CHAPTER 6

Selling a “Dutch Experience”: Images in Tourism and Consumer Culture

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ABSTRACT

This chapter investigates early tourist discourse (1875-1914) on the Netherlands through material of mostly British, German, and Dutch origin – travel brochures from Thomas Cook, the Vereeniging voor Vreemdelingenverkeer (VVV), and the Centraal Bureau voor Vreemdelingenverkeer, as well as guidebooks and travel writings. It traces the emergence of commercial tourism to the Netherlands by bringing together earlier forms of leisure travel to the Netherlands and the discovery of the Netherlands as a place worthwhile visiting by painters and writers of the Romanticist movement. In tourist discourse, information is linked to the advertising or purchase of a service or commodity – a travel arrangement, a postcard, or a souvenir. These commodities serve as mediators for experiencing the visited country; hence other visual media of consumer culture are investigated as well (advertising trade cards, picture postcards). Images in tourist discourse and consumer culture mostly use the form of the cliché, regardless if these images were produced by Dutch or foreign people. The chapter concludes with a discussion of Dutch reactions to the cliché, which calls for rethinking the divide between self-image and outsiders’ image.

KEYWORDS
visual culture; consumer culture; tourism; visual media; nineteenth century; twentieth century; cliché; self-image and outsider’s image; landscape painting; Romanticism; Picturesque
Information from promotional material in tourist discourse is often met with suspicion. In contrast to anthropology or geography, tourist discourse is not primarily concerned with acquainting the learning world with the customs, history, and landscape of faraway people and places according to the time’s standards of objectivity and truthfulness. In tourist discourse, information is linked to the advertising or purchase of a service or commodity – a travel arrangement, a postcard, or a souvenir. These commodities serve as mediators for experiencing the visited country or town. Suspicion about the reliability of information notwithstanding, tourist discourse and consumer culture are relevant sources of supposed common knowledge about the Netherlands.

The term “tourism” entered French, English, German, and Dutch dictionaries between the last quarter of the nineteenth century and 1914. In this chapter, I use the term to refer to a special form of travel in the age of consumer culture, in which a commodified experience of “other people and places” is advertised (and sold) by emphasizing differences between the everyday life of the traveller and the tourist destination. While some studies use the term “tourism” as a synonym for travel or, anachronistically, for any practice of voluntary travel to places in leisure, I will distinguish between “travel for leisure” and “tourism” and use the latter term exclusively for business-supported forms of travel for leisure for a limited time. This conceptualization implies limiting tourism to practices in industrialized societies.

Industrialization profoundly changed organization, methods, and understanding of the concepts of work and leisure. One of the characteristics of Western industrialized societies is the existence of distinct places and times for working, living, and leisure. The means to sustain life were increasingly earned in the form of money, accumulated at one place during working hours, and spent elsewhere during leisure time. Purpose-built places for spending leisure time popped up in the decades around 1900 – restaurants and bars, hotels and seaside resorts, dance halls, theatres and later also movie palaces. These specialized leisure places were situated in public spaces and implied the consumption of goods and services. Consequently, spending leisure time increasingly took the form of consuming commodities; this development went hand in hand with strategies of the emerging leisure industry that adver-
tised its goods as personal experiences. Experiences thus were mediated via the consumption of commodities. As such, the advent of tourism as a special form of travel is closely tied to the advent of consumer culture in industrialized societies.

Before I turn to the discussion of the archival material, I will briefly introduce key aspects in studies that respectively investigated the relation between tourism and authenticity and tourism as experience of difference. After that, I will sketch how authenticity is connected to selling a product.

Typically and Authentically Dutch

Tourism and tourist discourse have attracted a great number of studies from different disciplines; the dynamics between tourism and the image-shaping of other people and places have been investigated across the humanities and the social sciences. Jonathan Culler, John Fiske, and John Urry have investigated the processes and dynamics of meaning-making that the travelling tourists ascribed to the places visited (Culler 1988; Fiske 1989; Urry 2009).

The connection of “typicality” (a defining category) with “authenticity” (an evaluative category) in the description of realist images of people and places is one characteristic of tourist discourse. Once the selected elements of the “typically and authentically” Dutch are used in tourist discourse to represent pars pro toto all people and all things Dutch, it becomes impossible to maintain the idea that realist images of selected elements are an exclusively documentary affair. On the one hand, such images document bits of reality; on the other hand, the generalizations based on these selections are not valid for the entirety they claim to cover. This, obviously, stands in tension with the promise of tourist discourse that these images “simply show what was there”. Next to documenting bits of observable phenomena, tourist discourse produces certain bits as sight-worthy, authentic, and typical.

Jonathan Culler writes in “The Semiotics of Tourism” that tourists who “set out in quest for the authentic” (Culler 1988, 158) needed signifiers that signpost the authenticity of certain places and sites in order to perceive their authenticity. Rejecting the opposition between “tourist trap” and “the real thing”, he concludes:

Boorstin and his like assume that what is reproduced, represented, written about, is inauthentic, while the rest is authentic: tourists pay to see the tourist traps while the real thing is free as air. But “the real thing” must be marked as real, as sight-worthy; if it is not marked or differentiated, it is not a notable sight, even though it may be Japanese by virtue of
its location in Japan. The authentic is not something unmarked or undifferentiated; authenticity is a sign relation. (Culler 1988, 161, emphasis added)

Following Culler, tourists set out to see particular sites, objects, and buildings as signs: in the eye of the tourist, every beer garden in Munich is considered a typical German beer garden, and every windmill is considered typically Dutch. This way of looking, according to Culler, turns tourists into semioticians who look for markers at the destinations, which have already been established in discourses of travel and tourism. Authenticity is then revealed as a discursive effect – and so is typicality.

In line with Culler, Verhoeff points to another issue: if the typical and the authentic must be presented as typical and authentic, we find ourselves in the domain of interpretation, of ascription of meaning to the things in the world. The perception of something as typical and authentic requires an established system of signification that had already produced certain elements as such. The typical and the authentic then turn out to be relational categories because they can never be typical and authentic in and of themselves. Seen this way, typicality and authenticity are the opposition of what the terms came to stand in for in tourist discourse: these terms do not refer to an objective, realist documentation of “things that are there” (and have been so for a long time) but they are an effect, created in the rhetoric of realism and authenticity (Cf. Verhoeff 2006, 252–253).

Understanding authenticity and typicality in this way opens the possibility to investigate the processes with which typicality and authenticity were ascribed to certain phenomena (and not to others). Such an investigation is at the core of this chapter.

The Experience of Dutchness

In the section above, I briefly mentioned the search for differences as intrinsic to the search for typicality in tourist discourse. Unlike some other forms of travel, tourism is motivated by the expectation that the destination has interesting experiences to offer that differ from the tourist’s everyday life. From a tourist’s standpoint, what is considered “typical” and “authentic” also needs to be “different” from their everyday life in one way or another. John Urry even goes so far as to say that difference was the key feature of tourism, and not authenticity (Cf. Urry 2009, 12).

As I stated above, tourist discourse advertises goods and services by promising, both directly and indirectly, a certain experience. In the case of tourism
to the Netherlands, this experience is one of the typical, authentic, and different or, in terms developed in Chapter 1, of “Dutchness”. Because the tourist's experience needs to be the fulfilled promise, the individual experience of the traveller needs to be predictable and reproducible, and hence programmed. The circular logic between promise and fulfilment of the promise or, translated into business terms, of predefined consumption patterns and commodified experiences, makes the advertised experience predictable and reproducible. Repeatedly produced experiences are advertised by means of repeatedly produced images, hence the embrace of the cliché in tourist discourse. As I have written in Chapter 1, the cliché is part of supposed knowledge and as I have shown in Chapter 4, images of Dutchness are mostly expressed in form of the cliché. Frank Kessler’s observation about the adaptation of national clichés from tourism to films of early cinema points out this logic:

Nation-ness, in these and many other films, is thus both constructed and referred to by means of cultural clichés offering a tourist point of view. The relations with forms of modern tourism are indeed quite obvious. The images are presented as both typical and true – typical, because they are true, and true, because they are typical. This is exactly the form of circular reasoning on which the logic of tourism is built. And this also constitutes the paradox of tourism, as the authentic has to correspond to the cliché. (Kessler 2008, 24, emphasis added)

Once the cliché of the Dutch becomes the marker for the typical, authentic, and different experience of Dutchness, the cliché is repeatedly reproduced in media of tourist discourse, not at least because it is most likely to sell the product it advertises successfully, i.e. the experience of Dutchness.

Presentation of the Chapter

In this chapter, I will trace how the markers or signifiers developed that enable the tourist to see “Dutchness” in the phenomena observed in the Netherlands. I will do this by tracing how certain people and places were promoted as worth seeing. To understand the continuity and changes of travel for leisure to the Netherlands before tourism, and to understand why the Netherlands became a tourist destination, this chapter begins with an overview on the history of travel for leisure to the Netherlands. The flat landscape of the Netherlands and the fishing villages had not been considered noteworthy by authors of travel writings of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Only after poets and painters of Romanticism promoted the idea of the picturesque in opposition
to the idea of classical beauty, was the Netherlands constructed as a visually appealing place worth a visit (Chapter 6.2).

Chapter 6.3 consists of an analysis of travel guides, travel brochures, and promotional material from the market-leading British tourist agency Thomas Cook & Son from the period 1868 to 1914, as well as material from Dutch tourist organizations, the Bond van Vereenigingen voor Vreemdelingenverkeer (hereafter, VVV), and Centraal Bureau voor Vreemdelingenverkeer (hereafter, Centraal Bureau). This case study will reveal what was promoted as visually appealing in the Netherlands and investigates how the terminology performed certain people and places as sightworthy (Chapter 6.3). The findings are then compared to travel guides, picture postcards, films of early cinema, and lantern slides (Chapter 6.4-6.9).

The chapter ends with a discursive analysis of opinionated articles and letters to the editor of (mostly Dutch) newspapers, which express appreciation for and critique of the clichés about the Netherlands and the Dutch that circulated in tourist and advertising material (Chapter 6.10). The variety of opinions require framing of the appreciation and critique in a more nuanced way than a simple opposition of self-image versus outsider' or external image, which is still often supposed in studies of national clichés.

6.2 BEFORE TOURISM: TRAVEL IN LEISURE THROUGH AND TO THE NETHERLANDS

Travelling to places for leisure in Western societies is much older than the tourism that developed in industrialized societies (Cf. Towner 1996). Travel to (the area that was later to become) the Netherlands before modern tourism mostly had a purpose other than travel primarily for leisure. In addition to travel for family visits or for selling or buying goods at markets, salesmen, politicians, and diplomats from neighbouring countries and kingdoms as well as soldiers travelled and wrote reports for their employers. Scientists and students from abroad followed seminars at Dutch universities as early as the seventeenth century (Cf. Kooij 2010, 53). Aristocrats and well-off gentlemen, especially from England, embarked on the Grand Tour to conclude their education and passed through the Netherlands on their way (Cf. Black 1992). The main purpose of the Grand Tour was to become acquainted with the remains of antique civilization and classical Roman and Greek art. Although the travel route from England to Italy went through the Netherlands, not all travellers of the Grand Tour described their stay in the Netherlands in detail; the Gothic churches scarred by iconoclasm did not contribute much to the educational aim (Kraan 2002, 27). Travellers of all kinds wrote accounts of their stays: cor-
respondences and letters, memories and travel diaries for personal and family use, educational travel accounts to prove the result of learning while touring abroad, or travel journals with the intention of publication (Cf. Meier 2007).

A survey of 406 travel writings about the Netherlands (including correspondence, journals, diaries, and more) from 1648 to 1850 revealed that most foreign travellers to the Netherlands came from Germany, Great Britain, and France; these travellers mostly visited cities in the industrialized provinces of North and South Holland (Jacobsen Jensen 1919; Jacobsen Jensen 1936; cf. also Kooij 2010, 51; van Strien 1998, 4–5). Travel writings of foreign travellers who visited the Netherlands in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries have been studied by van Strien for British travellers (1989; 1998), by Beaulieu for German travellers (2000), and by van Strien-Chardonneau for French travellers (1994). Some of the published and unpublished travel writings contain illustrations. From the only paragraph that van Strien dedicated to this topic, it can be estimated that there was much variation in illustrated subjects (van Strien 1989, 38 footnote 41). Illustrated subjects mostly consisted of city buildings, visited monuments, and scientific instruments in collections.

Across national origins, the affluent travellers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries came to see the architecture of town halls and churches, monuments, artworks, and natural history in public or private collections. Travellers also fancied the maisons de plaisance (country houses) and the gardens, and described canals and barges (Cf. van Strien 1989, 33 and 160–161; van Strien-Chardonneau 1994, 43–57 and 275). The Dutch were characterized as liberal and tolerant in religious matters, the cleanliness of houses and people was mentioned, and the sober lifestyle of rich trade people was noted (Cf. Chales de Beaulieu 2000, 205; van Strien 1989, 160; van Strien-Chardonneau 1994, 275). Accounts of travellers on the Grand Tour from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries mention the good conditions of the streets and the cleanliness of hotels, cities, and people; writers mention charity institutions, admire the cityscape of Rotterdam for the many sailboats, and buy books in Amsterdam book shops; some also visited collections of universities (Cf. Hibbert 1969, 206–213). In short: visiting the Netherlands was primarily a matter of visiting cities to see collections and to purchase goods in shops; the visual impressions of Dutch landscape or rural life were not considered noteworthy.

Apart from the general remarks on the low-lying country and the eternal struggle of its inhabitants against the sea, relatively little is written about what tourists saw outside the towns. Holland for them was an urbanized society and most of their comments concern “industrial” activities going on in the neighbourhood of the cities: the large number of mills produc-
ing a great variety of products, the shipbuilding industry, or the bleaching fields near Haarlem [...]. (van Strien 1989, 119)

French travellers of the second part of the eighteenth century were also interested in Flemish paintings, as Flemish art became fashionable among the wealthier French around that time (Cf. van Strien-Chardonneau 1994, 95). However great their appreciation for Dutch or Flemish art – which included landscape painting – the Netherlands as such, the actual landscape or the dresses of the country people were not considered aesthetically interesting. Common people were generally described without enthusiasm:

The ordinary Dutchwoman was said to be bossy; the hard-drinking Dutchman bad-mannered with no respect for his betters. However, when seen from a distance at their inns and funerals or skating on the ice they fully lived up to the tourist’s expectations and looked very picturesque. (van Strien 1989, 161)

Van Strien’s comment interests me here for two reasons. Firstly, van Strien applies the term “picturesque”, not to express aesthetic perfection, but to describe a pleasurable impression in the eye of the beholder. His comment emphasizes the subjectivity of the traveller/viewer. Secondly, he mentions that the traveller comes with expectations, which implies that these must have been shaped prior to their own visit; moreover, these expectations were related to something visual.

In the following, I will mention why the shift to the picturesque around the beginning of the nineteenth century was relevant for the development of travel for leisure and tourism to the Netherlands. Then, I will sketch how the picturesque was adapted by painters and travellers to promote the Netherlands as visual attraction.

Romanticism and the Picturesque

The fact that the Netherlands came to be considered as a place where interesting things could be seen and, later, a tourist destination, owes much to the aesthetic concept of the picturesque. The picturesque as an aesthetic category gained relevance in the nineteenth century through painters and poets of the Romantic era. Among other things, the picturesque implied a “new enthusiasm for the medieval world” (Towner 1996, 110) which turned Gothic churches into aesthetically interesting monuments. Before the rise of the picturesque, buildings of classical antiquity were considered the only visually appealing
architecture – which did (and do) exist in Italy or Greece, but not in the Netherlands.

Hans Kraan’s book *Dromen van Holland. Buitenlandse Kunstenaaars schilderen Holland 1800-1914* (2002) gives a rich insight into art creation with the Netherlands as subject matter. In this book, Kraan juxtaposes the aesthetic concepts of beauty and the picturesque. Whereas the classical age’s concept of beauty is associated with perfection, symmetry, stability, and eternity, the picturesque is characterized by raw and sudden variation, non-symmetrical lines, and an understanding of phenomena as ephemeral with an emphasis on subjective experience and nature (Cf. Kraan 2002, 31–33).

My use of the notion of the picturesque is twofold. First, on a historically-descriptive level, only through the aesthetic concept of the picturesque did the landscape and the architecture of the Netherlands become visually attractive. Second, the concept of the picturesque serves as an analytical backdrop for the investigation of the constellation among aesthetics, the commercialization of culture, and tourism at a specific moment in Western history. Jennifer Peterson and Nanna Verhoeff have paid much attention to the qualities of picturesque aesthetics in visual culture and the way these has been taken up in cinema as an emergent mass medium (Verhoeff 2006, esp. 250–269; Peterson 2013, esp. 175–205). Both stress the link of picturesque aesthetics to the commodity form; Peterson even calls the picturesque the “commercialized form of the sublime” (2013, 176). In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, which is also the dawn of consumer culture, the term “picturesque” was used as an advertising term for a “generalized sense of something pleasing” (Peterson 2013, 179), which included a “quality of pastness” (Peterson 2013, 177). The notion of the “picturesque” was used to indicate phenomena that were considered “visually attractive” and thus sellable. Picturesque aesthetics have an external viewpoint, positioning the viewer outside, at a distance from the things seen in the image. This distance allows the viewer to experience mastery over the things seen, promoting “a colonizing mode of looking that is a form of appropriation” (Verhoeff 2006, 252). For tourists, the quality of the picturesque allows them to stay “out of the scene”, not involved in the world put before them. Thereby, tourists are enabled to live their nostalgic sentiments by experiencing quaintness, exoticism, “pastness” and authenticity in the people and places they look at but are not part of. At the same time, these tourists rely on decidedly modern elements such as modern means of transportation, package tours and mass-media that offer themselves to the paying tourist in the commodity form. But once there is distance to the vista, the quality of the landscape is not immediate any more – it needs to be attributed (Cf. Verhoeff 2006, 250). The picturesque then serves as an *attribution of pictorial quality* and, in this sense, it is used as a label in tourist discourse.
As mentioned above, the many cities, the flat land, the straight canals, and the cleanliness of farmer’s houses were mentioned in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century travel accounts – but Dutch landscape and ordinary Dutch people did not yet attract artists or travellers as such. This changed in the late eighteenth century when artists and poets of the Romantic Movement promoted the picturesque as a concept for aesthetic appreciation. The foregrounding of the picturesque changed motivations for travel, attitudes towards landscape, and the understanding of the artist’s duties. Intensity of emotion, experience of pure subjectivity, the scenic, and praise for being in untamed nature were topics upon which authors and artists of the Romantic Movement elaborated extensively. The overall emphasis on individual, personal, and subjective “impressions”, rather than objective accounts, influenced the style of travel writings and the style and motifs of paintings. In order to receive these impressions, painters and authors of the Romantic Movement travelled considerably to work on-site. The resulting artworks and writings inspired other people to travel to these sites, too. Before I turn to picturesque travel, I will give a short overview over painting (in) the Netherlands in the nineteenth century.

Romanticist Artists in the Netherlands / The Netherlands in Romanticist Paintings

In Chapter 3, I have already explained changes in the depiction of places from the backdrop of the changing status of objectivity and realism in the sciences. In the case of landscape painting, Romanticist painters challenged academic painting traditions that continued to privilege history painting and its corresponding aesthetic concepts stemming from (a Renaissance view of) classical antiquity. Such paintings did not meet the taste of the bourgeoisie in the Biedermeier epoch. Romanticists who wished to paint the world as they experienced it and not according to age-old schemata found inspiration in Dutch landscape painting and prints of the seventeenth century (Cf. Kraan 2002, 44).

In travel writings and poetry, as in painting, the expression of subjective impressions was the order of the day. Landscape, until then seen as ancillary element for the background of history painting, emerged as an independent subject in the second quarter of the nineteenth century (Cf. Kraan 2002, 98–99). The aesthetic appreciation of landscape in and of itself smoothed the path for promoting Dutch landscape as being of interest for a visit. Next to landscape painting, the genre painting of peasants and fishers became fashionable by the 1840s, too (Cf. Kraan 2002, 100–103). In these genre paintings, the interest of artists and ethnologists overlapped as “people in traditional
“costume” was much admired by both: the romanticists admired them for their supposed exoticism and ethnographers for their supposed typicality.

After the romanticists had promoted the mundane world as subject for painting in the first part of the nineteenth century (as interpreted, dramatized, subjective, and composed as their landscape paintings might have been), realist painters took these subjects and tried to depict the mundane world around them more truthfully. What romanticist and realist painters share is that they promoted the Netherlands through their paintings as a country where picturesque landscape and picturesque people caught the attention of the traveller’s eyes. Their paintings were hung in galleries, and were often remediated and issued as lithographs or reprinted in illustrated magazines. Through these editions, the motifs of the paintings were internationally disseminated – at least in the home countries of the artists: France, Belgium, Germany, Great Britain, and the United States of America. Because hardly any other motifs on the Netherlands were produced in high numbers, the Netherlands thus became visualized with a specific image repertoire, created by romanticist and realist painters: flat grasslands with cows, winter scenes with people skating on the ice, beaches with sailboats, fisher families, and farmers.

The deep connection between travel and fine arts is important for an understanding of tourism in the Netherlands. The romanticist and realist painters’ rejection of history painting with idealized landscapes and their embrace of the picturesque is much in line with the greater epistemological shift from the ideal, found in abstractions of the empirical world towards the typical, found in (selected parts of) the empirical world (see Chapters 3 and 4). Additionally, as I have shown above, tourist discourse is deeply intertwined with the concept of typicality. Only after the depicted people and places were conceived of as aesthetically interesting (which happened with the advent of the picturesque) and only when the viewers of the (reproduced) paintings could reasonably expect the Netherlands to look like those images (which happened with realist tradition in painting), travellers could expect to see the sights at the sites themselves.

**Romanticism and Picturesque Travel**

In the period of romanticism, “picturesque travel” increased while the Grand Tour declined. Gothic monuments, towers, and castles of the Middle Ages in secluded places of France, Scotland, and along the Rhine became fashionable destinations for a journey and qualified as motifs worth painting. While the Netherlands had barely anything to offer with respect to the classical and antique concept of beauty, it had something picturesque to offer. Going on a
picturesque tour to the Netherlands became fashionable in Britain after 1815 when romanticist painters such as Turner, Callcott, and Stanfield had shown the British that Dutch cities and coastlines still looked like the – at that time à la mode – Dutch landscape paintings of the seventeenth century (Cf. Kraan 2002, 55). As admirers of landscape and landscape painting often expressed nostalgic sentiments, a picturesque travel to “Holland” was considered a travel to the land of the seventeenth-century Flemish master painters. Unlike the traveller of the Grand Tour, the picturesque traveller was encouraged to note down their emotions; a picturesque travel report was considered good when the images and feelings expressed in the text were in harmony (Cf. Kraan 2002, 33). This new emphasis on subjective impressions can be observed in other travel writings, too. Whereas the traveller of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries strove for a correct topographical description and an enumeration of buildings and collections in a city, the nineteenth-century travel account is characterized by the overall impression of the city or landscape in the eyes of the traveller (Cf. Kraan 2002, 93). The countryside became a place of interest to the traveller.

Henry Havard’s Voyages Pittoresque aux villes mortes de Zuiderzée (1874)

The most influential travel report of a picturesque tour to the Netherlands was Voyages Pittoresque aux villes mortes de Zuiderzée by Henry Havard (1874). Although this report does not sell a tour to the Netherlands and thus rather falls into my characterization of the discourse of armchair travel (Chapter 5), I include it here because of its relevance for understanding certain topoi of tourist discourse. Henry Havard sailed together with a skipper and an illustrator, M. Van Heemskerck van Beest, to the villages and islands of the Zuiderzee. The publication contains almost 400 pages of texts and ten engravings “after sketches of the author and M. Van Heemskerck van Beest” (Havard 1874, title page). These engravings are well-worked and show much care for detail.

Five engravings show buildings (towers and city walls) and five depict people in traditional costume (of Marken, Volendam, Hindeloopen, and Urk), portrayed in the entourage of the landscape, a village street, or in their home. Some of these villages had been important trade cities in the sixteenth century, but, by the nineteenth century, they had been largely forgotten, even by the Dutch. The descriptions of the villages resemble one another. Havard elaborates on the air of past glory that he found lying in ruins. He reports in detail on the architecture of the town houses and the art collections they accommodate. He wrote about a deathlike silence in the streets, the monotonous
landscape, leading to the impression of time standing still. The poverty of the village inhabitants, most of them living off of small-scale fishing and unindustrialized agriculture, probably added to his impression. In great detail, he describes the traditional costume of the village people.

The overall image Harvard sketches in writing and illustrations is one of a region that has been untouched by modernity, where costume and customs can be observed as relics of a time long ago. *Voyage Pittoresque aux villes mortes du Zuiderzée* fitted the demand for accounts of exotic and picturesque places and was an international publishing success. The French edition was reissued four times by 1883. It was also translated into Dutch (1876), German (1882), and English (1885) (Cf. Blom 1996, 246–255). Right from its first publication, travelogues and guidebooks throughout my researched period refer to Havard’s account. The expression “the dead villages of the Zuiderzee” appears in countless newspaper articles, travel guides, and journals, written in several languages. Only after the publication of *Voyage Pittoresque aux villes mortes du Zuiderzée* did travellers and tourists venture out in higher numbers for a trip to these supposedly exotic and authentic villages. In no other case of the mate-
rial in my corpus can the emergence of a tourist destination be determined so clearly.4

Topoi and Images in Tourist Discourse

Before I analyse examples of material in tourist discourse, I wish to bring attention to the target group and the actual tourist. Prior to 1914, tourism in the Netherlands for longer than a day was affordable only for the middle and upper classes (of the Netherlands and of foreign countries alike). Workers and lower-class people in the investigated period could only afford a day out, if at all. For this group, tourism was limited to those places that could be reached in a day-return trip. In 1906, twelve percent of workers and administrative employees had between four days and three weeks of vacation per year (Cf. Schipper 2000, 31), but the vacation days were not fully paid or were unpaid and such agreements were made on the individual level. The first workers in the Netherlands who won the struggle for a collective agreement of one week of (unpaid) holidays were the typographers and diamond workers in 1910. Visiting places with the entire family for a week was not affordable, especially not for families with many children, even if the time would have allowed for such a vacation. The first nationwide collective agreement (CAO) for four days
of fully paid vacation was realized in 1928/1929 in the metal workers branch (FNV 2005a, 2005b). From this follows that promotional material for tourism to the Netherlands, which promoted overnight stays, was targeted at very privileged people.

Nevertheless, the business of day-return trips should not be underestimated. Along with trips by the train to the seaside or to the woods in the nearer surroundings, cyclists organized in clubs and made tours, and school classes went on excursions with their teachers. With this in mind, it is less surprising to read that the promotional efforts of the local VVVs in the years 1906-1908 were almost exclusively directed towards the Dutch market (Cf. Schipper 2000, 30). The train and barge companies must have earned a considerable income from this day-return tourism, and the postcard-sellers and cafes in the visited places probably did, too.

### 6.3 TRAVEL PROMOTION BY THOMAS COOK & SON, THE VVV, AND THE CENTRAAL BUREAU

The Thomas Cook Agency, later Thomas Cook & Son, was the most important travel agency prior to World War I. Originally a British enterprise, the agency soon opened offices around the world, including in Amsterdam in 1898. The company’s history is well-documented in a four-volume book, written by the company’s archivist Paul Smith (1998). Thomas Cook began organizing day-return trips to British seaside resorts for working-class people as early as the 1840s. Cook was a reformative thinker and connected to the temperance movement; he considered travel a means to make workers spend their leisure “properly” instead of getting drunk. The business of organized group trips soon grew, and, in addition to day-return trips, longer excursions were offered. In 1855, Thomas Cook organized the first trips across the English Channel, to Belgium, France, Switzerland, and Italy.

Early material was not illustrated. The first illustrated brochure in my corpus dates to 1899 (Thomas Cook & Son 1899b), and the first illustrated article on the Netherlands to 1900 (Thomas Cook & Son 1900). The variety of motifs in these illustrations is limited. Altogether, about half of the images shows people in traditional clothing, mostly from Volendam; another quarter show a cityscape with canals and houses standing next to the water. Less prominent are images of landscapes with canals, pastures, and windmills. In Thomas Cook & Son’s publications, the images of places are mostly city views, and the images of people are inhabitants of villages. This is the same pattern that I have already observed in Chapters 4 and 5.

The company published a monthly illustrated magazine as well as sepa-
rate leaflets and guidebooks for its tours (see Chapter 2). In the following, I will study the continuity and changes in the way in which the Netherlands was promoted as a tourist destination in material of Thomas Cook & Son.

Advertising Tourism to the Netherlands: The First Trip to the Netherlands

The first evidence of a tour by Thomas Cook & Son to the Netherlands dates from 1868, when an excursion to Holland and Belgium was announced in the company’s magazine *Cook’s Excursionist and Tourist Advertiser*. The tourists left England on 30 May 1868 from London to Rotterdam, from there continued to The Hague, went to the classy seaside resort of Scheveningen, and visited the picture gallery of the House in the Woods in The Hague. After that, they went back to Rotterdam and continued their travel via Moerdijk to Antwerp. Tourists could continue their trip with a visit to German cities mostly along the Rhine. The itinerary of the tour is given in the article “Programme of Whit-suntide Excursion to Holland and Belgium” (Thomas Cook & Son 1868a). A descriptive article “About Holland and Belgium” (Thomas Cook & Son 1868b) gives background information on the travel destination and informs the potential travellers about what they will see. Although the article is not illustrated, it vividly describes the visual appearance of the Dutch – and discards one generalization only to replace it with another one:

Nothing is more erroneous than an Englishmen’s idea of a Dutchman. We fancy Meynheer Van Dunck an unwieldy purpose, very much like a Dutch cheese on legs. We draw him with a protruding abdomen and with a stern as round as one of his fishing boats, this is quite a mistake. He is a little man, well shaven, active and sharp, and genial and clean. The Dutch are an old-fashioned people, and no wonder, for theirs is a grand history, and they may well be proud of the past; but they are not the worse for that. On Sundays they have a very staid and ancient air, but you will admire the head-dresses of the ladies; and if you are the head of a family, and know the hard work it is in these enlightened days to get a good maid-servant, you will be enchanted with the little rosy-cheeked Dutch maids-of-all-work who go pattering about the streets in wooden clogs, with neat print gowns and clean muslin caps. Look at them, and the canals, and the trees, and the big ships unlacing in all the sheds at the very doors of the leading merchants’ houses, and then rush to look at the statue of Erasmus, the glory of Rotterdam and Holland. (Thomas Cook & Son 1868b, 6)
Some topoi were repeated in later accounts, and some of them were illustrated: the headdresses of women, “rosy-cheeked maids”, people walking on wooden shoes, the description of canals and trees. An extensive report about the trip was published in *Cook’s Excursionist*. Mr. Ripley reported in “Mr Ripley’s Account of our First Excursion to Holland and Belgium” (Thomas Cook & Son 1868c) about the places visited and the things seen, giving references to history here and there. The tourists arrived in Rotterdam on a Sunday. Mr. Ripley described churchgoers, the pulpit and the organ of a church, a park, the traffic in the streets, and compared Rotterdam to Venice. In The Hague, the group visited a private picture gallery (the House in the Woods) as well as another museum of fine arts and, in the evening, went to Scheveningen, where a big fair was held. The author was disappointed by the “absence of shows and light amusements – if we except some swings and a merry-go-round” (Thomas Cook & Son 1868c, 7). The tourists of this first excursion spent most of their time on visits to art collections; they saw the cityscapes of Rotterdam and The Hague, and, by coincidence, the traditional dresses worn at a country fair were spotted. The countryside itself was not commented on in Mr. Ripley’s account, and neither Amsterdam nor the villages of the Zuiderzee were visited.

**“Event-Tourism” to the Netherlands**

Thomas Cook & Son regularly offered travel arrangements for specific events, including world expositions. Such arrangements were offered for the Amsterdam Industrial Exhibition in 1869, the Colonial Exhibition in 1883, the ice-skating contest in 1888, the Coronation Ceremony of Queen Wilhelmina in 1898, and a cycling tour in 1897 “under the personal escort of an experienced cyclist, a graduate from Oxford, who knows the country and the language thoroughly” (Thomas Cook & Son 1897, 8). Without doubt, these events, and not the country, were the main reason to attract (potential) travellers. In some announcements, however, the city in which an event was held was promoted as an additional attraction. The description of the cityscape of Amsterdam in the journal article on the Industrial Exhibition of 1869 is especially long:

Amsterdam with its docks full of large ships, and long paved promenades stretching out to the Zuyder Zee, only to be reached by pedestrians across a *mysterious* network of swinging water gates and drawbridges [...] We know of no country which in anywise resembles Holland, no cities like those in which the worthy Dutch burghers reside. Utterly *dissimilar* to anything in France, in Switzerland, in Italy, in Germany, or in any other country known to us, as the *peculiar features* of this *strange* region of land and
water are perfectly unique. There is a medieval aspect about the town, which impart to them almost picturesque appearance. (Thomas Cook & Son 1869, 2, emphasis added)

The medieval aspect was seen in the carillons that play every hour. Further, “strange costumes in the streets” could be spotted such as “women from distant provinces with their indescribable hats and bonnets, and their heads adorned with bands and plates, as if they had been trepanned with the precious metals”, men in “knickerbockers from the Isle of Marken”, or “Jews in blue overcoats and black waistcoats” (Thomas Cook & Son 1869, 2). The cumbersome and long descriptions of the clothing in this early article are exceptional for publications of Thomas Cook & Son. The adjectives that appeared in later articles – “picturesque”, “quaint”, “authentic”, “national”, “typical” – are largely absent. Instead, adjectives are applied that highlight a not fully graspable difference (“mysterious”, “utterly dissimilar”, “peculiar features”, “strange”, “perfectly unique”). It seems as if there was no ready formula to describe the perceived difference of the country and the costumes, and the absence of illustrations in the early volumes of the journal complicated the matter even more.

Change of Topoi in the 1890s

Cook’s earliest travel guide that mentions the Netherlands is Cook’s Tourist’s Handbook to Holland, Belgium, and the Rhine (1874). The Netherlands was clearly not the main travel destination: only sixteen out of 174 pages are dedicated to the description of Dutch towns. Dunes, dykes, canals, and windmills (“by the thousands, used as pumps for draining the land, and for a dozen purposes we never use them for in England”, Thomas Cook & Son 1874, 16) are introduced as general features in “Holland”. Trees are described as “standing like militia men, Dutch men understanding art more than nature” and flowers are “rich and beautiful, everywhere” (16). Wooden clogs and headdresses are said to be worn (15), and all men smoke (14). Next to Rotterdam (“the Dutch Venice”, 13), with its busy quays, historical buildings, and parks, the art galleries of The Hague, and the cities of Leiden, Haarlem, Amsterdam, Maastricht, and Utrecht are mentioned.

In the edition of 1879, the information is presented in a more sober way, resembling very much the style of Baedeker guidebooks (see Chapters 2.3 and 6.4). The places and cities are described in the third-person singular and the description of the travel to the Netherlands or the arrival in Rotterdam is no longer included. The cities are described from a tourist’s point of interest and
includes a comment on the visually interesting quality by the choice of adjectives:

The Hague is considered by most to be the prettiest and pleasantest place in Holland. (Thomas Cook & Son 1879, 16)

Rotterdam is a marvellously picturesque place, with its busy quays, old-fashioned houses, curious costumes, numberless bridges, countless trees, strangely attired policemen, and trim gardens (Thomas Cook & Son 1879, 10)

The adjectives identify something as visually attractive, but do not describe a determined quality. In the second quotation, the described elements are mentioned, as if the term “picturesque” needed explanation. I will come back to these kinds of adjective below.

Description of a Tour: Comparison of the Versions from 1891 and 1899

The comparison of descriptions of the tour to “Holland, Belgium, and the Rhine” from 1891 and 1899 shows a slight change in topoi (Thomas Cook & Son 1891; Thomas Cook & Son 1899a). While the itinerary does not change much, the description of the visited places does. Not only do the adjectives differ in both versions, but the topoi are also elaborated. To illustrate this point, I will quote two lengthy passages of the sources. The underlined passages are included in the 1899 description of the travel but are not part of the description in 1891.

“Cooks conducted Tours to Holland, The Rhine and Belgium” (1891/1899) Itinerary:
Sundays – The Steamer now calls at the new port, Hook of Holland, but passengers will continue by steamer to Rotterdam (Hotel Weimar). Rotterdam is a very picturesque city with 225,000 inhabitants (1891: 200,000), busy quays, old-fashioned houses, curious costumes, numberless bridges, and trim gardens. The river side of the city consists, for a mile and a half, of a series of magnificent quays, one of which is planted with stately linden trees. The shipping and steamboats are moored close to these quays, the river here being thirty or forty feet deep, so that passengers have merely to step from the deck to the shore. On landing, the tourist finds himself at once in a world of novelty. The houses are clean
and bright both inside and out, and generally from four to five storeys in height, several being extremely old-fashioned in appearance. The costumes in the streets will not fail to attract attention, many of them being very quaint. [

Tuesdays – travel by morning train from The Hague to Amsterdam, where the day will be spent (Hotel du Pays-Bas). During the stay a carriage drive will be provided. Amsterdam is the largest, wealthiest, and most populous city of Holland, The Royal Palace, the Stadhuis or Town hall, and the Bourse are near together, in the open square called the Dam. The new National Museum (Rijks Museum) is a splendid building containing a large and grand collection of pictures belonging to the state. The Museum Fodro, the Artist’s Club, and some private collections of painting may be visited. The parks, promenades, and gardens afford pleasant resorts, and the harbour, quays, dykes, and docks, display scenes of busy life. The quaint head-dresses worn by many of the women, curiously wrought in silver and gold, are often heirlooms which have remained in the same family for generations, many of the streets present a very picturesque appearance, some of the houses being considerably out of the perpendicular. Diamond cutting is a great local industry, and a visit will be paid, if possible, to one of the best factories. Amsterdam is abound with places of amusement, at one of which the evening may be pleasantly spent.

Cooks Tourist Office, 83 Damrak.

The only sentence that is left out in the newer version is a sober geographical fact:

The North Sea Canal, opened by the King in November 1876, is sixteen miles in length, and gives free access to the German Ocean.

The added sections mention windmills, places that are not visited, more museums, and traditional costume. Altogether, these changes describe scenery and the visual pleasures and do not only give factual or historical information. Rather, added passages suggest experiences to the traveller that are mostly described with adjectives of vague descriptive power.

Topoi in the Text Modules

From the 1890s on, the descriptive texts for travel to the Netherlands became increasingly standardized. Recurring topoi are expressed in text modules that were copied from year to year with minor changes throughout the period from
1891 to 1914. Such text modules were used in articles and brochures, combined in various ways. Occasionally, more background information on the history of a city is given. Generally, only the title and the opening paragraph are slightly modified. For example, the same text module was used in the articles “The Land of Mijnheer van Dunck” (Thomas Cook & Son 1902a) and “Holland from an aeroplane” (Thomas Cook & Son 1911), with the exception that the “view from the balloon” of the earlier version is replaced by a “view from an aeroplane” in the later version. Other modules concern the struggle of the Dutch against the sea and the flatness of the land, the wars of the Dutch for religious freedom, picturesque medieval architecture, art galleries with Flemish paintings, canals, many windmills, crowded quays in cities, peasants in quaint costumes and headdress, steeples with carillons that play melodies, houses in the city that are out of the perpendicular, flower fields and horticulture, and a general cleanliness of houses and streets. The most visited cities were Rotterdam, The Hague (including Scheveningen), Amsterdam, and, from 1896 on, the Zuiderzee villages of North Holland.

Cook’s Trip to the “Dead Villages of the Zuiderzee”

The trip to the “Dead Villages of the Zuiderzee” appears in Cook’s programme in the same period when all printed matter of Thomas Cook & Son became more richly illustrated. It is surprising that Volendam and Marken are included comparably late in the conducted tours; in the consulted material, Marken is first included in a trip in 1896 (Cf. Thomas Cook & Son 1896) and Volendam is included in the Zuiderzee trip only in 1906 (Cf. Thomas Cook & Son 1906b, 10), much after the motif of the Marken and Volendammer fisher families circulated widely throughout visual media.

The first guidebook that mentions the Zuiderzee region is *Cook’s Tourists’ Handbook to Holland, Belgium, the Rhine and Black Forest* (Thomas Cook & Son 1899c). Next to the city descriptions, which are fully copied from previous editions, a visit to the Zuiderzee villages is suggested:

> Excursions from Amsterdam to the Islands and to the Dead Cities of the Zuyder Zee will be found very interesting. Every Monday, Thursday, and Saturday, at 10 a.m., a well-appointed small steam yacht leaves the De Ruyter Kade, at the Kettingboot, for the old-fashioned Island of Marken, passing on the way the village of Broek and the quaint old town of Monnickendam, ample time being allowed for visits, and after a stay at Marken, the return voyage is made by sea direct to Amsterdam. (Thomas Cook & Son 1899c, 5)
The Zuiderzee villages are included in the guidebook in the same year that Thomas Cook & Son offered package tours explicitly designed to see the Netherlands – and not just the picture galleries. A six-day tour to the Netherlands was offered weekly in the summertime from 1899 until the 1930s. A special Easter tour of four days to the Netherlands was offered (at least) in 1899 and 1908 (Thomas Cook & Son 1899b; Thomas Cook & Son 1908a).

The thirteen-day tour “Holland, Belgium and the Rhine” was offered at least ten times in 1908 and included to Rotterdam, The Hague, Scheveningen, Amsterdam, and, from there, Cologne. The “Dead Cities of the Zuyder Zee” were not included in this arrangement until 1914, when a slight change in programme prolonged the stay in the Netherlands by one day – adding an excursion to the Zuiderzee villages. Three brochures for the trip “Dead Cities of the Zuiderzee” from Easter 1899, summer 1899, and Easter 1908 show the same images: an empty canal in Amsterdam, a beach scene in Scheveningen with people in fancy clothes walking on the sands, and women in traditional clothing of Volendam and Marken.
Transporting the Zuiderzee to Haarlem

While the reuse of the same images is understandable in brochures – after all, they advertise the same tour. The image of the Zuiderzee inhabitants is also used to advertise an excursion to the flower fields of Haarlem, a town that is not situated at the seaside, and which is generally known for horticulture and not for fishing. The written text informs correctly about that fact:

Easter falls late enough this year to find the blooms of these highly ornamental plants in their greatest beauty, and the party which we have organised for spending four days of Easter time in picturesque little Holland will have an opportunity of witnessing a truly gorgeous spectacle. Fields of many hundreds of acres are aglow with one mass of bloom in the middle of April, and present a sight that can be witnessed nowhere but in Holland. (Thomas Cook & Son 1903a, emphasis added)

The image to illustrate the article on Haarlem has nothing to do with Haarlem. This curious combination of word and image can only pass without puzzlement when the motif of Volendammers and Markeners is unambiguously understood to signify “the Dutch”; that way, the motif could be used by the publisher to illustrate “any Dutch person somewhere in the Netherlands”. This use of motif goes beyond the function of synecdoche / pars pro toto as the image in the image-text combination is not used to inform about the Netherlands globally, but specifically about Haarlem. In this case, the use of image might even be called “wrong”. Obviously, this did not bother the editor much.
Selling a Dutch Experience through Interchangeable Qualities

The article “Picturesque Holland and the Dead Cities of the Zuider Zee” (Thomas Cook & Son 1902b) is a combination of often-repeated text modules. Concerning the Zuiderzee villages, Broek-in-Waterland is associated with cleanliness, and Monnickendam is described as a “pretty little city” situated next to “the quaint old-world Isle of Marken”. On a market day in Purmerend, Alkmaar, and Zaandam, so it is promised, “Dutch rural life will be seen in perfection” (Thomas Cook & Son 1902b, 33). The use of different adjectives creates an air of description, but a simple test shows that the adjectives are interchangeable. All Zuiderzee villages could be described as “quaint and old”, “pretty little town” showing “Dutch rural life in perfection”.

Adjectives used in tourist discourse such as “quaint”, “typical”, or “authentic” refer to an undetermined quality as they do not describe an unambiguous characteristic. Unlike adjectives such as “red”, “medieval”, or “brick-built”, the concepts which the adjectives in tourist discourse express are not even vague but only qualify the phenomenon as “visually attractive and locally specific” without giving any criteria. In the end, these rather “undetermined adjectives” explain nothing, describe nothing, and are only used to promote a sight as visually appealing. These adjectives mark a site as a sight without describing a specific quality (for the idea of the marker, cf. Culler 1988, 159–160).

In the promotion of a trip to a certain city, the general recurring topoi are loosely connected to that city without adding too-specific descriptions of local colour. The descriptions of Hoorn in 1903 (Thomas Cook & Son 1903b) and 1908 (Thomas Cook & Son 1908b) are identical. In both, the reader learns:

Of all those old-world moribund cities which line the shores of the Zuider Zee, whose names ring out so valiantly through the stirring pages of the history of the Netherlands, Hoorn, to our mind, is the most curious, the most picturesque, the most attractive. (Thomas Cook & Son 1903b, 12; Thomas Cook & Son 1908b, 14)

The statement that is made by the use of general and nondescriptive, undetermined adjectives is also weakened by the insertion “to our mind”, which proposes that these statements could be challenged. Tourists who thought that e.g. Edam was the “most curious” did not have to defend their view against the statement made in the brochure. Still, the adjectives were linked to the city. After the message that Hoorn had interesting visual experiences to offer, the advertising of the product follows: “Hoorn is included in the itinerary of our weekly Conducted Parties to Picturesque Holland” (Thomas Cook & Son 1908b, 14).
The same strategy to combine the unspecific description triggering vague expectations with the purchase of a product is used in the article “An Island in the Zuyder Zee” (Thomas Cook & Son 1907):

*We know of no other* inhabited island to compare with the Isle of Marken in the Zuyder Zee, and those who visit it by our weekly parties to Holland announced on page 33 are certainly entitled to say that they have trodden *the most curious bit of earth* in the known world. (Thomas Cook & Son 1907, 10, emphasis added)

In conclusion, Thomas Cook & Son’s travel arrangements to and through the Netherlands *before 1900* highlighted the cities, the cityscape, and the art galleries. Package tours were related to events or activities that were considered interesting in themselves (exhibitions, the coronation, a cycling tour, ice-skating) without advertising them as intrinsically Dutch. Early trips to the Netherlands were rather trips *through* the Netherlands. Aside from Rotterdam, which was an important stopover for Cook’s travel route to Belgium and Germany, tourists only went to The Hague and the fashionable bathing place Scheveningen. Early reports and accounts written by travellers describe the picture galleries, the cityscape, the quality of food, the hotels, and traditional dresses of the peasant women. Day trips to villages or the countryside are not mentioned in the archival material before 1896.

Although some topoi that were taken up by travel guides after 1900 had already been mentioned, earlier material showed more variation in the way in which phenomena were described and qualified. The tendency to add more atmospheric and less descriptive details can be observed already in material of the 1890s and culminated in material after 1900. In brochures and articles after 1900, the potential tourist is addressed with promotions of visual experiences that are supposedly unique to a specific place; the interchangeability of applied adjectives in later material causes the content of the promised experience to remain vague. The tourist is promised to see something “quaint”, and the vagueness of that concept facilitates the fulfilment of the promise enormously.

**The Dutch Promotion of the Netherlands:**

*Holland Express* and *Vreemdelingenverkeer*

Dutch associations promoted travel to the Netherlands and published promotional material in various media formats, too. I will compare publications from various sources to those of Thomas Cook in order to find out if there is a similar pattern in form or content. *Holland Express* was an illustrated mag-
azine, issued between 1908 and 1928 by the *Centraal Bureau* in The Hague. The *Centraal Bureau* was set up in 1908 and sought to promote tourism to the Netherlands abroad. Alongside the VVV (the umbrella organization of local tourist offices), railway companies, hotel managers, and other organizations with an interest in promoting tourism to the Netherlands, were members of the *Centraal Bureau*. The magazine *Holland Express* was issued about 20 times per year at first and weekly from 1914 onwards. The magazine provided information on travel and travel arrangements around the world by all kinds of enterprises and organizations, combined with practical information. The foreword in the first edition clearly states the magazine’s aim:

*We are no Baedeker. We do not claim at all to be complete. But if we come close to reaching our goal, one can use our information to put together a suitable travel plan at home and enjoy more, with less effort and less expense than otherwise would have been the case.* (*Holland Express* 1908a, 3, my translation)

Written in Dutch, the publication was obviously directed to the Dutch market. Issues contain reports on travel to foreign countries and day trips to Dutch cities and towns. The tendency to promote, not only the already established tourist places, but also other Dutch regions as sight-worthy, is a core theme in the publication and the *Centraal Bureau’s* mission. After all, if tourists spent more time in the Netherlands and visited more places during their stay, the Dutch economy would benefit from the additional expenditures by tourists. In a report on the newly founded *Centraal Bureau* in The Hague, the variety of the beauties of the Netherlands are praised, and action is called for making the Netherlands known abroad for more than Volendam and Marken (which says something about the Dutch recognizing the cliché as such themselves).

Holland is a beautiful country! Our cities are often pretty, here for their aspect of “city-of-old”, there, because of their liveliness and their progress with time. Our districts! Oh, you either see the flat marshlands of our low countries, stretching out widely under a high sky; or you ramble through the dunes or in the woods at Gooi; or you see the endless heath around you, the rolling plains of the Veluwe, of Drenthe; or you reminisce in our dark forests, or you sail over our waters, our lakes and canals... everywhere you will experience joy for the beauty of the things you see! Holland is a beautiful country! Many already know this [...] . Many foreigners go to these places and it is always more beautiful than they thought before; it is only that... there are not only Volendammers and Markers! (*Holland Express* 1908b, 255, my translation)
The Nationale Bond van Vreemdelingenverkeer in Nederland also issued a magazine, titled Vreemdelingenverkeer. This periodical was sent to all members of the association and contained news on the activity of the local branches, reports on renovation of hotels, and train services. It promoted day-return trips within the Netherlands, bicycle tours, and longer tours through the country alike. Sometimes, local VVVs wrote articles promoting their city or town as travel destinations. In contrast to material by Thomas Cook & Son, various locations were described as sightworthy, not only the Zuiderzee towns and the cities of North and South Holland. This finding also goes for Holland Express. In order to compare the way in which information is given, I will compare Dutch articles from around the Zuiderzee and the main cities. Additionally, I will quote from some articles in which the (Dutch) authors refer to American and English tourists, because these foreign tourists were said to illustrate what can be visually enjoyed in the Netherlands.

A Day-Return Trip to the Villages of the Zuiderzee

In the first volume of Holland Express, a day trip to the Zuiderzee villages near Amsterdam was promoted by W.W. (1908). W.W. described a trip from Amsterdam to Monnickendam, Broek, Volendam, and Edam. There is not much difference in tone and vocabulary in W.W.’s description of the trip and the material by Thomas Cook & Son. Broek is characterized as clean, Monnickendam as a town where nothing happens, and Volendam as interesting because of its traditional costumes. The article is illustrated with two photos of windmills at a canal (one also shows cows); one photo of men in Volendam clothing, squatting in front of a house; and Volendammers walking along the main street in Volendam on the dyke (W. 1908, 133). The monotonous landscape on the way to Edam is compared to the paintings of old Dutch masters:

If the way which we took was quite monotonous in the beginning, this got better over time, and as we approached the aforementioned city, a panorama unfolded before our eyes as it is only possible in Holland. It sometimes reminds us of the masterpieces of our old school of painters (W. 1908, 133, my translation)8

Only one paragraph could not have appeared in the material of Thomas Cook & Son. That paragraph concerns the thoughts of the author about the difference in appeal of the landscape to the Dutch and to foreigners. W.W. encourages the Dutch to cherish the landscape of their homeland, and reflects on the
influence of tourism on the local population, which caused the children to beg every stranger for money:

Where we otherwise so phlegmatic Dutchmen can be captivated by a landscape that is simple in its composition – how captivating must be its special beauty to those foreigners who visit this typical Dutch area in great numbers? All of you who praise the foreign countries, come here once, too, and you must add that your homeland really does not fall short in what you look for across its frontiers. Entering Edam, one can observe the influence of the many foreign visitors. The children, bothersome as everywhere because they annoy you by staring at the visitors and by begging in broken English for “cents”. (W. 1908, 133, my translation)\(^9\)

The traditional costume of Volendam is praised and the poverty of the population is also mentioned, albeit only \textit{en passant}, just before concluding with information that a tour “through the picturesque parts” can be booked via the North Holland Tramway Company, which also engaged tour guides. W.W. therefore linked travel to consumption of a service and combined it with explicit advertising:

Those who like to travel on a guided tour through this picturesque part are informed that the aforementioned North Holland Tramway Company offers tickets for a round trip at 3 guilders per person during the months of May, June, July and half of September including a good travel guide who points out all curiosities. (W. 1908, 134, my translation)\(^10\)

\textbf{Architecturally Interesting and Picturesque: Hoorn}

\textit{Vreemdelingenverkeer} featured a lengthy article about Hoorn in 1909. Hoorn was also in the programme of Thomas Cook & Son’s trip to the “Dead Villages of the Zuiderzee” and featured as a travel destination in Cook’s 1903 and 1908 journals (see above). The article about Hoorn in \textit{Vreemdelingenverkeer} is one of the few Dutch articles in which reference to authenticity and difference is made:

Of course you know Hoorn! At least, you will have heard of a city with this name, at the Zuiderzee north of Amsterdam. And then you imagine Hoorn as a gloomy and peasant province town at which you as a child of the city turn up your nose. That is how you – and with you many others – know Hoorn. Anything else? No, that is all that most people know. They
do not realize that travellers of many nationalities attest that Hoorn is a town of which the Netherlands does not have many, that it is a place that keeps an abundance of memories of that very interesting Old Holland. Old Holland – frequently artificially copied in recent times – in Hoorn you see the real thing. (Esser 1909, 36, my translation)

The description in the journal of Thomas Cook & Son advertised the same sights for the same reasons and with similar generalizations, the only exception being that the Dutch article refers to Hoorn as “provoking a sentiment of admiration for our 17th and 18th century”, thereby nationalizing Hoorn as part of national history and cultural heritage. Visiting Hoorn is almost promoted as the duty of every Dutch citizen who should be informed about the history of their nation. In Thomas Cook & Son’s description, this nationalist dimension is absent; the city is described only in terms of its visual attractions. The Dutch article continues:

One is enthralled everywhere, be it by a pretty archway or an antique house front. Hoorn is a town of architectural and picturesque beauties. A harmony of both, so necessary for the original and fine appearance of a town, is here present and provokes appreciation for our 17th and 18th century in the viewer. [...] Then Hoorn shall remain a city – also in the future – on the programme of nearly every American and Englishman who visits the Netherlands but slowly also become a place where the Dutch themselves go to and become a place not only known by name but also beloved through own experience. (Esser 1909, 40, my translation)

All the houses are old and attractive, covered with sculptures and charming bas-reliefs; with every roof finished with step-gables. [...] It is not one house, or ten houses, which are thus decorated; but one and all, from the first to the last. It appears almost ridiculous to walk about these ancient streets in modern costumes. (Thomas Cook & Son 1903b, 12)

In conclusion, Holland Express and Vreemdelingenverkeer do not differ much in their ambition from Thomas Cook & Son’s publication. Tourism was encouraged and the benefit of tourism lay first and foremost in generating income. To that end, Dutch cities, towns, and landscapes were described and promoted as visually attractive. In contrast to Thomas Cook & Son’s material, most Dutch articles are more specific about the content of what there is to be seen. The specific beauty of a certain town, landscape, or trip implies (visual) difference to other Dutch towns and landscapes; this difference is not marked in terms of
nationality but shows variation within the Netherlands. In the Dutch edition, what is visually attractive is not always framed as “authentic”.

Articles about regions that were appreciated by international tourists (Rotterdam, Amsterdam, the Zuiderzee villages) often began with a statement that the Dutch should learn what the international tourist already knew. Articles promoting a trip to less-known places usually commented that Dutch tourists did not have to travel abroad to see beautiful landscapes and places; both lines of argumentation called the Dutch to travel the Netherlands in order to get to know their own country better. Whereas a trip to the Netherlands in publications by Thomas Cook & Son was framed in terms of nation-ness, Dutch publications for the home market framed their articles in terms of nationalism. In this way, Thomas Cook & Son offered its clients an experience of Dutchness, while the Dutch tourist offices (directed to the home-market) offered nationalist experiences to the Dutch. This difference notwithstanding, the pattern of promoting a place was similar: both tourist agencies tried to create excitement about the experience that a specific place had to offer and combined the promoted experience of that specific place with (advertising for) the consumption of goods and services.

It would have been interesting to compare the material that Dutch tourist organizations produced for the promotion abroad to these two findings. Unfortunately, I could not find any such sources in the archives visited but only reference to four foreign editions of Holland Express. In 1910, the first one was issued in English and was dedicated to the lakes of Friesland and water sports. A German edition of Holland Express was distributed in 1910 at the international exhibition of tourism in Berlin. This German edition was supposedly issued together with the Dutch version; subscribers of the Dutch journal were encouraged to send the German edition to a friend in that country. Vreemdelingenverkeer reported that “thousands of copies” of French, German, and English editions were distributed in 1910 on the subject of the bulb fields of Haarlem, which promoted a visit to a flower exhibition. Brochures were prepared on bathing places at the North Sea, on castles in the province of Gelderland, and about Giethoorn. These were issued as part of the twelve foreign editions of Holland Express that were reported about in February 1914.

As none of these publications are known to exist in publicly accessible archives, I cannot say anything about the use of images, nor about the way in which potential tourists were addressed. From these very few references to the promotional material for distribution abroad, it can only be stated that, next to well-known tourist destinations such as seaside resorts, the Zuiderzee region and the flower fields of Haarlem, less-known places (Friesland and Gelderland) were promoted abroad as well.
Narration and practical guidebooks (see Chapter 2.3 for my definition) are obviously touristic media. Travel guides promote a country or city without connecting them to services of a specific travel company or hotel. In order to be able to compare the content of travel guides on the Netherlands with material issued by tourist organizations, I will focus on three aspects that I sketched in the Introduction. The tension between partiality and comprehensiveness will be addressed through a comparative analysis of what these guides promote as knowledge about the Netherlands, which places were included in the travel route and, if applicable, which images are used as illustrations. To investigate the aspect of typicality and the common, I will inventory which phenomena and things seen in the Netherlands are described as “Dutch” and “not Dutch at all”. Lastly, the tension between authenticity and artificiality will be studied through those passages in the guidebooks that are dedicated to the Zuiderzee villages Broek-in-Waterland, Monnickendam, Volendam, and Marken. The rationale behind this choice is that these villages are described in all publications (including those of Thomas Cook & Son) and thus allow for a broad comparison.

The three aspects will open with a detailed discussion of one narrated guidebook, *Rambles in Holland*, which I consider a prototype of a narrated travel guide and therefore fit to sketch the pattern of such publications. Additional quotations from various other guidebooks serve to illustrate variation within the pattern.

*Rambles in Holland* (UK 1913)

*Rambles in Holland* (Grew and Grew 1913) is a good example to illustrate how information on the Netherlands is presented in narrated travel guides. In 339 pages, the reader follows the travel route of the authors’ quest for visually appealing elements in and of the Netherlands. The introductory chapter of Rambles recalls the fight against the Spanish and the fight for religious freedom; the last chapter contains practical advice for travellers on hotels, transport, and museums. The remaining 20 chapters are dedicated to one or two cities or towns each and follow the same pattern. First, the travel from one place to the other (and the landscape seen in between) is described. Upon arrival, the impression of the respective city or town is given, followed by information on local places of interest, which always includes the churches. Personal experiences (the comfort of the hotels visited, encounters with local people, thoughts and feelings triggered by the landscape) are blended with
practical advice on the local transport system and opening hours. The perspective on the visited places and monuments is the perspective of a tourist in search for visual attraction, as evidenced by the following quotations:

The stately proportions of Dutch churches are nearly always impressive from the outside, though disillusionment too often waits on the vision of the interior. (Grew and Grew 1913, 41–42)

Colour and movement and varied life by day, strange and beautiful effects of lights on the water by night, make staying in Dordrecht an endless pleasure. (Grew and Grew 1913, 51)

On the way to Enkhuizen we passed innumerable farms and the houses of well-to-do peasants. They were a quite different type of house from any we had seen before, built largely of wood and gaily painted in vivid greens and blue. (Grew and Grew 1913, 129)

*Rambles in Holland* emphasizes visual pleasures rather than anecdotes about historical or geographical facts. The authors’ way of looking neatly fits the tourist’s gaze.

**Comprehensiveness: Where Should Travellers Go and What Should They See?**

*Rambles in Holland* is one of the few cases in which longer descriptions of towns in the provinces of Groningen, Friesland, and even Drenthe, Overijssel, and Limburg are given.

It is illustrated with 32 photographs: eight depict churches, sixteen city views and buildings in cities, and six views depict towns. Only one photograph shows people in detail: “The Canal Bridge of Volendam” shows three Volendam women. The title of another photograph, “The children of Giethoorn”, directs the attention to people, but the children are standing on a bridge at a distance and cannot be seen in detail. Altogether, the photographs show places, not people. The images of places are not restricted to what is generally considered “typical”.

Most narrated travel guides were less comprehensive. *A Wanderer in Holland* (Lucas 1908), for example, dedicates the first 206 pages to cities and towns in the Provinces of North and South Holland and the villages on the Zuiderzee. The other 77 pages describe towns in the provinces of Friesland, Groningen, Overijssel, Utrecht, Zeeland, Gelderland, and Brabant, but do not mention cit-
ies or towns in the provinces of Limburg or Drenthe. A Wanderer in Holland is illustrated with 34 black-and-white reproductions of old Dutch masters (Jan Steen, Frans Hals etc.) and 20 reproductions of watercolour paintings by painter and illustrator Herbert Menzies Marshall (1841-1913). The reproductions from Dutch masters, with three exceptions, show people in interior scenes and do not include landscapes. The reproductions of Marshall’s watercolour paintings depict cities and buildings. Modern elements are absent in these images; in Marshall’s street views or market scenes, all female figures wear long skirts with aprons and bonnets – no city dresses appear in his illustrations. Considering both types of images, the book provides visual information on Dutch people from the past and romanticized contemporary city views.

Things Seen in Holland (Roche 1910) mostly describes the three big towns Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and The Hague, as well as parts of the Zuiderzee villages and Zeeland. The stated intention to provide ethnographic information of “countries & towns” as made in the sleeve note is at odds with the biased images. Things Seen is illustrated with 50 images (46 photographs and four drawings), fourteen of which depict people in Volendam costume, four images show people in Marken costume, and three show women in traditional costumes of Beveland. The photographs are either portraits or staged shots of people engaged in “typical activities” such as ice-skating or transporting milk. Although people in modern dress appear in photographs of market scenes and city views (together with other modern elements such as bicycles), the caption does not mention them. The city views mostly depict market scenes, canals, churches, and town halls. Generally speaking, city views illustrate places and village inhabitants in traditional costume illustrate people. The selection of photographs does not encourage the non-travelling readers to picture Dutch people other than in traditional costume or to become visually acquainted with modern industries or modern means of transport even though these subjects are treated in the written part of the book.

Practical guidebooks, by contrast, contain information on almost all Dutch cities and towns without an explicit hierarchy or reference to typicality or authenticity. Although comprehensive in the information they give, these practical guidebooks make a selection by proposing itineraries for “cursory trips”. Thereby, such books contributed to the canon of what there was to be known and seen about the Netherlands in spite of their extensive listings. Such suggested itineraries include trips to Amsterdam and the Zuiderzee villages, which are mentioned in all practical guidebooks. Tips about the “must-sees” of the Netherlands and information on how to get there can thus be regarded as invitations to make a Dutch experience even when these books do not highlight Dutchness.

The editors of Baedeker’s Belgien und Holland nebst dem Großherzogtum
*Luxemburg* (Baedeker 1910) propose the following itinerary: from Cologne via Arnhem and Utrecht to Amsterdam (1.5-2 days), visit Amsterdam and surroundings (3 days), Haarlem and Leiden (1.5-2 days), The Hague and Scheveningen (2 days), and end with another 2-3 days for Delft, Gouda, Rotterdam, and Dordrecht. This suggestion covers mainly the provinces of North and South Holland, with a quick visit to Utrecht and Arnhem (which were on the travel route to and from Germany anyway), and leaves out Friesland, Limburg, Overijssel, Drenthe, Brabant, Groningen, and Zeeland.

Hölschers *Holland Reiseführer* (Kirchner 1914) suggests two travel routes: one shorter trip of eight to ten days and a longer one of seventeen days (Cf. Kirchner 1914, 21). The short trip is restricted to cities in the provinces of North and South Holland. The longer trip also includes trips to the places in the province of Utrecht as well as two days in Maastricht (Limburg) and one day in Arnhem (Gelderland). The provinces of Groningen, Friesland, Drenthe, Overijssel, and Zeeland are not covered in any trip.

The proposed itineraries in Griebens *Reiseführer Holland* (Hooiberg 1914) mostly cover the provinces of North and South Holland as well as Zeeland. One suggested trip covers a visit to Utrecht and its surroundings; another suggested trip pays a visit to Friesland and Groningen, but no suggested itinerary includes places in Limburg.

Concerning comprehensiveness, the narrated and practical travel guides are biased towards the provinces of North and South Holland with regards to their travel route, and are highly biased towards rural aspects with regards to the images. Illustrations and proposed travel routes are much in line with Thomas Cook & Son’s publications, but the guidebooks cover more than the popular regions of Cook’s publications and give additional information.

**The Typical: What is Dutch and What is Not?**

In *Rambles in Holland*, general statements about the Netherlands and the Dutch are connected to personal observations so that local, concrete manifestations functions as prove of what the authors consider to be genuinely Dutch. For example:

> Every Dutch city has its individual charm, but The Hague unites in itself that of all the others. Here is met for the first time the refreshing and superlative cleanliness that is a characteristic feature of every town in Holland. (Grew and Grew 1913, 30, emphasis added)
The expectations of what the Netherlands should look like are implicitly referred to when the authors see something “characteristic” or “typical”:

Once the Hoek is left behind, the face of the country changes immediately. The characteristic Dutch scenery begins: the neat, trim houses, freshly painted, gaily coloured, always maintaining an air of being well ordered within and without. Between the stations wide, moist pastures stretch away: already the typical Dutch black-and-white cows have been turned out to grass. (Grew and Grew 1913, 29, emphasis added)

Next to the statement of “Holland” as essentially picturesque, the content of the picturesqueness is defined. Moreover, the visited places are compared to a picture that was obviously in the mind of the authors before they actually travelled:

Everything in Holland is picturesque. There is an impertinent excrescence, in the shape of a line of small houses leaning against the north wall of the Groote Kerk, but even they date from the eighteenth century and are so charming that one would hesitate to sweep them away. At the window of one of them, among some flowerpots, a cat was sunning itself, and behind the cat looked out a sweet old face framed by a frilled white cap – a priceless little picture, a theme for an old Dutch master. (Grew and Grew 1913, 51, emphasis added)

As a rule, the authors prefer smaller towns over bigger ones in their search for visually attractive sights. This search for attraction and difference is defined as the essence of travel. This difference is described in terms of nationality. Characteristics of “the little old Dutch towns” are generalized.

Nothing could be more endearing than the little old Dutch towns, with their sense of a great past and a well-ordered present, their sweet cleanliness, their vivid colour and pleasant activities; above all, their atmosphere of mental repose. Large towns everywhere induce the same sense of stress and pressure, and a strenuous, crowded life fills their streets; the dust of traffic, the builder’s hammer, the clangour of trade fills the air, and the differences, the novelties, that are the piquancy of travelling are absent. (Grew and Grew 1913, 111, emphasis added)

Which places and people pass as typically Dutch is limited; neither all Dutch towns nor all Dutch people are considered typically Dutch. Rotterdam, for example, was not typically Dutch in the eyes of the authors because it was not
picturesque. As becomes apparent in this quotation, “commerce and modernity” are seen as opposed to picturesqueness and typicality.

Altogether, though every place in Holland is picturesque, Rotterdam is not endearing. It is the prose city of Holland; it really looks its best from the railway bridges, lapped in its wide and busy waters, with barges full of flowers coming in to the market. Its streets are filled with a noise and clangour out of keeping with the sweet peacefulness of Holland: it smacks so of commerce and modernity. (Grew and Grew 1913, 64–65, emphasis added)

Not all inhabitants of the Netherlands were considered typically Dutch, either. In the chapters on Maastricht and Zeeland, the authors ponder on the “racial identity” of the Dutch. Their ideas about the typical Dutch person conflict with the outward appearance and the culture of the Maastrichters. Girls are dressed according to “French fashion plates, with very short skirts and socks half-way up to their bare knees” (Grew and Grew 1913, 281). One part of Maastricht even “looks like a Belgian town and smells like an Italian one” (Grew and Grew 1913, 289). Although the authors do not dislike Maastricht, it fell out of the Dutch experience they came to explore and which they describe up to that. In the province of Zeeland, parts of the region of Walcheren are considered interesting for their “extremely curious local costumes” (Grew and Grew 1913, 317), but some of these costumes were “Belgian rather than Dutch in character” (Grew and Grew 1913, 317). Dark eyes were not considered Dutch either, as the following quote implies: “We saw some very charming faces, pale and dark-eyed, suffusing Spanish descent” (Grew and Grew 1913, 322).

What is characteristic for a Dutch village becomes apparent in the author’s description with Hulst, a village on the Dutch side of the border with Belgium:

In the village of Hulst, Holland is already left behind to all intents and purposes. This is not Dutch, this straggling, neglected-looking place, with littered streets, a bandstand badly in want of paint, and a rabble of rather unkempt-looking children, obstreperous and ill-mannered. (Grew and Grew 1913, 323).

The southern ends of the Netherlands were thus German, Belgium, French, Spanish, and Italian – but not Dutch.

All narrated and even most practical travel guides mention the struggle of the Dutch against the sea. In most cases, the flat landscape of dunes, dykes, and canals are referred to as typically Dutch (Cf. Hooiberg 1914, 13). Other topoi also known from Thomas Cook & Son’s publications – peasants in
quaint costumes and headdresses, steeples with carillons that play melodies, the general cleanliness of houses and streets, as well as the flower fields and horticulture of Haarlem are mentioned, but these other guidebooks give additional information on a variety of topics, too. Artworks are described at length, mostly with more background information on the painter’s lives. The wars of the Dutch for religious freedom and the tolerance concerning religious matters are mentioned as well as the medieval architecture – although most authors of narrated travel guides see less picturesqueness in the whitewashed Gothic churches than the authors of Thomas Cook & Son’s material.

What is said to be Dutch with respect to national character varies. These characteristics are not nuanced and are often used to mark difference rather than similarity with respect to the country of the author. The following quotation from *A Wanderer in Holland* is interesting because the British author applies the same generalized statements about his homeland and defines Dutchness in opposition to Englishness. Similarities are not mentioned in the comparison between the English and the Dutch.

Perhaps the quickest way to visualise the differences of nations is to imagine them exchanging countries. If the English were to move to Holland the whole face of the land would immediately be changed. In summer the flat meadows near the town, now given up to cows and plovers, would be dotted with cricketers; in winter with football-players. Outriggers and canoes, punts and house boats, would break out on the canal. In the villages such strange phenomena as idle gentlemen in knickerbockers and idle ladies with parasols would suddenly appear. To continue this list of changes (but not for too long) the trains would begin to be late; from the waiting-rooms all free newspapers would be stolen; churches would be made more comfortable; hundreds of newspapers would exist where now only a handful are sufficient; the hour of breakfast would be later; business would begin later; drunken men would be seen in the streets, dirt in the cottages. If the Dutch came to England, the converse would happen. The athletic grounds would become pasture land; the dirt of our slums and the gentry of our villages would alike vanish; Westminster Abbey would be whitewashed; and ... But I have said enough. (Lucas 1908, 170–171)

What is Dutch is implicit in statements about what is not Dutch, e.g. in *A Wanderer*, Arnhem is referred to as “the least Dutch of Dutch towns” because its “bosky beauty” was “German in character” and “untamed by Dutch restraining hands” (Lucas 1908, 261). The author of *Das paradiesische Holland* proposes to distinguish between so-called typical Dutch elements that could be
seen in rural areas and the observable phenomena of a modern country. This way, Hartmann could describe “modern elements in the city” next to “typical elements in the countryside” and relate them both to “Holland”. He gave a critical view on generalizations by a (German) traveller who looked for the confirmation of presupposed common knowledge.

The German who travels to Holland should beware of saying that Holland was one big pasture. If he gets around in that country he will see that the landscape actually does not always resemble a big dinner plate [...]. There is nothing more convenient than generalizations. One [traveller] sees, just after having crossed the border, a herd of cattle on a pasture and then exclaims, as if he had found the philosopher’s stone: Dutch agriculture consists solely of cows! Another one crosses paths with a farmer in wooden shows, the so-called “klompen” and comments: Look! All Dutch wear wooden shoes! (which is not the fact). And because a third one sees areas without mills’ chimneys, he carries on the phrase that Holland was not industrialized. A country that employs seventeen thousand workers alone in its wharfs and that built in one year – it was the year 1909 – a thousand ships in 101 wharfs for marine and canal shipping! (Hartmann 1913, 31, my translation)14

However, the author only corrects a “wrong” generalization – which he says stems from superficial travel and from well-known paintings that emphasize the picturesque – with, in his opinion, a more correct generalization: Holland is an austere country and “the Dutch” are an austere nation (“volk”), training their forces in an arduous fight against nature.15 Despite his critique on generalizations, Hartmann writes in a general manner about the “national character” of the Dutch: rooted in their mother soil, dedicated to work, and living up to their internal and external duties. The cliché of the pipe-smoking Dutchman does not express well their “true” national character, so Hartmann’s argument goes. This position seems to imply that a more appropriate national cliché should be chosen.16

Most practical guidebooks give an overview of “characteristic Dutch features” in their introductions. Baedeker’s Belgien und Holland nebst dem Großherzogtum Luxembourg (Baedeker 1910) has a section titled “Dutch characteristics”, in which the landscape is described as monotonous, yet of interest because of the fields, the abundance of water, and the well-trimmed gardens. Outside of cities, “friendly villas” are situated along the canals and streets (Cf. Baedeker 1910, 291). The reader also learns that the cities have canals and movable bridges. Houses are mostly brick houses with narrow front sides and gables; windmills are “remarkably large and powerful” (Baedeker 1910, 291)
and fulfil various functions; church bells ring every quarter of an hour. The function of dykes, canals, and polders is briefly explained (Cf. Baedeker 1910, 292). Other mentioned peculiarities are the numerous benevolent foundations and traditional costumes of the rural population in Zeeland, North Holland, Friesland, and the Islands of the Zuiderzee (Cf. Baedeker 1910, 292) but these costumes are not described in great detail.17

The section “General remarks” in Hölschers Holland Reiseführer (Kirchner 1914, 4) sees the Netherlands as a great travel destination not only because of its proximity to Germany but also for its “beautiful nature, interesting buildings, the plenty of art works, the great sea side resorts, the traditional customs and costumes and the fantastic food in the restaurants” (Kirchner 1914, 4).18

Apparently, in all these cases, the typical is opposed to the modern and the typical is mostly found in rural and underdeveloped regions. The positive descriptions about typical elements imply nostalgic sentiments. This is the point at which generalizations based on the typical potentially run into problems: in tourist discourse, typical elements are highlighted to such an extent that they may appear common, but a more accurate, comprehensive description of the Netherlands around 1900 cannot equate the so-defined typical with the general or genuine. Just because tourist media and the plenty of images depict the Dutch in wooden shoes, the majority of Dutch citizens did not wear them in their everyday life. This tension between the typical and the common underlies many Dutch reactions to the cliché, which I will discuss in Chapter 6.9.

The Authentic: Consuming the Picturesque at Broek, Monnickendam, Volendam, and Marken

The authors of most narrated travel guides were not enthusiastic about the tourist villages Broek-in-Waterland, Marken, Monnickendam, and Volendam. In Rambles, the critique on Monnickendam is not only directed at the bad manners of the children but also at their lack of authenticity. The perceived lack of authenticity is the starting point for the author’s reflection on the tourist’s duties towards the people they stare at:

Our next landing-place was Monnikendam, a fishing village on the shores of the Zuider Zee. Here we met the Dutch child at its worst. It is particularly hard on Monnikendam, which is otherwise an engaging little place, because these strident-voiced, brazen-faced, pushing girls, and hulking, baggy-trouseried, pipe-smoking boys don’t belong there at all, but come over from Marken, to spend, let us hope, a generally unprofitable day in
pestering visitors to buy postcards and other rubbish. (Grew and Grew 1913, 137, emphasis added)

While the authors agree that tourists should pay for their visual pleasure at one place, tourists should help to preserve the authenticity and the picturesque-ness of other places by not giving money to people in traditional costume:

In Volendam we are in the Holland dear to the poster and beloved of artists. Everyone is familiar with the Volendam fisherman, with his long, full trousers, fastened at the waist in front with two silver crown-pieces, his sabots, his coloured jersey, a tall, round, muff-like cap, and a pair of silver brooches fastening his collar. There is no prettier head-dress in Holland than the graceful winged lace cap of the Volendam woman, though its charming lines are actually less becoming than the soft oval frame of the Zeeland girl’s cap. Women meet the Amsterdam boat with baskets of lace caps for all, but their attentions are comparatively mild, and they don’t pester visitors unduly. After all, it is only fair that people who go to stare at them should pay for the privilege. (Grew and Grew 1913, 139, emphasis added)

The tourist’s duty was considered a different one at Spakenburg. When a woman from Spakenburg invited the travellers to come visit her house, their Dutch companion vetoed the idea because “she would expect money” and, the authors conclude, “that would be the beginning of the end of Spakenburg” (Grew and Grew 1913, 158).

Most narrated guidebooks share this reservation about the tourist places. The author of A Wanderer in Holland comments on the effect of tourism on Marken, Broek-in-Waterland, and Volendam, which, he claims, has led to a loss of authenticity because local people staged their home town as an attraction and were conscious about their picturesque capital:

An excursion which everyone will say is indispensable takes one to Marken (pronounced Marriker); but I have my doubts. [...] In seasons of tourists it has too much the suggestion of opera bouffe. The men’s costume is comic beyond reason; the inhabitants are picturesque of set design; the old women at their doorways are too consciously the owners of quaint habitations. [...] I must confess to being glad to leave [...]. What is wrong with Marken is that for the most part it subsists on sight seers, which is bad; and it too generally suggests that a stage-manager, employed by a huge Trust, is somewhere in the background. It cannot be well with a community that encourages its children to beg for visitors. (Lucas 1908, 195–196, emphasis added)
The other villages around the Zuiderzee are mentioned more favourably in that publication. Broek had become a “professional sight”, too, but authentic traits could still be spotted:

Broek-in-Waterland, to give it is full title, is one of the quaintest of Dutch villages. But unfortunately Broek also has become to some extent a professional “sight”. Its cleanliness, however, for which it is famous, is not an artificial effect attained to impress visitors, but a genuine enough characteristic. (Lucas 1908, 197, emphasis added)

The author is positive about Volendam, “paradise of the quaint costumes and prettiness” (Lucas 1908, 202). Volendam and the Volendammers are referred to as “better Markeners in a better Marken” (Lucas 1908, 203). According to the author, Volendam is “more human, more natural” (Lucas 1908, 203). The underlying assumption of these statements is that natural and authentic impressions of Dutchness were to be preferred over institutionalized forms of tourism that stage the attractions for the tourist.

Two years later, Things Seen in Holland even advised the reader not to visit Broek-in-Waterland and Marken because these places had become show places and were neither authentic nor typical and definitely were not representative:

[…] tourists must not be deceived into believing that Broek en Waterland [sic] is the “cleanest place in Holland.” It shares with the Island of Marken the reputation of being nothing more than “show-place.” Both places are to be avoided, for they are not representative of Holland. (Roche 1910, 96).

On the other hand, this publication is positive about Monnickendam, Hoorn, and Volendam, and most illustrations are dedicated to Volendammers and Marken because of the picturesque buildings and the artworks by contemporary artists that worked there in artist’s colonies (Cf. Roche 1910, 139–148). The picturesqueness of these places is thus not related to authenticity but the visual appeal mediated by and reflected in artworks.

In Das paradiesische Holland (Hartmann 1913), authenticity and typicality are only related to historical artefacts – restored or not – and not to the fairs and expositions on modern crafts and industries that are also mentioned. For example, in Broek-in-Waterland, a model house was restored and “decorated in typically Dutch manner”; the reader is informed that “characteristic costumes” could be spotted in the villages of Bunschoten and Spakenburg, which therefore were considered interesting for the traveller. In the introduction, Hartmann only writes that Volendam and Marken are worth visiting, “pictur-
“esque”, “world famous” and a “must-have-seen” (Hartmann 1913, 18), while recommending the traveller to have a look at other places, too. He exclaims his appreciation of Volendam in one sentence and mentions Marken only in a half a sentence (Hartmann 1913, 74). Why Hartmann loves “the quiet village” of Volendam “more than requirements of culture” and how he experiences “the Isle of Marken, the most popular island of the Netherlands” is not made explicit. Monnickendam, to him, is “picturesque” and “interesting” because of the historical buildings. All in all, Hartmann is neutral to positive about the Zuiderzee villages. Just as in promotional material of the tourist offices, the content of the visual attraction of the picturesque is not spelled out. The description of Marken and Volendam as “world famous” also allows for the interpretation that a tourist had to see these places not primarily because they were visually appealing, but because everyone talked about them.

Contrary to the narrated guidebooks, the practical guidebooks remain descriptive and do not evaluate the sights as explicitly as the promotional material by Thomas Cook or the passages in narrated travel guides. Hölschers Holland Reiseführer includes a suggestion for a trip “From Amsterdam to the so-called ‘dead villages and cities of the Zuiderzee’” (Cf. Kirchner 1914, 87–88). Marken is described as an island where “picturesque costumes of the fisherfolk” and “stilt houses” could be seen. Volendam is also mentioned as a fisher village “much visited by artists” where traditional costumes were worn. Edam is mentioned for its cheese, its church, and as the founding place of the Society for Common Benefits. Monnickendam is referred to as a city that has seen better days and Broek-in-Waterland as an old-fashioned village, “formerly being known as the cleanest”, with a church and a model factory for cheese (Cf. Kirchner 1914, 88).

Similar is the case of the suggested trip to the surroundings of Amsterdam in Grieben’s Reiseführer Holland: although the text mentions what is supposedly authentic about Marken (and what not), no explicit judgment is connected to this observation and Marken is considered as very much worth a visit:

[...] From here motorboat connections to the fishing village Marken with 1300 inhabitants, 5 km, round trip 75 and 50c. A visit to the island is very worthwhile; interesting fisher’s houses which recall the age of pile dwelling. The costumes of the inhabitants are original, the special type of costumes has been preserved on this island. One visits various interesting houses from which all original items but the kitchen sink have been bought and taken away by collectors and which have been replaced by cheap reproductions. At the nearby fishing village Volendam, traditional costumes can still be seen. 6 km further to Edam, a friendly and old town with 6600 inhabitants, known for its round cheese that is produced from sweet
With respect to authenticity, most authors of narrated guidebooks were ambivalent or even negative about the “tourist places” of Volendam and Marken. Such a critique is, of course, not to be found in material of Thomas Cook & Son, which continued to promote these places as “quaint”, “authentic”, and “sight-worthy” throughout the investigated period.

To conclude the comparison of guidebooks, topoi in practical travel guides, narrated travel guides, publications of Thomas Cook & Son, and in promotional brochures are pretty similar, but the tone in practical guidebooks and narrated guidebooks is slightly different. This can partially be explained by the medium form and the intention of the publication: whereas the success of a tourist agency aiming at masses needs to rely on reproducible experiences, authors of narrated travel guides are expected to write about their personal impressions, too. This division of labour between commercial mass-tourism industries and personal accounts of experiences of travel is mutually supportive. On the one hand, personalized variation on a theme can only be understood if the underlying pattern, i.e. the cliché, is expected to be generally known (see Chapter 1). In this respect, personal travel writings depend on the cliché and on supposed common knowledge disseminated via the tourist industry. On the other hand, the tourist industry benefits from personalized travel accounts: the narrative guidebooks offer a personal slant on the general pattern and thus offer every tourist the possibility to personalize the reproduced pattern. In narrated travel writings, the content of “picturesque” and “quaint” sights remains less abstract because most authors explain what the picturesqueness and quaintness meant to them. It may sound ironic, but the personal interpretations of the vague adjectives contributed to their general application.

6.5 THE CLICHÉ IN CONSUMER CULTURE: DUTCHNESS IN ADVERTISING TRADE CARDS

Images of Dutchness appeared in various products of consumer culture, not only in commodities and services that were directly related to tourism. The (promotion of the) consumption of chocolate, coffee, or light bulbs does not offer experience of Dutchness in the way that tourism does; in advertising trade cards, as in advertising more generally, images of Dutchness were used to advertise products that may or may not have been associated with the Netherlands. Because the aim of trade cards was not primarily to inform about the
Netherlands but to increase the sales figures of a brand product, images and ideas of Dutchness functioned as means to sell a commodity. This perspective connects consumer culture and advertising trade cards to tourist discourse. The absence of trade cards with images of the Dutch that are not in line with the cliché is remarkable.²¹

What I want to show in this section is that the national cliché could be used in advertising even if the product in question was not considered authentically or typically Dutch. Images of Dutch women and men in traditional costume were, according to the previously established cliché and the content of supposed common knowledge, presented as “quaint”, “typical”, and “picturesque”. The brand product was thus sold together with the quaintness and picturesqueness of the trade card image, or, the other way around, the “quaintness”, the “typical”, and the “picturesqueness” was part of the sold product.

In the previous chapters, I have shown that the cliché was used in advertising trade cards produced by Dutch enterprises as much as by companies of other countries. The custom trade cards and the comments of Gartmann’s chocolate, as discussed in Chapter 5.4 (see figure 5.16), are interesting with regards to the expressed attitude toward the Dutch. The explanation to the trade card No. 5 of the set “Holland in Wort und Bild” reads:

Such a perfected image of colour and friendliness smiles at us through the girl who returns home from the well. (Chocoladefabrik Altona 1903, comment to image 5, my translation, emphasis added).²²

The girl returning from the well is pictured from the front side, giving way to the gaze of the viewer. Just as in tourism, the landscape and the people of the Netherlands are presented as a visual pleasure to the traveller or collector, and they are considered to represent typical Dutch sights as well as typical Dutchmen and -women.

The American stock trade card “Holland”, too, uses the cliché to please the viewer of the card. On the front side, the image shows the figures in fantastic combinations of various local dresses and in ethnographically incorrect colouring (for a discussion of this aspect, see also Chapter 4.8), engaged in the supposedly Dutch activities of ice-skating, knitting, and fishing. In the background, windmills, canals, and tulips are visible.

On the back, advertising for a coffee grinder is printed next to an explanation of the image:

HOLLAND “the land of dikes and ditches,” notwithstanding its flat surface, is one of the most picturesque of countries. Phlegmatic and unromantic as the Dutchmen are they yet present to the eye of fancy some of
the quaintest of studies. The mere idea of Holland calls to mind Delft ware, tulips, scrupulous cleanliness, rotund and pot-bellied burghers and rosy-cheeked buxom housewives. [...] Dutchmen are born fishermen too, even the children sit on the string pieces of the dikes and skilfully ply the lines and reel. Every Jungfrau in Holland is adept in knitting. It is a passion as well as an employment. (Pictorial History of Sports and Pastimes of all Nations, back. http://digital.lib.muohio.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/tradecards/id/4139/rec/4, accessed 14 September 2014, emphasis added).

No town or city is mentioned. The enumeration of things considered “typically Dutch” is followed by a strongly visual inventory and the statement that all Dutch men were fishers and all Dutch women were knitters. In fact, all observations concerning the people and their activities are generalizations that stress the typicality of the selection. Authenticity is not an issue here; the
6.6 PICTURE POSTCARDS

Picture postcards of the Netherlands show places far more often than people. Postcards prominently feature extraordinary buildings of a city, cafés, hotels and restaurants, seaside resorts, empty street views with and without canals, or local landscapes. In Chapter 5, I said more about the possibility to collect and use postcards as a medium of armchair travel. Here, I will study postcards that were sent by tourists and examine what they actually wrote on the postcards they bought and sent. Through the comments on the postcards, I believe, the various meanings that the tourists ascribed to the places they sent postcards from will complement the ready-made pictorial representation.

Sending home postcards to family and friends was, and still is, part of the practice of tourism. From the perspective of the sender, postcards document the location where the tourists have been and what they have seen. From the perspective of the addressee, the postcard shows an attractive view of the surroundings where the relative or friend has travelled. From the perspective of the publishers and the local tourist industry, a postcard should raise curiosity about that specific location. Posted postcards thus serve, at the same time, as documents of and as promotional material for travel – even more so if the sender enhances the implicit promotion of the local beauty spots by literally writing something like “this is a nice place, you should come here, too!”

The competition between different cities and towns for (the money of) tourists had resulted in an emphasis on local colour. In contrast to material by Thomas Cook & Son, local specificities were not phrased in terms of national difference on the printed text on the postcard (which usually specified the location). This notwithstanding, some tourists presented the local sites as standing in for the Netherlands as the following examples show. As photo historian and antiquity seller Frido Troost (1960-2013) told me, most picture postcards that he bought and sold in the course of his activities in selling antique Dutch photographs were sent within the country (personal communication, 1 March 2012). People who went on a day-return trip wrote postcards. Picture postcards were thus not primarily a medium of international tourists but one of the home market, too. By 1910, almost every Dutch city or town that qualified as a tourist destination had postcards to offer for their visitors, and places that were highly frequented by visitors probably sold more copies than less
frequented places. I will not give a historical overview of picture photographs of the Netherlands here; the following examples of picture postcards written by tourists are a random sample to illustrate possible uses. Further research is needed to assess whether these examples are exceptional or illustrations of a broader pattern.

The postcard “Zandvoort. Tram in de duinen” shows the streetcar that connected Haarlem with the seaside place Zandvoort aan Zee. The back of the postcard translates as “In memory of the first general vacation week” and was sent to the trade union’s office by a union member.

A postcard with the picture of the Prince’s Garden in Leeuwarden bears testimony that this was a place where people went for refreshments. Given that this location is not mentioned often in international tourist guidebooks and that its text is in Dutch, this location (and the postcard) probably attracted more day-return trip visitors than international tourists.
Postcards from seaside resorts such as Scheveningen and major cities such as Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and The Hague were sent within the Netherlands, too. The following three postcards were made after illustrations by Henri Cassiers (1858-1944), a then well-known graphic artist in applied and advertising arts (fig. 6.14-6.16). Alongside postcards, Cassiers also illustrated books and designed advertising posters including one for the Dutch railway company with the aim to attract Belgian tourists to travel to the Netherlands. The poster features women in the traditional costumes of Marken, Volendam, and Zeeland as well as windmills at the water (Cf. van Frankfoort 1994, 16).

The first example is a postcard of Laren, a village near Hilversum, about
35 km from Amsterdam and 20 km from Utrecht. The postcard was stamped in Rotterdam and probably sent to Italy. The written text translates “From the Netherlands a greeting. Capitan Taturzo”. Although the printed text on the postcard indicates that the card pictured the village of Laren, the tourist’s comment “nationalized” the view by relating it to the Netherlands.

The handwritten comment on the untitled postcard reads: “Dear Mr. Sqallazi [?], I send you some Dutch views for your collection”. By using the category of the national as adjective, the view also becomes nationalized and does not emphasize local colour.

In the third example, the sender writes “I tear myself away reluctantly from this land of dykes & windmills – which has really exercised a certain fascination over me. I return here on Monday, Yours truely, Yahel Hammont [?]”. Zaandam was (and still is) known for its great amount of windmills. Yahel Hammont’s observation is thus not surprising; just as is often observed in

Fig. 6.12-6.13 Front and Back of “Strandleven”. Postcard (c. 1913).
tourist discourse, she describes the characteristics of this town by means of synecdoche as a general feature of the entire country (“this land of dykes and windmills”).

The main difference between nationally or internationally sent postcards probably lies neither in the visited place nor in the motif chosen by the traveller, but in the comments of those who wrote them. Whereas I did not find any comment on postcards sent within the Netherlands that commented the views as “(typical) Dutch views”, some – but not all – internationally sent postcards were commented by the writer as showing Dutch scenery. Dutch postcard writers who wrote to their friends and family did not write “greetings from the Netherlands” on a postcard they sent from Leeuwarden to Leiden. This finding is not very surprising, but it does mirror the difference in perception of the Netherlands as tourist destination seen through the eyes of international and Dutch tourists. In the first case, the comment performed the view as belonging to a city or town; in the second case, the comment performed the view as Dutch. The difference between the local or national meaning of nonfiction images is part of the tension between the typical and the common. I will come back to this in the Conclusion.

Fig. 6.14 “Laren”. Postcard after an illustration by Henri Cassiers (c. 1902).
Alongside printed matter to advertise their trips, Thomas Cook & Son also offered a free loan of lantern slides to their customers. They set up a service to meet the demand of “constantly received enquiries as to the possibility of arranging Lantern Lectures, descriptive of tours taken under Cook’s arrangements” (Thomas Cook & Son 1895, 7). Thomas Cook & Son offered sets of lantern slides to their destinations for presentations “to friends, Societies, Institutes, etc.” In addition to former customers, “any society or institute delivering a lecture to their members” could rent out the slides for free. In addition, magic lanterns and the necessary supplies could be hired against a “moderate charge”. A special office was in charge of this service. This offer was
also noted in the lantern trade press, *The Optical Magic Lantern Journal and Photographic Enlarger*. The December issue of 1897 contains a list of lantern slides for free loan, which includes Thomas Cook & Son (Cf. Ashcroft 1897). The service was also reported in the Dutch illustrated magazine *Op den Uitkijk* in 1904. Although the name of the travel agency is not given, a short article informs about “friendly travel agencies” that offer a free loan of lantern slides to their former customers. Each set consisted of 50 to 80 slides, from “all parts of Europe, Egypt, Palestine, the United States and Canada, the West-Indies and the Cape Colony” (*Op Den Uitkijk* 1904, my translation).

Unfortunately, no set of the Thomas Cook & Son slides is known to exist today; it therefore remains subject to speculation if the Netherlands was among the destinations for which lantern slide sets were produced and, if so, which views were visible on these slides. Considering the itinerary of the conducted tours (see above), such a slide set would probably have shown street views of Rotterdam, The Hague, and Amsterdam; beach scenes in Scheveningen; and flower fields and people in traditional costume from Broek-in-Waterland, Monnickendam, Volendam, Marken, Purmerend, and Edam.

Performing Authentic Memories with Preselected Images

Even without the actual lantern slides at hand, the connection between advertising and tourism is quite obvious when these slides are considered as objects used in performance. Clearly, the images that individual tourists showed to their audience are the same for everyone – regardless of their personal experiences or memories. By making use of a ready-made set of images for the individual presentation, the former-tourist-turned-lecturer personalized this set through anchoring these images in their eye-witness account. The former-tourist-turned-lecturer thus produced an effect of authenticity and truth – of both the images and of the personal account. The slides illustrate the personal, eye-witness account, and this account ascribes authenticity and truthfulness to the slides and shows that the things they talked about were “really there”. The selection of views fit for the slide set by Cook’s “Lecture Bureau” might have even influenced the memories of the former tourists, as they were explicitly reminded of those sights for which slides had been produced.

The reconstruction of this hypothetical slide set exemplifies the use of images in the logic of tourist discourse, as personal experiences are advertised and documented by predefined, repeatedly produced and performed images. The account of the former-tourists-turned-lecturers to “friends, societies, Institutes etc.” always also advertised the services of Thomas Cook & Son – if only by referring to them as generous supplier of the slides.
Other lantern slide manufacturers offered their services to the tourist, too. In the advertising section of *The Excursionist*, photograph- and lantern seller Walter Tyler promoted its services by the slogan “The best souvenir of a Tour is a Series of Photographs Taken by Oneself” and offered the production of photo prints and lantern slides from the negatives of private travellers (*Cook’s Excursionist*, 1891). In 1906, lantern slide producer George Washington Wilson offered to combine individually taken photographs with those of their stock:

> If you wish to give a lecture on your holiday or travels – with éclat – you should get your * Lantern Slides* made by us. We can make them from your own photographs and *supplement your selection by pictures from our own series as we have thousands of Continental Views*. Our slides have been described by the greatest lantern expert in the country to be “the best in this world”. (*Cook’s Traveller’s Gazette* 1906, emphasis added)

These three advertisements offered various possibilities for remembering a trip with lantern slides; in the case of Tyler, the former-tourists-turned-lecturers had slides made exclusively from pictures taken by themselves; G.W. Wilson “supplemented” personal photographs from a preselected corpus of images in their stock; and Thomas Cook & Son offered a complete selection of slides for loan. How personal experiences and the preselected, mass-produced images were blended is not distinguishable in Wilson’s and Cook’s slide sets. Moreover, authenticity was then performed not only through images of tourist discourse but in the personal experience of the traveller. This is in line with the definition of authenticity in tourist discourse, which I have described at the beginning of this chapter.

### Creating Another Image of the Dutch: Lantern Slides Offered by the Centraal Bureau

A number of written sources indicate that Dutch tourist associations tried to broaden the imagery repertoire with which the Netherlands had become associated internationally. In 1910, the *Centraal Bureau* offered lantern slides for illustrated lectures about the Netherlands abroad. The aim of these lectures was to “give a somewhat complete image of our country”. Local tourist offices were asked to give lantern slides of their regions to the *Centraal Bureau* so “the countries abroad could once see something else than Marken-Volendam and their baggy-trousered inhabitants with their hay-hair or the usually visited places”. These slides were produced by local *VVVs* and assembled by
the Centraal Bureau to an “entertaining lecture”, completed by photographic slides with reproductions from paintings from famous museums. This call was obviously not met with great response; the article reports that many local tourist offices had not submitted any slides yet. The effort to promote more variation in (visual) knowledge about the Netherlands was taken in 1909/1910 – fifteen years after Thomas Cook & Son offered a free loan of lantern slides, and around 20 years after the commercially successful lantern slide sets (see Chapter 4.6), with their limited image repertoire, were in circulation. The image repertoire of the Netherlands and the cliché of the Dutch had already been established when Dutch tourist agencies began their promotional activities.

In spite of the difficulties, the Centraal Bureau continued its efforts to promote more than the cliché. An article in Holland Express was full of praise for a lantern slide lecture on the Netherlands by Arthur Marshall, an English amateur photographer who also worked for the Centraal Bureau. The author praised Marshall for criticizing the “parody and caricature of Dutch life” made in theatre plays and in illustrated magazines. Marshall is said to have “protested amiably” against the “wrong images”. The illustrations in the journal, however, produced from photographs by Marshall, show Volendam children
and an interior scene in a Volendam house decorated with blue delftware, where a woman wearing a laced cap cooks tea on an open fire. These images were probably considered appropriate because they correctly depicted a specific environment.26

Dutch tourist organizations did not work against Volendam and Marken images as such, but against the effect of these very well-known images that eclipsed other aspects of the Netherlands. In the articles quoted above, the critique on the Volendam and Marken cliché is restricted to the criteria of ethnographic accuracy, not to their functioning as synecdoche.

This implies that Dutch tourist organizations saw images of Volendam and Marken as part of the Netherlands, as part of all images that in their entirety gave an image of the Netherlands. The critique of Dutch tourist offices can thus be situated on the level of the typical versus the common.

6.8 Film

In comparison to media of geography and armchair travel, the number of films and lantern slide sets that were explicitly produced for the promotion of the Netherlands as a tourist destination were small in the period covered by this study. Approached from the angle of performance, films and lantern slides of the travelogue genre could have been used to promote actual travel, e.g. at tourist fairs or by associations. From the consulted sources and the comment in travel journals, however, it seems that promotional material for actual travel to the Netherlands before 1914 appeared almost exclusively in printed matter: folders, flyers, postcards, as well as some lantern slides. In the EYE Film Institute’s catalogue of films before 1914 with the Netherlands as filmed location, no title indicates that the film was explicitly produced by agents of the tourist industry. The digitized print or fragment of Amsterdam’s Vreemdelingenverkeer (“Tourism in Amsterdam”, alternative title: De Fontein op ’t Frederikplein, Emil Lauste 1899) seems rather a satire on tourism than advertising: four people in modern dress are filmed in an admiring pose in front of a fountain in Amsterdam.

In the journals Holland Express and Vreemdelingenverkeer, I did not find any reference to plans to make an advertising film on the Netherlands prior to 1914. A project with the intention to use film for the promotion of tourism was reported in the Dutch trade press journal for film and cinema, De Kine-matograaf. The film was initiated by the local tourist office of The Hague and Scheveningen in 1915 and was probably directed by Willy Mullens. The article states that the aim of that film was to promote The Hague and Scheveningen as tourist destinations abroad. The film was to be screened “if possible” also
within the Netherlands and it was put on the programme of renowned Dutch cinema exhibitors and producers Albert Frères (Cf. *De Kinematograaf* 1915a, 1961–1962).  

One week later, a positive review was published in *De Kinematograaf*. The author wrote that the film showed “a series of views of the city and the seaside resort” where one can “see how beautiful the Residency [The Hague] is”. Shots were made of the “well-known, beautiful city places, its parks and the beach”, which were judged as “really not inferior to city views from abroad”. The author comments that it will “doubtlessly be an excellent advertising for The Hague and Scheveningen” (Cf. *De Kinematograaf* 1915b, 1964).

The promotional film *Mooi Holland* (Willy Mullens 1915) was shot for the *VVV*. The digitized fragment available at the website of the EYE Film Institute Nederland is almost eight minutes long and displays images associated with Dutchness. The film follows a travel route along a canal. It starts with views of windmills at the waterfront, moveable bridges in a city, and the cheese market in Alkmaar. The last six minutes are dedicated to rural areas: sheep and cows in pastures, sailboats on the canals, and people in traditional clothing, mostly from Marken and Volendam. Two shots show women washing clothes at the riverbank, one shot shows a smoking young boy in Volendam attire, and another shot features traditionally dressed people who use dog carts to transport their goods through a flat landscape. According to the website of EYE Film Institute Netherlands, the film consists of shots taken between 1900 and 1905.

In a review of the film screening at Cinema Palace, the author expressed disappointment: *Mooi Nederland [sic]*, in his comment, was far from beautiful. If one tried to advertise the beauty of the Netherlands abroad in such a
fatuous manner, the reviewer continued, this attempt must be considered a failure in advance. In that case, the films by Pathé were to be preferred (Cf. De Kinematograaf 1916, 2378).

In 1918, Willy Mullens started another film project to “advertise the beautiful and industrious Netherlands to the Dutch, the Dutch colonies and first of all, abroad” (De Kinematograaf 1918b, 3732). It remains unclear whether these films were made especially for (potential) tourists and what they actually advertised. Unfortunately, no film copy of this later series is known to exist.
Another film for promotion abroad was planned by the *Vereeniging tot verbreiding van kennis over Nederland in den Vreemde* (“Society for the advancement of knowledge about the Netherlands in foreign countries”) in 1918. Their film project was announced to give an “attractive and popular picture of what is going on in this country in various sections of our national identity, the beauties of our nature, our architecture and so on” (*De Kinematograaf* 1918a, 3551). This film was probably completed later that year or in 1919 and is also considered lost.\(^{31}\)

In an article from 1917, translated from the British film trade press journal *The Kinematographer*, the (British) author discusses why so few Dutch films were screened in English cinemas. In the Dutch translation of the quote from the English journal, the British author proposes that “some small cities in Holland were perfectly suited for short numbers because films that show the picturesque costumes of farmers, the hyacinth fields of Haarlem and so forth would be appreciated as an interesting addition to our programs” (Cf. *De Kinematograaf* 1917, 2832). The Dutch editors of *De Kinematograaf* problematize neither the suggestion to show films that correspond to the cliché nor the equation of “Dutch films” with films that show images of Dutchness.\(^{32}\)

Altogether, film was not the main medium with which tourist organizations promoted tourism to the Netherlands before 1914. It seems that such films were realized only after 1915 – at least in the Netherlands. This is comparatively late, as films were used to promote tourism to Canada as early as 1902 (Cf. Braun and Keil 2008) and, in the US, railway companies used all kinds of photographic media – by 1901 also film – for the promotion of travel as a leisure activity, connected to advertising their services (Cf. Kirby 1997, 36–39). In 1907, several local tourist clubs in Germany used film as means to promote their regions and many countries were reported to have produced films for the international exhibition on tourism in Berlin in 1911 (Cf. Deeken 2005, 319–320).

### 6.9 WAYS OF LOOKING AT DUTCHNESS: REACTIONS TO THE CLICHÉ

Publications on the Netherlands and the Dutch were regularly reviewed in Dutch newspapers and journals. There were reviews of travel guides, announcements of newly published postcard series, and reports of lantern lectures, as well as letters to the editor, all of which were concerned with the image production of the Netherlands and the Dutch in foreign eyes. In tourist discourse and in consumer culture, images and descriptions of Dutchness define the motif as spectacle for the eyes, to be looked at and enjoyed by the tourist/consumer. This mode of looking therefore marks a hierarchy between
the tourist and the landscape or the native Dutch person and positions the tourist as the active looker and the landscape and its inhabitants as the objects of this look. The repeated statement of their “quaintness” has a promotional, thus economic, component as this quaintness is precisely the product that is advertised: the quaintness and picturesqueness (and not the ethnographic information) are part and parcel of the commodified experience.

Although not explicitly discriminatory, images in tourist discourse and consumer culture were perceived as problematic and offensive by some Dutch citizens, while others appreciated the freshness of a view from the outside or the usefulness of these images for economic purposes. The following section attempts to categorize various responses in order to broaden the understanding of what Dutch people thought about the way in which they were depicted through tourist discourse as well as in images that circulated in consumer culture.

Appreciation: Looking at One’s Own Country through Different Eyes

Travel writings written by foreigners about their stay in the Netherlands could be appreciated for being well-written. Early examples are the many reviews of Henry Havard’s *Voyage Pittoresque aux villes mortes de la Zuiderzee* (Havard 1874). For example, *Het nieuws van de dag* praised Havard for the truthfulness of his account and the kind-heartedness with which it was written. The reviewer expected that the account would serve well to inform foreign people about the Netherlands and the Dutch correctly. A journalist of the national newspaper *Algemeen Handelsblad* was even more enthusiastic. In addition to the truthfulness of the account, the poetic writing style and the well-worked sketches of Havard’s account were cherished for their artistic beauty. According to the journalist, Havard received the decoration “Knight in the Order of the Oak Crown” from His Majesty the King with full right, because he wrote so adorably about the Dutch, their arts, their history, their present, and future.

Another appreciated travel book was *Sketching Rambles in Holland* (Boughton and Abbey 1885). The review opened with a critique on earlier travel reports. The vast amount of badly written accounts on the Netherlands made it worth reporting if one good book was published, according to the journalist. Even though the text contains some incorrect information, the journalist writes, the authors should be excused for their lack of knowledge about the Dutch language. All in all, the reviewer was very satisfied with the information; the book “deserved an honourable mention next to Havard’s account”. Considering the limited time they had spent in the country, it is understandable
that they did not achieve a deep understanding of the country. In spite of this shortcoming, the illustrations of “characteristic buildings, striking points of view as well as national types” were well-made, even if not as complete as in other works.\textsuperscript{35}

Admiration for a view of the Netherlands by foreigners was expressed by Dutch journalist “G.C.”, who admired the paintings of rural Dutch towns and the landscape of the province of Holland by foreign painters. These paintings opened the eyes of G.C., who could appreciate the landscape of their homeland only after having seen “Dutch reality” (“\textit{Hollandsche werkelijkheid}”) represented in the images of the foreign tourists and painters. Through their eyes, G.C. learned that common Dutch items could be considered aesthetically interesting and their view inspired the author to spend a day out in the grasslands of North Holland.\textsuperscript{36}

**Negotiated Position**

Ambivalence between appreciation and critique of generalizations is expressed by the editors of the journal \textit{De Aarde en haar Volken} in an annotation preceding the article “Door Holland met pen en camera” (Hamön 1906a; Hamön 1906b), which I have already discussed in Chapter 5. The article is a translation of a French travel description, originally published in \textit{Le Tour Du Monde} under the title “Croquis Hollandais” (Hamön 1905a; Hamön 1905b; Hamön 1905c). Despite the generalizations in Hamön’s text, the editors of \textit{De Aarde en haar Volken} believe that Dutch readers would consider the well-written piece interesting to read and that they were curious about the French traveller’s perspective on their country.\textsuperscript{37}

**Opposed Position**

Explicit criticism of descriptions by foreigners can be found already in Maaskamp’s publication from the beginning of the nineteenth century (see Chapter 4). His book aimed, among other things, to correct a “wrong aesthetic perception” of Dutch costumes by tourists.\textsuperscript{38} The promotional material of Thomas Cook & Son was regularly opposed by Dutch journalists, sometimes very fiercely. In \textit{Op den Uitkijk} from 1899, two short articles were published about the English travel agency. The author of the first example accepted with regret that tourists only visited some parts of the Netherlands, but protested against the “silly manner” (“\textit{dolle manier}”) in which the Netherlands and the Dutch were presented.\textsuperscript{39}
The other article in Op den Uitkijk expressed a less fatalistic opinion. Next to opposing the “outdated and wrong” description of the Netherlands, the author still had hope that Cook’s information on the Netherlands would change now that the company had opened an office in Amsterdam – all the more so if Thomas Cook & Son wished to sell its services to potential Dutch tourists. The author closed the article with the statement that the employees who worked as tour guides “knew better”. Once people saw how the Netherlands really looked, according to the author, the description of the Netherlands would change.40

A similar argument was made in the article “Een Engelschman over Nederland”, published in Utrechtsch Nieuwsblad. While the descriptions of the Netherlands and the Dutch in Cook’s brochures were fiercely opposed, the author nevertheless wishes Cook success with his package tour because then “at least some English [travellers] will have the chance to see that we have more modern means of transportation at our disposal than barges and dog carts, that there are houses in the cities which are in the perpendicular and that our rural population does not yet need to seek refuge in stilt houses”.41

Critical but less cynical is the author of “Het oordeel van anderen over Holland”, a review of Holland and Our Friends the Dutch by S.S. Abrahamson published in Holland Express (1911a). The author states a lack of interest by tourists in modern elements of Dutch life and culture. Dutch people in the cities, the journalist stated, were disappointed when a tourist only wanted to know about the canals, the Island of Marken, and the hut of Czar Peter. This tourist view “admires the past and misjudges and devalues the present” (Cf. Holland Express 1911a, 85–86).42

Homemade Clichés: Appreciation and Criticism

The material produced by Dutch tourist offices for the promotion of travel to tourists was also commented on in the Dutch press. The activities to promote Dutch towns, cities, and countryside abroad were met with appreciation. Arthur Marshall, an English photographer, was praised for the way in which he captured the characteristic aspects of the beauty of landscape around Giethoorn in Friesland. Contrary to other English people, Arthur Marshall was said to “have travelled the country enough in order to rightfully state that the visitor will meet new and fresh surprises everywhere in the country”. The text was “pleasurable to read even for a Dutch reader” because Marshall did not “make from ten Markeners in wide trousers an entire army” and “described things as they are” without exaggeration.43

The Dutch illustrated family magazine Eigen Haard went even further and
appreciated the use of the Volendam cliché for advertising campaigns abroad. The article “Hollandsche reclame in Engeland” reported on the advertising strategy of the steamship company “Batavierlijn”. Six boys were dressed in Volendam costume and sent to England to advertise the services of a Dutch steamship company. The boys were hired by an agency in Amsterdam and it is most likely that none of them was from Volendam. Without reservations, the author embraced this strategy and judged it as successful for the promotion of Dutch enterprises abroad, which, in turn, would be good for the entire coun-

Fig. 6.21-6.22
Illustrations to the article “Hollandsche reclame in Engeland” (“Dutch advertising in England”), showing the six hired boys dressed up in Volendam costume at the Trafalgar Square in London and on the beach of Brighton. Eigen Haard (1906, 512).
try. Authenticity and ethnographic truthfulness obviously were not criteria for the advertising company and the reporting journalist. What mattered was the success of the campaign – and, to that end, the cliché was embraced and, even more, performed in order to live up to the (presupposed) expectations of the British public. The campaign was appreciated by another journalist who characterizes himself as critical of the use of the cliché in many cases. This journalist even cherishes the fact that the Volendammers were performers, because “if they had been real Volendammers, the crowded streets in London would have made them feel bewildered and uncomfortable.”

In this as in other cases, the use of the cliché for advertising purposes was a conscious choice. Women in traditional costume were chosen as motifs for advertising trade cards by the Dutch enterprises Philips (who produced lightbulbs) in 1910/1911. The editors of Kunst in de Philips-Reclame 1891-1941 quote from an interview with the director Anton Philips in which he said he preferred “a beautiful girl over a funny cat” on advertising products (Cf. Wilbrink and van Hulst 2005, 15). For the trade card set of photographic images, the company even hired Dutch film star Annie Bos to pose in traditional costume (see figures in Chapter 4). Just as in the case of the Amsterdam boys in Volendam outfits, ethnographic accuracy and authenticity obviously were not central concerns.

Not everyone was happy with Philips’s choice of motifs. Especially Dutch people living abroad and diplomats expressed a perceived danger of these self-images. “I already got angry a hundred times when I saw the advertising trade cards with Dutch farmers and fishers”, A.M.S. wrote, “such images make the foreigner think that the entire Netherlands wear costumes like that. Not two weeks ago, an Italian said to me ‘a fat toddler not taller than a boot with a cigar as long as a hand in his mouth – no, you stretch things too far, over there’.” A.M.S. was even more upset when they discovered that these images were also produced by Dutch enterprises and explicitly named Philips. The typical that these trade cards accentuate was not suitable to give the right impression about life in the Netherlands in the mind of the viewer. What is interesting here is that A.M.S. did not see the typical as representative for the entirety, which implies a clear distinction between the typical and the common.

The fear of becoming known through these “misrepresentations” was also expressed by Dutch citizens living in the colonies. Instead of blaming foreigners for their distorted views, the Dutch should take the responsibility themselves as they took part in living up to the cliché of a rural Netherlands in presentations of Dutch pavilions at international exhibitions and fairs. According to the author, this self-presentation created the impression that no modern architecture existed in the Netherlands. The programmatic title of the article was “Eigen Schuld” (“Own fault”). A Dutch representative was
quoted who expressed his disappointment about the self-presentation at the opening of an exhibition or fair:

We have tried so often to convince the foreigner of the fact that the Netherlands is not exclusively a country of farmers and that people in the Netherlands wear boots and trousers just as the Americans do. It is therefore regrettable that the Dutch commission meant to undo our work by presenting the Dutch to the American as a panorama of “Marken in 1670” (De Sumatra Post 1915).

The writers of the article concluded by blaming “the stubbornness of our Dutchmen” (“kaaskoppen”) for not changing the self-representation.46

The self-presentation as farmers and fishers from former times was subject to critique in a review of the festive show of New Year’s Eve 1914/1915. If The Hague wanted to become the world capital of thought, then the self-presentation of the Dutch as “picturesque Volendammers” needed to stop – also in the entertainment branch. Hollanders should not align themselves with “everything that presents itself to the globetrotter as picturesque costume” or “as uncivilized natives whose typical costume, custom and amusements are conceived by the foreigner as a curiosity!”47

Film production was also seen as one source of creating a restrictive impression of the Netherlands. In a letter to the editor of the monthly publication of the Algemeen Nederlandsch Verbond (an organization that was active in the domain of Dutch language and literature), A. Loosjes warns about the dangers of film for the perception of the Netherlands abroad. A film only became labelled a “Dutch film”, so Loosjes writes, if it features traditional clothing of fishers and farmers (sometimes even a combination of items of various regions) “with a windmill in the background”. Films such as those produced by Pathé “reach the entire world and confirm the silly idea (“dwaze denkbeeld”) that Hollanders were nothing more than typically dressed people, walking in wooden shoes”. The author called for films that show “Holland as it really is” to prevent the Dutch being seen abroad “exclusively as the country of typical costumes” (Cf. Loosjes 1912).48

A. Loosjes’s critique was probably not only directed towards foreign film production but against Dutch film production as well; after all, the Dutch film company Filmfabriek Hollandia used similar settings for its films of the Netherlands. Ivo Blom refers to a statement in a Dutch family magazine which seems similar to that of Loosjes:

A similarly archetypical image of the Netherlands could be found in the films of Alfred Machin, so much that the Dutch popular magazine Het
Leven featured an article in 1911 fiercely protesting against these foreign “windmills and clogs films” which created the impression Holland had nothing more to offer than folkloristic types and surroundings. (Blom 1996, 255)

Critical Reflection on National Clichés

Occasionally, one’s opposition to being depicted with national clichés served as the starting point for a reflection on the own use of national clichés in the perception of other people and places. A review of a lantern lecture, given by an American of Dutch origin, referred to a position towards clichés which was neither embracing nor rejecting but which provided the ground for reflecting on one’s common knowledge about other people and places. A reporter on the lantern lecture “Het nijvere Amerika” (“Industrious America”) notes that the lecturer gave a short introduction in which he listed cliché images and stereotypical ideas that were widespread among Americans. But weren’t some Dutch travellers as superficial as the criticized Americans, if they themselves only knew the Americans via the prejudice that everything in the US was about money?

In the closing paragraph of the book review of the travel guide A Wanderer in Holland, the (British?) author reflects on the directedness of their gaze searching for those elements that are promoted by travel brochures. This reflection lead the author to question the national specificity that they are deemed to signify. The same elements that were cherished abroad (barges, canals) had been overlooked in the homeland. Travel, according to the author, opens the eyes for elements in one’s homeland. These elements probably have escaped one’s attention because they were not signposted as typically English. Quite ironically, the agency Thomas Cook & Son is thanked for having enabled this eye-opening; after all, they were a major agent in pointing to a selected number of sights and marketing them in terms of nationality.

Positions in the Debate about the Cliché: Rethinking the Self/Other Distinction

The various standpoints in the debate about clichés as expressed by Dutch writers call for a more nuanced analysis in the reception of the cliché than that allowed by a binary opposition between (appreciated) use of the cliché in the outsider’s perception and rejection of the cliché in the self-perception. Rather than organizing appreciation and critique of the cliché along the line of the
nationality of the speaker, I propose to look into the function that the cliché has in a certain argument. It is noteworthy that negotiated and opposed opinions rather elaborate on the lack of modern elements and the distorted or untruthful description that the clichés gave about the country. In contrast, positive reviews of tourist publications join in the praise for the beauty of the rural areas and elements which they consider traditionally and typically Dutch, and thus imply a nostalgic component. Dutch enterprises (Batavierlijn, Philips) or committees in charge of the self-representation of the Netherlands (e.g. at international fairs and expositions) contributed to the dissemination of the cliché about the Dutch by the choice of motifs in their advertising products and strategies. Some Dutch journalists embraced this use of the cliché in consumer culture and judged it as “good for the entire country”, referring to the tourist economy as an important field of income and its expected positive influence on selling Dutch (brand) products. Other Dutch journalists even shared the appreciation of tourists and foreign artists for the typical and authentic of the Netherlands. In doing so, they not only shared the interpretation of what “typical and authentic Dutchness” consisted of, but also admired it for the same reasons, i.e. its picturesqueness. Appreciation of the cliché was thus motivated by its economic benefits for the Netherlands and the expression of nostalgic sentiments tied to one’s nation.

Rejection of the Dutch cliché follows two main lines of argumentation. Both types of opposition against the cliché denounce the absence of modern elements in the cliché, but for different reasons. In the case of the first type, the critique is about truth and directed against a distorted view of the Netherlands that the cliché communicated. The cliché was said to be “not right”, at least not if it was generalized to the entire country. This critique especially attacked the absence of modern elements in the presentation of the Netherlands through the cliché. In the case of the second type, the argument against the cliché was of a strategic nature. In that view, the effect of the cliché of the rural Dutchman was seen as a threat to the Dutch reputation and, consequently, as a threat to the Dutch position in society circles. Critiques of that type stressed the need for the Netherlands to be perceived as modern in order to be taken seriously in international diplomatic, economic, and scientific affairs. Dutch authors of both types of opposition to the cliché (more or less explicitly) expressed that they felt affronted by being perceived through or associated with clichés. In that respect, ethnographically correct images of Volendam and Marken fisher folks could be seen as equally threatening as ethnographically incorrect representations. This marks a fundamental difference towards the use of clichés and other images in anthropological discourse.

Furthermore, opinions towards the cliché differ by class. Dutch journal-

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ists, i.e. intellectuals, who – given that newspapers were produced in the cities and not in the countryside – generally must have lived in the city, shared the praise for the authenticity, visible in images of farmers and fishermen, that was created for the affluent (potential) tourist abroad. After all, the appreciation of “quaintness” in the images resulted from the possibility not to connect poverty with the “quaint” costumes. With one exception, none of the sources discussed the bias of class in tourist publications. Not surprisingly, this exception is found in the socialist weekly magazine Het Volk Zondagsblad. The article is illustrated with one line drawing, depicting a poor family in traditional clothing and rich people with a camera, taking a photograph. The article opens with a denunciation of the social injustice that a working-class child experiences in its life and the privileges of the rich child, made possible by the exploitation of the working class and concludes with a denunciation of the tourist who sees the poverty as picturesque: “Oh, look at her, with her child – a ‘picturesque group’, even in this state they render service to the rich: they are photographed and the learned experts will say that it is an interesting picture.”
If there was one criterion to cluster appreciation of and opposition to the cliché, it would be the distance from it: Dutch authors and journalists who expressed appreciation of the cliché apparently did not feel personally touched by the motif of the Volendam fisher families. The quaintness of rural life was “out there” to be looked at and to be enjoyed, and this look was not perceived as directed at themselves; these authors were not part of the picturesque image. Rejection of the cliché often articulated fear of undesirable consequences of being perceived (or experiences of having been perceived) through the cliché. It seems that the “impersonal appreciation” of the cliché was built upon an understanding of the cliché as a symbol, not related to anything “real” in the realm of one’s own experiences, whereas opposition to the cliché was based on its effect when applied *pars pro toto* to the entire Netherlands.

In this respect, the attitudes of journalists towards the functions of the cliché were similar to those in anthropological discourse. On the one hand, the cliché can communicate an abstract concept (“the Dutch”) and, on the other hand, it can refer to real-existing people (see Chapter 4.11). Just as in the other discourses, fixing the motif did not imply fixing the meaning – even if the motif in question was the cliché.

**6.10 CONCLUSION**

The investigation of the discourse on the Netherlands and the Dutch in tourism and consumer culture has shown that the disseminated knowledge is an eclectic amalgam of geographical, historical, and anthropological discourse, combined with aesthetics that suited the commodity form. Tourism and consumer culture relied on the cliché of the Dutch that had been established through popularized anthropology (Chapter 4) as well as media of popularized geography and armchair travel (Chapter 5) in the course of the nineteenth century. The categories “picturesque” and “quaint” originated from painters and writers of the Romantic Movement, whose works of art and literature contributed significantly to the creation of (expectations about) visually attractive sights in the Netherlands. From the 1880s on, “the picturesque” was a concept deeply tied to celebrating modernity and the visual pleasures it enabled through mass-production and mass media in the newly established consumer culture.

The analysis of tourist material of mostly British and Dutch origin reveals that towns and sights were promoted for the same attractions and with similar images. Materials from outside the Netherlands often attribute national categories to people and places seen in the Netherlands, whereas the Dutch tourist
discourse is more specific about the scale and almost always mentions region and town along with naming them as part of the beautiful sights in which the Netherlands is so rich. In some articles, Dutch authors tie local specificities explicitly to the national by referring to them as part of Dutch culture and of interest to all Dutch citizens who wanted to learn more about their country (Cf. Esser 1909 in Chapter 6.3). Even in those articles, the authors might judge the attractions of a city or town as “typically Dutch”, but they never generalize them as typical for the entire Netherlands. The typical is thus connected to taste, which situates it on the level of Dutchness.

Dutch tourist organizations and journalists tried hard to broaden the images and the knowledge about the Netherlands and the Dutch, but, at the time the Centraal Bureau was founded (in 1908), the cliché of the Dutch and the tourist image of the Netherlands had already been established and circulated widely. Narrated guidebooks usually covered more than the tourist show places, too, but obviously neither the narrated guidebooks nor the efforts to promote various places in the Netherlands by the Bond van VVV and the Centraal Bureau led to a change in tourist discourse (or the interest of tourists who continued to flock to Volendam and Marken).

Whereas material of Dutch origin tends to document the costume and places rather truthfully (see the case of trade cards by Philips in Chapter 4), the German and American trade cards in my corpus are not limited to Dutch costumes but display an “iconography of Dutchness” by including elements that have been identified as typically Dutch in the background. Thereby, such cards not only place their images in the broader cultural-geographical-political context of the Netherlands, but also in a specific discourse about it. This discourse is characterized by generalizations made on the national level, a repetition of certain motifs, and the presentation of the views for the entertainment of the viewer – all of which I identified as characteristics of the discourse of Dutchness. Yet, even the ethnographically correct depictions in the trade cards and other promotional material issued by Dutch enterprises fed into the discourse of Dutchness. Publications of Dutch origin with the motif of women in costumes with apron and headdress situated in a premodern countryside were, voluntarily or not, complying with the cliché of the Dutch as these products presented the Dutch as visually interesting (or “picturesque” and “quaint”). Therefore, visual media of Dutch origins contest neither the cliché nor its logic; furthermore, neither the ethnographic accuracy of the depictions nor the regional specification (by naming the respective town) could have changed supposed common knowledge about the Netherlands and the Dutch in the eyes of light-bulb buyers or chocolate consumers around the world.

The economic benefits from the use of the cliché seem to have motivated its broad application in both advertising and tourism and, probably, in con-
sumer culture more generally. After all, advertising relies on messages that are uncontroversial and easily understood; consumers were not approached with confusing or complex messages, hence the choice for reductive forms such as the cliché. The compliance with the cliché seems to have been considered a good strategy for successful marketing by enterprises of Dutch and foreign production alike. This economic reasoning recurs in reactions of the Dutch to the cliché, as those who favoured its use mostly argued economically (see Chapter 6.9).

The same tourist destination, the same visually attractive elements (and sometimes even the tone of the descriptions) could be used for the construction of different meanings around the relation between the local and the national. As a tendency, material on the Netherlands produced by the Dutch follows the logic of the national-as-bracket mode and material produced outside the country follows the logic of the national-as-descriptor mode. The results of having looked for the function that a word and image combination fulfilled call for a rethinking of an easily assumed difference between the self-image versus the outsider's image. Seen from this perspective, difference is not to be found in the circulating images themselves but in the meaning they communicate.

Tourist discourse's emphasis on difference and authenticity had the result that the Dutch were described as exotic and largely depicted the Dutch in the form of the cliché (material by Thomas Cook & Son; Grew and Grew 1913). As any local population in tourist discourse, the Dutch were considered natives-to-be-looked-at, but this difference was not framed in terms of cultural hierarchy. For the international tourist, seeing the native Dutch with one's own eyes realized the promised experience of authenticity and difference advertised in leaflets, travel guides, and articles.

Consumer culture and tourism requires reproducible forms; the cliché generally provided an apt means for advertising the idea of Dutchness and promising the experience in commodity form. The cliché was a dominant visual depiction of the Netherlands throughout the period under investigation, even as it became obvious that it obstructed the appreciation of those places of the Netherlands that did not match the visual appearance of the cliché, and hence, partially hindered the economic exploitation of the Netherlands for tourism. Quite ironically, the repetitive logic of consumer culture, tourism, and the cliché is stronger than what “authenticity” usually covers. As everyone can reproduce the cliché, the cliché does not need to be truthful to its origin – which is at the core of the definition of authenticity. In tourism, “authentic” sights only need to appear as not staged and “out there” without the tourist, while, at the same time, authenticity can only be perceived if a certain place

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or sight is marked. If the authentic is too obviously set up for the tourist, then some tourists may be disappointed, as I have shown in quotes from the travel guides in Chapter 6.4.

Because of the enormous number of American tourists, “fake Volendammers” were hired as additional guides. On a cruise through the Mediterranean Sea, Dutch journalist G.V.H. met Claggett Wilson, an American traveller. Wilson had worked as such a “fake Volendammer” and had performed the Volendammer to American tourists. G.V.H. wrote about this “most striking” phenomenon of tourism:

A young American, living as a Volendammer among the Volendammers, that really is the most striking phenomenon in the domain of tourism. [...] According to the account, it even went as far as having fake guides: Americans dressed as Volendammers informed their fellow countrymen in a true or deceiving manner. For his fellow countrymen, the Americans, he played the guide, and then got tipped a dime or a quarter. Funny sensation for someone who spent a lot of money there himself.54 (G.V.H. 1911, 273–275, my translation)
Authenticity in tourist discourse is always the result of having marked a sight as authentic; authenticity is thus always performed. This is why the discourse of consumer culture and tourism allowed for the fact that the film star Annie Bos could pose in the traditional costumes of Spakenburg and Bunschoten and this explains why an American traveller could act as a Volendammer tourist guide without causing irritation in the eyes of the tourist or in the systems of signification.

NOTES


2 Technological progress in transportation networks of both goods and information (stream trains, steamboats, telegraphy) went hand in hand with an expansion of tourism and mass media. Both were preconditions for images to reach larger audiences across farther distances in less time. The ubiquitous existence of images in industrialized societies nourished the perception of places and people to “look like a picture” – and, as a picture, the vista could be sold.

3 Images in tourist discourse have both an advertising function for the commodified experience achieved through travel while, at the same time, these images are a commodity in themselves, too. Recalling Culler, these images as well as souvenirs are “off-site-markers” that “remind[.] one that the attraction is an attraction” (Culler 1988, 160).

4 The importance of Havard’s travel account for the promotion of the Zuiderzee region as appealing to romantic and realist painters and, later, as a tourist destination is also pointed out in Blom (1996) and in the recent popular nonfiction book by Smid (2013).

5 Alison Griffiths observes that, in the case of early ethnographic film, “adjectives such as ‘wild’, ‘barbarous’, ‘curious’, ‘picturesque’, ‘quaint’, ‘strange’, ‘weird’, and ‘queer’ become the hallmarks of Otherness in published descriptions of these films, functioning essentially as an ideological shorthand for deeply embedded views about racial difference and the place of the Orient in Western imagination” (Griffiths 2002, 215). When referring to the Dutch, these adjectives do not imply *racial* difference. I will come back to this point in Chapter 7.

Original: “Holland is een mooi land! Onze steden zijn vaak prachtig, hier in hun aspekt van stadje-van-vroeger, daar in hun levend-zijn, hun voortgaan met den tijd. Onze landstreken! Och, of je ziet de vlakke grasvelden van onze lage landen, heel wijd onder een hoogen hemel; of je dwaalt door de duinen of in de bosschen van het Gooi; of je ziet de oneindige hei rondom u, de deinende vlakten van de Veluwe, van Drenthe; of je mijmert in onze donkere bosschen; of je zijt op ons water, onze plassen en vaarten... overal voelt ge in U een jubel om de schoonheid van wat ge aanschouwt! Holland is een mooi land! Er zijn reeds velen die dat weten [...].

Velen, die vreemd zijn daar, trekken er naar toe en altijd is het nog mooier dan ze dachten; alleen ...... er wonen niet enkel Volendammers en Markers!”

Original: “Is de weg dien wij passeeren in den beginne vrij monotoon, later wordt dit beter en zijn wij laatstgenoemde stad op geringen afstand genaderd, dan krijgen wij een panorama te zien, zooals men dat alleen in Holland te zien kan krijgen. Het doet ons bij tijden denken aan de meesterstukken van onze oude schildersschool.”

Original: “Waar wij Hollanders, anders zo phlegmatiek, verrukt konden staan over een landschap zoo eenvoudig in zijn samenstelling, hoeveel te meer moeten dan niet de vreemdelingen, die in grooten getale dit typische Hollandsche plekje komen bezoeken, getroffen worden door die eigenaardige schoonheid. Gij allen, die zoo het buitenland verheerlijkt, gaat eens hierheen en gij zult moeten toevoegen, dat uw geboorteland soms waarlijk niet behoeft onder te doen voor wat gij over zijn grenzen zoekt. Reeds dadelijk Edam binnenkomende, kan men den invloed van de vele vreemdelingen bemerken. De kinderen, als overal hinderlijk, omdat zij u vervelen door hun bête aangapen van niet-plaatsgenoten, bedelen in een geradbraakt Engelsch en geven u te verstaan dat zij ‘cents’ verlangen.”

Original: “Voor hen die gaarne onder leiding zulk een reisje door dit pittoreske gedeelte zouden willen maken, zij erop gewezen, dat de reeds eerder genoemde Noord-Hollandsche Tramweg-Maatschappij, tegen den prijs van f3 per persoon, gedurende de maanden Mei, Juni, Juli en de halve maand September rondreis-kaarten beschikbaar stelt en den reizigers een goede gids mede geeft, die alle merkwaardigheden toont.”

Original: “Natuurlijk – ge kent Hoorn! Ten minste, ge hebt wel eens gehoord van een stadje van dien naam, aan de Zuiderzee ten Noorden van Amsterdam. En dan stelt ge u Hoorn voor als een triestig, boersch landstadje, daarbij als groote standskinderen er den neus voor optrekkende. Zo kent gij, en velen met u, Hoorn. / Maar overigens? Neen, verder strekt de kennis van velen niet. Men weet niet, dat reizigers van alle nationaliteiten van Hoorn getuigen, dat het een stadje is, zooals ons Nederland er slechts zeer enkele kan aanwijzen; dat het een plaatsje is, dat herinneringen aan dat zoo interessante Oud-Holland in overvloed heeft bewaard. Oud-Holland – in den laatsten tijd zoo meningmaal kunstmatig nagebootstst – ge ziet het in Hoorn in werkelijkheid.”
12 Original: “Overal wordt men geboeid; ’t zij door een aardig poortje of een antieken gevel. Hoorn is een stadje met bouwkundige, maar ook met schilderachtige schoonheden. Een harmonie van beide, zoo noodzakelijk voor een zuiver en fraai stadsgezicht, is hier aanwezig en geeft den beschouwer een gevoel van bewondering voor onze 17e en 18e eeuw. [...] dan zal Hoorn blijven – ook in de toekomst – een stad, reeds staande op het programma van schier elken Amerikaan en Engelschman, die Nederland bezoekt, maar dan zal het langzamerhand ook worden de plaats, waarheen de Nederlanders zelf zich opmaken; de plaats niet alleen bekend slechts bij name, maar ook geliefkoosd door eigen aanschouwing.”

13 “THIS series is intended for two kinds of reader [sic], those who travel abroad and want to have information about the lives and ways of the people of the town or country described, which is not found in guidebooks; and secondly for those who stay at home and wish to read a description of foreign countries & towns, and the ways of living &c. of their inhabitants” (Roche 1910, sleeve note). The chapters are organized by subject and not by location, which situates the publication somewhere in between the discourse of armchair travel and tourism.


Holland ist ein herbes Land und seine Bewohner sind ein herbes Volk, von dem der größte Teil im harten Kampf mit der Natur seine Kräfte stählt.” (Hartmann 1913, 26–27).

“[...] aber was ich überall sah, war immer dasselbe: Ein festes und sicheres Verankertsein im Mutterboden, eine begeisterte Hingabe an die Arbeit und eine trunkene Genussfreudigkeit dort, wo es galt aus sich selbst heraus der inneren Elastizität wieder neue Spannkraft zu geben. Der Holländer steht nicht immer, wie man meint, in Holzschuhen vor seinem Haus, die lange Tonpfeife im Mund, in dunkles, tatenloses Sinnen versunken. Das ist nicht das richtige Symbol für dieses tapfer vorwärtsstrebende, am Leben und allem, was damit zusammenhängt, mit einer abgöttischen Liebe hängende Volk. Nie und nimmer. Sondern das ist es: der Holländer wirkend, ruhig zufassend, arbeitsam dort, wo ihn das Schicksal hingestellt hast, ohne viel Worte darüber zu verlieren, dass er die Pflicht nach innen und nach außen als Gesetz für sein Dasein anerkennt.” (Hartmann 1913, 30–31).


“Aber nicht nur die geringe Entfernung ist die Ursache dieser Erscheinung, sondern die schöne Natur, die interessanten Bauten, der Reichtum an Künst schätzen, die herrlichen Seebäder, die alten Sitten und Gewohnheiten in Kleidertracht und Lebensweise, die anerkannt gute Verpflegung in den Gasthöfen und die vorzügliche Verbindungen mit den großen Städten Deutschlands und des weiteren Auslandes.” (Kirchner 1914, 4). Statistics on the population and information on dunes, dykes, polders, and canals are presented in the section “About the country” (“Zur Kenntnis des Landes”).
“Als Modell einer Wohnung aus dieser Gegend wird ein waterländisches Haus restauriert und innen und aussen typisch holländisch ausgestattet werden. [...] Auch die reizenden Dörfer Bunschoten und Spakenburg sind wegen ihrer malerischen Lage an der Zuidersee und ihrer charakteristischen Volkstrachten eine lohnende Tour für den Reisenden” (Hartmann 1913, 9).

Original: “[...] Von hier Motorbootverbindungen mit der 1300 Einw. zählenden Fischerinsel Marken, 5 km, hin und zurück 75 und 50c. Der Besuch der Insel ist sehr lohnend; interessante Fischerhäuser, die an die Pfahlbautenzeit erinnern. Originell sind die alten Kostüme der Bewohner und der besondere Typus der Trachten, die sich auf dieser Insel erhalten hat. Man besucht verschiedene interessante Wohnungen, aus denen aber alles Echte, was nicht nicht- und nagelfest, längst von Sammlern entführt und durch Imitationen ersetzt ist. Auch im nahen Fischerdorf Volendam sind originelle Trachten zu finden. 6 km weiter nach Edam, freundliches altes Städtchen mit 6600 Einw., bekannt durch seine runden Käse, die von süßer Milch gemacht werden. (Markttag | Sonnabend 9-12 Uhr.)”. Emphasis added.

The only exception to this rule that I saw in the accessed material is a series of trade cards by Myrrholin Soap, discussed in Chapter 4.3.3.

Frido Troost reported that he saw relatively few nineteenth-century picture postcards from places in the provinces Limburg and Drenthe in comparison with picture postcards of the big cities in the provinces of North and South Holland (Rotterdam, The Hague, Amsterdam) (Personal communication, 1 March 2011).

Cassiers’s illustrations to Le Charme de la Hollande (Gauchez 1932) resemble the motifs of the postcards and concentrate on picturesque, premodern elements. Parts of his work on the Netherlands are reproduced in Holland anno 1900 (Klijn 1994).

“Aan de North Eastern Railway in Engeland werd door het Bureau [Centraal Bureau] een 85tal lantaarnplaatjes ter circulatie afgestaan voor de wintermaanden. Aangevuld met de photo’s van beroemde schilderijen uit het Rijksmuseum en het Mauritshuis, is hiervan een zeer onderhoudende lezing gemaakt, welke aan ons Bureau ter beoordeling en correctie werd gezonden. / Ook uit Schotland ontving het Bureau aanvragen naar lantaarnplaatjes voor het houden van lezingen, terwijl ook het Algemeen Nederlandsch Verbond van plan is in België lezingen te organiseren. De verzameling lantaarnplaatjes telt op het ogenblik 300; nog lang niet voldoende om aan de verschillende aanvragen te kunnen voldoen; althans niet voor lezingen, welke een eenigzins volledig beeld van ons land zullen geven. / Daar vele vereenigingen nog niet aan ons verzoek hebben voldaan, lantaarnplaatjes aan het Bureau te willen afstaan, dringt het alsnog daarop aan; het is in de eerste plaats in het belang der Vereenigingen-zelf en ten

26 “Hoe men over ons land in den vreemde denkt, dit weten we. Voor de meesten zijn we het volk van klompen en wijde rokken, met als achtergrond de bekende molentjes. Nu heeft Mr. A. Marshall, een van de experts zooals men weet onder de Engelsche mannen van de camera en die als artist-fotograaf zooveel van ons land houdt, onlangs gesproken te Nottingham voor een taalrijk gehoor over ‘eenige Hollandsche plaatsen en bevolking’, verlucht door een werkelijk prachtvolle serie lichtbeelden naar zijn beroemde fotografien. / De lezing bekoerde zeer, daar Mr. Marshall, een pittig spreker, begaafd met een zeldzame humor, zijn onderwerp zeer aanlokkelijk wist te maken. Daar hij meermalen Holland bezocht, protesteerde hij vriendelijk tegen de, zooals hij noemde, ‘parodie en karikatuur’ van het Hollandsche leven, voorgesteld door de geïllustreerde pers en het tooneel, en vooral wees hij op het verkeerd uitbeelden van Hollanders met schel gekleurde vegen op hun klederen, een streep schitterend oranje op groen, of blauw op geel, en de zonderlinge dansen, aan het Hollandsche volk toegeschreven. Hij zag het Hollandsche volk in een gansch ander licht, een eenvoudig ras […]” (Holland Express 1910, 68).


29 “Cinema Palace […] ‘Mooi Nederland’ was verre van mooi. Als men met zulk een onbenullige film binnen- en buiten ons land de belangstelling voor Nederland’s
schoon zou willen opwekken, kan dit pogen alreeds bij voorbaat als een mislukking worden beschouwd. Dan de opnamen van Pathé!" (De Kinematograaf 1916).

30 “[...] Dhr. Willy Mullens van de s’Gravenhaagsche filmfabriek is ook bezig aan ’n mooi propagandistisch werk. Hij maakt namelijk opnamen van het natuurschoon in ons eigen land, den handel, de industrie, het verkeer, enz. zooowel op het platteland als in de steden. [...] ’t Doel is met deze films hier te lande, in de koloniën, en vooral in het buitenland reclame te maken voor het mooie, nijvere Nederland." (De Kinematograaf 1918b, 3732).

31 “Amsterdam. De filmcommissie, ingesteld door het bestuur der ‘Vereeniging tot verbreding van kennis over Nederland in den Vreemde’ (zie p. 3175, No 242 van ons blad) heeft een film doen samenstellen, welke, zonder aanspraak te maken op volledigheid, een aantrekkelijk en popular beeld geeft van hetgeen hier te lande geschiedt op het gebied van verschillende takken van ons volksbestaan, het natuurschoon van ons land, onze bouwkunst, enz. Het geheel is verwerkt in een scenario, door Jan Feith geschreven en technisch samengesteld door Joh. Gilde- meyer te Amsterdam, aan wien ook de uitvoering van de film is toevertrouwd.” (De Kinematograaf 1918a, 3551).

32 “De vraag is dikwijls gesteld, waarom hier nooit Hollandsche productie’s worden vertoond. Of zij geschikt zouden zijn voor de Britsche markt staat te bezien, maar men kan ze tenminste een kans geven. De Kinematografie moet altijd in zekere mate internationaal zijn, en afwisseling in onze programma’s kan slechts ten goede komen. Sommige van de kleinere steden in Holland zijn prachtig geschikt voor korte nummertjes, daar films, die de schilderachtige kleederdracht der boeren, de hyacintenvelden in Haarlem enz. demonstreren wel zouden worden geapprecieerd, en een interessante aanvulling vormen van onze programma’s.” (De Kinematograaf 1917, 2832).

33 “Indien wij ooit aan een vreemdeling dank verschuldigd zijn omdat hij geene gelegenheid ongebruikt liet, om ons land en volk, onze instellingen, zeden, gewoonten en kunst in den vreemde naar waarheid te doen kennen en waardeeren, dan is het zeker in de eerste plaats aan Mr. Henry Havard, die in zijne verschillende geschriften over ons land zooveelenen en onze geschiedenis niet alleen door en door kent, maar – wat meer is – ook een warm hart toedraagt.” (Het Nieuws van Den Dag: Kleine Courant 1876, 2).

34 “Men vergeet by het lezen der beschrijving van hun wedervaren voor geen oogenblik, dat men in gezelschap van twee artisten is, die alles waardeeren wat schoon en schilderachtig is en die een geopend oog hebben voor de eigenaar- dige betovering van IJ en Zuiderzee, van het vlakke Hollandsche landschap, met zijn wondere lichteffecten, met zyn ‘transparence argentée’, gelijk de heer Havard het zoo juist noemt van zijn atmosfeer, en met zijn ‘brume gris-perle’. Laat ons een enkel voorbeeld aanhalen van die waardeering van hetgeen schoon
is in ons landschap. Het zal beter dan iets dat wij zeggen kunnen, bewyzen dat men hier met geen oppervlakkigen spotzieken bezoeker te doen heeft, doch met een kunstenaar, die de groote gave bezit van te kunnen bewonderen en overal schoonheid op te merken. [...] De heer Havard, niet tevreden met te schilderen met woorden, heeft evenals zijn vriend, de heer van Heemskerck, teekeningen gemaakt van het merkwaardigste en schoonste dat zij op hun reis zagen. De haven van Hoorn, de Oosterpoort te Hoorn, een visschers binnenhuis te Vollendam [sic], het eiland Marken, Hinloopensche [sic] vrouwen, de haven van Urk, de Cellebroederspoort te Kampen, enz. leveren hem beurtelings stof tot aanschouwelijke schetsjes en geestige teekeningen. [...] De heer Henry Havard werd door Z. M. tot ridder in de orde van de Eikekroon [sic] benoemd, en al heeft deze decoratie door de overgrote mildheid waarmede ze geschonken wordt ook veel van haar waarde verloren, ze is in dit geval een waar symbool. Met eikenloof moet de man omkransd worden, die over het Nederlandsche volk, zijn kunst, zyn oudheden, zijn verleden, heden en toekomst op zoo beminnelijke en degelijke wyze weet te schrijven." (Algemeen Handelsblad 1875).

“Zoo dikwijls worden door vreemdelingen, die ons land bezoeken, zelfs ter goeder trouw, zulke zonderlinge verhalen over Holland en de Hollanders opgedischt, dat het zeker wel der moeite waard is om er de aandacht op te vestigen, wanneer werkelijk weer eens een goed boek van een toerist uit den vreemde over ons land het licht ziet. Sketching Rambles in Holland, Schetsstochtjes door Holland, aldus luidt de titel van het fraaie werk, waarin twee Engelsche kunstenaars, de heeren Boughton en Abbey, met pen en teekenstift de indrukken weergaven, welke zij tijdens een uitstapje door een deel van ons land ontvingen. Wanneer men, zonder voldoend geleide, slechts een vluchtig kijkje komt nemen in een vreemd land en daarbij de taal niet verstaat, is het uit den aard der zaak niet mogelijk om een volledig en volkomen juist beeld te geven van hetgeen men ziet en hoort. Daarom zullen ook deze beide toeristen zich wel eens aan de een of andere onjuistheid schuldig maken, maar toch is zeker ons land zelden door vreemdelingen bezocht, die zoo vaardig met de teekenstift wisten om te gaan. De schetsen van merkwaardige gebouwen, treffende gezichtspunten en volkstypen zijn bijna zonder uitzondering even keurig uitgevoerd en daarom verdient ook dit werk, ook al moge het minder volledig zijn, eene eervolle plaats naast de beschrijving door Havard en De Amicis van Nederland gegeven.” (Algemeen Handelsblad 1884, emphasis added).

“[...] Doch daar komen buitenlandsche toeristen [sic], met name buitenlandsche schilders, en naast Hollandsche kunst van vroegeren en lateren datum bewonderen zij ook Hollandsche werkelijkheid. Hoe speciaal Hollandscher, hoe liever hun een voorwerp is. Hollandsch huisraad en gereedschap, Hollandsche kleedingsstukken en rariteiten duiken zij op, waar zij maar kunnen, geven er veel geld voor, brengen ze in de mode. En zelf blijven zij heele zomers hier en schilderen weiden en slooten en koeien en eenden en marktscène’s en binnenhuizen en

37 “Wij hebben den Franschen Schrijver in zijn reisverhaal op den voet gevolgd, al kwam soms de lust boven, hem eens even in de rede te vallen, waar hij in zijn gevolgstrekking te ver ging en, naar het weinige dat hij zag, oordeelde ook over hat vele, dat hij niet zag. Het zal onzen lezers zeker evenzo gaan, maar om der curiositeit willen zal het oordeel van den Franschman hen interesseeren en zijn aardige verteltrant zal hen boeien.” (Hamôn 1906a, 1).

38 “Foreign Travellers, or Author of Fabulous travels have blamed the North-Holland Women, as having an uniformity in their Dress, which is bordering to stiffness, or to say the real truth, these Gentlemen have persisted that this dress made them disagreeable. A more unjust reproach could never take place [...].” (Maaskamp and Kuyper 1808, explanation to plate 17).

39 “Er is weer vermakelijke lectuur over ons land te vinden in het zomernummer van Cook’s Excursionist. Elken zaterdag gaat er een groepje toeristen onder leiding van het agentschap naar ons land, maar zij leiern altijd hetzelfde deuntje af van Noord- en Zuidholland en een stukje Friesland en zien niets van het oosten, noch van ’t zuiden of midden des lands. Maar daarvan behoefde toch niet het gevolg te wezen, dat er in het redactioneele gedeelte van het blad op zoo’n dolle manier over Nederland wordt geschreven. / Het wordt genoemd the queerest, quaintest, oddest country you ever heard of outside fairyland: dan heet het, dat in the funny country, where water is so abundant, there is scarcely any fit to drink en er wordt op gewezen hoe vreemd het is, dat in ons land where earth is about the scarcest article they burn it as fuel. De heeren hebben hier gezien farmhouses standing on stilts, which gives them the appearance of huge toadstools, maar bosschen en boomen hebben zij nergens opgemerkt. No leafy lanes as in England. There are plenty of green willow trees out of which the (!) Dutchman makes his shoes, but scarcely a hedge is visible. Ditches and canals are the fences. / Natuurlijk is er ook weer het oude verhaal bij van de kikvorsch in ’t riet aan den oever, die neerziet op de zwaluw nestelend op het dak, en van onze huizen, leaning like drunken men in every direction. / ’t Zou wel goed zijn, als de redactie van dit toeristenblad eens informeerde bij de heeren van de vredesconferentie, of die dit land ook zoo queer
en quaint and odd and funny vinden; zoo'n international getuigenis moet voor hen toch wel eenige waarde hebben.” (Op Den Uitkijk 1899b, 3, exclamation mark and emphasis in original).

“Cook over ons land. ’t is te hopen, dat, nu de firma Cook een filiaal heeft in Amsterdam, zij in haar groot blad, de Excursionist, ook wat nauwkeuriger over ons land gaat schrijven en niet met zulke ouderwetsche onjuiste praatjes komt aandragen als in de aankondiging van het Paaschtourtje door Noord- en Zuidhol-

40 land. Van Donderdag 30 Maart tot Dinsdag 4 April konden voor de somma van f 63 een groepje engelsche toeristen den Haag, Scheveningen, Amsterdam, Marken en Rotterdam gaan kijken onder Cook’s geleide. / Van Amsterdam heet het in ’t programma dier reis dat de estraten er zoo schilderachtig zijn, omdat vele huizen uit het lood hangen en achterover leunen of voorover hellen of tegen elkander steunen ‘alsof de eeuwen, die er zijn verloopen sinds de sticht-

ing der stad in 1204 bij hen den wensch hadden doen ontstaan naar nauwer aaneensluiting.’ Op zondag, leest men verder, is het er druk en levendig op straat en op Pasche heeft men de gelegenheid ‘for witnessing Meinheer at his best.’ Of ‘Mijnheer’ dat wel zoo heel aardig uitgedrukt zal vinden van iemand, die preten-

deert zelf op zijn tijd Hollanders tot geleider op reis te willen strekken? / Ten

overvloede wordt bij Rotterdam vermeld, dat de quaint costumes of the inhab-

itants heel curieus zijn. Dat kan de engelsche dames en heeren wel eens zijn tegenvallen en de heeren leiders van Cook’s gezelschappen weten ook wel beter.”

(Ver Den Uitkijk 1899a, 4).

“De bekende Engelsche touristenfirma Thomas Cook, die, evenals Lissonne reizigers in kudden van tien, twintig en meer over de wereld zendt om ze in zooveel dagen tegen betaling van zooveel gulden al het moois van de Riviera, van Zwitserland, van Amerika enz. enz. te laten zien, organiseert op dit oogenblik een Paasch-uitstapke naar Nederland en geeft ter verhooging der aantrekkelijkheid daarvan de volgende beschrijving. / ‘Stel u voor, een land, dat jaarlijks 600,000 pd st aan zijn inwoners kost om het boven water te houden, of beter, om het water daarboven te houden! Een land waar, zoo gauw als de bevolking ophoudt met pompen, zij begint te verdrinken! Waar de kikvorsch, kwakend in het riet, neerkijkt op de zwaluwen, die op de daken zitten en waar schepen varen hoog boven de schoornsteenen van de huizen! / Kanalen, mijlen bij mijlen lang strekken zich naar alle richtingen uit. Schuiten, beladen met goederen of vol passagiers glijden zoetjes voorbij door de steden, die prijken met haar hel geverfde en schitterend vergulde huizen. Schilderachtige woningen, erg scheef gezakt, kerken met zonderlinge koepels en torens; drukke kaden waarop hooge bomen groeien, en melkkarren door honden getrokken, zijn de vornaamste eigenaardigheden van Holland in zijn steden. / Op het land ziet men de boerderijen met overhangende daken gebouwd op palen, waardoor ze eruitzien als groote paddestoelen, kudden bont vee, uitgestrekte weiden, en tienduizend windmolens, die hun reusachtige
armen zwaaien over het land... / ‘t is te hopen’ zoo schrijft de Londensche corre- 
spondent van het ‘Hbld’, aan wien wij de mededeeling ontleenden, ‘dat Cook 
succes heeft met zijn Paasch-uitstapje naar Holland. Er zullen dan tenminste 
weer wat Engelschen gelegenheid hebben op te merken, dat we ook wel andere 
vervoermiddelen kennen dan trekschuiten en hondenkarren, dat in onze steden 
ook nog wel recht huizen staan en dat onze plattelanders nog niet tot paalwoningen 
gen hun toevlucht behoeven te nemen!’” (Utrechtsch Nieuwsblad 
1904).

Het oordeel van anderen over ons land is meestal wel iets anders dan we zelf 
meenen dat het zou moeten zijn. [...] Zijn we dus in vele opzichten, wat men 
zou kunnen noemen, een welonderlegd en wat het onderwijs betreft, zelfs een 
aanstondvolk, onze verbazing blijkt niet gering als we bespeuren dat vreemdelin- 
gen bij ons voor die algemene kennis niet zoo zeer opvalt dan over de grenzen, wijl ons 
volk in zijn geheel bezien nog al landelijk en uiterst eenvoudig is en bezoekers allicht 
meenen als ze die ontwikkeling bespeuren, met een uitzondering de doen te hebben, 
doch vooral omdat de vreemdeling hier dingen ziet die hoegenaamd niet modern, 
hem zelfs buitengewoon belangrijker voorkomen, dat wil hier zeggen afwijkend 
vande dingen die overal zijn. / Men kent die verontwaardiging van den gemid- 
delden Nederlander als de vreemdeling hem ‘t eerst vraagt naar de molens en 
de kanalen, naar Marken en het Czaar Peterhuisje, terwijl diezelfde man hoegenaam- 
de toont geen belangstelling toont te hebben, althans niet in die zelfde mate, voor 
ons modern leven en al wat wij toch zelf beschouwen als welk bekend voornaam-
ste. Dat de vreemdeling zich ons volk gansch op klompen voorstelt, de mannen 
gekleed in wijde broeken, de vrouwen met zilveren en gouden kappen en ontel-
bare rokken, dit brengt ons vaak buiten ons zelf. In dat oordeel zien we – en niet 
geheel ten onjuiste – een vereering van het verleden en een ontkenning en kleineering 
vand het heden.” (Holland Express 1911a, 85–86, emphasis added).

“De bekende architect van Nottingham, Arthur Marshall, heeft weer nieuwe 
 tochten door ons land gedaan, gewapend met zijn fotografie-toestel en zijn talent 
van scherp waarnemen. Marshall doet die tochten in gezelschap van bestuursleden 
van het Centraal Bureau voor Vreemdelingenverkeer en heeft zijn indrukken van 
een nieuwe excursie naar Giethoorn, Zwolle, Deventer, Kampen en tusschengele-
gen plaatsen aan dat bureau afgestaan, daarbij voegende de op den tocht genomen 
fotografieën. Het bureau op zijn beurt heeft van dit kostelijke materiaal een nieuwe 
(de 12e in de reeks) uitgave bezorgd in den vorm van een aflevering van Holland-
Express, die nu in een flinke oplaga ter gratis- verspreiding naar het buitenland is 
gezonden. Men weet niet wat in deze reisschets verdienstelijker is: de Engelse tekst 
of de foto’s. Deze laatste pakken dadelijk door hun scherpte en de gelukkige keus 
van typische stads- en dorpsgezichten. De groote foto’s van het Giethoorn-landschap 
munten uit door zonnige klaarheid en karakteristiek landschapschoon. Zij geven 
het Hollandsche Venetië buitengewoon levendig terug. Ook de kleinere kiekjes 
van Kampen, Zwolle en Deventer zijn voortreffelijk. Maar ook de tekst laat zich,

“Hollandsche reclame in Engeland. [...] Reclame maken in eigen land voor buitenlandsche zaken is aan de orde van den dag. Reclame maken voor eigen zaken in het buitenland is nog een zeldzaamheid voor den securen Hollander. Destemeer valt 't op - en kan daardoor het succes niet uitblijven, wanneer op voor de mijne de wijze voor een Hollandsche onderneming, in het groote land der reclame, in Engeland, propaganda gemaakt wordt. / Door bemiddeling van den 'Besteldienst Premier Stores', te Amsterdam, is het aan de Directie der Batavier-lijn gelukt om een buitengewone, veel opgang gemaakt hebbende reclame voor dien goedkopen Stoomvaartdienst tuschen Londen en Rotterdam uit te voren. / Een zestal jeugdige bestellers van dien Besteldienst werd in Volendammer pakjes gestoken en zoo naar eenige Engelsche badplaatsen gezonden. Geen wonder dat dit zestal overal zeer de aandacht trok en natuurlijk goed de gelegenheid waarnam om de echt-Hollandsche Batavierlijn, eens echt-netjes en goed onder de aandacht der reislustige zonen en dochteren van Albion te brengen. / Die ‘Dutch boys’ hadden overal niet alleen bekijk, maar wonnen stormenderhand de sympathie van het publiek dat hen gul en hartelijk onthaalde. / Het N.v.d.D. schreef daarover o.a.: Meingmaal werden zij medegenomen naar eene tea- of lunchroom, en informeerde hun gastheer naar de gezondheid van Bruin Sul, Jan Dunk, Klaas Plat en andere bekende Volendammers en luchten zij de hun bekende woorden als ‘dat is yau bowenbois; dat is yau onterbois; ik bin blai you te sien; how kaat het thois?’ enz. / Met een hunner gulle gastheeren, een Engelsch officier, bezochten de jongens het vuurwerk in het Crystal Palace. Deze officier, die meermalen in Volendam geweest was, had het meest plezier hierin, om hen in de maat twee aan twee door de groote zaal van het Palace te doen marcheeren, waarbij hij hun aanmaande zo hard mogelijk te stampen, hetgeen een oorverdovend lawaai veroorzaakte en groote vrolijkheid teweegbracht. / [...] Miss Gertie Millar, die kort gelden in Gaiety Theatre een populair liedje zong, getiteld ‘Rotterdam’ en wel in Volendammer costuuum begeleid door een klompendans, was oorzaak, dat de zes ‘Volendammers’ overal werden verwelkomend met het refrein van dat liedje en eenige ‘steps’ uit den dans. / Geheel London weet thans, hoe goedkoop en vlug men Holland kan bezoeken met de ‘Batavier-lijn’. [...] Bravo, Batavierijn en Premier Stores! Kranig gedaan! Zulk een reclame doet ‘t geheele Batavierland goed.” (Eigen Haard 1906, emphasis added).

“Bij het zien van deze en meer dergelijke voorstellingen, kan een Hollander wel eens kregelig worden, maar ten slotte heeft hij er niet het minste recht toe, want de dwaze begrippen omtrent zijn land hielp hij zelf in stand houden. Hoevele in Holland gedrukte reclameboekjes, die den vreemdeling naar het oude land moeten trekken, bevatten niet op den omslag een molentje bij een waterplas en den boer in de wijde broek. Wil de Hollander in het buitenland, zelfs in Indië, eens iets specifiek Hollandsch vertoonen, dan zoekt hij het in... de wijde broek. Maar zelden komt hij eens met iets nieuws, wat van den huidigen tijd, voor den dag. / Moet er voor een tentoonstelling in het buitenland een Nederlandsch paviljoen gebouwd worden, dan herinnert de stijl immer aan het Goudsche stadhuis of iets anders uit vroeger jaren, zoodat de buitenlander zich afraagt, of Holland geen nieuwe architectonische kunst te bieden heeft. [...] Officiëel Nederland vertoont daar, voor de zoovéélste maal in het buitenland, het panorama ‘Marken in 1670.’ / ‘Wij hebben,’ zei een der Nederlandsche sprekers bij de opening, ‘al zoo vaak getracht den buitenlanders te overtuigen, dat Nederland niet uitsluitend een land is van boeren, water en klompen. Wij hebben getracht hen te overtuigen, dat in Nederland de menschen ook laarzen en broeken dragen,
net als de Amerikanen en het is daarom betreurenswaardig, dat de Nederlandse commissie gemeend heeft ons werk weer ongedaan te moeten maken door den Amerikanen Holland te leeren kennen als een panorama van Marken in 1670.’ / Zouden we, als we wèér eens boos willen worden over buitenlandsche onkundigheid, de hand niet eerst in eigen jasje steken en bedenken dat de schuld ligt aan de hardheid van onze kaaskoppers, die nu eenmaal immers een buitengezomen onwil betoonen om iets eenvoudigs door te laten? / Wij Hollanders zoeken dikwijls iets zoo heél ver als het heél dichtbij te vinden is. Voor het oog van de wereld zullen we wel immer in wijde broeken blijven rondtippelen.” (De Sumatra Post 1915).

“Zou ‘t niet leuker zijn, als men den Nieuwjaarwensch in ’t vervolg liet uitspreken door en duo van dame en heer, gekleed als mannequins voor de mode van ’t jaar? ’t Is maar ’n ideetje, dat met permissie ik presenteer aan de commissie. Want wij moeten ’n beetje denken aan onze internationale verplichtingen. ‘De Bruiloft van Kloris en Roosje’ staat zo ongeveer op ’t zelfde peil als de Volendammerij. De ‘verkeerende vreemdeling’ vindt die Volendammerij wel aardig, zooals hij de Scheveningsche typen wel aardig vindt, alsmede de echte of nagemaakte Zeeuwse meisjes, de dito Bretons en Bretonnes, de Spreewalderinnen, de Zigeuners, de Sioux of Zoeloes, kortom, al wat zich den globetrotter presenteert in schilderachtig kostuum of even schilderachtig décoletté of retroussé. / Maar wij Hollanders en internationale Hagaarsen kunnen er toch niet altijd bij staan als vertegenwoordigers van ’n schilderachtig of zo genaamd schilderachtig verleden, wanneer Den Haag de stad wordt, die het midden de wereld wordt: de hoofdstad der gedachte! […] Als Den Haag, dank zij het Vredepaleis, reeds hoofdstaat van den Wereldvrede, nog hoofdstad der gedachte ook wordt, kunnen wij Hagaarsen daar toch niet met z’n drie-honderd-duizenden – door de levenwekkende internationale gedachte wellicht spoedig gegroeid tot miljoenen – bij staan als de inboorlingen, wier typische kleedij, gewoonte en vermaken de vreemdeling gaat bekijken als een curiositeit!” (De Sumatra Post 1914).

“Bioscoop-gevaar. / Geachte Redactie, / Sinds eenigen tijd worden er in onze bioscooptheaters zoogenaamde ‘Hollandsche films’ vertoond. Men krijgt dan Holland te zien, zooals het nog maar al te veel in de verbeelding van den buitenlander bestaat: de optredenden zijn zonder uitzondering in Volendamsch, Marker, Urksch kostuum; of in een hotspot van deze kleederdrachten, met soms nog een Walchersch of Zuid-Bevelandsch eigenaardighheidje er bij; op den achtergrond gewoonlijk een molen. Zonder die kleederdrachten, die menschen op klompen en die molens, is het geen ‘Hollandsche film’. / Hier schuilt m.i. een gevaar. Films als die van de firma Pathé gaan de heele wereld over, en bevestigen en verbreiden het dwaze denkbeeld, dat de Hollanders niets anders zijn, dan typisch geklede menschen, die op klompen loopen. / Wij zijn immers meer dan dat, en moeten willen dat ook het buitenland dit weet. Er is, me dunkt, wel reden

“Het nijvere Amerika. / In de gisteravond in het Nutsgebouw alhier gehouden bijeenkomst van het departement Amsterdam der Maatschappij tot Nut van ’t Algemeen hield Rev. A. A. Pfahnstiehl, uit Chicago, zijn aangekondigde voordracht over ‘Industrial America’. [...] Zijn lezing was er een met lichtbeelden, die het voordeel hadden zeer duidelijk te zijn en fraai gekleurd, maar voordat het licht uitging hield de spreker een korte inleiding, voor de vuist weg uitgesproken, waarin hij toonde een geestig causeur te zijn. Hij nam een loopje met zijn landgenooten, die Europa afreizen, ook Holland op één dag afdoen, Marken, Volendam, Broek en Scheveningen, en dan thuis in Amerika vertellen, dat: in Holland de mensen op klompen loopen, de mannen wijde broeken dragen en de vrouwen zes-en-dertig rokken over elkaar, en dat de bewoners van Broek zóó zindelijk zijn, dat ze zelfs de tanden van hun kippen en kuikens poetsen. Dat is wat men zou kunnen noemen een ietwat ‘oppervlakkige oordeel’, gevolg van het al te vluchtig reizen. Maar – zoo vroeg spreker – zouden er ook niet Hollanders zijn, die uit Amerika vluchtige, indrukken meebrengen, welke aan dat land en zijn bewoners geen voldoende recht doen wedervaren. / Daarom wilde spreker nu hier en elders in Europa een en ander vertellen over Amerika om juistere begrippen omtrent dat belangwekkende land mede te deelen, gelijk hij ginds lezingen had gehouden over Holland en de Hollanders. / Allereerst kwam hij op tegen het onverdiende vooroordeel, dat de Amerikaan vóór alles een quaker zou zijn, die enkel denkt ‘how to make money’ [...]” (Het Nieuws van Den Dag: Kleine Courant 1913).

“England has even its canal life, too, if one cared to investigate it; the broads are populous with wherries and barges; cheese is manufactured in England in a score of districts; cows range our meadows as they range the meadows of the Dutch. We go to Holland to see the town, the pictures, and the people, we go also because so many of us are so constituted that we never use our eyes until we are on foreign soil. It is as though a Cook’s ticket performed an operation.’ – Well, the cataract being there, the operation had better be performed as quickly as possible, and a Cook’s ticket taken whether to Holland or any other foreign country. Let us travel even if it only enables us – and it will do considerably more – to appreciate the beauties of our own native land.” (Thomas Cook & Son 1906a, 10, quoting Lucas, probably from the 1905 edition).

Various papers from the conference “Through Word and Places: Travel and Writing in Dutch- and German-speaking Regions of Europe between 1800 and 1950” (Münster, Germany, 1 March 2013 – 2 March 2013) showed that otherness was not only found in descriptions of peoples and places of the Far East and global South, but could also be witnessed within western Europe: “For the conference in Münster, travel and travel writing within Germany, Switzerland, the Netherlands and Belgium were an unconventional sample of European countries and regions that proved to be a closely intertwined area within the investigated period of the long 19th century. It became evident that even within Europe the exotic is not difficult to find, as looking for the completely different is also essential for travelling shorter distances.” (van Dam 2013) The exotic descriptions gave reason for some Dutch authors to oppose these descriptions, in some cases, with an explicitly formulated wish to be distinguished from groups of people that were considered inferior to Western people (De Sumatra Post 1914, see quotation in Chapter 6.4). The perceived discrimination obviously did not lead to building solidarity with other groups of people who felt affronted by being pictured in clichés.

The continuous use of the cliché in consumer culture and tourism may possibly be explained with the fairly small importance of tourist industries in comparison to brand products of consumer goods. Although tourism was a growing industry between 1890 and 1914 (Cf. Schipper 2000), advertising for consumer goods very probably reached far more people.

Original: “Een jonge Amerikaan, als Volendammer onder de Volendammers levend, dat is toch wel ’t allermarkanteste op het globe-trotter gebied. [...] Zoo verging het, aldus de vermelding, dat er reeds valsche gidsen waren, Amerikanen, die als Volendammers gekleed gingen, om hun landgenoten, op bedriegelijke of ware wijze voor te lichten. [...] Voor zijn landgenoten, de Amerikanen, speelde hij voor gids, en dan kreeg hij een dubbeltje of een kwartje fooi. Grappige sensatie voor iemand die zelf het geld met handenvol daar verteerde.”