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# Guidebooks and the Representation of 'Other' Places

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## 1. Introduction

Tourism destinations do not simply exist. In what can be described as processes of symbolic transformation (Dietvorst & Ashworth, 1995), destinations are created and recreated by both tourists and tourism texts. Postcards, brochures, souvenirs, travel magazines, websites, advertisements and guidebooks all play their part in these processes. Tourism texts imbue places with meanings and create sights that tourists should see (Crang, 2004). These meanings attached to destinations can be part of wider circuits of culture and reproduce images or ideas from the literature, movies or news media. Such processes of symbolic transformation, or 'sacralization' (Crang, 2004; 71), turn ordinary places into destinations to visit and sites into 'must-see-sights'.

Tourism texts are the focus of this chapter. These texts are important for tourists because of the somewhat intangible and experiential nature of tourism (Osti et al., 2009) and because of the time lag that often exists between purchase and consumption, as "the product, the experience and destination, is normally purchased prior to arrival" (McGregor, 2000; 29). Wong and Liu (2011) thus characterise a trip as a high risk purchase involving both disposable income and free time. Searching for information, both before the purchase and during the trip, helps to reduce the risks. Tourists turn to both internal and external information sources when planning a vacation (Osti et al., 2009; Wong & Liu 2011). Internal sources are the knowledge and attitudes that people have acquired in the past through personal experience with a destination (or similar destinations). Unless tourists visit the same place over and over again, their knowledge from firsthand experience is limited. Therefore, tourists also turn to external sources of information, namely, mediated or 'second-hand' experiences from friends and family or media and tourism texts (Adams, 2009). Traditionally, tourists turned to intermediaries such as travel agencies, brochures and guidebooks for help. Today, their information search might also include the Internet and social media.

Guidebooks or travel guides are still an important source of information that tourists value. According to Wong and Liu (2011), guidebooks have a competitive advantage over other information sources as they are both tangible and accessible at any time and place. Guidebooks are designed to be used during the trip, in situ (Koshar, 1998; Beck 2006), but can be used before and after the trip as well (Jack & Phipps, 2003; Nishimura et al., 2007). Another possible advantage of guidebooks over freely obtainable tourism texts, such as

websites or brochures, is that because tourists have to pay for guidebooks, they perceive them to be more reliable and useful (Lew, 1991).

This chapter focuses on how guidebooks turn places into destinations and sites into must-see-sights. This symbolic transformation is about making these sites unique and imbuing them with meaning. The tourist's interest therefore centres on what is distinctive, and different from his or her daily life. The first section of this chapter describes how tourism texts transform places into destinations and influence tourist behaviour. The second section discusses the main characteristics of guidebooks. The third section focuses on how guidebooks transform nearby places into destinations that tourists should visit and which strategies of 'othering' guidebooks use in this transformation process. The findings in this chapter are based on a literature review and analyses of guidebooks. Over the years, the author has performed several content and semiotic analyses of guidebooks sold by the Dutch automobile association (ANWB) or in bookstores in the Netherlands. The majority of these guidebooks (see list at end of references), although written in Dutch, are translations or translated editions of German-, French- or English-language guidebooks.

## **2. Symbolic transformation of destinations**

### **2.1 Tourism texts and tourists' practices**

The importance of tourism texts is not limited to helping tourists choose a destination. These texts also raise expectations about the destination and, as such, might influence tourists' satisfaction with the destination (Wong & Liu, 2011). Moreover, these texts also guide the tourist at the destination, they: "do not just describe places, but set normative agendas" (Crang, 2004; 77). Tourism texts tell tourists what to see and where to go, either by explicit recommendation or by implicit selection of the information. Tourism texts thus influence the practices of tourists (Bockhorn, 1997; Dietvorst, 2002; Gilbert 1999; Jenkins, 2003; McGregor, 2000). This influence of tourism texts on the behaviour of tourists is best understood as an hermeneutic circle (Urry, 1990) and is illustrated by the concept of the 'circle of representation' (Jenkins 2003; 308). Tourism texts - created both by official tourist boards and by authors of guidebooks, blogs and the like - and mass media in general project images of destinations. Potential tourists are lured and inspired by these images. Tourism texts thus create expectations of what a tourist should encounter and experience. At the destination, tourists visit the sights that they know from the tourism texts, and bring along their cameras to record their visit. At home, these pictures are shown to friends and family and will influence their perception of the destination. In this way, the reproduction of these images continues (Jenkins, 2003).

Nelson (2007) emphasises that the circle of representation can lead to rather 'unchanged' tourist representations over long periods of time. Today's representations of the Caribbean, recycled through the circle of representation, can be traced back to the early beginnings of tourism in the area. The narratives of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century travel writings were used by subsequent travellers and tourists and helped to shape their expectations of the area. Some travel writers explicitly referred back to earlier writings they took with them on their journey and compared their personal experience with the accounts of other writers. Moreover, authors and editors of guidebooks, who did not necessarily travel themselves, used the travel writings as a source of information. Nelson (2007) thus demonstrates the continued

recycling of the earliest tourist representations of the area. As a result, regardless of changes in writing style, print and photography technologies, today's tourist representations of the area still carry the same imagery of the Caribbean as early travel writings.

The influence of tourism texts might be rather strong: many tourists photograph sights in exactly the same way that these icons or landscapes are portrayed on postcards, in brochures or in guidebooks (Jenkins, 2003). McGregor (2000), in his research on the relation between tourists and tourism texts in Tana Toraja, found that the texts also influenced the way tourists experienced aspects of Tana Toraja that they encountered while traveling in the area. As a destination, Tana Toraja can be divided in four realms: the Known, the Imagined, the Unknown, and finally, the Unseen. This distinction is based upon the amount and kind of information (text and/or pictures) available to tourists. Known sights are the most important sights to see; these sights can be considered to be known to the tourists before they set off to the area. Guidebooks provide much information and pictures about these sights. The difference between Known and Imagined sights is that guidebooks include no photographs of the latter. Tourists thus know that they need to see these sights, but can only imagine what they look like. The Known and the Imagined sights are those that tourists seek out. The Unknown comprises sights to which tourists were indifferent because they were mentioned only briefly in the guidebooks. The Unseen is not discussed in tourism texts and is not observed or experienced by tourists (McGregor, 2000). This distinction was also applied in an analysis of tourism texts for three cities in the Netherlands: Maastricht, Enkhuizen and Amersfoort (Van Gorp, 2003). These tourism texts were translated into a map of the city showing the Known and Imagined sights, popular paths, and the parts of the city that remained outside of the tourists' experience. This map closely matched a map depicting the sights that tourists in these cities reported having visited.

Specific groups of tourists, often referred to as backpackers or travellers, might claim that they look beyond the tourist gaze, that they try to travel off the beaten paths. These groups try to discover the 'real places', seek authentic experiences and refuse to participate in mass tourism. Such tourists fit the profile of tourism as sketched by MacCannell (1976) in Urry (1990). In his view, tourism is a quest for authenticity. To a certain degree, these tourists visit different places or seek out different sights than mass tourists would. However, they seem to be caught up in their own particular gazes and discourses on destinations, as research by, for example, Jenkins (2003), Law et al. (2007) and McGregor (1999) has demonstrated. These groups of tourists might escape the circle of representation projected at mass tourists, but they do not escape the one targeted at themselves (travellers, backpackers).

## 2.2 Othering

Both the projected images in tourism texts and the tourists' images of a destination are the result of selection. According to Bockhorn (1997), a tourist image is a simplified, schematic and constructed reproduction of the destination. Part and parcel of this selection is the tourist gaze. Urry's (1990) notion of the 'tourist gaze' - the way tourists see and look at a destination - has been very influential in tourism research. Subsequent publications have applied this concept to capture both the relation between tourism texts and tourists and the selectivity of projected and perceived tourist images. As a representative of the selectivity of

tourism images, researchers following Urry's line of thought have wondered about the direction of the tourist gaze. Tourism, according to Urry (1990), is about escaping from work and daily routines and seeking different experiences. The gaze is therefore directed to what is different from home and daily practices: the extraordinary or the spectacle. Tourists gaze at things that are out of the ordinary experience of their daily lives. Jenkins (2003; 310-311) cites Hollinshead who noted that the tourist gaze is directed at "fun and/or pleasure and the consumption of things, seeking difference, appropriating other people, places and other pasts, and the pursuits which commodify things". Tourists thus gaze at 'other' landscapes and 'other' people, and seek out 'other' experiences.

Because tourism texts help to structure the tourist gaze, these texts can be expected to focus on what is distinctive. These texts, as a result, present destinations as 'counter images', as the 'other' or opposite of the tourist's place of origin (Goss, 1993). Such counter images are most obvious in the way that tourism texts present non-Western destinations to Western tourists. Western tourists set out to find 'exotic others'. Tana Toraja in Indonesia is such an exotic place, "a place of incredible and unusual architecture peopled by an exotic tribe that has remained many of its barbaric traditions" (McGregor, 2000; 36). Guidebooks direct attention to local funeral traditions, graves, and past warfare. The people of Tana Toraja thus become slightly cruel and barbaric 'others'. Another common way of depicting indigenous people is by presenting them as 'primitive' and in harmony with nature. In this way, visiting such places fulfils Western tourists needs to experience a simpler time and place (Hinch, 2004).

The Western tourist gaze also seeks pristine nature, untouched by humans. The Caribbean thus is presented "as an earthly paradise with bright skies, clear blue waters, soft white sand, and lush green vegetation" (Nelson, 2007; 1). Caribbean nature, in such tourism texts, is a stereotypical rainforest: green and dense, with an occasional waterfall and low-hanging-clouds, providing a romantic atmosphere. The local population or evidence of their lives are not shown in these pictures, as this information does not fit the romantic tourist gaze, which looks for 'pure' or 'authentic' nature. Such untouched or pure nature is, however, there for tourists to discover and admire (Nelson, 2005). In their analysis of Third World marketing for tourists, Echtner and Prasad (2003) identify two different kinds of 'pure nature'. Sea/sand destinations are presented as pristine, lush tropical areas, whereas the "pristine nature in frontier destinations is not harmless and soft (as in sea/sand countries) but described as wild and savage" (Echtner & Prasad, 2003; 666). These two types of destinations each require their own specific narratives, not just describing nature but also describing the local people and possible attractions for tourists. Frontier destinations are presented as uncivilised areas where nature and natives are savage, untamed or primitive. Tourists will be on expedition, possibly encountering dangerous animals such as lions. Sea/sand destinations are paradise, with a smiling, serving local population, luxurious resorts and beautiful soft nature (Echtner & Prasad, 2003). A third cluster of destinations found by these authors is the Orient. The representation of these destinations follows the line of orientalism. Here, tourists set out to discover the past. Marketing of these destinations centres on past glory, exemplified by ancient buildings. The tourist gaze on these destinations includes local people in simple (traditional) dress, often peasants, who are described as "unchanged and exotic remnants of another time" (Echtner & Prasad, 2003; 669). The representation of India in the Lonely Planet guidebook, analysed by Bhattacharyya (1997), fits this Oriental myth. Moreover, Lonely Planet presents India as difficult and

dangerous: one might get sick or robbed, infrastructure can be poor and poverty may upset the backpacker. This information might be read as an attempt to echo the adventures of the first explorers. Meanwhile, this representation makes the Lonely Planet guidebooks the undisputed companion for the trip (Bhattacharya 1997).

Representations of the 'exotic other' relate to sexuality as well. The myth of island paradise, according to D'Hautesserre (2004; 239), also conveys images of "island women merely awaiting Western men's attentions and affections". McGregor (2000; 36) quotes Silver (1993; 303) who feels that "guidebooks and brochures depicting the developing world "tend to portray predominantly what Westerners have historically imagined the Other to be like"". As such, tourism has been characterised as a continuation of colonial forms of interaction (D'Hautesserre, 2004; Echtner & Prasad 2003). The tourist representations of the Caribbean still centre on the view from onboard an approaching ship, the way early European visitors (explorers and later travellers) got their first impression of the islands (Nelson, 2010). The representation of the 'other', moreover, implies the continuation of unequal relations between Western tourists and local populations, as exemplified by Lonely Planet's depiction of India's local population either as something to gaze upon or as serving tourists (Bhattacharyya, 1997). D'Hautesserre (2004) emphasises that this continuation is not just the result of the representation of the 'exotic other'. The symbolic transformation of places into destinations also authorises these transformations and thereby controls the future development of tourism in these areas.

For tourism within the Western world othering is also common. Images of the exotic other are used in the tourist representation of Australia as a paradise and an adventure (Waitt, 1997). The Mediterranean is similarly presented as an exotic place: exotic gardens, palm trees, villages with narrow, colourful streets and houses with shutters (Dietvorst, 2002). Representations of Malta on postcards fit this exotic Mediterranean image of sun and sea. However, over the years, Malta has managed to add a layer to this representation that conveys heritage, implying a certain authenticity (Markwick (2001).

Hopkins (1998) studied the representation of the countryside east of Lake Huron, Canada. In the nearly two hundred tourist brochures he analysed, Hopkins discovered a number of recurring 'place myths': the natural environment, heritage and community and, to a lesser degree, escape, adventure and fun. The countryside thus becomes 'other' by representing it "as some place other than urban, some time other than the present, as some experience other than the norm" (Hopkins, 1998; 78). References to 'other time' and 'other place' can be found in tourist representations of, for example, Scotland, Ireland and the Netherlands. Scotland thus becomes a remote place of tartan and kilts, of misty landscapes with castles and lochs populated by pipers and highland dancers (Scarles, 2004). Ireland has long been presented as a place in the past with heritage and culture and apart from modern society (O'Leary & Deegan, 2005). The Netherlands is reduced to Holland, a land of seventeenth-century cityscapes and idyllic rural landscapes with windmills, cheese and tulips (Van Gorp & Béneker, 2007). An additional focus on the heroic struggle against water makes the Netherlands an 'other place', with houses built on poles and land below sea level.

Tourist representations of Western cities use similar strategies to transform these cities into sights to see. Gilbert (1999) found three different elements in tourist representations of European cities since the mid-nineteenth century. The first element is longevity: traces of the

past make the city a sight to see. The second, and seemingly opposite element is modernity. Cities are presented as modern places where modern life can be observed. The representation of some cities combine these first two elements and so the tourist gaze also focuses on how ancient and modern times are combined. The third element Gilbert (1999) mentions is the city as the site of power. This third option is not open to every city, but many cities can boast some (present or past) power. Their wealth or position in the world system is something that can be gazed upon and is what makes such cities 'others'. The tourist representation of cities thus equally centre on 'other time' (the past), 'other place' (power) and 'other experience' (modern life). Section three of this chapter will elaborate further on the way in which guidebooks represent nearby places as 'others'. First, section two will sketch a number of shared characteristics of guidebooks by focusing on the kind of information that guidebooks provide.

### 3. Guidebooks

#### 3.1 Analysing representations in guidebooks

Guidebooks are one of many possible sources of information to which tourists could turn and many tourists continue to bring guidebooks on their trips. The range of guidebooks is large, especially for long-established destinations (see text box 1). Many of these guidebooks seem to aim at the mass market of tourism or at tourists in general rather than at niche markets of special-interest tourism. The remainder of this chapter will focus on these non-specialised guidebooks. Such guidebooks can be purchased in ordinary or online bookstores or from national automobile associations. Although many of these guidebooks seem to target the generic tourist, there are many subtle differences (Gilbert, 1999). Even non-specialised guidebooks are not written for 'the tourist' in general. Different series and publishers aim at specific segments of this market, based on the motivations, values, needs and demographic or socioeconomic characteristics of the targeted audience (Lew, 1991; 126; Jack & Phipps, 2003; 291). In the selections they make, guidebooks follow their own traditions and attempt to align with their readers' expectations (Agreiter, 2000; Van der Vaart 1998). Tourists, on the other hand, will choose their guidebook based on the publisher's reputation (Laderman, 2002).

The literature on guidebooks mentions several predecessors of today's guidebooks. Jack and Phipps (2003) trace the instructional character of guidebooks back to seventeenth-century travel handbooks and travel writings in Germany. Michalski (2004) describes the relation between current guidebooks and different strands of nineteenth-century guidebooks that attempted to familiarise strangers, not necessarily tourists, with cities such as New York and San Francisco. Michalski (2004; 198) found a transition in guidebooks available for visitors to San Francisco in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, "from guides which are indicative to guides which are increasingly interpretative". The early nineteenth-century resource guides tried to provide useful knowledge about the wealth and resources of the city for visitors and immigrants to become acquainted with the city. After the 1830'-s, experiential guides become more common. These guides, characterised by more picturesque descriptions, focused more on city life (Michalski, 2004).

The development of the guidebook is also closely associated with the rise of mass tourism. "The guidebook has been seen as a key element in the development of the figure of the 'tourist', following a prescribed route through a landscape of selected and ready-interpreted

sites and monuments" (Gilbert, 1999; 282). Murray and Baedeker are therefore viewed as the founding fathers of this genre of tourist texts (Koshar, 1998). As a result of the association of guidebooks with mass tourism, guidebooks have been discarded by many scholars. The mass tourist came to be viewed as a pitiful figure, ready to be duped by its guidebook and condemned to a superficial acquaintance with the places he or she would visit – quite the opposite of (self)exploring travellers. Guidebooks, as a result, were viewed as superficial and one-dimensional (Gilbert 1999; 281; Koshar, 1998). Until the 1990'-s research on guidebooks was thus limited. Similar to other tourism texts, guidebooks are indeed selective. Their content, though not a "mirror image", is also not "purely fantasy" (Michalski, 2004;188). Guidebooks are part of broader discourses on places (Bhattacharyya, 1997; Gilbert, 1999). They show how society wishes to gaze upon certain places and how sites are transformed into sights to see (Siegenthaler, 2002; Michalski, 2004).

Guidebooks, thus, offer a framework for perceiving the destination, and, as such, they are a form of popular geographical knowledge that can be analysed (Bhattacharyya, 1997; Gilbert, 1999). Since the 1990'-s guidebooks have been a topic of research in the field of cultural studies. Authors from different disciplines and backgrounds have used content, semiotic, discourse or narrative analyses to deconstruct the representations that guidebooks offer. This 'tradition' has resulted in a plethora of cases studied, focusing on the following:

- one destination in one specific guidebook, such as Bhattacharyya's (1997) analysis of Lonely Planet India;
- one destination in several guidebooks at one point in time, such as Agreiter's (2000) analysis of six Italian guidebooks on Munich, Van der Vaart's (1999) analysis of four guidebooks on Athens, Van Gorp & Bénéker's (2007) analysis of four guidebooks on the Netherlands and Van Gorp's (2003) analysis of both guidebooks and brochures on the Dutch cities of Amersfoort, Enkhuizen and Maastricht;
- one destination in several guidebooks over time, such as Gilbert's (1999) analysis of Imperial London in guidebooks and Van der Vaart's (1998) analysis of mostly Dutch guidebooks on Paris, published between 1952 and 1997.

The analyses of guidebooks might focus on how these places, in general, are represented, or they might be directed at a specific element in these representations. Beck (2006), for example, analysed the narratives of World Heritage in series of well-known guidebooks, such as Lonely Planet, Eyewitness and Fodor's, for Greece, the UK and the Russian Federation. Laderman (2002) deconstructed the discourses on the Second Indochina War in guidebooks on Vietnam for English-speaking tourists. Siegenthaler compared the tourist gaze on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japanese guidebooks published between 1948 and 1997. His analysis focused on how guidebooks dealt with the memories of the Second World War and the atomic bomb. In section three of this chapter, the focus will be on the representation of nearby places in guidebooks. The question is what strategies of 'othering' guidebooks apply to transform places that may be physically and culturally nearby (for the readers of the guidebook) into destinations to visit. To answer that question, section three will draw upon results from many of the guidebook analyses mentioned above. These results will be augmented with findings from content analyses of Dutch-language guidebooks for Germany and Belgium.



In August 2011 a search for the most recent guidebooks for London on the booksellers website Azone.com resulted in 149 unique titles (to be) published between November 2010 and May 2012. This list includes 19 thematic guidebooks such as *London's City Churches* or *London's Parks and Gardens*. The list also included 17 guidebooks solely about consuming London (eating, drinking, shopping and sleeping), such as *Michelin's Red Guide London 2012* and *London's Riverside Pubs: A Guide to the Best of London's Riverside Watering Holes*. A number of these guides are also or solely available as e-books. The large publishers of guidebooks, such as Lonely Planet, Time Out and Eyewitness, have several different guidebooks on offer. Only some of the guidebooks were explicitly aimed at niche markets, such as *Let's Go Budget London: the Student Travel guide*, *KidsGo! London: Tell Your Parents Where to Go* or *Time Out Gay and Lesbian London*. Nevertheless, some of the thematic guides can also be seen as catering for a more specific audience of culturally motivated tourists.

The market of Dutch-speaking tourists is smaller than that of English-speaking tourists. A search for Dutch-language guidebooks on London on both the bookseller's website Bol.com and the website of the Dutch automobile association (ANWB) resulted in a list of 13 unique titles published in 2010 and 2011: *Kidskompas Londen*, *Capitool reisgids Londen*, *Marco Polo Londen*, *ANWB Navigator Londen*, *100% Londen*, *ANWB Extra Londen*, *Capitool Compact Londen*, *Wat & Hoe Londen*, *100x Londen*, *National Geographic reisgids Londen*, *Michelin Groene Gids Weekend Londen*, *Londen van Shakespeare voor 5 duiten per dag*, *Capitool Mini Londen*. The Capitool series (translated edition of Eyewitness) thus offers three guidebooks for this destination, ranging from the pocket-sized mini guide to the detailed regular guidebook. Among these 13 titles are two guidebooks that seem to aim at specific niche markets: one guide for those travelling with children (*Kidskompas*) and one themed guide about Shakespeare's London.

For another popular holiday destination among the Dutch, the Provence (France) there are at least 12 unique titles for sale on the same websites, although most of these guidebooks describe both the Provence and the Côte d'Azur. The guidebooks are *Capitool Provence & Côte d'Azur* and *Capitool Compact Provence & Côte d'Azur*, *ANWB Navigator Provence Côte d'Azur*, *ANWB Extra Provence*, and *ANWB Goud Provence, Côte d'Azur*, *Merian Live Provence*, *Trotter Provence*, *Michelin Groene Gids Provence*, *100% Provence & Côte d'Azur*, *100x Provence - Côte d'Azur*, *Lannoo Provence*, *Insight guide Provence*. If second-hand guidebook are included, the range of titles gets even bigger: *National Geographic Provence*, *Kosmos Wegwijzer Provence*, *Marco Polo Provence*, *Wat & Hoe Provence*, *ANWB Geogids Provence*, and *ANWB in geuren en kleuren Provence*.

Text box 1. A variety of guidebooks

### 3.2 Information offered by guidebooks

To familiarise the readers further with the genre of guidebooks, this section describes the information that guidebooks offer. The next section turns to some style characteristics that are shared by many guidebooks. Guidebooks for the generic mass tourist do not exist. Differences between series of guidebooks can be noted in the overall lengths of the guidebooks and in their lay-outs. The relative amounts of illustrations and text, the use of

full-colour pictures, and the structure of the information differs between the popular series of guidebooks. However, the series seem to largely agree on the kinds of information that tourists require. Four types of information can be distinguished in tourist guidebooks. First, guidebooks introduce a destination, sketching its main characteristics and offering some background information. Second, guidebooks list and describe the sights to see. Third, they offer information about where to eat, sleep or shop. Fourth, guidebooks provide their readers with detailed travel tips and advice. Some series of guidebooks, such as Capitoool and ANWB Navigator, even offer information on how to use the guidebook itself. These four types of information will be discussed in more detail below. The series of guidebooks differ in the relative attention given to each of these four types of information, as demonstrated in figure 1 and 2. The category 'else' in this figure includes the table of content, indexes and maps.

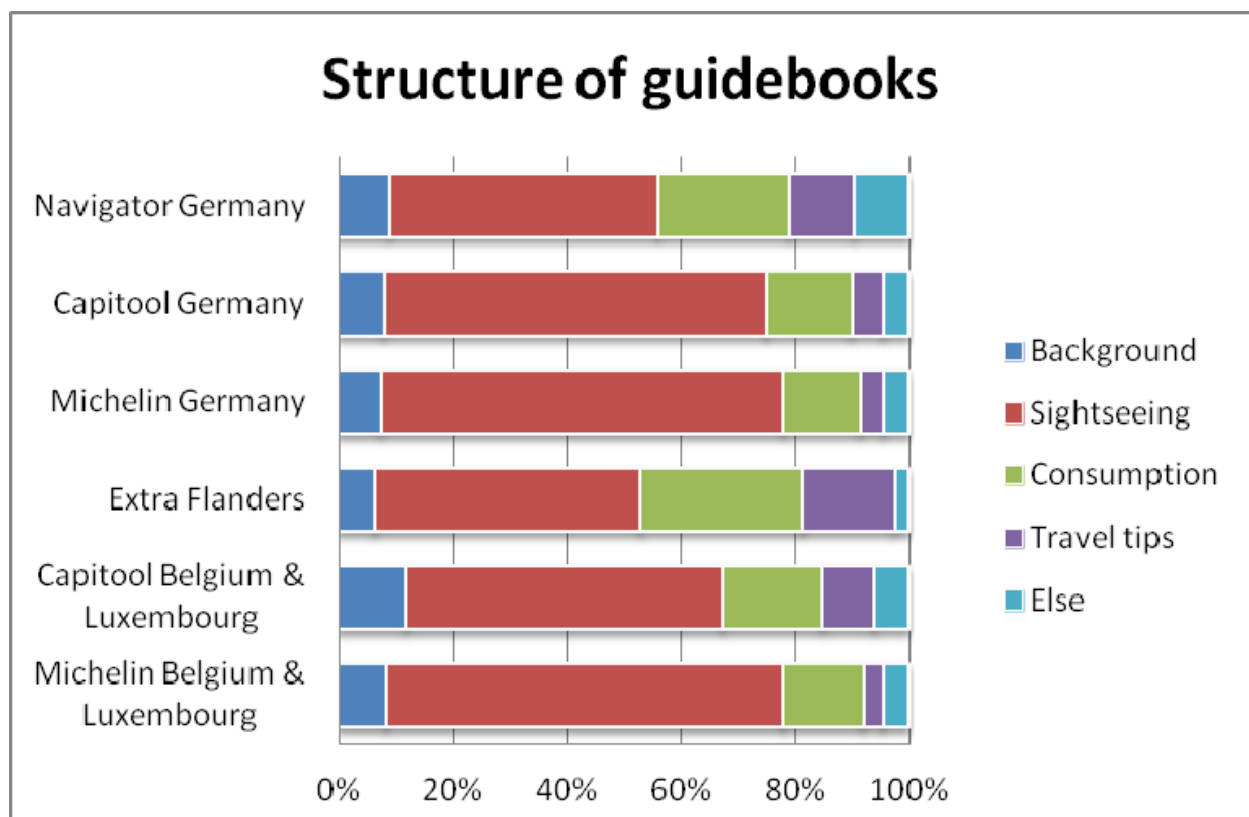


Fig. 1. The structure of guidebooks - the relative amounts of the four types of information in recent editions of Dutch-language guidebooks for Belgium and Germany. Note that the length of these guidebooks varies. ANWB Extra Flanders is a thin guidebook of only 120 pages. It does not present the whole of Flanders, but limits itself to the area west of Antwerp and Brussels. The Capitoool and Michelin guidebook each combine information on Belgium and Luxemburg in a single edition of 351 and 623 pages, respectively. The guidebooks for Germany are even longer, ranging from 462 pages for ANWB Navigator to 608 pages for the Capitoool and 830 for the Michelin guidebook.

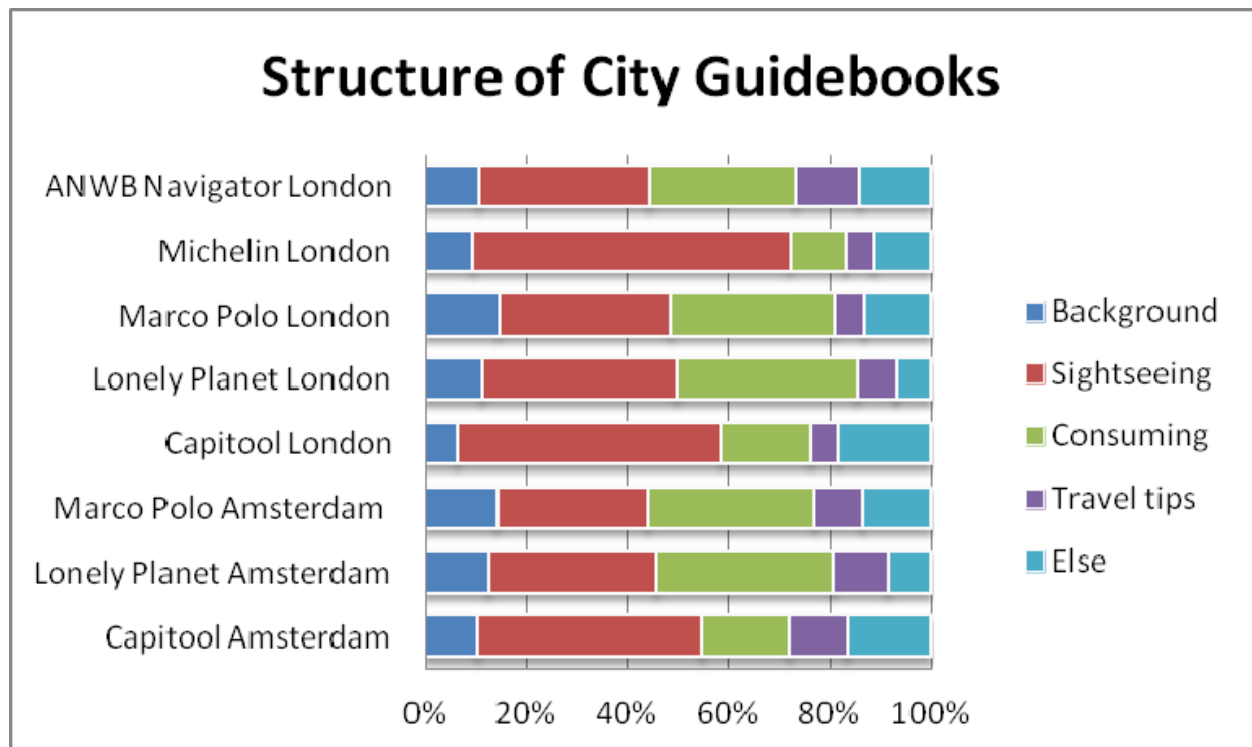


Fig. 2. The structure of guidebooks for cities, including the relative numbers of pages devoted to the different types of information in recent guidebooks for both London and Amsterdam. Marco Polo guidebooks offer relatively more background information. However, in terms of the number of pages, this background information is limited compared to the other guidebooks, as the Marco Polo guidebooks are the shortest of those compared here. Marco Polo London has only 136 pages and Marco Polo Amsterdam 140, whereas the other guidebooks for Amsterdam are approximately 270 pages long and those for London vary between 350 and 500 pages.

### 3.2.1 Background

Guidebooks usually start with an introduction of the city or region as a whole. This introduction sketches the main characteristics of the place. In many series, this short sketch is followed by more background information. This background information usually contains an historical overview - mentioning dynasties, wars and revolutions (Bockhorn, 1997). Some of the guides also offer a section on arts and culture, which might include folklore, famous poets, painters and writers, and architecture.

### 3.2.2 Sightseeing

The next section of the guidebook typically focuses on the must-see-sights. Some series rank these sights. Michelin's Green Guides distinguish between three-star sights, which are highly recommended (deserve a trip on their own); two-star sights, which are recommended (deserve a detour); interesting sights, which are awarded a single asterisk, and sights. ANWB Extra Flanders (2010) lists twelve highlights and ANWB Navigator Germany (2006) contains a two-page list of highlights and a list of 15 experiences not to miss. Guidebooks began ranking sights in the first half of the nineteenth century:

“Adopting a Murray convention, Baedeker in 1844 first used asterisks to mark those extraordinary sites that hurried travelers were to see, and later he added a second asterisk to ‘especially stellar attractions’ and then extended the system to hotels and restaurants” (Kosher, 1998; 331). According to Kosher (1998), this ranking of sights reflected the popularisation of tourism from elite travellers on extended Grand Tours to less well-to-do tourists on shorter trips to nearby places. New (and faster) modes of transportation ensured that these tourists could visit more places in the same amount of time. Because their time and money were limited, they did not have time to see everything, and efficiency became important. In 1858, Murray therefore avowed to describe what *ought* to be seen and not all that *may* be seen (Kosher, 1998). Sections in contemporary guidebooks, such as *24 Hours in London* (Marco Polo London, 2009), *Weekend Breaks* (Michelin Green Guide London, 2006) or *Amsterdam in four days* (Capitool London, 2007) anticipate this time constraint, providing suggestions for ‘hurried tourists’. However, ranking the sights not only sets priorities for tourists under time pressure, it also influences tourists’ experience at each site. Bockhorn (1997) states that the use of asterisks signals the amount of enjoyment that tourists should derive from a site.

The sights that are described by guidebooks are usually grouped together in regions, cities or neighbourhoods. Different series of guidebooks might create different geographical entities within the same city or country. The German ADAC Niederlande (2004), for example, creates 5 ‘themed’ regions, whereas the Capitool Nederland (2002) uses a simpler division into West, North, East and South that will more closely match the mental map Dutch tourists have of their nation (see table 1). Michelin’s Green Guide used to discuss sights in alphabetical order rather than by geography. However, the most recent Dutch edition for both Germany and Belgium – Luxembourg divide the county into identifiable regions.

ADAC	Capitool	Lonely Planet
1) Holland <i>North and South Holland</i>	1) Amsterdam	1) Amsterdam
2) Waddenzee <i>Wadden Islands, Friesland, Groningen</i>	2) West <i>North and South Holland, Utrecht, Zeeland</i>	2) <i>Noord-Holland and Flevoland</i>
3) IJsselmeer <i>Flevoland, Utrecht and the cities Kampen, Zwolle, Giethoorn</i>	3) North and East <i>Wadden Islands, Groningen, Friesland, Drenthe, Overijssel, Flevoland, Gelderland</i>	3) <i>Utrecht</i>
		4) <i>Zuid-Holland and Zeeland</i>
		5) <i>Friesland</i>
4) East <i>Drenthe, Overijssel, Gelderland</i>	4) South <i>Brabant, Limburg</i>	6) <i>Groningen and Drenthe</i>
5) Burgundian South <i>Limburg, Brabant, Zeeland</i>		7) <i>Overijssel and Gelderland</i>
		8) <i>Brabant and Limburg</i>

Table 1. Tourist regions in the Netherlands according to three different guidebooks: ADAC Niederlande (2004), Capitool Nederland (2002) and Lonely Planet The Netherlands (2004). The names of Dutch provinces are given in italics.

Overall, guidebooks for London identify roughly the same neighbourhoods. However, the delineation of the areas differs. Text box 2 shows the different borders three guidebooks draw around the area they call 'Southbank'. The size of the area differs remarkably both in all four cardinal directions. None of the guidebooks truly explains the 'geography' or map that it creates. These areas are not presented as social constructions but as 'real' places to be discovered. In the usually short sketch of the area, its unique features, functions or atmosphere is described (see text box 3).

Michelin Green Guide (2006):	The area between Westminster bridge and Waterloo bridge, Florence Nightingale Museum and National Theatre
Capitool Reisgidsen (2007):	The area between Lambeth bridge and Blackfiarsbridge, in the south bordered by Lambeth Road – Imperial War Museum – Garden Row.
Lonely Planet City Guide (2008):	The area between Westminster bridge and Towerbridge, in the south bordered by Westminsterbridge Road, Borough Road, Great Dover Road, Tower Bridge Road.

Text box 2. Southbank (London) according to three different guidebooks

ANWB Navigator Germany (2006; 70):	Northern Germany consists of the Länder Niedersachsen, Sleswig-Holstein and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, plus the city-states of Hamburg and Bremen. The landscape is rather flat, sometimes a little slanting and stretches along the entire coastline. Outside the busy harbor cities, that were once members of the Hanseatic League, lays a vast rural area.
Capitool Germany (2011; 418):	Northern Germany has a very diverse landscape, that varies from sandy beaches along the shores of the North- and East Sea coast to the moraine hills of Sleswig-Hollstein and the heaths of Lüneburger Heathlands. Nature lovers will like the lakes of Mecklenburg and the Harz Mountains, whereas those who are interested in history and architecture will enjoy the Renaissance castles along the Weser and the gothic brick buildings in the former Hanseatic cities. In both Goslar and Hildesheim, historical buildings remind visitors of the past glory of these cities.

Text box 3. (B)ordering Northern Germany – characteristics of a region

### 3.2.3 Consumption

The third kind of information that guidebooks offer, either in a separate section or combined with the sightseeing information, is aimed at consumption. It tells tourists where to eat, drink, sleep or shop. These sections might start off with some general comments on hotels, food, eating habits and the like in the area. This introduction is usually followed by suggested hotels and restaurants in different price ranges. Guidebooks also list a number of shops, bars, and other entertainment venues for tourists. Guidebooks usually provide information beyond the address, prices and services offered. They also evaluate the

establishments, using rather interpretative styles, as text box 4 indicates. The relative importance of this section (and thus its relative size) differs for different series of guidebooks (see figures 1 and 2). Michelin Green Guides focus more on sightseeing, whereas Lonely Planet guidebooks contain relatively large sections on consumption.

The Seven Bridges Hotel is evaluated by both Capitoool Amsterdam (2009) and Lonely Planet City Guide Amsterdam (2008). Capitoool Amsterdam (2009; 174) writes the following: "Located in a former merchant house dating from the 17<sup>th</sup> century, one of the best kept secrets of the city. A perfect sanctuary for those looking for peace and quiet. Only eleven rooms, with a view of the canals or the garden. Decorated with antiques and breakfast served in the rooms". Lonely Planet Amsterdam (2008; 217) described this hotel as follows: "private, sophisticated, intimate, the Seven bridges is one of the city's loveliest little hotels on one of the loveliest canals. It has eight tastefully decorated rooms (with lush oriental rugs and elegant antiques). The urge to sightsee may fade once breakfast, served on fine china, is delivered to your room". Although the guidebooks disagree on the number of rooms available, they both use several adjectives to describe the hotel. They describe more than the simple facts and both try to convey the atmosphere of the hotel. The reader might begin to imagine himself or herself staying in this hotel.

Text box 4. Evaluation of accommodation in Amsterdam (Southern Canal Belt)

### 3.2.4 Advice and travel tips

Finally, the guidebooks offer practical advice on topics such as climate (what is the best time of the year to visit), currency and exchange rates, public transport, language (useful phrases) and other essentials. Part of these travel tips might be offered in the beginning of the guidebook, but the majority can be found in the last section of the guidebook. Guidebooks also contain maps to ensure that tourists can find their way. In some series of guidebooks, detailed street plans are included in the sightseeing section; in other series, all maps are placed in the back of the guidebook (part of the 'else' category in figures 1 and 2).

### 3.3 Guidebooks as substitutes for a personal tourist guide

This combination of information more than covers tourists' information needs as described by Smecca (2009; 110). Tourists have three fundamental information needs: a need for orientation in foreign places, an interest in the place's social and cultural history, and finally a need to save both money and time. The above presentation of the content of guidebooks demonstrates that guidebooks cater to these information needs. Tourists can learn about the history and culture of their destination from their guidebook; they are told which sights they must see; and the maps help them to navigate from their hotels to the sights and back. Because the authors of guidebooks have evaluated the quality of hotels and restaurants, finding a place to eat or sleep is easy. The risk of spending too much money is reduced, as tourists know exactly what is offered. This is what Baedeker envisaged with his guidebooks. He allegedly sought to create a guidebook that would make the traveller as independent as possible from all sorts of local tourism entrepreneurs such as hotel owners (Koshar, 1998). The information that guidebooks offer moreover free tourists from another local tourism

entrepreneur: the personal tourist guide (Jack & Phipps, 2003). The role of this modern personal tourist guide, according to Cohen (1985), has four components. By showing instrumental leadership, the guide first ensures that the tour will go smoothly. As a pathfinder, the guide has to lead the way, ensure that access is granted and bear responsibility for the behaviour of the tourists in his or her care. Second, social leadership refers to the guide's role in maintaining the morale and good atmosphere in the group of tourists (Cohen, 1985). Third, the outer-directed mediatory sphere represents the personal guide as "a middleman between his party and the local population, sites and institutions, as well as touristic facilities" (Cohen, 1985;13). Finally, the communicative mediatory sphere represents the guide as a cultural broker, selecting sights to see and describing and interpreting them to the tourists. In her analysis of Lonely Planet India, Bhattacharyya (1997) demonstrates how this guidebook performs all but one component of the role of a personal tourist guide. As a book, Lonely Planet India cannot be a social leader, responsible for the morale and cohesion of the party. The afore mentioned 'usual' content of guidebooks supports the three remaining components of the personal tourist guide's role. The sightseeing section replaces the personal guide as a cultural broker. An introduction to the area and background information on history and culture, the travel advice and the section on consumption substitute the personal guide as both a middleman and a pathfinder. These sections offer suggestions on where to eat or sleep, on itineraries, on some behavioural guidelines and sometimes even on useful sentences in the local language.

The voice of guidebooks seems to echo the personal tourist guide. On some occasions, guidebooks explicitly direct tourists rather than only describing a destination. ANWB Navigator Germany (2006; 75) thus instructs readers to "Stroll through the city centre near the Neuer Markt and visit Schloss Jever" in Jever. Like personal tourist guides, guidebooks address tourist directly as if they were engaged in a conversation. In its Food and Drinks section, ANWB Extra Flanders (2010; 25) thus advises readers on dining out in Flanders: "...in plainer localities you could stick to the main course - you will never leave the establishment still feeling hungry". Bhattacharyya (1997; 375) calls this the voice of an implicit narrator "the reader is frequently referred to with second person pronouns and it is not hard to imagine the texts as the narrator's chat to the reader over a bottle of beer". Some guidebooks, such as the Marco Polo and Lonely Planet series, even contain a short section with insider tips where the Insider, like a personal guide, shares his or her favourite places to see or go. Although these examples might evoke the idea of a conversation between a tourist guide and tourists, the authors of most guidebooks stay out of sight (Bhattacharyya, 1997; Laderman, 2002).

Guidebooks thus speak with certain authority (Bhattacharyya, 1997). The information in guidebooks is presented as a fact. There seems to be no alternative reading of history or place than the one offered by the guidebook. The information is to be taken for granted "as a straightforward, self-evident description of reality, rather than as a socially constructed representation" (Bhattacharyya, 1997; 376). According to Koshar (1998; 326), travel in itself offers enough uncertainty, so guidebooks were not designed to "bewilder the reader/traveler or to introduce the potential for a multiplicity of meanings while viewing particular touristic sites". Guidebooks need to offer "clarity, precision and 'scientific' accuracy" (ibid). The implied objectivity of such descriptions signals reliability to the readers, and this authoritative and directional voice eventually differentiated the modern guidebooks from travel writing (Gilbert, 1999, Koshar, 1998, Smecca, 2009).

The authoritative voice is also reflected in the consumption section of many guidebooks, which not only describes the location or the menu of hotels and restaurants, but also evaluates the quality of the rooms, food or service. These evaluations are likewise presented as facts or as Bhattacharyya (1997; 375) puts it, "any reasonable person is expected to agree with the evaluation" (see also text box 4). Another example of the authoritative voice is the use of stars to rank the sights in importance. The text on the back cover of the Green Guide Belgium and Luxembourg (2011) demonstrates that Michelin sees its ranking system as a selling point of the guide and praises its practicality. The text does not explain who ranked these sights and why a certain sight was awarded two or three stars. The editorial of the Green Guide Germany (2011), however does assure its readers that the guidebook's author(s) continuously evaluate and judge the importance of each site and thus reevaluates its rankings. This approach is presented as another selling point.

Thus far, different characteristics of guidebooks have been discussed. However, little attention has been paid to what guidebooks actually gaze at and what they present as sights to see. The next section of this chapter will focus on attempting to shed some light on how guidebooks transform places that are culturally and / or physically nearby into places to visit and sights to see.

## **4. Othering what is nearby**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Although new markets and destinations are opening up and air travel makes more far-flung destinations feasible, the majority of tourists stay rather close to home. Of the 36.4 million holidays taken by the Dutch almost half were spent in the Netherlands (CBS, 2009) and more than 60% of their 3.8 million short trips were spent in the neighbouring countries of Germany (38%) and Belgium (29%). Popular destinations for Dutch tourists' 14.6 million long holidays were France (16%), Germany (14%), Spain (10%), Austria (8%), Belgium(6%) and Italy (6%) (CBS, 2009). These popular destinations for Dutch tourists might be slightly more familiar, through firsthand experience (because these destinations have been popular for a long time) but also because they receive more attention in, for example, news media or education. Guidebooks have to transform these countries, which are culturally and physically rather close to the audience, into destinations. As shown in the first section of this chapter, such symbolic transformations focus on what is distinctive, what deviates from the everyday life of the tourist.

Strategies for othering have been studied in the context of tourism, perhaps most prominently in examining how the Global South or Orient are represented for Western tourists. Section 1.2 of this chapter presented some examples of how places in the West become tourist destinations. Hopkins (1998) demonstrated that othering, or what he called 'alterity', could be achieved by three different 'routes': 1) stressing that a destination is an 'other place'; 2) referring to 'other times'; and 3) emphasising that the destination offers 'other experiences'. Van Gorp and Béneker (2007) demonstrated that these three routes offer a useful framework to deconstruct tourist representations within the Western world. Gilbert's (1999) strategies used by European cities also match this distinction. Focusing on the longevity and past glory of cities places them in an 'other time'. Presenting them as truly modern creates 'other experiences', as does the combination of old and new. Cities



presented as sites of power become 'other places', places where people can admire royal palaces, luxury townhouses of tradesmen or shiny new headquarters of international firms.

#### 4.2 Other times - Places packed with monuments and museums

Whereas the earliest guidebooks had an eye for industry, economy and ethnography, later editions and series focused more and more on monuments and museums (Koshar, 1998; Michalski, 2004). What tourists ought to see in Germany, according to Murray, thus became "statues and monuments, historical buildings such as Gothic cathedrals and castles, and ruins [...] scenic natural beauties and their counterparts, sublime natural disasters" (Koshar, 1998; 327). This 'repertoire' of sights to see in guidebooks has not changed much since then. Van der Vaart (1999) analysed four guidebooks for Athens (ANWB, Standaard, Michelin and Capitoool). The sections on Athens in these guidebooks focused primarily on monuments and museums or artefacts in museums (see figures 3a+b). Places, meaning squares, streets and neighbourhoods, accounted for the smallest amount of written (approximately 20 to 25%) and visual information (in the range of 5 to 25%) of the three kinds of sights identified by Van der Vaart (1999). A comparison by the same author of guidebooks for Paris published between 1952 and 1997 shows that the emphasis on monuments and museums has increased over time to the detriment of representations of Paris as a city of Parisians, of creativity and sensuality. Van der Vaart (1998; 204) calls these processes 'petrification' and 'fossilisation': guidebooks focus more and more on stone (monuments, museums) and less on people. The people who figure in the guidebooks belong to the past. Both trends place destinations in 'other time', an undefined glorious past.

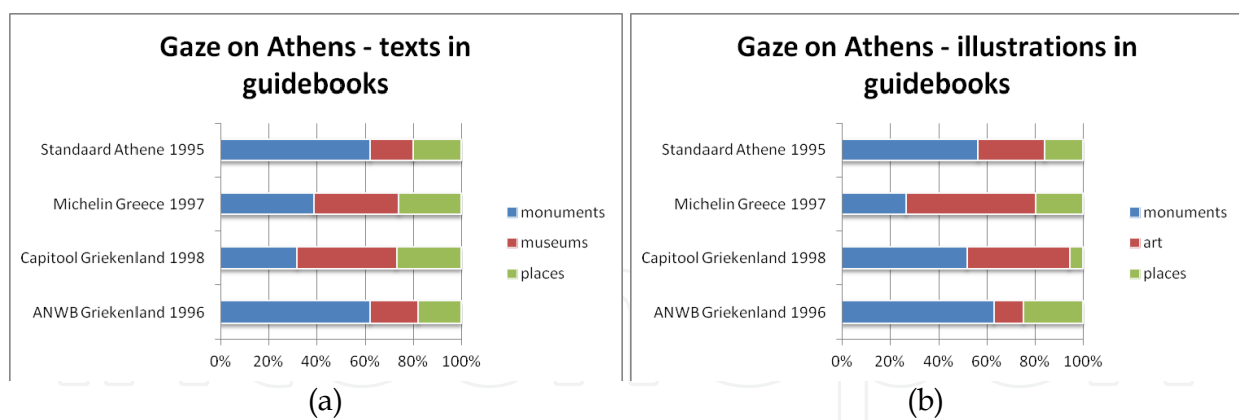


Fig. 3. The tourist gaze on Athens in four guidebooks. The percentages of pages of text (a) and of illustrations (b) devoted to either monuments, museums or art, and places (streets, squares and neighbourhoods) are shown. After: Van der Vaart (1999)

Petrification and fossilisation are thus possible strategies for transforming places into destinations that might be used in recent edition of Dutch-language guidebooks for Germany and Belgium. The author therefore performed a content analysis on three guidebooks for both Belgium and Germany: ANWB Extra Flanders (2010), Capitoool Belgium & Luxemburg (2010), Michelin Green Guide Belgium & Luxemburg (2011), ANWB Navigator Germany (2006), Capitoool Germany (2010) and Michelin Green Guide (2010).

Dutch (translated) editions were used. For the analysis, a sample of three regions was selected: two regions in Germany and one region in Belgium. The Capitool guidebooks were used as a reference for the delineation of these regions. For Belgium, the Capitool section 'Middle and Eastern Flanders' was chosen, which covers a vast region stretching between Antwerp and Brussels to the west and the Dutch province of Limburg to the east. For Germany, two different regions, as defined by the Capitool guidebooks, were selected: Reinland-Pfalz & Saarland in the west and Bayern in the south. To establish whether petrification can be observed in today's guidebooks, the photographs included in the information on the selected regions were categorised. Table 2 summarises the results for the German regions. Overall, it is clear that the section(s) on Bayern are lengthier than those on Reinland-Pfalz & Saarland. This result can be explained partly by the relative size of the areas and partly by Munich, which receives substantial attention. Moreover, table 2 shows that the majority of photos in these sections present 'other times' in the guise of monumental

	Reinland Pfalz & Saarland			Bayern		
	ANWB Navigator	Capitool	Michelin Green Guide	ANWB Navigator	Capitool	Michelin Green Guide
Monumental buildings and streetscapes	13	31	5	30	84	10
Monumental interiors	1	15	0	15	45	5
Museum collection	2	6	1	24	42	1
Statues	0	7	0	6	13	1
Modern buildings	0	0	0	4	2	2
Rural and natural areas	4	4	3	5	11	6
Industry	0	1	1	0	1	0
People	1	0	2	9	10	1
Else	3	2	0	5	12	1
Total number of photographs	24	60	12	97	219	27
Number of pages	8	24	67	41,5	82	146

Table 2. Petrification - In guidebooks, Germany still is a country of "statues and monuments, historical buildings such as Gothic cathedrals and castles, and ruins" as Koshar (1998; 327) indicated. Natural beauty receives some attention. Findings of a content analysis of photographs in three guidebooks on Germany: ANWB Navigator Germany (2006), Capitool Germany (2010) and Michelin Green Guide (2010).

buildings and streetscapes, monumental interiors, museum collections and statues. 'Stone' thus figures prominently in these guidebooks. This finding is reinforced by the relatively few photos of people and of rural or natural areas included in the guidebooks. From a Dutch perspective, a focus on landscape would certainly help to turn Germany into an 'other place': the hills of Reinland-Pflaz and Saarland or the mountains in Bayern offer a different view than what Dutch tourists experience at home. Indeed, pictures of mountains and lakes

and of the vineyards lining the Mosel are present, but they are rather rare compared with pictures of historical buildings and artefacts on display in museums. Because, in this analysis, photos were only ascribed to one category, there was a bit more greenery present in the guidebooks than Table 2 indicates. The photos were ascribed to a category based on the focus of the camera. Greenery in such photos was no more than a setting for 'stone', a castle or church.

Some differences between the guidebooks were notable as well. Firstly, the Capitool guidebook contains many more photos than the other guidebooks (note that illustrations other than photos were not even included in this analysis). The Michelin Green Guide has the most text pages overall. This guide does, however, use a larger font than the other guidebooks. Secondly, ANWB Navigator seemed more interested in monuments of industry and engineering and presents a number of pictures of antique cars, fighter jets and bicycles, all of which are part of the collections of museums in Munich. As a result, the photographic representations of the city of Munich differ remarkably between the ANWB Navigator and the Capitool guidebook. The Capitool guidebook presents Munich as a city of past wealth: important buildings, lush baroque or rococo interiors, and works of art. This representation of the city concurs with the representation of Munich in Italian guidebooks: a city full of churches, museums and castles (Agreiter, 2000).

The guidebooks on Belgium show evidence of petrification as well (table 3). Again the guidebooks gaze on monumental buildings and cityscapes and highlight museums. Compared with the photographs of the German regions, there are relatively more photos of people in the Belgium sample. These photos depict people having a drink inside or outside a bar or visiting a flea market. Such photos show the present and not some distant 'other time'. As such, fossilization is less prominent in these guidebooks. Table 3 also shows that the Capitool guidebook and the Michelin Green Guide present middle and eastern Flanders differently. Eighty per cent of the photographs in the Capitool guidebook depict monuments or museums. In the Michelin guide, this number is 40%, but 'stone' is also represented in four photographs of modern buildings. The Michelin guidebook depicts Brussels and Antwerp as cities with both monumental and modern buildings. These cities, then, do not belong to 'other times' entirely. They are examples of cities where the old and new coincide, a well-known strategy according to Gilbert (1999).

Petrification and fossilisation are not solely a matter of what photographs editors put in their guidebooks. These trends result from selections of the sights to see and the information that is given about these sights. The texts of the sightseeing sections of guidebooks are thus equally important. From the selected German and Belgian regions three places were sampled for a closer look at the texts: Antwerp, the Moseltal and Berchtesgadener Land. These three very different places are included in all three available guidebooks. ANWB Extra Flanders dedicates 12 pages to Antwerp including information on events, consumption and a detailed map. Capitool also spends 12 pages on Antwerp, but the analysed section only consists of sightseeing information. Michelin's Green Guide section on Antwerp is 32 pages long but it includes detailed streetmaps and information on where to eat, sleep and have a drink. ANWB Navigator Germany rates Moseltal 4 (on a five-point scale) for its picturesque qualities and dedicates two pages to the area. It advises tourists to take a boat ride and see the valley from the river. The Capitool and Michelin guidebooks both suggest a trip by car along the valley. Michelin awards the valley three stars and spends six pages describing the sights to see in this valley and its immediate surroundings.

The Capitool guidebook only spends one page on explaining the area and the sights along the route. Berchtesgadener Land is considered almost equally beautiful as the Moseltal. The area is awarded two stars by Michelin, which dedicates 6 pages to the area (including information on consumption). ANWB Navigator rates this area also 4 for its picturesque qualities and 5 for outdoor activities. Like Capitool, ANWB Navigator dedicates two pages of information to this area. The content analysis first focused on what kind of sights the guidebooks write about in Antwerp, Moseltal or Berchtesgadener Land. Following Van der Vaart's (1999) analysis of guidebooks on Athens, four categories of sights to see were identified in the guidebook passages on Antwerp: monuments, museums, places and else. Monuments as a category include buildings, historical or modern. Places encompass squares, streets, neighbourhoods and villages. The analysis furthermore categorised the kind of information offered about these sights.

Middle and Eastern Flanders: Brussels, Antwerp, Limburg and Flemish Brabant			
	ANWB Extra	Capitool	Michelin Green Guide
Monumental buildings and streetscapes	2	46	6
Monumental interiors	0	26	1
Museum collection	0	30	0
Statues	0	15	0
Modern buildings	0	2	4
Rural and natural areas	0	3	1
Industry	0	0	0
People	1	15	3
Else	0	9	2
Total number of pictures	3	146	17
Number of pages	14	72	170

Table 3. Petrification - Emphasis on buildings, streetscapes, interiors and art collections in photographs in guidebooks on the Belgian provinces of Brussels, Antwerp, Limburg and Flemish Brabant. Findings of a content analysis of three guidebooks on Belgium: ANWB Extra Flanders (2010), Capitool Belgium & Luxemburg (2010), Michelin Green Guide Belgium & Luxemburg (2011).

	Antwerp		
	ANWB Extra	Capitool	Michelin Green Guide
Monuments	9	15	22
Museums	8	12	14
Places	7	9	12
Else	2	0	3
Total sights	26	36	51

Table 4. Sights to see in Antwerp according to three guidebooks of Belgium: ANWB Extra Flanders (2010), Capitool Belgium & Luxemburg (2010), Michelin Green Guide Belgium & Luxemburg (2011).

The guidebooks show remarkable similarities in their choices of sights to see in Antwerp. All three guidebooks start at Grote Markt and then move to, for example, Onze Lieve Vrouwe Cathedral, Vleeshuis, Sint Pauluskerk, and the city's central train station. Museums are an important part of what Antwerp has to offer tourists, and again, the guidebooks largely agree on what is interesting: the eight museums mentioned by ANWB Extra also appear in the other two guidebooks. Table 4 shows that the majority of the sights to see in Antwerp are monumental buildings and museums. For Antwerp, today's guidebooks follow the pattern described by Van der Vaart (1998, 1999). Approximately a quarter of the sights are places such as Grote Markt, Cogels-Osylei and the Diamant neighbourhood. The information that guidebooks offer about the sights to see in Antwerp centres on the history of the sights, the appearances of monuments and places (architecture and interior) and the collections in museums (see figure 4). Petrification and fossilization are thus the most pronounced in the written information, the same goes for fossilization. If people are mentioned, they usually are the owners, architects or painters, and they are usually people who lived in the past. A few exemptions from this fossilization stand out, such as the short description of the Diamant neighbourhood in the Michelin Green Guide, which mentions both its history and the current situation.

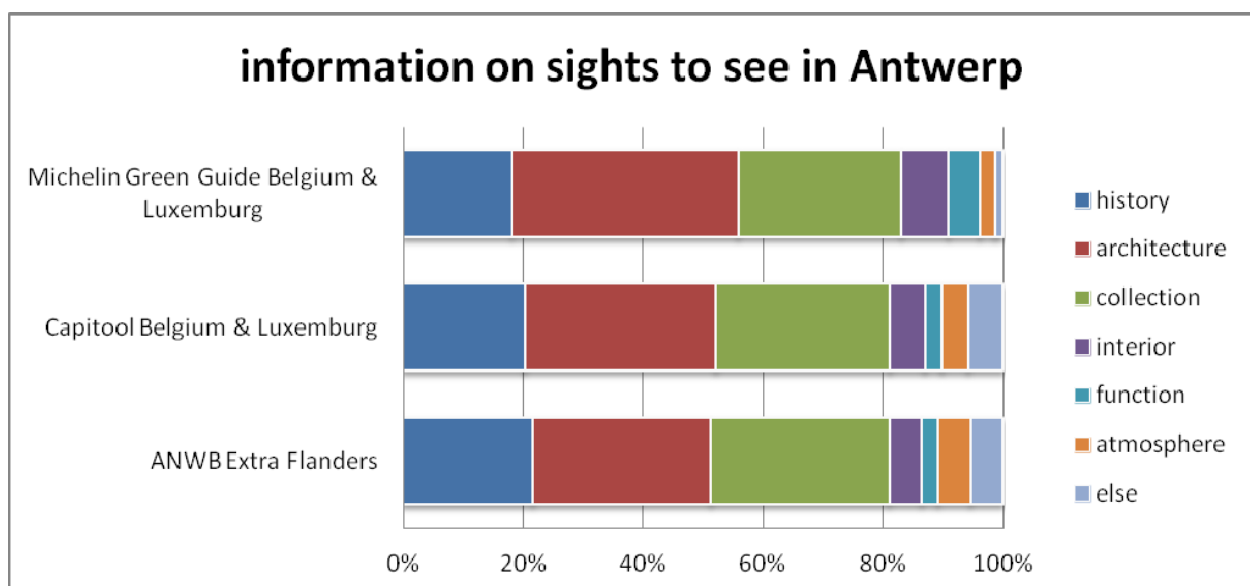


Fig. 4. Petrification and fossilisation in the written information about sights to see in Antwerp. Guidebooks most frequently offer information on the architecture or building style, followed by information on museum collections and information on the history of the sights. This graph does not represent the length or relative amount of these types of information, but rather the number of times a certain kind of information was offered.

Petrification might be more pronounced in texts on cities because of the high density of buildings inherent in cities. Even if just a small percentage of these buildings are worth seeing, this results in a large number of sights to see in a city. If petrification is strong, then even in rural or natural areas guidebooks would predominantly gaze at buildings. To check this, the Moseltal and Berchtesgadener Land were selected. As table 5 shows, there are more pronounced differences between the guidebooks in their gaze on the Moseltal and Berchtesgadener Land. Capitoool's gaze at the Moseltal most clearly demonstrates

petrification. The sights to see in this valley are six castles and one chapel. The information on these sights is brief and mainly focuses on the history of the castles. Michelin's Green Guide lists both castles and churches but also villages. The written information is mainly short and describes the appearances or the history of the sights. The few people who are mentioned are people from the past: the founder of a medieval hospital and a painter. The best places to view the river and the vineyards is a recurring theme in the text in this guidebook. This guidebook then partly turns its gaze to spectacular landscapes or natural beauty. The ANWB Navigator does things differently. It claims that the best way to see or experience the valley is by boat. It then first gives readers advice on this boat trip. The destination of the boat trip is Cochem, and this town and its castle are the only sights mentioned. The text continues with information on the easiest way to get a good view of the river and town and gives advice about visiting the vineyards in the area. In this specific sample, the level of petrification thus differs between the guidebooks. The limited information about people in these texts makes it difficult to tell if fossilization is an issue.

	Moseltal			Berchtesgadener Land		
	ANWB Navigator	Capitool	Michelin Green Guide	ANWB Navigator	Capitool	Michelin Green Guide
Monuments	1	7	14	2	2	4
Museums	0	0	2	1	0	1
Places	1	0	10	0	2	3
Else	2	0	2	1	3	4
Total sights	4	7	28	4	7	12

Table 5. Sights to see in the Moseltal and Berchtesgadener Land, according to three guidebooks of Germany: ANWB Navigator Germany (2006), Capitool Germany (2010) and Michelin Green Guide (2010).

The findings for Berchtesgadener Land are slightly different (see table 5). The Capitool guidebook in this case seems to focus less on monuments and museums. Two of the selected sights are villages and two others are lakes (Königssee and Hintersee). Overall, the guidebook seems to gaze at the landscape. It calls this area one of the most beautiful areas of Europe and uses words like 'idyllic' and 'picturesque' to describe the villages and their location. Besides such scenic information, the guide includes some historical and art historical facts. ANWB Navigator focuses less on the landscape. It describes four sights to see: Königliches Schloss, Kehlsteinhaus, Dokumentation Obersalzberg and the salt mines. The written information focuses on the history of these sights and of the area. Michelin's Green Guide selects a variety of sights: the Schloss, Kehlsteinhaus, the salt mines and three lakes. Its information is mixed (history, architecture, museum collections). Similar to the information on the Moseltal, the views, and the best spots to get a good view of the area are important. In the text of all three guides few people are mentioned and those who are mentioned, Prince Rupprecht and Hitler, lived in the past.

Nearby places thus become destinations packed with monuments and museums for the tourist to admire. The most important strategy that guidebooks use to transform nearby places into destination is by placing these places in an 'other time', more specifically: in the

past. This gaze is apparent in what the guidebooks select as sights to see and what they offer in terms of written information about these sights. It is also apparent in the photographs that are included. The focus on 'stone' and on past times and past people were termed 'petrification' and 'fossilisation' by Van der Vaart (1998). Although his analysis was completed more than ten years ago, this aspect of guidebooks does not seem to have changed much. The only parts of guidebooks that could possibly counterbalance this emphasis on stone, past times and past people is the background information offered in the introduction. In this section, guidebooks sketch the main characteristics of the area they describe. They may provide information about the natural and cultural landscape (Michelin Green Guides), about the current political situation (Michelin Green Guides and ANWB Navigator Germany) or about today's society in general (Navigator Germany). However, a relatively large part of these background sections is dedicated to describing the region's history, its rulers and its famous poets, painters and scientists (ranging from 44% of the pages providing background information in the ANWB Navigator Germany to 65% in the Michelin Green Guide Germany).

#### **4.3 Othering through stereotypes and clichés**

Guidebooks can use other strategies to create 'other place', 'other time', or 'other experiences'. One well-known way of othering is the use of stereotypes and clichés, which are oversimplified, one-sided representations of people and of the country or region (anything but the people), respectively (Dekker et al., 1997). Stereotypes and clichés usually express difference and thus establish 'other place'. When related to local food and drinks, they might represent 'other experience'. Occasionally stereotypes place people back in time, still cherishing age-old habits and wearing traditional dress. Stereotypes and clichés may be the result of 'uploading' or 'downloading' (Boisen, Terlouw & Van Gorp, 2011). Uploading is the transformation of a local characteristic or peculiarity into a regional or even national trait. The reverse process is downloading: national or regional traits are 'transported' into every place in that area. The Dutch cliché of the struggle against water (living in a delta and defending land from water) can serve as an example of downloading. Water has become part of the tourist gaze on the Netherlands as a whole; as a result water is omnipresent in pictures in guidebooks about the Netherlands, even when representing the areas situated on the drier, sandy soils in the east and south of the country (Jansen, 1994 in Van Gorp & Béneker, 2007). The well-known Dutch icons, tulips, cheese, windmills and clogs, provide an example of uploading. Although tulip bulbs are grown in a specific area, souvenir shops all over the country sell tulip items as well as 'Gouda' cheese and Delftware (Van Gorp & Béneker, 2007). In a slightly different process one place comes to stand for a regional or national characteristic. Amsterdam is the epitome of tolerance, a city where anything goes: the red-light district, soft drugs, and gay bars. Lonely Planet City Guide Amsterdam captures this gaze on Amsterdam in three pictures using the slogan "have a vice time". The 'vice time' is really part of this guidebook's gaze at Amsterdam. It discusses 'tolerance' in detail, presents the red-light district as a sight to see and even evaluates a number of coffee shops (not for coffee) in its consumption section. Part of this gaze at vice or tolerance might be typical for Amsterdam. However, it is national legislation that tolerates coffee shops and allows gay couples to marry. The Capitoool guidebook on Amsterdam therefore feels little need to discuss these topics at great length, except for the red-light district, which is recognised as a sight to see. Amsterdam's tolerance, moreover, might be on its way to

becoming a true stereotype. It does not fit the images that are deemed appropriate for marketing the city (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2007). Meanwhile, the red-light district has changed, tolerance is not what it once was, policies on soft drugs are changing and Amsterdam is no longer the most gay-friendly city. Both guidebooks on Amsterdam mention these changes.

According to Agreiter (2000; 38), Italian guidebooks on Munich use many stereotypes and clichés to present the city. Munich is the city of festivals, specifically Oktoberfest, and the Münchners are a beer-drinking, lederhosen-wearing, partying lot of people who love their city above all. Munich is an important destination in the selected Dutch-language guidebooks of Germany in terms of the number of pages used to describe the place and its must-see-sights (25 to 34 pages). Oktoberfest is mentioned by the Capitool Germany, but only a few times in the whole guidebook and twice in the section on Munich. Overall this guidebook gazes mainly at monuments and museums, and not so much at 'locals'. Michelin Green Guide Germany provides its readers with slightly more Oktoberfest and Biergarten information, but this event still is not the centre of attention. The ANWB Navigator guidebooks starts its introduction of Munich by stating that the city has a traditional, beer and lederhosen image, but that this stereotype does not do justice to the excellent shopping opportunities, the trendy bars and the museums. The use of this stereotype in guidebooks on Germany as a whole is thus limited.

Analysis of four guidebooks for the Netherlands by Van Gorp & Beneker (2007) demonstrated that stereotypes and clichés were used in the symbolic transformation. The guidebooks contained pictures of clogs, tulips, cheese and windmills, and these icons figured prominently on the covers of the guidebooks. The icons were, however, not as omnipresent in guidebooks as they were on the official tourist board website Holland.com. Compared with the total amount of pictures provided in these guidebooks, these stereotypes were few. A content analysis of two guidebooks for France, and three each for Germany and Belgium concurs with these findings. Some pictures of stereotypes and clichés are present. They are, however, not omnipresent and do not outnumber pictures of monumental buildings. Thus, France, in the Lonely Planet and Capitool guidebooks, is not a country populated by beret-wearing men playing 'petanque' or carrying a baguette under their arm. In fact, the 672 pages thick Capitool guidebook has only two pictures of men with berets and two of people playing petanque. There is one cliché on which both guidebooks linger in quite substantial detail: French cuisine and French wine. Both guidebooks have many pictures and written information describing local varieties of wine and regional foodstuffs. Gastronomy is part of the tourist gaze on France. Guidebooks present Belgium as 'the land of beer', which is the title of a two-page section in Michelin Green Guide Belgium and Luxemburg. This means that all three guidebooks have a page or two of written information on brewing, beer varieties and breweries that tourists can visit. Pictures of people having a drink (mostly a beer) inside or outside a bar are included in the guidebooks. Overall, the guidebooks mention the love for the good life in Belgium, represented by beer, chocolate and frites, but this is not their main focus.

#### 4.4 Other strategies

Van der Vaart (1998) noticed yet another trend in the Paris guidebooks published from 1952 to 1997, namely, a process he called 'virtualisation'. Over the years, guidebooks have begun to place greater emphasis on the 'atmosphere' and less emphasis on the actual physical



place. This atmosphere might be what the tourist gaze eventually embodies: it is a way of looking at a place. It creates expectations of what to experience. Virtualisation is a way of othering, because it tries to create experiences that cannot be experienced at home or in everyday life: “..come enjoy hospitable Munich and its people that always feel like having a drink on one of the Italian like squares”(Michelin Green Guide Germany, 2010; 556). Michelin Green Guide Belgium and Luxemburg (2011; 266) states the following about Antwerp: “the city has retained the special charm of Flemish cities and at the same time is highly dynamic”. The atmosphere of places can also refer to ‘other times’, mostly ‘old days’. For example, ANWB Extra Flanders (2010; 43) writes the following about the Vlaeykensgang in Antwerp: “this old neighbourhood with its old alleyways and tiny houses, saved from demolishing, takes visitors back to the old days. Especially lovely on a summers eve when the carillon plays”. There are more examples of virtualization in the guidebooks, which are found more often in introductions to areas or cities than in the information on sights to see. The introductions of the Moseltal are telling: “The Moseltal, littered with picturesque villages and renowned for its wines, is an enchanting region. The river winds around the bases of many castles and between the Rheinlandische mountains of the Eifel and Hunsrück and runs through vineyards dating back to the Roman era” (Michelin Green Guide, 2010; 371). A similarly enchanting picture is drawn by the Capitoool Germany (2010; 345): “it is one of the most beautiful areas of Germany. Magnificent, romantic castles, overlooking endless vineyards where delicious white grapes ripen, line both shores of the river”. As these examples demonstrate, virtualisation can also be used to create ‘other place’.

A very different strategy guidebooks use to create alterity is expressing the variety or diversity of the destination. The destination offers a variety of experiences, of places, of sights. Capitoool Belgium & Luxemburg (2010; 10) thus acclaims: “Visitors to Belgium and Luxemburg are often taken by surprise by the huge variety of experiences and sights these countries offer”. Germany is presented in the same series as a country of ‘sharp contrasts’ and a country that will impress visitors with its diversity. Such comments might be viewed as a means to overcome stereotypes and clichés. ANWB Navigator Germany (2006) and Michelin Green Guide Germany (2010) explicitly stress the varied landscape of Germany. Part and parcel of the way landscape has been used in nation building is a specific geographical blindness: the nation’s landscape is perceived to be very diverse, whereas other countries are viewed to lack such differences in their landscape (Renes, 1999). The guidebooks can be seen to adjust this cliché in an attempt to draw tourists to the area. However, variety might be part of the tourist gaze. Variety implies that tourists will have a variety of experiences along the way. In this, tourism is clearly different from everyday life and its routines. Variety or diversity might also become the tourist gaze, when no other specific label seems to fit all of the must-see-sights and experiences. The Marco Polo guidebook on London seems to use variety as its tourist gaze on London. “The essence of London? Its many faces of course.”(Marco Polo, 2009; 7).

#### 4.5 Othering lost in translation?

Translations of guidebooks are common, especially for the smaller language markets. The guidebooks in Dutch mentioned in this chapter (such as Capitoool, ANWB Extra, ANWB Navigator, Michelin Groene Gids) were originally published in English, German or French. Othering, however, poses a challenge when guidebooks are translated to new audiences: “Each culture has its own values and beliefs which contribute to moulding the perception of

'the other' and thus to creating prejudices and stereotypes" (Smecca, 2009;109). Few tourists would be flattered by gazing upon their fellow countrymen through international lenses. Smecca (2009) compared the English and Italian editions of guidebooks on Sicily and found that only one guidebook used mostly faithful translations. Other series edited the texts to their audiences' knowledge, expectations, values and beliefs. In detail, Smecca (2009) demonstrates the differences between the English and Italian language editions of Lonely Planet. Sicily becomes an 'other place' for the English or international readers of this guidebook because the book stresses stereotypes and clichés like the Mafia, crime and dislike of rules, the sunny weather, friendly people and the importance of family. Sicily is also presented as being in an 'other time', "an island trapped in a time warp, living in old traditions and classical recollections, and uninterested in progress and change" (Smecca, 2009; 112). The island and its people are more familiar and less different for the Italian audience. To be considered a reliable source for Italian readers, the guidebook therefore needs to be more accurate, for example, in its comments on the climate, and should skip some comments on politics. In the Italian translation, certain passages were also lost because they contained obvious stereotypes or because they might even be offensive to Italian readers. The relatively brief information about soft drugs in the Capitool guidebook on Amsterdam might be another example of things that were lost in translation. Although Capitool is a Dutch series, it was originally written and published in English as the Eyewitness travel guides. The Dutch audience of this translated edition obviously does not need to travel all the way to Amsterdam to go to a coffee shop, and if this audience is interested in coffee shops they are more likely to know the relevant legislation. However, a detailed comparison with the original Eyewitness guidebook would be necessary to draw conclusions on this matter.

Translating guidebooks to the home market is not the only time when differences might be evened out. For nearby places othering might not always be the only strategy. Agreiter (2000; 37) found that although Italian guidebooks on Munich used stereotypes and clichés, they also present "the Münchner" as the readers' Northern relatives. The inhabitants of Munich thus are "bayerische Italiener" or "italienischer Bayer" who appreciate the same things in life, such as parties, and good food, and are equally hospitable and cheerful. The similarity might make the Italian tourist feel at home and welcome in Munich.

## 5. Conclusion and discussion

Guidebooks are an important source of information for tourists and have specific advantages over other tourism texts. Similar to other tourism texts, guidebooks structure the tourist gaze. They influence tourists' expectations and behavior. What tourists gaze at is a selection of place characteristics and features that guidebooks have deemed fit for sightseeing. As tourism, according to Urry (1990), is about escape from work and daily routines, the selection of sights to see is based on 'othering'. Destinations are presented as places that are different from home and every-day working life. Othering is well documented for the way non-Western destinations are presented to Western tourists and, to a lesser degree, in how places within the West are presented to Western tourists. From the literature we can conclude that othering can take different shapes: the destination may be some 'other place', situated in an 'other time', populated by 'other people' and offering 'other experiences'.

This chapter focused on the way guidebooks transform places that are culturally and physically nearby into destinations. In this particular case, othering is mainly about 'other

time'. Guidebooks gaze at monuments and monumental streetscapes, at artefacts and pieces of art on display in museums, and at an occasional statue. Most of these sights to see are objects created in and thus representing past times, usually a golden age. They are thus intrinsically linked to past people, their creators, owners or users. This specific tourist gaze of guidebooks is reflected in the sights they select, in the information they offer about these sights and in the pictures the guidebooks contain. As a result, guidebooks seem to be filled with mostly historical facts and architectural and art-historical details.

Two questions arise from these findings. The first is how this focus on monuments and museums can make one destination different from another. The second is how this focus makes the destination different from the place the tourist comes from. To start off with the latter question, tourists might live in areas packed with monuments and museums themselves. However, in their everyday routines they may not stop to gaze at gables or admire buildings. They might not even visit museums or monuments at home. For many people visiting museums and experiencing heritage in general is what they do on holiday (Munsters, 2001). It is the activity and experience that makes the difference. Regarding the first questions, the repertoire of castles, churches and museums is clearly the same in Belgium as in Germany. Van Gorp (2003) noted the same phenomenon in her research on three Dutch cities: overall, the tourist gaze is directed to similar stuff in each of these cities. However, the appearances and the settings differ: medieval hilltop castles in Reinland-Pfalz, baroque interiors in Bayern and gothic churches in Antwerp - in essence, they are all unique. Moreover, it is not the duty of the guidebook to sell the destination. Usually a tourist has chosen where to go and then buys the guidebook to plan the trip in more detail.

A second strategy of othering that is occasionally applied by guidebooks is the use of stereotypes and clichés. These very selective and simplified images could help to transform nearby places into destinations. Stereotypes and clichés are present in guidebooks but are not omnipresent. As guidebooks have many more pages to fill than a brochure or website does, they can go beyond the stereotypes and clichés (Van Gorp & Béneker, 2007). A limited use of stereotypes and clichés might also be typical of representing nearby places. The audience can be expected to have some firsthand or mediated experience of the place and people. They would not accept obvious stereotypes or clichés. On the other hand, research by the Dutch Clingendael Institute (Dekker et al., 1997, see also Dekker, 1999) has demonstrated that Dutch youth in general have rather negative and selective images of Germany and Germans. A similar research on the perception of Belgium demonstrated that the Dutch youth have less pronounced negative stereotypes of Belgium. The research, however, also demonstrated that Dutch youth have limited knowledge of Belgium (Aspheslag, 2000). Stereotypes and clichés might also be used by guidebooks as a way to draw the reader in. The guidebooks describes the stereotype and then go on to deny it or use the stereotype to further explain the people or country.

Two other strategies were found: virtualisation and emphasising diversity. A focus on the atmosphere directs the tourist gaze to other senses and to the intangible aspects of a place. Virtualisation can take any shape of othering, as it offers 'other experiences', partly by setting places back in time or stressing how different they are. Diversity is something that the guidebooks mention in their introduction to the area. The implied variety of experiences

to be had is why this is considered a means of othering. Perhaps stressing variety is another way to draw readers in. If the country is varied, the guidebook will also be varied. However, these last two strategies were not used as frequently as the focus on monuments and museums.

This analysis has demonstrated that non-specialised guidebooks share certain characteristics, such as the kinds of information they feel tourists need and some strategies of othering. The samples from Antwerp showed that guidebooks even largely agree on the sights that tourists should see. The analysis, however, also demonstrated that guidebooks differ in length, lay out, structure, and regionalisation. They even differ in their degree of using strategies for othering. Although this analysis was based on a small sample, these findings concur with earlier analyses of guidebooks.

This chapter was restricted to tourism texts and thus to what tourists are instructed to gaze at. The circle of representation teaches us that tourists seek out the sights that they are instructed to gaze at and that tourism texts thus influence the perception of places tourists visit, even when those places are nearby. To determine whether monuments and museums represent the sole interest of and reason for Dutch tourists to travel to Germany and Belgium can only be determined with additional research.

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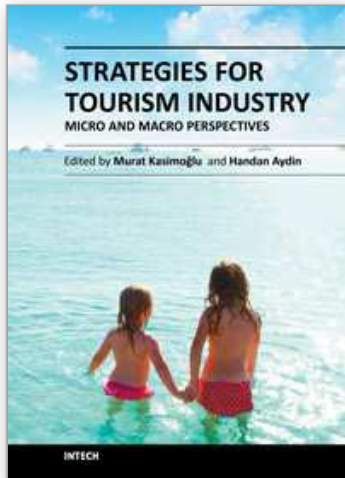
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## **Strategies for Tourism Industry - Micro and Macro Perspectives**

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Today, it is considered good business practice for tourism industries to support their micro and macro environment by means of strategic perspectives. This is necessary because we cannot contemplate companies existing without their environment. If companies do not involve themselves in such undertakings, they are in danger of isolating themselves from the shareholder. That, in turn, creates a problem for mobilizing new ideas and receiving feedback from their environment. In this respect, the contributions of academics from international level together with the private sector and business managers are eagerly awaited on topics and sub-topics within Strategies for Tourism Industry - Micro and Macro Perspectives.

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