The images of Dutch cities in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.¹

Introduction
At the beginning of the twentieth century, municipal councils and tourist offices started to promote ‘their’ cities. An important instrument in this promotion was often a new characterisation of individual cities. Haarlem, for instance, was called the city of flowers, and ’s-Hertogenbosch (Bois le Duc) the cheerful market town. The political and economic unification of the Netherlands, which started with the formation of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in 1813, probably induced municipal authorities to distinguish their cities within this national framework. A cultural differentiation went hand-in-hand with economic specialisation, which received an extra impetus during the industrialisation wave at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. In this paper I will investigate whether these processes of cultural and economic specialisation are related. A second question concerns the continuity of the city images which were formulated before the nineteenth century. Did they persist, were they incorporated in the new image, or were they replaced by completely new ones? When answering these two questions, a distinction will be drawn between the images formulated inside the city and the images presented by visitors from foreign countries and other parts of the Netherlands.

City images before 1800 by travellers from abroad
Recently, some solid analytical studies have been published about the experiences of travellers from Britain, Germany and France who visited the Netherlands in the early modern period.² One survey, published in 1936, points out that most of these travel accounts were written by visitors from these three countries.³ Of the 303 journals known at that time, written between 1648 and 1850, 105 were written by Germans, 78 by Britons, and 61 by Frenchmen. Almost all of them visited the most urbanised western part of the country. Occa-

¹ Published in Roman Czaja (ed.) Das Bild und die Wahrnehmung der Stadt und der städtischen Gesellschaft im Hansestaat im Mittelalter und der frühen Neuzeit (Toruń 2004) 259-277.
² C.D. van Strien, British travellers in Holland during the Stuart period. Edward Browne and John Locke as tourists in the United Provinces (Leiden 1993); Anja Chales de Beaulieu, Deutsche Reisende in den Niederlanden. Das Bild eines Nachtbarn zwischen 1648 und 1795 (Frankfurt am Main 1995); Madeleine van Strien-Chardonneau, Le voyage de Hollande: visite de voyageurs français dans les Provinces-Unies, 1748-1795 (Oxford 1994).
³ J.N. Jacobsen Jensen, Reizigers te Amsterdam. Beschrijvende lijst van reizen in Nederland door Vreemdelingen (Amsterdam 1936). This list also contains journals by people who did not visit Amsterdam. The national differentiation was made by Chales de Beaulieu, Reisende in den Niederlanden, 63.
sionally, some of them visited the northern or the southern or eastern parts. The Germans usually visited the eastern part on their way to the west (Nijmegen, Arnhem) while the French entered via the south (’s-Hertogenbosch, Breda, Bergen op Zoom, Vlissingen (Flushing), Middelburg). People from England usually took the boat from Harwich to Den Briel, and later to Hellevoetsluis. From there they travelled by land to The Hague or by boat to Rotterdam.\footnote{Van Strien, \textit{British travellers}, 71.}

The main goal of all the travellers was the most urbanised western part of the country. Amsterdam, The Hague, and Rotterdam were the most frequently visited cities. Delft, Leiden, Haarlem, Dordrecht, and Utrecht also attracted many visitors, as did the small towns along the Zuiderzee, now the IJsselmeer. Travelers to the north of the country, which was not situated along important entry routes, always visited Leeuwarden and Groningen. Maastricht in the south, at that time a somewhat isolated stronghold, was usually missed by travellers.

Most visitors used the same format for their descriptions, one which still can be found in many contemporary brochures for tourists: a statistical introduction (inhabitants, number of houses), some history linked to the political position in the Dutch Republic, economic activities, and the main buildings, which were often presented in the context of a walk through the city. Since museums at that time were almost non-existent, the cabinets containing the private collections of rich burghers are mentioned. Another attraction were the spinning houses and rasp houses (bridewells) where female and male criminals respectively had to spin wool and rasp wood for the paint industry. Visitors had to pay to see this.

For our purposes, it will be interesting to examine the general opinion of the cities. Most of the time it seems to have been positive. The typically Dutch architecture was always mentioned, as were the canals which reflected the façades of the houses and monuments. Visitors were primarily impressed by the whole rather than the individual monuments.

Sometimes visitors from abroad characterised a Dutch city in a way which became a kind of stereotype. Amsterdam was often called the Venice of the North; a characterisation by a German visitor, ‘Pearl of all cities in the world’ (Die Perle aller Städte in der Welt), was not adopted by others.\footnote{Chales de Beaulieu, \textit{Reisende in den Niederlanden}, 77.} The Hague was always characterised as a beautiful village, although it had more than 40,000 inhabitants in the eighteenth century. This was because it had no fortifications, and only received city rights in 1811, from Napoleon. French visitors often characterised The Hague, the seat of the Dutch government, as elegant.\footnote{Van Strien-Chardonneau, \textit{Voyage de Hollande}, 236.} It was indeed the most ‘French’ city in the Netherlands because of the presence of international diplomats. Rotterdam was sometimes called little London by Englishmen who went there, not because of resemblances in economic activity but because of the numerous Scottish and English families who lived there and continued to
wear the clothes of their homelands.\(^7\)

Almost all visitors praised the cleanliness of Dutch cities, although this scrubbing and polishing was sometimes considered exaggerated. Zaandam was considered to be the cleanest town.\(^8\) The village of Broek in Waterland, north of Amsterdam, was an icon of cleanliness which every foreigner wanted to visit. Amsterdam was also considered very clean. Some visitors, however, complained of the smell of the canals, which were used as open sewers. A number of French visitors called Rotterdam the most pleasant city in the Netherlands. This was because of the presence of broad canals in the sixteenth-century extension to the city, which was called the water town.\(^9\) These canals were connected with the rivers, which enabled the inhabitants to embark in front of their houses and warehouses. Moreover, this system of running water prevented the smells which affected other large cities. 's-Hertogenbosch in the south, one of the least typically Dutch of the larger cities, was stigmatised by German visitors as very dirty.\(^10\) In general, there was less appreciation for cities outside the province of Holland, with the exception of Utrecht which was sometimes called one of the fairest places in the Low Countries.\(^11\)

Travel accounts were also written by foreign students who visited universities for longer periods of time. Many German students, for instance, studied at Leiden and Utrecht.\(^12\) These accounts usually concentrate on one city, which makes them more ‘in depth’ than those of visitors who left again the same day. Leiden, where the woollen industry was declining in the eighteenth century, was characterised as a quiet, sober town. However, the best and most specific information in these student accounts concerns the university itself, especially the quality of the professors.

Another special group of travellers were people interested in fortifications. The large examples in the south, at Breda, Bergen op Zoom, and 's-Hertogenbosch in particular, attracted many visitors. The fortifications of Bergen op Zoom, designed by Menno van Coehoorn, were popular with French visitors because this town had been captured by the French in 1747 during the war of Austrian succession.

There is a lot of duplication in the travel accounts. Most visitors brought a guidebook from their homelands with them, such as Guicciardini’s Description de tout le Pais-Bas (1567) or Diderot’s Voyage en Hollande (1773), and copied that tour. This makes it rather easy to separate the original observations from repeated ones. However, this duplication is also an indication that there was a lot

\(^7\) Van Strien, _British travellers in Holland_, 72.
\(^8\) In Zaandam, tourists always visited the small house where the Russian emperor Peter the Great lived in 1697, when he worked at a shipyard.
\(^9\) Hans Bonke, _De kleyne mast van de Hollandse coopteden. Stadsontwikkeling in Rotterdam 1572-1795_ (Amsterdam 1996).
\(^10\) Chales de Beaulieu, _Reisende in den Niederlanden_, 139-146.
\(^11\) Van Strien, _British travellers in Holland_, 114.
\(^12\) Chales de Beaulieu, _Reisende in den Niederlanden_, 167-178.
of unanimity in the evaluation of Dutch cities.

It can thus be concluded that all foreign visitors were rather positive about Dutch cities, especially those in the west. In their view, the wealth of the country and of the individual cities was reflected by the well-maintained, clean buildings. Visitors from abroad were primarily charmed by the overall impression, because in their opinion there were hardly any monuments comparable to those in their home countries. Haarlem, for instance, according to foreign observers, had only one monument, the cathedral. 13 Only the town hall of Amsterdam was considered to be a monument of international standing. Later, there was admiration for the way that water was integrated in the cities, and for the windmills, which radiated industriousness.

The self image of some Dutch cities in pre-modern times

Let us now examine the ideas that the inhabitants of some cities visited by foreigners formulated about their own cities. Unfortunately, research so far into the self image of cities in early modern times has only been performed for a small number of cities. It is only very recently that urban identity or the image of cities has attracted the attention of urban historians. Scientific histories of individual cities, however, published in the last few years, always include this aspect.

Some cities, Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Dordrecht are important examples, were promoted as commercial cities. 14 A Rotterdam inhabitant in the seventeenth century called Rotterdam the mizzen mast of the Dutch merchant towns. 15 The main mast of course was Amsterdam. Coopstad (commercial town) was also the epithet the Rotterdam ruling elite used for their city. This was also the case in Dordrecht, which demonstrates that urban magistrates, who were generally important merchants, used their own activities to characterise their cities. This connection with the harbour was also expressed by the lower levels of society, which had to do with the mutual dependency of the upper and lower social classes, because the greater part of the lower levels worked in the harbours. Later on, the inhabitants of Dordrecht expressed pride in their position as the first town in the Netherlands with the privilege of a vote in the Estates General. Foreign visitors also often mentioned this aspect.

Corporate identity has been studied thoroughly in Leeuwarden. 16 In spite of a rather large social distance, all the inhabitants felt part of what is called the urban theatre. The court of the Nassau stadholders was one of the stages of this urban theatre. This court gave the town a status second only to The Hague. Because of the peripheral location of Leeuwarden, this town was less frequent visited by foreigners.

15 Bonke, *Kleyne mat*, 68.
This relative neglect was also felt by the city of Groningen, a flourishing commercial and university town, twice the size of Leeuwarden. The inhabitants of Groningen expressed their pride in possessing large parts of the province, where peat was cut. The Groningen elite in early modern times developed a specific civic pride based on a feeling of superiority towards the provincial nobility. These nobles, living in the province in large fortified houses, more or less acknowledged this bourgeois attitude by moving to the city of Groningen in winter, and by imitating that culture. The large farmers also imitated that culture. In the countryside, they were rather successful at overruling the nobility thanks to a special organisation of property rights. This turned Groningen into a centre where burgher values were very clearly formulated.

A recently published urban history of Utrecht has been titled *Een paradijs van weelde* – a paradise of affluence. This was the characterisation by the famous Dutch poet Joost van den Vondel (1587-1679). Until 1528, the city and province of Utrecht had been governed by a bishop, but in that year Emperor Charles V took over. Utrecht was transformed into a Hapsburg fortification by an Italian architect, Donato de Boni Pellizuoli. Utrecht was considered to be an important city by the Hapsburgs. Both Charles V and Philip II made triumphal

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17 This happened after 1594 when Groningen again joined the Dutch Republic. The city bought large sections of the monastic holdings confiscated by the province.

entrées (blijde incomste) and a meeting of the knights of the order of the Golden Fleece was held there. In 1576 Utrecht joined the Dutch revolt against Spain, and became a part of the Dutch Republic, which was founded in 1579 in Utrecht. There were several vehement conflicts between orthodox Calvinists and Catholics, which lasted for decades and ended in a kind of fragile coexistence. Nevertheless, the city was successful in maintaining its old grandeur. This was reinforced by the founding of a university in 1636, the negotiations on the peace of Utrecht in 1714, which for more than a year almost turned Utrecht into a French city, and the settlement of many rich and noble people. These new inhabitants built opulent houses which masked, at least for foreign visitors, the economic decay of the eighteenth century. In 1807, King Louis Napoleon lived there for a time, but after a few months he moved his residence to Amsterdam.

Interesting is the case of ‘s-Hertogenbosch, a city which as we have seen was not greatly appreciated by foreign visitors. This town, the capital of the province of North Brabant, was taken in 1629 by Frederik Hendrik and was therefore one of the last larger cities to be added to the Dutch Republic. Brabant did not receive the sovereignty which other provinces had, and was ruled directly from The Hague by the Estates General. ‘s-Hertogenbosch became in some respects a colonial city. The dominant Catholic religion was forbidden and a revered statue of the Virgin in the cathedral was removed. The city ended up with a split personality. Although old Catholic habits were mocked by the Protestant authorities and vicars, one section of the population did their best to keep them alive. The discrepancies in the town were made worse by the immense fortifications, which trapped the factions inside. It is possible that foreign visitors were struck by this depressing atmosphere, which was only partly physical.

It is as yet too early to draw any conclusions because they would only be based on a few observations. Nevertheless, we can conclude that the self image of Dutch towns was in a state of flux in early modern times. Songs of praise from the end of the Middle Ages have survived for every city. They tend to exaggerate, with parts which are rather impersonal, applicable to every city. Between 1500 and 1800, the characterisations seem to become a little more specific, with a clear link to the traits of individual cities. But this difference is very slight. From this period there are also many quotes from city authorities, characterising their city as one of the wealthiest, one of the most beautiful, and one of the cleanest of them all. In fact, the Dutch word for beautiful is the same as the word for clean: schoon.

21 The earliest one known is from Haarlem 1483. G.F. van der Ree-Scholtens et al., Deugd boven geweld. Een geschiedenis van Haarlem (Hilversum 1995) 100.
The nineteenth century, Dutch cities seen by foreign and Dutch visitors

As for the early modern period, no systematic research has as yet been conducted into the accounts of foreign visitors in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. There are, however, some travelogues which were well known in the Netherlands and abroad, and which were reprinted and translated many times. The most famous is *Olanda* by Edmondo de Amicis, an Italian globetrotter who visited the Netherlands in 1873. It has had numerous reprints and was also translated into English and Dutch.22

A second well-known foreign writer was Henry Havard from Paris. He fled Paris in 1871 because of his role in the Commune revolt. Although he eventually went back to Paris, he returned many times to the Netherlands. Travelling had become much easier thanks to the train. During his rather short visit, De Amicis succeeded in covering the whole country with the exception of the provinces of North Brabant and Limburg. Havard travelled in one part of the country during each visit.23 As a result, his books have much more detail and also contain descriptions of the countryside. De Amicis is also very positive about the countryside.

I think that this interest in the world outside the cities is a new element in travel accounts. Previous generations of travellers generally just passed through the countryside to reach another city. At best, their interest in the countryside was confined to the cultivated part of it. But now it was the more natural part which was being admired. De Amicis, for instance, went to the beach at Scheveningen near The Hague. His predecessors had avoided such raw, uncivilised areas.

This attention to the countryside and for nature was just one important difference with older travel accounts. This new attention was accompanied by a lessening of interest in economic activities in cities, which had been an important item in older travel accounts. Of course, this could be a quite accidental lack of interest on the part of these two travellers. However, it can also be found in the books of other contemporary visitors from abroad. Moreover, this habit of skipping harbours, factories, and other economic centres was also adopted by Dutch travellers at the end of the nineteenth century.

Until that time, industry had been an integral part of Dutch travelogues. Van Hogendorp and Van Lennep, for instance, two students who crossed the country in 1823, frequently mentioned new factories. They linked the beauty of the cities with economic activity. Deventer, for instance, was considered an ugly de-

22 Edmondo de Amicis, *Olanda*, 1873. The first translation in Dutch was published in 1876. I have used Edmondo de Amicis, *Nederland en zijn bewoners* (Utrecht/Antwerp 1985).
clining town because of the absence of new economic activities at that time.\textsuperscript{24}

The vicar Craandijk, who published very popular travelogues in around 1870, reprinted many times, mentions factories, harbours and other economic sites as an integral part of the landscape.\textsuperscript{25} Twenty-five years later, however, this had changed. The four volumes of Van Eems tot Schelde, the most generally accepted survey of the beauty of the Netherlands, only contain descriptions of beautiful towns and villages and, for the greater part, impressive landscapes.\textsuperscript{26}

The author, H. Blink, was a leading economic geographer who had published many studies on regional and local economic development. Industry now seems to have become something else, no longer a part of the beauty of the countryside. In fact, industrialisation by the end of the nineteenth century had become so widespread that it was regarded as a threat to the beauty of the countryside.\textsuperscript{27}

Since industrialisation in the Netherlands was mainly situated in the cities, some authors even removed those cities from their travelogues and concentrated on the countryside.

In the period around 1900, nature was becoming increasingly considered under threat by the rise of industry and the expansion of cities. Many societies were founded to protect the last remnants of unspoiled nature, among them Vogelbescherming (the Society for the Protection of Birds) in 1899, Staatsbosbeheer (the Forestry Commission of the Dutch government) in 1899, and Natuurmomumenten (the Society for the Protection of Monuments of Nature), founded in 1905, which started to purchase valuable natural areas. The General Dutch Cycle Union (ANWB), founded in 1883, was very active in promoting tourism in the countryside, for instance by erecting signposts and publishing guides. There were comparable developments in the cities. De Bond Heemschut (1911) (the Society to protect Monuments of Culture) started to pay attention to monuments and beautiful townscapes and mobilised people to protect them. Heemschut was a private society. The central government also showed its interest in monuments by the creation of a commission in 1903.

The new attitude towards nature, caused by excessive industrialisation, primarily threatened the positive image of industrial cities. Of course, this was seen as a great problem. The administrators of those cities also wanted to attract tourists. Moreover, wealthy inhabitants were starting to leave the cities and settle in rural areas. One of their answers was to commission prestigious expansion plans, but as we will see below, this was only partly successful. The negative image particularly affected the industrialised cities in the west, which had been so admired.

\textsuperscript{24} Elisabeth Kluit, Nederland in den goeden ouden tijd. Zijnde het dagboek van hume reis te voet, per trekschuit en per diligence van Jacob van Lennep en zijn vriend Dirk van Hogendorp door de Noord-Nederlandse provinciën in den jare 1823 (Haarlem 1942).
\textsuperscript{25} J.G. Craandijk & P.A. Schipperus, Wandelingen door Nederland met pen en potlood, 7 volumes (Haarlem 1875-1884).
\textsuperscript{26} H. Blink, Van Eems tot Schelde. Wandelingen door oud en nieuw Nederland, 4 volumes (Amsterdam 1902/1906).
\textsuperscript{27} Pim Kooij, 'Het landschap en de industriële samenleving', in Uit sympathie. Vijftien opstellen, aangeboden aan Taco Kastelein (Groningen 1989) 39-53.
in previous centuries. Cities outside the province of Holland, like Arnhem and Nijmegen, which had once been considered hardly worth visiting, now proved to be pleasant places to settle or to visit because of their green, natural surroundings.

Therefore, the industrial cities had to make efforts to change their images and advertise themselves in a more attractive way. In the next section we will see how this worked out.

**Image building in Dutch cities around 1900**

Amsterdam was very active in image building and tried to highlight its best features. Since the opening of the railway to Utrecht in 1845, many wealthy inhabitants had left the city to settle in the countryside to the south, where villages like Baarn, now accessible by train, were transformed into representative villa villages. To keep these important taxpayers, the expansion of Amsterdam was mainly planned for the elite. A new semicircle was planned around the city, to be filled with houses for the well-to-do. However, due to financial problems and the reluctance of the elite, some of whom did not want to leave their houses along the canals, only part of the plans was realised. These parts included the

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Vondelpark with its adjacent villas, constructed by a private company with share-holders, the Plantage in the east, and parts of the Sarphati plan in the southeast. Other parts of the ring were occupied by industry, for instance by the Heineken brewery, and by quarters for labourers, the so-called Pijp (pipe), with small, tall, multifamily houses.29

Apart from this promotion as a residential city, the Amsterdam municipality also felt the need for new industries. As a result of the agrarian depression (1878–1895), many people from the countryside had migrated to the big cities. Initially, demand for labour in Amsterdam surpassed supply, but this soon changed.30 In this liberal era, even though the liberals in Amsterdam became rather radical, the municipality could not play an active role in attracting industries. They had to confine themselves to reducing the legal obstacles to the establishment of enterprises, and for private companies and corporations who wanted to build houses for labourers. Moreover, they were very active in expanding the economic infrastructure of the city and in propaganda on an international scale.

In this propaganda, Amsterdam proclaimed itself as a microcosm of the whole of the Netherlands. The Palace of Industry (Paleis voor Volksvlijt) opened in 1864. This was Amsterdam’s response to the Crystal Palace, promoted by the businessman, philanthropist and city promoter Dr Samuel Sarphati, and displayed not only products from Amsterdam but from the whole country.

To stress the function of Amsterdam as an attractive residential centre as well as an economic one, and to attract tourists, a number of fairs were organised. The most important was the Exposition Universelle Coloniale et d’Exportation Générale in 1883. This was a real world fair organised along the lines of the fairs in London and Paris, with the participation of industries from foreign countries, art exhibitions, and the inevitable colonial section, for the greater part devoted to the Dutch East Indies, which proved to be the biggest success of the exhibition. The exhibition was initiated by a group of Amsterdam businessmen but was firmly supported by the Amsterdam municipality, and eventually by the Dutch government.31

In the history of world fairs, this Amsterdam event, with one and a half million visitors, is considered a mediocre one, but it inspired a number of Dutch cities to copy its example on a lesser scale. This was, for instance, the case with Groningen, where an exhibition was organised in 1903 consisting of presentations of Groningen, Dutch and some foreign firms, while the exotic part consisted of a Japanese square. This exhibition attracted 300,000 visitors, including the royal family. Interesting is that the initiative for this exhibition was taken by the director of the Groningen tourist office, who wanted ‘to attract people from

31 Ileen Montijn, Kermis van koophandel. De Amsterdamse wereldtentoonstelling van 1883 (Bussum 1983).
Holland and abroad’ to his beautiful city.32

Tourist offices, the first one in the Netherlands was founded in 1885 in Valkenburg in the province of Limburg, played an increasingly important role in organising this kind of exhibition. This was the case in 1910 in Haarlem, where the national bulb-growing exhibition *Bulbi Cultura*, was organised.33 This exhibition was also a great success. It attracted 163,000 visitors in two months. Among them were the Queen and Prince Consort, and even an ex-president of the United States, Theodore Roosevelt, who happened to be the 100,000th visitor. With this exhibition, and also their flower parade, an annual event since 1903, the tourist and municipal authorities wanted to propagate the image of Haarlem as the flower city. Haarlem possessed the ideal location for activities connected with this image. There was a city forest, the *Haarlemmerhout*, which was transformed at the same time into a park by the landscape architect L.A. Springer.

Nevertheless, Haarlem in around 1900 was transforming into an industrial city, with the emphasis on the printing industry (for a long time it was claimed that book printing had been invented in Haarlem by Laurens Janszoon Coster), the metal industry and the food and allied products industry (chocolate). Partly as a result of this, most florists left the city for the area to the west, behind the dunes, with the exception of the world-famous firm of Krelage. However, the

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33 M. van Vlijmen and W. de Wacht, *De groene stad. Een eeuw openbaar groen in Haarlem* (Wormer 2002) 144.
municipal authorities ignored the industrial character of Haarlem until 1930.34

In Rotterdam in around 1900 it was impossible to ignore industry and trade. The city was booming, primarily due to its transfer function, and between 1851 and 1899 the number of inhabitants rose from 86,000 to 309,000, which was accompanied by major expansions and changes in the city centre. Foreign travellers, such as E.V. Harris from Britain, did not like this new Rotterdam: ‘Rotterdam, it should be said at once, is not a pleasant city. It must be approached as a centre of commerce and maritime industry, or not at all’.35 But even Rotterdam inhabitants expressed their disapproval of the disappearance of the proud and beautiful coopstad and its transformation into something resembling Manchester.36 Culture was subordinate to economic interests and it was only thanks to a couple of isolated Mæcenases with old money that the Historical Museum and the Museum Boymans van Beuningen could be founded. The majority of the old elite left the city.

In the period between the two world wars, the negative image changed into a somewhat more positive one. W.G. Witteveen drew up a master plan for the existing city and new extensions which was intended to reduce the chaos in the infrastructure and buildings, and to restore the equilibrium between harbour and city.37 Although many building activities were performed in a traditional style, Rotterdam also became a place where modernists could present their visions. For instance, Dudok built a modern exclusive department store, De Bijenkorf, which together with other shops attracted many visitors from other places. So, too, did the new tunnel under the river. Moreover, the socialist party had gained a majority in the municipal council and promoted cultural institutions to emancipate the labourers. This, among other things, resulted in a new museum and the founding of a philharmonic orchestra, while large modern cinemas were also built. As a result, the image of a werkstad, which Rotterdam kept, acquired a more positive emphasis.

The old elite which left Rotterdam generally moved to The Hague. There, real estate developers built a number of villa quarters on the sandy soil between The Hague and Scheveningen, which was now considered to be a healthy location.38 Although The Hague also had large factories, especially for metal, they were concentrated out of sight in the peat area to the west. Thus the city succeeded in keeping its image as a prestigious and attractive residential centre. Most of those who returned successfully from the Dutch East Indies settled there. The Hague was considered the city with the most exclusive shops, including a Passage, and famous Dutch authors like Louis Couperus described The
Hague as a *cité mondaine*, a fashionable city. The royal court, however, did not do much to bolster this image. Ambassadors and foreign visitors reported that the court culture was very boring, especially after Queen Sophie died in 1877. The many clubs, however, were appreciated.39

Leeuwarden, the centre of the agricultural province of Friesland, was one of the least industrialised of the larger cities in the Netherlands. Therefore, it will be interesting to see if this resulted in a more positive image. The prerequisites were not very favourable. The French occupation of the Netherlands (1795-1813) ended the existence of the Nassau court in Leeuwarden, which did not return when the Kingdom of the Netherlands was founded. And at the end of the nineteenth century, the agrarian depression affected the market functions of the city. Nevertheless, Leeuwarden did not fall into decay. The upper classes, including the nobility, which had garnered reasonable fortunes from their landed properties in previous times, started to upgrade private as well as public space.40 The gardens of the court, for instance, were presented to the city by King William I and transformed into a beautiful park, and the link to the Dutch railway system resulted in representative dwelling quarters around the railway stations.

Due to the relative lack of modern economic activity, the social structure did not change very much and remained rather rigid, with much continuity in politics. Many members of the upper classes expressed their civic pride.41 During the whole nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, they characterised their city as a pleasant, conveniently arranged, open and healthy city. This was partly confirmed by foreign visitors. De Amicis called Leeuwarden a large village and mentioned the smallness of the houses, ignoring the big urban palaces of the nobility along the main canal. He paid more attention to the young Friesian women, still wearing their traditional costume.42 Lucas, who visited Leeuwarden about 30 years later, knew of De Amicis’s description and copied him: ‘Leeuwarden is large and prosperous and healthy. What one misses in it is any sense of intimate cosiness’.43 Like De Amicis, he expressed his feeling of being further from home than in any other town, and he describes the Friesian women. New, however, is that he quotes half a page from a brochure by ‘a patriotic society known as the “Vereeniging tot bevordering van vreemdelingenverkeer”, the Dutch name for the tourist office.

Utrecht at the end of the nineteenth century had a split personality. It was promoted as an attractive residential city by the authorities. By 1820 the walls were being removed because fortifications at some distance from the city had taken over their defensive function. The cleared soil to the east of the city was used for the creation of parks and villa quarters for the well-to-do. In the centre,

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41 Kuiper, ‘Burgerlijk zelfbeeld’, 330-345
the city government created cultural institutions like a museum (1838), followed by a music hall (1845). In the south, however, a huge railway junction had been taking shape since 1842, the largest in the Netherlands, while in the west an industrial area was developed, dominated by the metal industry. The restoration of the Episcopal hierarchy in 1853 made Utrecht the most important centre of Catholicism, and promoted the visibility of Catholicism in the city centre. The first department store in the Netherlands had been founded in the centre in 1839, followed by other large and specialised shops.

De Amicis did not notice any of this. When he visited Utrecht in 1873 he saw a town with an important past in decay, as sad and serious as Leiden. Even the church was mutilated, as a result of the destruction of the central part by a storm in 1674, and what was left looked like the House of Commons, because of the many benches.

For the inhabitants of the surrounding area, in around 1900 Utrecht primarily had the image of an attractive shopping centre, easily accessible by train and tram. This commercial element was raised to a national scale by the founding of the annual fair in 1917. This private organisation was supported by the city government and was promoted all over the country. In years to come it would occupy a large area around the railway station, and stress the function of Utrecht as a centrally located meeting point.

Some interesting research has been produced on ‘s-Hertogenbosch. As mentioned above, the conquered Brabant area was governed directly by the Estates General. This was experienced by the Brabant population as a kind of colonial administration. In 1813, however, North Brabant, as it was now called, became a fully fledged province of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, with ‘s-Hertogenbosch as its capital. Some emancipation movements were founded in the city, with unusual results. They tried to reintroduce old traditions from the time when ‘s-Hertogenbosch was an important city in the Duchy of Brabant. Some people started to wear traditional clothes again, historic parades were held, and ‘s-Hertogenbosch was promoted as a Catholic city, not partially, as in Utrecht, but generally. De Amicis did not visit this town but Lucas certainly noticed its Catholic character. He also mentioned the superb cathedral of St. John’s with its - returned - statue of the Holy Virgin. In addition, the marketplace was mentioned as ‘the most spirited...in the country’. This marketplace was also the subject of a popular Dutch song Dat gaat naar Den Bosch toe, zoete lieve Gerritje (Going to Bois le Duc, sweet Gerritje). Although ‘s-Hertogenbosch

46 De Amicis, Nederland en zijn bewoners, 200.
47 Floribert Baudet, Utrecht in bedrijf. De economische ontwikkeling van stad en regio en de Kamer van Koophandel (Utrecht 2002).
49 Lucas, Wanderer in Holland, 279.
had important industries, especially printing, shoes, and cigars, in the rest of the Netherlands the image of the city primarily consisted of the aspects mentioned above, and the famous *Bosse bollen*, huge choux pastry filled with whipped cream and covered with chocolate. There were also other cities which produced delicacies which were famous all over the country, such as *Arnhemse meisjes* (Arnhem girls), a kind of biscuit, and the *vlaai* (fruit flan) from Maastricht.

Within the scope of this paper, it has been impossible to deal with the images of all major Dutch cities. I had to choose just a few to be able to highlight the images of different types of cities. What has become clear is that in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the way in which the images of cities were formulated changed, from the inside as well as from the outside. In early modern times the wealth of the cities was praised by foreign visitors as well as by the inhabitants. And the sources of this wealth – harbours, markets, factories – were visited. After about 1875, the wealth of cities was still promoted but the industrial base was ignored by visitors. Urban wealth was primarily associated with exclusive shops, and the ability to keep the urban monuments in good shape. And the municipal administrators did not advertise their cities as industrial centres but as pleasant places to live. In this promotion they stressed cultural characteristics, like museums, monuments, and parks. By doing so, they proved to be influenced by tourist offices. The same was the case when promoting the pleasant surroundings of their individual city. This was a result of the increased interest in nature. Therefore, at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, Dutch cities were denying that they had become industrialised.