The image of Spain in Dutch travel writing (1860-1960)
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CHAPTER II:

DUTCH TRAVELLERS IN SPAIN (1860-1900)
When Gerard Keller, the first author discussed in this chapter, made his journey to Spain in 1862, he did not encounter many Dutch fellow tourists. However, he regularly came across German and, in particular, English travellers. The number of foreign visitors to Spain increased in the second half of the 19th century, when transportation gradually became easier due to the extension and completion of a rail network which, in the first decades of the 20th century covered a total of approximately 16,000 kilometers (Moreno Garrido 2007: 44).

The supply of reliable travel guides was still limited. In 1897 the publication of Baedeker’s Spanien und Portugal, mit 6 Karten, 31 Planen und 11 Grundrissen was enthusiastically heralded in the magazine De Nederlandsche Spectator. At last, those who wanted to visit “that peculiar country” had at their disposal something more practical than Murray’s Handbook or Lavigne’s guide on Spain and Portugal that had appeared in the collection Guides Joanne. Shortly after its first publication, an English edition of the Baedeker was published in 1898, followed by a French edition in 1900.

In April 1886 the Dutch painter-writer Jacobus van Looy (1885-1930) arrived in Spain to spend the second year of his Prix de Rome scholarship in this country. His impressions are reflected in both drawings and paintings and in a lively correspondence with family and friends. Furthermore, in 1889 his book Proza was published, containing a variety of sketches and short stories, the majority of which are based on his experiences in Spain. Although Van Looy’s writings about Spain are not actual travelogues - and for that reason were not included in this study - he did play an important role in re-establishing a tradition of Dutch painters working in Spain, as well as stimulating in Dutch travel writers who followed him, a distinctive pictorial manner of describing the country and its inhabitants.

Five travelogues from this period will be described in this chapter, published in 1863, 1864, 1884, 1886 and 1899 respectively.

1. GERARD KELLER, *Een Zomer in het Zuiden* (Part I, 1863; Part II, 1864)

Gerard Keller (1829-1899), novelist, playwright and travel-writer, wrote his first travelogue in 1860, Een Zomer in het Noorden, describing a journey to Sweden and Norway. The enthusiastic reception of this book motivated him to write

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57 De Nederlandsche Spectator, Volume 1897, nr. 34, August 21st.
58 Ibidem, 276.
59 A Summer in the South.
another travel account about a trip to Spain in the spring of 1862. Keller made
this journey with his friend Robidé van der Aa, whom he knew as co-editor of the
magazine *De Nederlandsche Spectator*.

Part I of *Een Zomer in het Zuiden* describes their arrival in Spain by steamboat
that took the two friends from Marseille directly to Barcelona. After visiting the
city and the monastery at Montserrat, they took another steamer to Valencia.
From there an excursion was made to Sagunto before taking a train from Valencia
to Madrid. With the capital as point of departure, they visited the Escorial and
Toledo. Next, they went by train to Granada, with a stop in Aranjuez. The train
went as far as Manzanares, a municipality in the Ciudad Real province, and from
there they travelled on to Granada by stage-coach - a trip that took 30 hours. In
Granada, the Alhambra and the Albaicin were visited before they continued their
journey to Malaga and Ronda.

Part II opens with the next stage of the journey from Ronda to Gibraltar, a
trip that took five days on horseback. From there, they crossed the Mediterranean
by boat to Tanger, and then went on to Tetuan. The reverse trip from Tetuan to
Tanger was made, once more, on horseback, after which they returned to Spain as
passengers of a warship, disembarking in Algeciras. After visiting Tarifa, another
ship took them to Cadiz and from there they went by train to Seville, via Jerez.
From Seville, they went to Cordoba and back again. After visiting the Roman
excavations in Italica, they took a boat to Lisbon on the 12th June 1862.

Keller’s travelogue, illustrated with six litho’s by the Dutch painter and
draughtsman C.C.A. Last, offers an extensive social portrait of contemporary
Spain, as opposed to mere descriptions of places visited and sights seen. A great
variety of aspects of Spanish society, from public transport, policing and the
press, to social intercourse, clothing, theatregoing and religious life, are passed
in review. It seems that Keller was aware of the fact that he would be the first
Dutch tourist to inform fellow countrymen who would follow in his footsteps
about a relatively unknown country. He is, furthermore, familiar with Spain’s
unfavourable reputation in The Netherlands and, on several occasions, puts into
perspective negative stereotypes of filth, danger and backwardness. Especially the
black image of Spanish inns and the food served there is regularly countered with
high praise of the cleanliness, the delicious food and the more than reasonable
prices.

As a consequence of his focus on people and society, descriptions of
nature are rare in this travelogue. While many of the Dutch travellers who came
after him were deeply impressed with Spain’s wild and pristine countryside,
particularly its mountains, Keller writes, rather dryly, that those who know the
mountains know what they look like and those who don’t can’t imagine what they are like anyway.\footnote{Keller, \textit{Een Zomer in het Zuiden}, I, 2. In Chapters II-IV the page numbers of the quotes are mentioned with their translation in the Appendix.}

\textit{The Spanish National Character}

For Keller, the prototype of the Spanish national character is the figure of the \textit{hidalgo}.\footnote{Originally, those who, without title of nobility, distinguished themselves from the common people and lived on their property, instead of earning an income.} In his view, every Spaniard sees himself as such. The hidalgo’s innate pride is the main cause of his deplorable attitude towards work. When the author looks out of a train window and notices labourers working on the recently constructed railway, it catches his attention that they always stop working when they are being watched,\footnote{Keller, \textit{Een Zomer in het Zuiden}, I, 64.} as if being seen while at work were a disgrace.

The author and his friend also find it difficult to engage a guide and think they know the reason why:

A Spaniard with enough culture to be a guide, would consider it beneath him to do this job, just as he would consider many other jobs beneath his station. The hidalgo’s are too proud for this (I).

Furthermore, the fact that every Spaniard sees himself as equally important as any other of his compatriots, leads to a pronounced egalitarianism:

In Spain pride has achieved what the champions of democratic principles have fought for in vain: the lord and the common man, the grandee and the labourer, are equal in social intercourse [….] (2).

This sense of equality is not limited to the way in which the Spaniards treat one another, it also expresses itself in the familiarity with which guides and servants address foreign visitors. This familiarity, however, does not exclude politeness, which is also, for Keller, a notable character trait of the Spanish. Their politeness and hospitality are, nevertheless, often a mere formality and one learns quickly that presents offered should not be accepted, nor should invitations to visit people at home.\footnote{Ibidem, I, 85.}

The most irritating quality of the Spanish hidalgo is, for Keller, his chauvinism, which lets him believe that his country is superior to any other in the world:
The Spaniards have an excessively high opinion of themselves and their country: their national feeling borders on insanity; whatever the subject of conversation, even with the most civilized members of society, they will deem their country in every way superior to any other (3).

Keller frequently links Spanish character traits, as well as physical features, to the Moorish past. And it is, in particular, this Moorish legacy which makes the Spanish, in some ways, incomprehensible to those who come from the north to visit this “European Africa”. Anomalies, which Keller, like other travellers to Spain from the mid-1800s, puts under the heading Cosas de España, which means something like ‘typically Spanish things’. The Moorish legacy is especially noticeable in the South, called by Keller the Garden of the Hesperides, where the lively and cheerful character of the people distinguishes the Andalusian from the Castilian and the Catalan.

Regional differences are, furthermore, mentioned in Barcelona, where one finds the businessmen, in Valencia, where the people show similar industriousness and in Malaga, where Keller would like to live and where the women are ravishingly beautiful and the men regal and polite.

The beauty of Spanish women, particularly their dark eyes, strikes Keller in every part of the country, but the looks of the Andalusian woman surpass all. The author is aware, however, of their dubious reputation and suggests that their light-hearted cheerfulness and lack of embarrassment could be the reason why they “have earned a name, given to them by the evil world, which we would not like to see applied to our Dutch wives and daughters” (4). On closer acquaintance, furthermore, Keller has to admit that these beauties are totally uninteresting, as only two activities are of interest to them: going to Mass and walking the paseo to catch a suitable husband.

Three times Gerard Keller attends a bullfight, as this is supposed to be the most typical Spanish tradition of all. Before describing the first fight, he explains to the reader that this account has already been published in De Tijdspeigel and has provoked some negative reactions from the readers of this magazine. For this reason, he is now leaving out some of the original enthusiastic comments. Nevertheless, Keller’s opinion of the event remains, on the whole, positive. For him, the tradition is an intrinsic part of the Spanish identity. And he does not
agree with a (not specifically named) English writer, who said that the corrida is the root of Spanish cruelty.\textsuperscript{69}

Another fixed point on the touristic agenda is a visit to the Gypsies at the Albaicin in Granada. Keller calls them “Heidenen” (Heathens). In a footnote he explains that this is the proper Dutch translation of the Spanish word gitano, while the term commonly used in The Netherlands, ‘zigeuner’, is actually a German word. At the same time, he admits that “Heiden” is an improper term, as most of the Spanish Gypsies are Christians.\textsuperscript{70} Apart from dirt and poverty, Keller’s characterization of the Gypsies is, on the whole, rather positive. Contrary to the Spaniard, he writes, the Gypsy is seldom at home, he is industrious and makes the most of his days, while the Spaniard is resting.\textsuperscript{71}

\textit{Formation of the Image Content}

\textbf{Self-image.} Comparisons between Spain and The Netherlands appear regularly in this travelogue, their outcome being both negative and positive. Keller finds his own country superior where honesty and, particularly, religious freedom are concerned. The first quality is reflected in the person of the Dutch envoy in Madrid:

His open, Dutch character, averse to any scheming, makes him an object of admiration for the plotting Spaniard, who finds it hard to understand so much self-denial (5).

On the other hand, Keller emphasizes that it is incorrect to think of Spain as being backward compared to the Netherlands in all respects. When he discovers, for example, that in Madrid the entrance to all public buildings is free of charge, he concludes: “In this respect, as well, Spain is ahead of us […]” (6).

\textbf{Past Relations.} The historical relation between Spain and The Netherlands is strongly present in the background of Keller’s journey through Spain. The Dutch image of Philip II is, firstly, reflected in every corner of the Escorial:

A name that we, as children, already pronounced with fear and aversion, a name that, whatever has been written later as an explanation of the character of him who carried it, can never, as long as a Dutch heart beats in our bosom, have a positive sound for us […]. It is the name of Philip

\textsuperscript{69} Keller, \textit{Een Zomer in het Zuiden}, I, 114.
\textsuperscript{70} Ibidem, I, 179.
\textsuperscript{71} Ibidem, I, 180.
II which is tainted with blood, reminding us of the rupture of our national unity (7).

Furthermore, the Spanish pride in their glorious past and the fact that, on several occasions, the author notices that the Spaniard, in general, doesn’t even know that Holland exists, provokes the following remark:

But if the Spaniards are proud of their old weapons and trophies, we thought about the reverse: if they don’t remember us in Spain, we, on the other hand, still remember the days when their power was broken by the sons of The Free Netherlands. If Spain was that great, what must the courage and determination have been like of those united provinces, of that people of butter that fought its way to freedom from the Spanish tyranny! (8).

Direct Contact. Although Keller was mainly interested in Spanish people and society, reports about personal contact with Spaniards are scarce. A limited knowledge of the language may have been a reason. The author himself talks about “the little Spanish I know” (9) and simple quotes like “yo va”72 (I am coming) and “Ti corazón”73 (Your heart), are incorrect.

When the travellers need a guide, they generally look for someone who speaks French, but even then their contact with these guides is superficial. Once, in a train, they have a conversation with a young Spanish lawyer who speaks a mixture of English and German. Although the author finds him polite, his praise of his native country makes him another example of what Keller sees as the ridiculous chauvinism of the Spaniard.

Most of the information about the country, resulting from direct contact, comes from other foreigners, mainly English and German, or compatriots, like the secretary of the Dutch legation, who shows them around Madrid. About both the English and the Germans, Keller has mixed feelings. While the English seem to exploit Spain in a positive way by contributing to its economy74, the behaviour of the English tourists in Spain is often irritating, because “they were utterly oblivious to the fact, so it seemed, that another language and other customs and traditions, besides the English, existed” (10). And although it was, on occasion, annoying to meet yet another German, called the European Chinese by the author75

73 Ibidem, I, 187.
74 Ibidem, II, 1.
75 Ibidem, I, 3.
because one stumbled across them all over the world, Keller also concedes that one has to admire the industrious and courageous German people.\textsuperscript{76}

\textbf{Intertextual References.} The choice of tourist guides, firstly, was still limited in the 1860s. Although Keller mentions foreigners with their “red Murray” or “Baedeker”,\textsuperscript{77} the Baedeker guide for Spain and Portugal had not yet been published when he made his journey in 1862. He personally used Murray’s \textit{Handbook for Travellers in Spain}.

As historical background information W.H. Prescott’s \textit{History of the Reign of Philip the Second, King of Spain} (1856) is recommended in preparation for a visit to the Escorial. About the Alhambra the author says to have read many descriptions beforehand, none of them doing justice, however, to his personal impressions apart from, perhaps, Washington Irving’s \textit{Tales of the Alhambra} (1832).

Several literary sources lie at the bottom of Keller’s image of Spain. Schiller’s \textit{Don Carlos} is remembered in Aranjuez (“Die schönen Tage von Aranjuez sind nun zu Ende”)\textsuperscript{78} and in Granada the author is reminded of a quote from Goethe’s \textit{Wilhelm Meister}: “Kennst du das Land wo die Zitronen blühen?”\textsuperscript{79} In Toledo, Keller thinks of the poem \textit{Disputation} from Heinrich Heine’s \textit{Romanzero}, in which a Christian and a Jew bitterly argue about the merit of their respective religions. And in a little village in the southern mountains, where half-naked children play in the streets, Heine’s poetry echoes once more, this time a stanza from the long poem \textit{Atta Troll}: “As I took my leave, around me / Danced the little creatures, and they / Danced a rondo, and they sang it: / Girofflino, Girofflette.” When the travellers spend the night in Alhama de Granada, a town which played a key role in the fall of the Arab empire in Spain in 1492, the author thinks of Byrons poem \textit{The Siege and Conquest of Alhama}, with its haunting refrain “Woe is me, Alhama.”

Keller also shows a certain knowledge of contemporary Spanish literature, when, in the vicinity of Granada, the travellers pass the country house of the author Serafin Estébanez Calderón (1799-1867), whose historical works, novels and sketches of Andalusian folklore he admires.\textsuperscript{80}

\textbf{Politics/Religion.} It is in Madrid, in particular, that Gerard Keller comments on the political situation in Spain. The capital, he finds, is a cesspit of vice

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{76} Ibidem, I, 248.
\item \textsuperscript{77} Ibidem, I, 97.
\item \textsuperscript{78} The pleasant days here in Aranjuez have now come to an end.
\item \textsuperscript{79} Do you know the land where the lemon trees bloom? Goethe’s poem referred to Italy, but was often applied to southern Spain by Dutch travellers.
\item \textsuperscript{80} Keller, \textit{Een Zomer in het Zuiden}, I, 175.
\end{itemize}
and corruption, where everything is for sale. “He who only saw Madrid, must despise Spain” (II), is his conclusion. The Spanish sovereigns of the 19th century, Ferdinand VII (1814-1833) and his daughter Isabel II (1843-1868) get a relatively positive review. While Keller is, at first, surprised at the amount of newspapers that appear in this “uncivilized country”, he later thinks that the absolutist monarch Ferdinand VII was right in limiting the freedom of the press, as the papers mainly serve as fuel for the inflammable masses. On another occasion he admits that while the story of the burning of the Constitution of 1812 by Ferdinand originally made him laugh, he later changed his mind:

He who gets to know the Spanish people and sees how they are above all, yes, almost exclusively, sensitive to what can be demonstrated, what is tangible, must admit that Ferdinand VII, a mortal enemy of everything liberal, from his point of view, did not act so unwisely when, instead of withdrawing the Constitution by law or decree, he simply ordered the executioner to burn it. One should not mock Spain for this, maybe quite a few other realms could be pointed out where the burning of the Constitution, at the king’s command, would have much more effect than an amendment by legal means (12).

Where religion is concerned, Keller is unpleasantly surprised when he sees how priests are mocked by the people in this “most Catholic country of Europe”, although he had been told that the Church had itself to blame for this. Religion, he concludes, is mainly outward appearance in Spain. The intolerance of the Roman Catholic Church, both in the past and in the present, is more than once criticised. Face to face with the Christian intrusion in Cordoba’s mosque, Keller ponders that the tolerance of the Moors compares favourably with the many violent conflicts that were fought in the name of Christianity. The lack of religious freedom in contemporary Spain is deplorable and Keller finds that other states should make an effort to improve the situation of non-Catholics in this country. However, although a Protestant himself, the author appreciates the atmosphere in Roman Catholic churches, while “there is an awful lot of poetry in the service of the universal Church […]” (13). And yet, in these modern times of materialism and realism, of common sense and cool reasoning, he says, one

81 Ibidem, I, 10.
82 Ibidem, I, 70.
83 Ibidem, I, 12.
84 Ibidem, I, 72.
85 Ibidem, II, 151.
86 Ibidem, I, 71.
looks for something more, something that is missing in Spanish Roman Catholic
churches.\textsuperscript{87}

On more than one occasion Keller stresses that a visitor should adapt
himself to the formalities of a country’s religion. When a German fellow tourist
accuses him of hypocrisy when he crosses himself on entering a church in Seville,
he replies that he conforms in this way in all religious temples, out of respect.\textsuperscript{88}

2. ABRAHAM CAPADOSE, \textit{Herinneringen uit Spanje}\textsuperscript{89}
(1864)

Abraham Capadose (1795-1874) was a Jewish physician and writer who converted
to Christianity and was baptised in Leiden in October 1822. With Dutch authors
like Bilderdijk and Da Costa he belonged to the Revival Movement (Réveil),
which resisted the liberal and democratic ideas of the 19th century. Feeling that
the Dutch Reformed Church was not strict enough, he left it in 1866.

In 1863 Capadose went to Spain in his capacity as President of the Dutch
Evangelical-Protestant Society, at the head of an international delegation that
intended to present a petition to Queen Isabel II, to release Spaniards that were
imprisoned as a consequence of their religious convictions.

As the author himself emphasized in the prologue to his \textit{Herinneringen uit Spanje}, he did not travel to Spain for merely recreational purposes:

\[
\text{[…] it was not my objective to make a journey through Spain purely for pleasures, no, to visit those who were suffering from repression because of their religion, that was why I had undertaken the trip (14).}
\]

However, as his visits to imprisoned Protestants might be risky for both them and
him, he thought it sensible to behave like a tourist and see the sights worth visiting
in the cities where he went in search of his fellow believers, both in and outside
of Spanish prisons. Nevertheless, he regularly reminds his readers of the fact that
his evangelical mission was the main objective of his journey. The prisoner he
particularly wanted to meet was a young man who called himself “Matamoros”\textsuperscript{90}
and who had already spent 34 months in prison in Granada. In November 1860,
Capadose had read a letter written by this Matamoros in the magazine \textit{Archives du Christianisme}. In this letter Matamoros had explained his situation and talked

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\textsuperscript{87} Ibidem, II, 171.
\textsuperscript{88} Ibidem, II, 172.
\textsuperscript{89} Memories from Spain.
\textsuperscript{90} Matamoros, the Moor-Killer, was the name given in Christian Spain to St James the Greater for his support in the fight against the Moors.
about his mission to form, in Spain, congregations of souls liberated from the
darkness of Rome.\textsuperscript{91} Since that time Capadose had corresponded with Matamoros
and informed the Evangelical Alliance in Great Britain about his plight.

On 26th March 1863, Capadose set off to Spain in the company of his wife and
two fellow members of the Evangelical-Protestant Society. They travelled by
train to Marseille, via Switzerland. In Marseille they took a steamer and made
a first stop in Barcelona. Next, they disembarked in Alicante, where the acting
consul (a German) offered to be their guide. After a stormy last stretch they
arrived in Malaga, where the cathedral, several cemeteries, an iron factory, a
convent and a prison were visited. The next stop was Granada, where they looked
at the cathedral and paid a superficial visit to the Alhambra, because that was
what tourists were supposed to do. But the main purpose of their stay in this
city was to pay daily visits to Matamoros. By stage-coach they then went from
Granada to Madrid, admiring the countryside on the way and seeing the new
railway being constructed from Granada to the capital. For the last stretch, from
Santa Cruz de Modena to Madrid, they were able to take the train. In the capital
they waited for an audience with the Queen. On the 29th April they heard that
Matamoros had been condemned to the galleys for nine years, a punishment that
was converted by order of the Queen to nine years of exile before the delegation
had the opportunity to present its petition. With Madrid as an operating base they
visited Toledo. On the 2nd June 1863, they took the stage-coach from Madrid to
Bayonne.

The main theme of Capadose’s travelogue is his mission to get in touch with as
many Spanish Protestants as possible, both in and outside of prison, and it is this
mission that strongly colours his impression of Spain. Whenever he behaves like
a tourist, he assures the reader that he did not really have the time for this. When
the travellers are forced to spend a few weeks in Madrid, waiting for an audience
with the Queen, Capadose informs the reader that planned visits to the Escorial
and Aranjuez were cancelled because of more pressing engagements. Nor did he
allow himself to visit the Prado Museum. Apart from prisons, churchyards and
cathedrals are the places most frequently visited in the various cities, the latter
giving the author the opportunity to criticise the “masses of statues and dolls”\textsuperscript{92}
that decorate these “heathen temples”.\textsuperscript{93} Apart from the courageous Protestant
brothers and sisters whom he meets in the course of his journey, the only thing

\begin{footnotes}
\item[91] Capadose, \textit{Herinneringen uit Spanje}, 4.
\item[92] Capadose, \textit{Herinneringen uit Spanje}, 102.
\item[93] Ibidem, 31.
\end{footnotes}
Capadose unreservedly admires in Spain is its pristine nature, the inexpressible beauty of which reminds him of the greatness of its Maker.94

The Spanish National Character

National pride is a quality which Capadose finds in quite a few of the Spaniards he meets. And although it is a sign of the backwardness of the country that so many let themselves be seduced by the “barbaric Roman Catholicism”95, he also comes to realize that for some their religion is part of their national identity.

At the heart of Spanish chauvinism is, according to Capadose, the bullfight, a scandal for a civilized nation in the 19th century but, at the same time, a spectacle no Spaniard can avoid without risking his reputation as a true patriot.96 The fact that a priest pronounces a benediction before the fight begins is another confirmation of the profanity of the Church: “Behold the essence of the Roman Catholic Church – a mixture of worldly service and so-called religion” (15). When, in the future, the Spanish people would convert to Protestantism, the author thinks that, under the influence of their national character, the expression of this religion would always be restrained and cautious:

 [...] the highly pensive, secretive and hidden character of the Spaniard would, even after his conversion, reveal, in his Christian life, activity and social intercourse, a certain overcautiousness and fear, as if he were in constant danger of deceiving himself or being deceived by others (16).

Capadose attributes the fact that the Queen converts Matamoros’s sentence before receiving the Evangelical delegation, to Castilian pride. Aware of the fact that the delegation was in Madrid, she clearly wanted to stay one step ahead of them because “the Castilian pride would, by no means, want to appear as if it had tolerated the influence of foreigners in matters of internal administration” (17).

A final quality of the Spanish people that, more than once, disturbs the author, is their greed for money, against which particularly the foreigner has to arm himself on every occasion.97

94 Ibidem, 44.
95 Ibidem, 36.
96 Ibidem, 80.
97 Ibidem, 63.
**Formation of the Image Content**

**Direct Contact.** Abraham Capadose’s contact with Spaniards mainly takes the form of meetings with fellow Protestants, whom he found much more calm and composed than the rest of the Spanish people, a quality which he attributed to their exhaustion from being continually persecuted.\(^98\) The highlight of his trip is, undoubtedly, his meeting Matamoros, whose composure and firm belief he greatly admires and who, he thinks, is a perfect Spaniard in the sense that he has, even in prison, not forgotten the demands of etiquette.\(^99\)

**Politics/Religion.** Capadose’s preconceptions about Roman Catholic Spain are plainly negative from the start. The image of the country as backward, primitive and even barbaric is confirmed by almost everything he sees on his trip. In a cemetery in Barcelona, for example, where the dead are placed in coffins stacked on top of each other, he concludes:

> In my opinion, the custom to leave the dead above the ground is most inappropriate and, as far as I am aware, not in use with any other civilized people (18).

The travellers are informed of both the actual and the historical situation of Spain by a brother surnamed Nicodemus.\(^100\) He assures them that during the Reformation the gospel was embraced by the most eminent men of Spain, while traces of this enthusiasm were erased by, particularly, the Jesuits.\(^101\) The present situation is also terrible and the weak and guilty Queen is supposed to be under the strong influence of a prophetess with alleged stigmata.\(^102\)

While Capadose is strongly opposed to liberalism in his home country, he has fewer objections to Spanish liberals as they, like he, hate the “horrors of a false religion” (19).

Capadose is aware of the fact that every nation professes and should profess their own variety of Protestantism. After expanding on the national forms of Protestantism in France and England, he comes to the conclusion that no particular Protestant Church form should be imposed on Spain other than an Evangelical Church, to preserve the connection with “the particularism of Spain’s nationalism”.\(^103\)

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98 Ibidem, 43.
99 Ibidem, 46.
100 According to the Gospel of John, a Pharisee who showed favour to Jesus.
102 Ibidem, 93/94.
The role of Capadose’s Jewish background is of secondary importance in this book and, while he on one occasion writes that he is not easily fobbed off because “some Spanish blood is running through his veins”, he only refers to the history of the Spanish Jews in Toledo, where he notices that several Roman Catholic churches were originally synagogues. On the return journey, in the stagecoach from Madrid to Bayonne, a conversation with Jewish fellow passengers confirms to him that “the faithful evangelist loves the Jews and can, mutually, count on their love, while the old or the new rationalists have always despised the old people” (20).

3. ADRIEN LOUIS HERMAN OBREEN, *In Spanje. Reisindrukken* (1884)

A.L.H. Obreen (1845-1915) started his working life as a mechanical engineer with the Dutch Company for the Exploitation of State Railways. In 1876 he was sent by the *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant* (*NRC*), as a reporter, to the World Exhibition in Philadelphia and in 1877 he began a new career as a foreign correspondent of this newspaper. In 1881 and 1883/1884 respectively, he travelled to Algeria and Spain. His experiences in Spain initially appeared in the form of letters to the *NRC* and, in 1884, the book *In Spanje. Reisindrukken* was published, about which the author says the following in the preface:

The saying goes that the first impression should be mistrusted. Therefore, it would always appear advisable to note down that first impression as a reason for further deliberation. As such, these letters have been brought together here. They have remained unaltered. Written on the corner of the table in a bar or on the shaking bench of a railway carriage, they seemed less susceptible to rewriting. As a travel diary they have been written down and as such they are presented to the kind reader (27).

The author crossed the Spanish border at Irun and went from there to San Sebastian in December 1883. As he was unpleasantly surprised by the severe cold, both in San Sebastian and in Burgos, he travelled on to Madrid, expecting milder weather, but discovering the capital to be one of the coldest cities in Europe. After spending Christmas in Madrid, Obreen went on to Seville, from where he wrote his first letter on 30th December. On 3rd January, he arrived by train in Granada where he stayed for a week. After visiting Cordoba he went back

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104 Ibidem, 72.
105 *In Spain. Travel Impressions.*
to Madrid and from there to the Escorial and Toledo. On 24th January 1884, he was back in Paris, where he worked at the time as a correspondent for the *NRC*.

Obreen’s book relies more on objective descriptions of sights than that it relates personal experiences. In the preface the author ponders on the rise and fall of nations, zooming in on Spain’s decline since the 17th century and the widening gap between this country and other European nations. However, the preface ends on an optimistic note when the author expresses his belief that Spain is a land of the future. Having faith in the young king Alphons XII, he thinks that Spain can regain the position it once held in Europe.107

The letters that were gathered in this book follow Obreen’s journey in a more or less chronological order. During his second visit to Madrid, he looks back on his stay in Cordoba, while the last letter, written in Paris, is used to summarize what the author sees as his most important impressions. This conclusion emphasizes that a good government is needed that not only wisely administers the large amount of foreign capital that enters the country, but also stimulates the work ethic of the Spaniards themselves.108

*The Spanish National Character*

The first characteristic of the Spanish people noted down by Obreen is their seriousness: “By nature the Spanish are not very cheerful” (22), he writes. That they are, on the other hand, of a passionate nature is demonstrated when he sees four women sitting in front of a police station, waiting for news of their husbands who were involved in a knife-fight where “the Spanish blood had pounded” (23).

Spain’s great poverty is manifested, particularly, in the vast number of beggars and related by the author to another peculiarity of the Spanish national character: their aversion to manual labour. “Why don’t the Spanish put their shoulders to the wheel?” the author asks himself.109 Whether it concerns the construction of railways or the restoration of the Alhambra, the workers never seem to be doing much.110 Begging, on the other hand, almost seems to be an honourable activity, while everywhere the foreigner has to guard himself against shady dealers and crooks who want to wheedle him out of his money:
But how hateful it is when you see that, for instance, in every railway office the clerks are bent on giving the travellers false money and on short-changing them (24).

In Spain’s museums Obreen is impressed by the powerful realism of Spanish painting, but he is less enthusiastic about that same realism in the many statues that fill the churches, a realism which he attributes to a preference for tangible forms.\(^{111}\)

While in mid-winter there is no bullfighting in the southern part of the country, Obreen attends a cockfight in Granada, another passion of the people and, according to the author, another relic of barbaric times that should have been forbidden long ago by the authorities.\(^{112}\) Near the end of his trip, he gets the chance to attend in Madrid a kind of rehearsal for the bullfighting season, organized, he thinks, to satisfy the burning impatience of the people.\(^ {113}\) Obreen attributes the fact that spectacles like these still exist in Spain to another characteristic of the Spanish people:

The main reason, however, why in Spain popular games are still being held at the expense of poor tortured animals, games which have long since been abolished in every other civilized nation, is this: that the nation is incomprehensibly insensitive to all animals (25).

The district of Granada where the Gypsies live is called by Obreen “typically Spanish”.\(^ {114}\) Here, however, as in many other areas, little of the original character remains and much of both the Gypsy’s appearance and their dancing is merely for show. The author doubts, however, whether their bad reputation is justified:

Perhaps these folks would, if one did not watch out, walk away with one’s handkerchief or umbrella, or with a lady’s muff, but their baseness does not go much further than that. All in all they have a cheerful appearance, something which one does not always see in the common Spaniard. It is worth the effort to go and see this district of the Gitano’s, as an example of how people, on whose faces the astuteness is written, can still remain in a pitifully low condition (26).

\(^{111}\) Ibidem, 12.

\(^{112}\) Ibidem, 33.

\(^{113}\) Ibidem, 65.

\(^{114}\) Ibidem, 36.
Formation of the Image Content

Past Relations. While a Dutch self-image is absent in Obreen’s travel diary, the historical relations between Spain and The Netherlands do come up occasionally. Face to face with 16th and 17th century paintings in Madrid, the author muses: “When we, as Dutchmen, think of the Spanish kings of the 16th and 17th centuries, we feel an instinctive aversion […]” (27). This aversion manifests itself particularly when the author is reminded of Philip II, whom he calls as senseless as his grandmother, Joanna, but whose seriousness, however, he does not doubt:

The Escorial is the work of a highly serious mind who saw both his life and his post as a heavy task and who, apparently, saw it as his duty to let others share in this seriousness. At what price, alas! (28).

The Dutch, furthermore, should, in part, be grateful to the King as it was his “monk-politics” that forced them to act and, eventually, brought them wealth and greatness.115

Intertextual References. Apart from passing references to Beaumarchais’s Figaro, Mozart’s Leporello, Don Quixote and Gil Blas, no cultural sources seem to have had a significant influence on Obreen’s image of Spain. On one occasion, however, he attends a play at a theatre in Granada that makes an impression. This play (the title of which is not mentioned) is performed once a year, just like Vondel’s Gijsbrecht van Amstel in The Netherlands, and commemorates the taking of the city by Ferdinand and Isabella on the 2nd January 1492. It strikes the author that during the performance an Arab who challenges the Christian army is cheered by the audience, an act which he considers to be an anti-clerical demonstration. At the same time, he sees the performance of the play as one of the last remnants of the rapidly disappearing couleur locale in Spain.116

Politics/Religion. Although Obreen does not pay much attention to contemporary politics, it is clear to him that Spain’s deplorable situation is due to both its cynical and profiteering politicians and the great indifference of the masses.117 There is reason for optimism, however, now that a young and astute king is heading the nation.

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115 Ibidem, 81.
116 Ibidem, 36.
117 Ibidem, 71.
Religion only plays a part in Obreen’s travel letters as far as it is expressed in art. As an explanation of the mixture of realism and mysticism in a painter like Murillo, he reminds the reader that the Spanish people, in those days, lived for the mysteries of the Church, while the Inquisition, supported by the sympathy of the people, saw to it that everyone who doubted those mysteries was killed.\footnote{Ibidem, 17.}

Obreen, like many others, is full of admiration for Islamic architecture in Spain and deplores what Christians have done with Cordoba’s mosque. The Roman Catholic church within the mosque is actually quite beautiful but its beauty would have stood out far more if the church had been built next to the mosque instead of in its interior.\footnote{Ibidem, 53.}

4. MARCELLUS EMANTS, *Uit Spanje: schetsen*\footnote{Sketches from Spain. For the analysis, the 2004 republication of this text has been used, to which the chapter about Mallorca, that was published separately in 1887 and as part of a collection of travel accounts by Emants in 1897, was added.} (1886)

Author Marcellus Emants (1848-1923) was already an experienced traveller when he went to Spain in the autumn of 1885. By that time, he had published a travel book about Sweden, *Op reis door Zweden* (1877), and another one about Egypt, *Langs de Nijl* (1884).

With his wife, Eva Verniers van der Loeff, who spoke Spanish well, Emants spent eight months on Spanish soil. The couple crossed the border at Port Bou and started their visit to Spain in Barcelona. From there they took the boat to Mallorca and travelled from the island directly to Valencia. Next they visited Alicante, Cordoba, Granada and Malaga. As they were strongly advised not to go to Gibraltar because of political tensions there, they decided instead to visit Toledo, Madrid, the Escorial and Burgos and then go south again, to be in Seville in time for the Holy Week and the Feria. In the spring of 1886 the couple returned to Holland. When on the Spanish mainland, the Emants travelled mainly by train, which led to frequent complaints about the lack of information available as well as the punctuality and speed of the trains.

Emants’s travelogue is written in the epistolary form, and in an introductory letter he suggests that his friend, Frits Smit Kleine, had asked him for letters from Spain. Also, in another letter that was written to the same friend, after Emants’s return, he asks for permission to publish a book about his journey, consisting of letters directed to Smit Kleine. It is unlikely, however, that Emants had actually
written to Smit Kleine from Spain, as no such letters have been found in the latter’s correspondence that has been preserved.  

Objectivity is an important aim for Emants in his description of Spain and the Spaniards. While he writes in a postscript that he has always noted down his impressions as directly as possible, he is often careful in passing judgement and confesses readily to the reader when he has used his imagination to enhance the vivacity of his account. After a long and lively description of a visit to the home of the marquis Don Juan T. in Elche, for example, he admits that he has mixed truth and fiction in this tale and his personal opinion about the bullfight is only given after visiting the event no less than eight times, without actually enjoying it.

The Spanish National Character

Apart from a few Spanish habits that caught Emants’s attention, like smoking excessively, spitting in the streets and arriving late, the author pays a lot of careful attention to what he sees as the national character of the Spanish, sometimes refuting the clichés that he has obviously heard and read elsewhere. For example, in talking about Spanish formality, he explains that the many elaborate sayings that adorn their conversation are not hollow phrases, but expressions of a real and innate politeness. A politeness which, in part, reveals a great hospitality towards the foreigner, while, on the other hand, it is related to the informality in social intercourse in Spain, where class consciousness plays a much lesser role than in other countries. In the same way he objects to the general view that the bullfight is an expression of typically Spanish cruelty and barbarism. Not only is a bullfight much more complex than that, but in Emants’s opinion it is also hypocritical to forget that cruelty to animals is common practice in many other parts of the world.

Emants attributes the fact that the Spanish are not very energetic where work is concerned, to both the behaviour of their leaders and to a defect in the national character: a lack of strength of mind. Furthermore, they are too sure of their superiority and their natural right to be the first among the nations of the world. On the other hand, Emants feels that in other countries, where one tends to always look elsewhere, some of this chauvinism could be useful. And the Spanish mentality of “passing the time, if possible, by having fun, if necessary, by working” (29), also has its attractions.

122 Emants, Schetsen uit Spanje, 78.
123 Ibidem, 218.
124 Ibidem, 47.
125 Ibidem, 120.
Emants is not as impressed by the beauty of Spanish women as most of his northern counterparts. He sees some beautiful specimens, but is rather put out by the amount of unwanted hair on some parts of their bodies. However, although he is shocked by the illiteracy of, particularly, Spanish women, he is impressed by their knowledge of Spanish literature.

Finally, while travelling through different parts of Spain, Emants pays some attention to regional differences in character. Although he criticises de Lavigne for his easy stereotyping of the various regional characters, he himself contrasts the hard-working Mallorquin with the aristocratic, lazy Castilian. In Andalusia the air is filled with music and love and Emants thinks he has discovered in the Andalusian “a light-hearted friendliness, a warm, but superficial feeling for art, a troublesome touchiness and an amusing proclivity for pomposity” (30). In his judgement of the Gypsies he wants to be careful and not lapse into cliché’s, but writes nevertheless:

That, in fact, they live with each other “in a cat’s marriage”, that stealing, cheating and smuggling is their trade, that, with every sunrise, they have forgotten the day before and only think about the future, when a fool asks about it, seems to be the truth (31).

Formation of the Image Content

Self-image. Comparisons between The Netherlands and Spain appear regularly in Emants’s account. For example, when he comments on the Spanish custom to spend a large part of the day outside, and compares this habit with Dutch domesticity - a consequence of the grey and cold climate in his home country.

The outcome of these comparisons is frequently in favour of the Spanish, as, for instance, when he praises the decent and brotherly way in which the different social classes in Spain treat one another, something that he has never seen before, as he explains in a footnote:

Especially not in The Netherlands, where freedom has led only to arrogance in the upper and rudeness in the lower classes and where a ridiculous class consciousness and scrupulous formality banishes all confidentiality and sociability from society (32).

Also in a footnote, and after having admired the electric street lighting in Barcelona, he admits that, although the Dutch, naturally, think of themselves

126 Alfred Germond de Lavingne, of whose Espagne et Portugal 13 editions were published, in 3 languages, between 1872 and 1896.
as much more enlightened than the Spanish, the superiority of this aspect of Barcelona’s public life gives rise for them to blush shamefully.\footnote{Emants, \textit{Schetsen uit Spanje}, 20.}

On the island of Mallorca it strikes Emants how neat everything is and he is sure that Dutch tourists, in particular, will be struck by the “Broek-in-Waterland-like cleanliness”\footnote{In the \textit{Vaderlandsche woordenboek} (1780-1795) by Jacobus Kok, in volume 8 (p. 1073), the village of Broek in Waterland, just north of Amsterdam, is described as particularly neat, both inside and outside its houses.} that does not limit itself to floors and household goods, but extends also to clothes and the body.\footnote{Emants, \textit{Schetsen uit Spanje}, 37.}

The most striking contrast between the Spanish and the Dutch is, for Emants, the capacity of enjoying oneself in the south, the carefree attitude, the lightness of being. This cosy atmosphere is symbolized by the Andalusian patio:

[...]

\textit{Past Relations.} There are only a few direct references to the Eighty Years War in Emants’s travelogue. Once he mentions the fact that the blood of his ancestors, justifiably, began to boil after they had become acquainted with the Holy Inquisition,\footnote{Ibidem, 85.} and although the Escorial is stereotypically described as an image in stone of the cold and fanatical personality of Philip II, this king, whom he also calls great, is only once explicitly linked to the Spanish-Dutch conflict, when the author calls him the monarch who bribed Balthasar Gerards.\footnote{Ibidem, 152. On the 10th July 1584, Balthasar Gerards murdered William of Orange in Delft.}

\textit{Direct Contact.} Personal meetings with Spanish people are, on occasion, described in detail in this travelogue, the most important ones being a visit to the home of Don Juan T.\footnote{The T. obviously stands for Tenorio, Don Juan’s surname as it already appeared in Tirso de Molina’s play \textit{El Burlador de Sevilla y convidado de piedra} (1630).} in Elche and a musical evening organized by Mrs Carmen X in Malaga. These meetings are important sources of information about the customs and behaviour of the Spanish. In the case of Don Juan, however, Emants confesses that, although there were visits to private houses in Spain, neither the
name, nor the remarks and conduct of this specific host were exactly truthful. The same might apply to the musical evening in Malaga, although there is no ‘confession’ here. The evening gives Emants the opportunity to write in detail about flamenco music and even add Dutch translations of some of the songs.

**Intertextual References.** Emants is well aware of the fact that many travel books about Spain have already been written in other countries, especially in the course of the 19th century, and he emphasizes from the beginning that he does not want to fill his letters with fragments from other books. Also, he mentions, in his introductory letter to Smit Kleine, that he has not done any previous study on the subject of Spain. Nevertheless, he regularly quotes from other travel books, mainly Théophile Gautier’s travelogue *Voyage en Espagne* and the travel guide *Espagne et Portugal* by Germond de Lavigne. The chapter about Mallorca begins with a long quotation from George Sand’s *Un hiver à Majorque*. Other books mentioned are Edmondo de Amicis’s travelogue *Spagna*,133 Murray’s travel guide, and the *Illustrierter Führer durch Spanien und Portugal*, that was part of a series of travel guides published by Hartleben in Vienna. About his visit to the Alhambra, he does not want to burden the reader with too many details and refers to a book about the complex by Jacques Edouard de Sturler: *Granada en de Alhambra: geschiedenis en reisherinneringen*134 (1880). Often, references to these books are accompanied by critical comments. George Sand, for example, was too frustrated about her stay on the island to write a truthful account and the consulted travel guides are considered to be generally imprecise, impractical or outdated. And, although Sturler’s book contained much valuable information, it was written in lamentably bad Dutch.135

Although Emants is critical of his Romantic predecessors, it is in ‘poetic’ Andalusia that he seems most strongly influenced by them. In Seville, where his expectations are high, the religious manifestations in the Holy Week produce an initial shock and revulsion, but soon the Spanish proverb “Quien no ha visto Sevilla, no ha visto maravilla”136 becomes reality, when Emants is enchanted with the warmth and carefree atmosphere in this part of Spain.

In one of his ‘confessions’ to the reader about the truthfulness of his account, he admits that his enthusiastic descriptions of the Andalusian patio are not entirely based on personal experience, but on hearsay and books like *El patio andaluz: cuadros de costumbres* (1886) by Salvador Rueda, which shows that he also had some knowledge of contemporary Spanish literature.

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134 *Granada and The Alhambra: history and travel memories.*
136 *He who has not seen Seville, has not seen a marvel.*
Finally, frequent references to the history of Spain, particularly the period of Arab rule, show that Emants had informed himself well on this subject. In Toledo, for example, the surroundings remind him of a stage set and inspire him to invent a synopsis for a drama about the famous legend of the Gothic king Rodrigo, a story that had been retold by, amongst others, Washington Irving in his *Legends of the Conquest of Spain* (1835).

**Politics/Religion.** The author’s views on politics also play a part in the shaping of his images of Spain and the Spaniards. Corruption is a widespread phenomenon in Spanish society, Emants writes. A strictly honest tradesman would swiftly be ruined in Spain and a customs officer who would limit himself to doing his duty, would be a voluntary martyr without glory.\(^\text{137}\) Emants dedicates a separate chapter to the *Cosas de España*, which he defines as the defects, like mismanagement, disorder and indifference that are to be found in every aspect of Spanish administration. He attributes these faults not only to selfish and incompetent leaders, but also to a defect in the Spanish national character, as the people not only copy the behaviour of their leaders, but also, with the same indifference, give up rights to which they are fully entitled.\(^\text{138}\)

At the same time, Spanish passion shows itself also in politics, where riots and rebellions are easily provoked. Madrid is the centre of political corruption and Emants calls the capital, for this reason, “Spain’s festering wound”:\(^\text{139}\)

What one reads and hears about family scandals, in which the southern passion played an utterly insignificant role, can be seen as equal to the disgraceful acts of meanness that are committed to obtain seats in parliament, or the shameless malversations by which the helmsmen provide themselves with a docile crew (34).

But the greatest culprit of all, responsible for Spain’s decline and backwardness is, in Emants’s view, the Roman Catholic Church. At the end of his chapter about politics in the capital, he deplores that a proud, noble and gifted people, like the Spanish, that could have been one of the happiest and most prosperous people on earth, has allowed the “microbes of religiosity”\(^\text{140}\) to paralyse their development, to confiscate their possessions, to reduce their women to stupidity, to turn their leaders into executioners and every honest person into a hypocrite and a fraud.\(^\text{141}\)

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138 Ibidem, 84.
139 Ibidem, 138.
140 Ibidem, 148.
141 Ibidem, 148/149.
As someone who declares himself to be neither Roman Catholic nor fond of ostentation\textsuperscript{142} Emants is shocked and angry when he sees the showy opulence of the Catholic Church in Spain. Consequently, he finds the processions during the Holy Week in Seville an offensively degrading spectacle:\textsuperscript{143}

Under the guise of piety, the whole thing is nothing but a contest in pageantry, organized by the most childish vanity. To make each other green with envy, the brothers splash out money on velvet robes, crosses of silver and tortoise-shell, gilded candelabra, coloured candles […] (35).

This proclivity for pomp and circumstance is especially in bad taste when it concerns the depicting of Jesus Christ, who preached simplicity and humility.

Furthermore, Emants contrasts the intolerance of the Catholic Church with the more liberal religious politics of the Moors, who, in the days when they ruled over Spain, allowed both Jews and Christians to profess their religion freely, while the Catholic Church not only expelled dissenters, or forced them to convert, but also destroyed their monuments. In a footnote that accompanies the chapter about Cordoba, city of the Moors, the author blames the monks and priests for Spain’s decadence:

The numbing, corrupting influence of the priests destroyed its prosperity, broke its mental strength and undermined its dignity, while decadence, superstition and varnished depravity took their place (36).

5. JOZEF ISRAËLS, \textit{Spanje. Een reisverhaal}\textsuperscript{144} (1899)

The Jewish painter Jozef Israëls (1824-1911) was one of the most important members of The Hague School: a group of artists who lived and worked in The Hague in the last decades of the 19th century. In the spring of 1894, shortly after the death of his wife, Aleida Schaap, Israëls made a journey to Spain with his son Isaac, also a painter, and Frans Erens, friend of the latter and an author who belonged to the Eighties Movement.

The three men left The Hague on the first of May, by stage coach that took them to Paris, where they boarded a “train de luxe” to the Spanish border town of Irun. From there they went to San Sebastian and took the train to Madrid, visiting the Escorial and Toledo. From Toledo they continued their journey to Cordoba,
Seville and Cadiz. In Cadiz they took the boat to Tanger. Although a visit to Fez was recommended, the prospect of the exertions and dangers of the trip through the desert made them decide to sail back to Gibraltar and cross from there to Algeciras. After having visited Algeciras, Ronda and Granada, the three men returned to Madrid and after a short stay in the capital took the train to the east coast, first to Valencia and then to Barcelona, from where they returned, via France, to The Netherlands. The exact date of their departure from Spain is not given, but on their return to Madrid, in the last stages of the journey, the capital is mourning the death of the famous bullfighter Espartero, which occurred on 27th May 1894. As only two other cities were visited, one may presume that the journey did not last more than two months.

In a first chapter, illustrated with a drawing of the author in the process of writing, Israëls explains that his travelogue is based on sketches and notes he wrote down in a little book during the trip. Although others probably would not understand his scribbles, for the author they trigger his memory and the trip comes to life.

As one might expect from a traveller who was, first and foremost, a painter, the author’s descriptions of Spain and the Spanish have a strongly pictorial character. And, as Israëls was a painter who specialized in representations of ordinary people, mainly fishermen from Zandvoort and Katwijk, he was particularly charmed by scenes of daily life in Spain, which are repeatedly described in detail. Accustomed to the subdued colours characteristic of the paintings of The Hague School, Israels especially enjoyed the bright colours and strong light in these tableaux. In Algeciras, he sees a woman with a child on her arm and observes:

Often I had seen the same picture and often I had painted it and, although it was exactly the same, I could not get enough of the pleasure of enjoying the difference between here and there. With us, the figures covered from top to bottom, against the cold, the wind and the wet soil, grey dunes surrounding them, a grey sea and a rainy sky. Here woman and child were only scantily covered; their black hair blew across their temples and a brown woollen cloth barely covered the nakedness of woman and child; and this figure stood on an elevation like a statue that was one with its plinth and this was outlined against a background of soft, agate-blue mountains, hazy and fine, while the foreground was warm and sunny (37).
The Spanish National Character

The first Spaniard the travellers meet, an elderly gentleman whom the author calls Señor Tenorio, a lover of music, “like all Spaniards”,\textsuperscript{145} tells them that he belongs to a real Spanish family, strong and quick-tempered.\textsuperscript{146} Contrary to the famous literary character whose surname he shares, he confesses that one failed relationship with a German girl in his youth has put him off love and marriage for the rest of his life.

A characteristic of life in Spain that is mentioned several times is the slower pace. This image is part of the author’s preconceptions, as already in the first days in Spain, Israëls sees in a passing ox-wagon a reflection of the country itself: slow, proud and stately.\textsuperscript{147} The long and slow train journeys have the same symbolic meaning:

This is a typically Spanish rail journey, from Toledo to Cordoba, I must say; here no one is in a hurry, the traveller isn’t, nor, in the least, the train itself; the names of the stations are not called out, everybody knows where he is. The train halts at the smallest places and the stops are long (38).

Lengthiness is, furthermore, related to verbosity, which, in turn, is associated with the wide open spaces in this sparsely populated country.\textsuperscript{148}

Dignity and modesty are seen as innate qualities of the Spanish and these are only threatened by outbursts of hatred and resentment, which are, in equal measure, characteristic of a southern temperament.\textsuperscript{149} The sense of style, the “grandezza”, is what Israëls admires in Spanish women, apart from their physical beauty.

Another appreciated character trait of the Spanish, of which Israëls, more than once, sees examples in the streets of Spanish cities, is the compassion and warm generosity that is so typical of the Spaniard.\textsuperscript{150}

Both the Gypsies and the bullfight get considerable attention. To the Gypsies - these rough, lively and picturesque creatures\textsuperscript{151} - a separate chapter is dedicated in which the picturesqueness of the gypsy life is strongly emphasized:

\textsuperscript{145} Israëls, \textit{Spanje. Een reisverhaal}, 18.
\textsuperscript{146} Ibidem, 17.
\textsuperscript{147} Ibidem, 23.
\textsuperscript{148} Ibidem, 175.
\textsuperscript{149} Ibidem, 135.
\textsuperscript{150} Ibidem, 184.
\textsuperscript{151} Ibidem, 155.
dutch travellers in spain (1860-1900)

[...] the wildness and rapacity of the people, the thousandfold rubbish in front of the openings that were made in the steeply rising background, it all came together and was warmly coloured by a dazzling sun (39).

The bullfight is duly visited twice and described in detail. Apart from a comment that the fight is dangerous for both animal and man, the ceremony provokes neither great revulsion nor enthusiasm and a third opportunity for a visit is given a miss.

formation of the image content

self-image. Although there are occasional bouts of homesickness in which aspects of Holland enter into the travelogue, Israëls does not often compare the Spanish national character with that of the Dutch. Apart from a general and recurring observation that much of daily life in Spain takes place outdoors instead of indoors, like in Holland, a direct comparison is made when a Feria is visited. Like many other Dutch travellers, Israëls expected something like a funfair and is pleasantly surprised that the drunken brawl and generally indecent behaviour that he associates with similar Dutch events, is absent.

Differences are occasionally generalized into a North-South opposition. Flirtations by a Spanish woman, for example, are seen as more innocent than similar behaviour in a northern woman.

Direct Contact. Israëls is not only interested in every day Spanish life for its pictorial merit, he also avidly looks for personal contact. He says he is “fond of a good chat”152, and although he admits that his knowledge of Spanish is limited, he tries to talk to a great variety of people, from chambermaids to a titled wine merchant, whose nobility is doubted. Already in the train from Paris to Irun a first conversation is described with an elderly gentleman, whom Israëls calls Señor Tenorio and who is a “living travel guide”,153 as he not only tells the travellers where to go and what to see, but also informs them of the Spanish national character and the best way to go about with the Spanish. In Seville, a nameless young painter is visited, which gives the travellers the opportunity to see the home of what is called a “solid citizen”154 and to be informed about their way of life. The foreign perspective on Spain and the Spanish is represented by a German commercial agent, whom they meet in Ronda and who reassures them about the bad reputation of its inhabitants:

152 Ibidem, 80.
153 Ibidem, 16.
154 Ibidem, 98.
“These folks of Ronda”, he said, “I know very well. There is a lot of trade in horses here and that is a business in which all kinds of things happen, swindling and quarrels; furthermore, the poor people are smart and clever here, although many of them are, on the other hand, naive and childlike” (40).

**Travel/Tourism.** Only once the difference between traveller and tourist plays a part in the image-formation in this travelogue. The only time Israëls speaks, rather denigratingly, about tourists, is in the Prado Museum, where the attendants are capable of seeing the difference between “the real art-lovers, writers and those who were interested and those who, like ordinary tourists with checked, light-coloured suits and red travel booklets, rummaged through the museum galleries” (41).

**Intertextual References.** Not surprisingly, the influence of pictorial sources on Jozef Israëls image of Spain is particularly prominent. Paintings from Spain and abroad project their image on the Spanish people the author encounters during his trip. A clergyman is a “proper subject for the dark Ribera”. Two waitresses in San Sebastian remind him of figures drawn by Flaxman. Textual sources were consulted before the trip began. Once the decision to go to Spain was made, the three men discussed useful preparatory readings. In one of the first chapters a meeting in The Hague is described, where a stack of, mainly French, books about Spain is gathered on the table. Apart from historical works, Gauthier’s *Voyage en Espagne* is recommended by Erens and Israëls himself contributes two travel guides, one French, Germond de Lavigne’s *Espagne et Portugal* and one German, the *Grosser illustrierter Führer durch Spanien und Portugal*.

On arrival in Spain, the country is referred to as that of Don Quixote and Gil Blas and about Cervantes’ heroes Israëls remarks, near the end of their trip:

[…]. Yes! One continuously thinks of Don Quixote, when one travels in Spain and Sancho Panza and the knight himself repeatedly appear before you in the crowd (42).

Amongst foreign authors, Heinrich Heine is mentioned most frequently, the first stanza of his poem *Almansor*, about the cathedral in Cordoba, being quoted:

In dem Dome zu Cordova,

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155 A reference to the red *Baedeker* guide books.
157 Ibidem, 24. John Flaxman (1755-1826) was a British sculptor and draughtsman.
Like several other travellers who visited this famous building, Israëls comments on the incorrectness of the details given by Heine, who never saw the *Mezquita* personally.

In Valencia, city of El Cid, Israëls demonstrates his knowledge of literary works about this famous Spanish hero by Herder, Heine and Corneille.

As a last textual reference, Israëls remembers how, as a boy in the “cold and ugly art school”, he had sung a well known song: “Fern im Süd das schöne Spanien / Spanien ist mein Heimatland / Wo die schattigen Kastanien / Rauschen an des Ebros Strand”. Once in Spain he could fully understand the homesickness the Spanish boy in this song had felt for his warm and colourful home country.

Although Israëls’ image of Spain cannot be seen as typically Romantic, the desire to see and the appreciation of what is different is clearly present in this travelogue. It is resumed in an observation made, with some regret, by the author during the return trip, in France: “the peculiarity of our trip was gone” (43). France, for him, is evidently more ‘normal’ and there is more similarity between the French and the Dutch.

As is to be expected, considerable attention is given to Spanish painting. In Madrid, the Prado Museum is visited twice and although Velasquez is admired, Israëls prefers the mysteriousness and the universality of Rembrandt to the quiet realism of the Spanish painter. Murillo, to whom a separate chapter is dedicated, is found to be too sweet, while the 16th century painter Luis de Morales is more appreciated for the depth of the expressed feelings.

**Politics/Religion.** Politics is a subject which hardly enters into this travelogue, any more than the subject of the Spanish-Dutch conflict in the 15th and 16th centuries, references to which do not go any further than the familiar epithets of the sombre, tyrannical, unworldly and ultra-Catholic king Philip II. Only once, in a conversation with a Spanish military, when Gibraltar is mentioned, Israëls lets his interlocutor express his nationalistic anger about the loss of this part of Spanish territory and refer to the high costs of keeping the overseas colonies.
As far as religion is concerned, Israëls visits many Catholic churches and notices that religion is very much part of daily life in Spain. Although he makes it clear that Catholicism is not his religion, he often enjoys the atmosphere of “music, incense and wonderful light”\(^{161}\) in Spain’s cathedrals. References to Israëls’ Jewishness are scarce. In Tanger there is a meeting with a Jewish codifier, whose imposing appearance is described in great detail as a picture that Israëls would have loved to draw.\(^{162}\) Only once, in Valencia, his own religion is mentioned in relation to Catholicism when his son Isaac helps a young choir-boy to lift a heavy church book and the father muses:

Thus, a son of the old people helped to arrange the Catholic church and looking at those two youngsters, I thought how ridiculous it is that there is so much hostility between people about the service to a Being of which we humans do not have any understanding anyway (44).

A similar attitude is reflected in his reaction to a monk in Burgos, who declares that none other than Catholics can die in peace. Israëls lets him profess his faith, without tormenting him with questions.\(^{163}\)

\(^{162}\) Ibidem, 124.
\(^{163}\) Ibidem, 35.