Disputing about taste: Practices and perceptions of cultural hierarchy in the Netherlands

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Appendix 1

Glossary of Dutch examples

In this glossary, all Dutch concepts, artists, TV shows, and so on, that were marked with an asterisk (*) are explained. It is based on internet sources such as Wikipedia, www.kijkonderzoek.nl (TV ratings) and www.kabelraden.nl (radio ratings), as well as on my own knowledge.

References to music charts are based on the Top 40* (which includes physical and digital sales as well as airplay; see www.top40.nl) and on sales charts (the ‘Single Top 100’ and ‘Album Top 100’, based on physical and digital sales only287, see www.dutchcharts.nl), both until the end of 2013. The in- or exclusion of airplay often makes a large difference, particularly with regard to Dutch language singers, who often have short-lived number one hits in the sales chart only.

When I refer to the research period, I mean the time of the interviews: 2009-2010.

3FM
Public radio station for pop/rock music, presents itself as less mainstream than some other radio stations, although the playlist does include many chart hits. Founded in 1965 as ‘Hilversum 3’. In the research period, the market share was between 8 and 10%, which means a second to fourth place.

Alle duiven op de Dam
A 1972 song by Gert & Hermien, a married couple who later turned to religious songs. The chorus starts with ‘All the pigeons on the Dam Square / sha la la lee, sha la la la’.

Appel, Karel
Artist (1921-2006), made expressionist paintings and sculptures of often colourful and distorted figures. Member of the influential avant-garde Cobra group (1948-’51). He was one of the most well-known artists in the Netherlands, famous for his line ‘I’m just messing around’.

287 Since the summer of 2013, live streams (such as on Spotify) are also counted, which reduces the quick rotation of singles.
Baantjer
Highly successful detective series on RTL4* (1995-2006), based on the police novels by A.C. Baantjer (1923-2010), always set in Amsterdam. Each episode is structured in the same way, and the crimes are always solved. The main character is an older detective, played by Piet Römer (1928-2012).

Bananasplit
Candid camera TV show on public television, in which both celebrities and unknown people are made fun of. It started in 1980; original Dutch clips were introduced in 1983. Since 2009, it is hosted by singer Frans Bauer*.

Bauer, Frans
Dutch language singer (b. 1973), who was born in a trailer park in the southern province of Brabant. He mainly sings cheerful and romantic songs, of which two reached the number one spot in the Top 40, in 1997 and 2003 (and one more in the sales chart). A reality soap on his private life, De Bauers (2003), received high ratings. He also hosts the TV show Bananasplit*.

Beense, Peter
Dutch language singer (b. 1963) who is more known in his home town Amsterdam, where he owns a bar in the city centre, than nation-wide. He is an admirer of André Hazes*.

Berge, Thomas
Dutch language singer (b. 1990), started his career as a teenager. He had two number one hits in the sales chart in 2009.

Boer zoekt vrouw
One of the most popular programmes of Dutch (public) television (since 2004), attracting millions of viewers. It is a dating show for farmers of different ages, who have difficulties finding a partner. The perceived authentic country life has been suggested as one of the reasons for its success. It is based on the British show Farmer wants a wife.

Borsato, Marco
Dutch language pop singer of Italian heritage (b. 1966). With fourteen number 1 hits in the Top 40 (including five duets; and three more in the sales chart), he is the most successful act in the Dutch charts ever besides The Beatles. His breakthrough was in 1990 in the TV show Soundmixshow, after which he sang Italian songs for some years. In 1994, he started his successful Dutch language career, consisting of both (power) ballads and up-tempo songs. He also works as an ambassador for NGO War Child.
Brood, Herman
Rock singer and painter (1946-2001). In the 1970s, he gained fame as a rock singer and musician. He also became a well-known TV personality, partly due to his heavy drug use and non-conformist behaviour; he was known as Holland’s favourite junkie. Furthermore, he started to produce art: wild, colourful, figurative but non-realist paintings, which were sold in high amounts as screen prints. In 2001, he committed suicide by jumping off the roof of the Amsterdam Hilton hotel.

Buuren, Armin van
DJ and producer of trance music (b. 1976). Between 2007 and 2012, readers of British magazine *DJ Mag* voted him as the world’s best DJ five times. When the Dutch king, Willem-Alexander, was inaugurated in April 2013, Van Buuren performed together with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra.

Concertgebouw
The main concert hall in the Netherlands (literally ‘concert building’), opened in 1888 in Amsterdam. It is hailed for its great acoustics. It is the home for the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, also founded in 1888.

Dance Valley
Yearly electronic music festival, held in a recreational area. It started in 1995 and has since grown to more than twenty stages, 200 DJs and 50,000 visitors.

De Wereld Draait Door
Talk show on public television, since 2005 broadcast every weekday at 7:30 p.m. (since 2014 at 7 p.m.). It is a variety show full of interviews, brief music and comedy appearances and funny TV fragments, and it aims to provide the ‘talk of the day’. It is both criticised for the hurry with which topics are discussed and praised for providing a mix of high and low culture.

Dijk, Ko van
Actor (1916-1978). He was one of the most well-known actors in Dutch stage history, famous for his theatrical style of acting.

Duijts, Frans
Dutch language singer (b. 1979), started his career as an imitator of André Hazes*. He had a number one album in 2011, as well as a number one hit in the sales chart.
Appendix 1

Duin, André van
Holland’s most popular comedian (b. 1947), who gained success through his theatre revues, radio and television shows, and comical songs. His shows consist of sketches, jokes and impersonations, partly improvised. He mainly attracts a lower educated audience (Kuipers 2006), but he is also admired by more ‘highbrow’ comedians (cabaretiers) for his craftsmanship.

education system
The Dutch education system has changed several times during the twentieth century, most significantly after the Mammoetwet of 1968. Both old and new school levels are known in the Netherlands with their abbreviations and acronyms.

Children go to elementary school until age 12. After the first year of secondary education, they spread out over different school levels, which give access to further diverging tracks. Below you find an overview. The numbers between square brackets indicate the operationalisation of school level in the quantitative analysis of this dissertation. Note that only a small minority of respondents received a higher secondary education [3] without advanced training.

At this moment, the secondary school levels are, from lowest to highest:
- VMBO, gives access to MBO. It was founded in 1999 as the result of a merger of the more practical VBO and the more theoretical Mavo [1]
- Havo, gives access to HBO [2]
- VWO, consisting of Atheneum and Gymnasium (in English: grammar school; it includes the courses Latin and Greek), gives access to the university [3]

Before 1968, the secondary school levels were, from lowest to highest:
- technical school for boys, domestic science school for girls [1]
- Mulo, the lowest theoretical school level, but in itself once a means for upward mobility for children from working-class families [1]
- MMS, a medium to high school level for girls, giving access to the current HBO [2]
- HBS, higher school level, giving access to HBO and sometimes university [3]
- Gymnasium, see above [3]

After secondary school, people can attend advanced training, from lowest to highest:
- MBO, medium vocational training (also gives access to HBO) [2]

288 In many schools, some of the tracks are combined in the first (and sometimes also second) year, such as Mavo/Havo and Havo/VWO, after which students have to choose one of the two directions.
• HBO, higher vocational training, leading to a Bachelor’s degree (in international relations, HBO schools can call themselves a ‘university of applied sciences’) [3]
• university, academic training, since 2002 leading to Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees [4]

Finkers, Herman
Comedian (b. 1954), highly popular since the 1980s thanks to the TV broadcasts (including many reruns) of his theatre shows. He has a friendly absurdist style.

fout
Adjective that literally means ‘wrong’ or ‘mistaken’, but with respect to cultural taste has connotations with ‘bad taste’ and ‘not done’.

Goede tijden, slechte tijden (GTST)
Most popular Dutch soap opera, literally translated as Good times, bad times. It started in 1990 as an adaptation of the Australian series The restless years, but the producers soon started using original scripts. It is the longest running soap opera on Dutch television. It is broadcast each weekday at 8 p.m. on RTL4*. Although the ratings have decreased since the most successful years in the early 1990s, in the research period it still attracted about 1.5 million viewers a day. Since 2010, the ratings began to rise again.

Gymnasium
see Education system

Havo
see Education system

Hazes, André
Dutch language singer (1951-2004) from Amsterdam, who wrote and sang volks* songs. Although some of his songs were cheerful, most were of emotional and sentimental nature (e.g., about a lonesome Christmas, or about a boy who attaches a letter to a kite in order to reach his deceased mother). He also attracted higher educated people, partly because of camp value, and partly because he was perceived as a more ‘authentic’ (blues) singer than other volks singers. A 1999 documentary film about him, Zij gelooft in mij, attracted a broad audience. His sudden death at 53 sparked off many emotional reactions; his funeral service in the Ajax football stadium was broadcast live on national television and attracted six million viewers (on a population of over 16 million). He had three posthumous number one hits.
Hek, Youp van ’t
Comedian (b. 1954), highly popular since the late 1980s, partially thanks to the TV broadcasts of his theatre shows, including several times on New Year’s Eve. He satirises both politicians, elites and middle-class people (including his own audience) in a hyperbolic style and sometimes foul language, and praises romanticism. He also writes a popular column in quality newspaper NRC Handelsblad*.

Hermitage Amsterdam
Dutch branch of the famous Saint-Petersburg museum, privately funded. It opened in 2009 in a former nursing home in Amsterdam (built in 1681) and it shows parts of the Russian collection in temporary exhibitions. In the research period, these were about Russian tsars and early 20th century European paintings (‘Matisse to Malevich”).

HBO
see Education system

HBS
see Education system

Joe Speedboot
Best-selling and critically acclaimed 2005 novel by Tommy Wieringa (b. 1967), which meant his breakthrough to a larger audience.

Jolting, Gerard
Singer and TV show host (b. 1960), known for his high voice. He broke through in the 1980s with English language songs, but he later turned to Dutch. He hosted several shows on commercial TV with foute* humour, often together with singer Gordon. Both are members of party band De Toppers*. He had three number one hits in the Top 40 (in 1985, 1989 and 2007) and eight more in the sales chart (2007-2013).

Komt een vrouw bij de dokter
Successful 2009 film, the adaptation of a best-selling 2003 book by writer Kluun, about a woman dying of cancer, while her husband is cheating on her. The title (‘Woman walks into a doctor’s office’) refers to the opening line of many jokes.

Kruidvat
Chemist’s chain that also sells classical CDs for low prices.
Lama’s, De
Comedy show on public television (2004-2008), in which young stand-up comedians improvise sketches, based on ideas by the host and the audience. It is based on the British show *Whose line is it anyway?*

Lowlands
Yearly three-day music festival, short for A Campingflight to Lowlands Paradise. Founded in 1993 as an alternative to the more rock oriented Pinkpop, it has become the most popular festival in the Netherlands, with over 50,000 visitors. The several stages host both famous bands and underground acts from many genres, as well as theatre, ballet, literature, film, and so on.

Maassen, Theo
Comedian (b. 1966), one of the most popular and critically acclaimed comedians of the late 1990s and 2000s (the generation after Youp van ’t Hek* and Herman Finkers*). More rooted in stand-up comedy, his innovative and socially critical shows and his interaction with the audience often break (moral) boundaries. He also acts in films.

Mavo
see Education system

MBO
see Education system

MMS
see Education system

Moke
Dutch stylised rock band in the Britpop genre, founded in 2005, popular at festivals.

Mulo
see Education system

Muziekgebouw aan ’t IJ
Concert hall in Amsterdam, built in 2005, which mainly programmes contemporary classical music and other less accessible music genres (Baroque, avant-garde jazz).
Nick & Simon
Dutch language singing duo (b. 1984 and 1983 respectively) from Volendam (see Palingsound). Since 2006, their pop songs and ballads, in which one of them plays the guitar, are very successful among a young audience. They had five number one albums and ten number one singles in the sales chart (of which one also in the Top 40). They are also featured in their own reality soap and – after the research period – in several other TV shows, such as *The Voice*.

NRC Handelsblad
Newspaper, founded in 1970 as the result of the merger of two newspapers that had their origin in the 19th century. It is known as one of the two main ‘quality newspapers’ in the Netherlands (next to de Volkskrant). Although originally liberal, it does no longer have a political affiliation.

OOR
Monthly popular music magazine, founded in 1971. It focuses on rock and alternative or indie music, although other genres (electronic, hip hop) are also covered.

Palingsound
(Honorary) nickname for music from the town of Volendam. Although this is a small town (22,000 inhabitants), since the 1960s, it has produced many famous bands and singers (who are often related), both in English (The Cats, BZN) and in Dutch (Jan Smit*, Nick & Simon*, 3JS). Palingsound literally means ‘eel sound’, which refers both to its (former) population of fishermen and to the slick music.

Pathé
French film company, which is, in the Netherlands, primarily known for its multiplex cinemas that mainly show mainstream (Hollywood and Dutch) movies.

Plien & Bianca
Comedy duo (b. 1971 and 1968 respectively) who made several shows since 1997, often existing of (absurdist) sketches. They are also known for their collaboration with TV sketch show *Koefnoen*.

polonaise
A simple Dutch party dance, in which people follow each other in a long queue while holding each other’s shoulders, comparable to the conga. Not to be confused with the Polish dance and Chopin music.
Radio 538
Commercial pop radio station, founded in 1992. It mainly plays mainstream music, including the weekly Top 40*. During the research period it was the most popular channel in the Netherlands, with a market share between 9 and 12%.

Rieu, André
World famous violinist and conductor (b. 1949), who, with his Johann Strauss Orchestra, makes well-known classical melodies, particularly waltzes, known among a wide audience. His world tours include huge sets, nineteenth century costumes and dancing musicians, which breaks the classical music tradition of silence and contemplation.

Rijksmuseum
The Netherlands’ most famous national museum, built in Amsterdam in 1885. Although it exhibits art and historical artefacts from the entire Dutch history, the focus lies on the 17th century, including Rembrandt’s *Night Watch* and Vermeer’s *Milkmaid*. During the research period, the main building was closed due to reconstruction work.

RTL4
The first commercial TV channel in the Netherlands, founded in 1989. It has the second highest ratings, after the public channel Nederland 1. It broadcasts a news programme, showbiz news, the daily soap series *Goede tijden, slechte tijden* and shows for the entire family. The Dutch RTL also owns three other channels (RTL5, -7 and -8).

Schat, Peter
Composer of contemporary music (1935-2003). He composed modernist (twelve-tone technique), serialist and electro-instrumental works.

Shalalalie
Dutch language song (originally: ‘Ik ben verliefd (Sha-la-lie)’) with which the Netherlands competed in the semi-finals of the Eurovision Song Contest of 2010, sung by then 18-year-old *volks* singer Sieneke. It was elected the day before the interview with Ton (HMM4), who referred to it in the interview.

Shaffy, Ramses
Dutch language chansonnier and actor (1933-2009) of Egyptian-Polish descent. He emerged in the 1960s as a bohemian singer in the Amsterdam theatre scene, with his vivid and emotional songs (sometimes translated from French), in his own show Shaffy Chantant. His abundant alcohol use caused an early Korsakoff's, but he remained popular
in the 21st century while residing in an Amsterdam nursing home. He died of cancer on 1 December 2009, during my research period.

**Sky Radio**
Commercial radio station, founded in 1988, which plays non-stop accessible popular music. During the research period, it was the third to fourth radio station in the Netherlands, with a market share between 8 and 10%.

**Slam!FM**
Commercial radio station, founded in 2000, which focuses on electronic dance music and mainstream pop music. During the research period, the market share was about 2%, but it has gained popularity among teenagers.

**smartlap**
(Honorary) nickname for a sentimental (Dutch language) song, mostly of a narrative nature, for instance about death, poverty, crime, and alcoholism. Although the word *smartlap* (coined in the early 1960s) literally refers to grief, many people use it to describe ‘lowbrow’ Dutch language music or *volksmuziek* in general.

**Smit, Jan(tje)**
Dutch language singer (b. 1985) from Volendam (see Palingsound). At the age of eleven, when he was called Jantje Smit (a diminutive; many respondents still call him this way), he had a number one hit with a sentimental song about his deceased grandma. A few years later, as a young adult, he made his comeback and gained popularity among a younger audience, resulting in six more number one hits in the Top 40 (and even seventeen in the sales chart), plus seven number one albums. Furthermore, he was often in the news with his celebrity girlfriends (see also former prime minister Balkenende’s comments, referred to in the introduction).

**Soerjadi, Wibi**
Classical pianist (b. 1970), who is well-known among a broad audience, partially because of his media appearances on his private life (he lives in a castle filled with Disney toys and drives expensive cars). Due to his image and his ‘mannered’ way of playing, many people in the classical music world do not take him very seriously, although, in his teenage years, he won many prestigious prizes. In an interview (*NRC Handelsblad*, 15-5-2013), he resists the high–low distinction by referring to the 19th century more theatrical concert practice.
**Spoorloos**
Highly popular emotional TV show on public television (since 1990) about people who search for long lost relatives, often adopted children’s biological parents and half-brothers and –sisters from parents’ previous relationships.

**Stedelijk Museum (Municipal Museum)**
Most important Dutch museum for 20th and 21st century art, built in Amsterdam in 1895. During the research period, it was closed due to reconstruction work.

**Telegraaf, De**
Largest newspaper of the Netherlands (founded in 1893), which mainly attracts a lower educated audience. It has a right-wing political affiliation, which is often actively propagated, with large, underlined, headlines. It also features many sports pages as well as entertainment and celebrity news.

**Telekids**
Children’s television show on RTL4* (1989-1999) and later RTL8 (since 2010), which was particularly popular on Saturday mornings. Besides American cartoons, it mainly featured a studio show hosted by Irene Moors and Carlo Boszhard (since 1993), who pretended to be a couple. One of the most popular weekly items was a parody on *Goede tijden, slechte tijden*.

**Tiësto**
DJ and producer of trance music (b. 1969 as Tijs Verwest), who has had many international hits with both his own recordings and remixes for other artists. In 2002, ’03 and ’04 readers of British magazine *DJ Mag* voted him as the world’s best DJ.

**Top 40 (or: Nederlandse Top 40)**
Most significant pop music chart in the Netherlands, founded in 1965. Nowadays, it is based on sales of CD singles and paid downloads, combined with airplay on several radio and TV stations. ‘Top 40 music’ is also a widespread metaphor for mainstream pop music, which, unlike more alternative acts in different genres, is featured in the charts. It is used both by respondents who like this kind of music and by those who look down on it.

**Toppers, De**
Party music trio and sometimes quartet (due to internal quarrels in varying line-ups), consisting of popular solo singers: Gerard Joling*, Gordon, René Froger and Jeroen van der Boom. Since 2005, they yearly perform in huge stadium shows, resulting in high CD and DVD sales. They sing covers of well-known Dutch and English language songs and
medleys, dressed in glitter costumes. Although only Gordon and Joling are gay, camp and bad taste are celebrated in a stereotypically and over the top ‘gay’ way. In 2009, they competed in the semi-finals of the Eurovision Song Contest.

**Toren C**  
Alternative, absurdist and often gross comedy sketch show (since 2008), with several characters played by two women (Margôt Ros and Maike Meijer), in a large office building (the title means ‘Tower C’).

**Veen, Herman van**  
Singer, actor and comedian (b. 1945), whose theatre performances include (sometimes clownish) sketches and chanson-like songs. Many of his songs, including several children’s songs, are classics. He also wrote the children’s musical *Alfred J. Kwak* (1978), which was later turned into a popular cartoon (1989).

**Veronica**  
Commercial (and between 1976 and 1995 public) TV and radio station. Because of its complex history, this description is limited to what respondents referred to. Vincent (UMM5) spoke about the original Veronica (1960-1974): a pirate radio station, broadcasting from the North Sea (outside Dutch borders), which was very popular among teenagers in the 1960s as the first Dutch pop/rock music station. Koos (UMM3) referred to the present-day commercial TV station (owned by SBS, since 2003), which mainly broadcasts American films and TV series.

**Villa Achterwerk**  
Children’s television programme on public television since 1984, particularly referring to the Sunday morning shows since 1987 (although the title originates from a later date). It is the umbrella show for several other programmes and films, mainly from the Netherlands and other European countries. It distinguishes itself by broadcasting more alternative and boundary breaking shows and drama, as compared to most other, cartoon-based, children’s programmes.

**VMBO**  
see Education system

**volks / volkse muziek**  
Literally the word *volks* means ‘of the people’ (such as in *Volkskrant*: newspaper of the people), but it is more often used in the meaning ‘of the common people’ (the working class), or just ‘common’. It is used both by elites and middle classes and by working-class
people themselves, both in a derogatory and in a positive way. *Volks muziek* is often Dutch language music, consisting of either cheerful or sentimental songs, with relatively simple lyrics, melodies and instrumentations. People from higher classes perceive some of it as authentic (compare the English word *folk* music, although this includes modern interpretations of traditional songs); and some as commercial, banal or too simple.

**VWO**
see Education system

**Zomergasten**
Prestigious talk show on public television, broadcast about six times each summer, since 1988. In each show, a more or less prominent figure from politics, literature, the arts, science and other fields is interviewed for no less than three hours, alternated with his/her favourite (often not well-known) TV and film fragments. It is mainly watched and discussed by higher educated people.