Seeing through the archival prism: A history of the representation of Muslims on Dutch television
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Given that television is increasingly authorial of that which accumulates daily in news archives, it is highly likely that the recursivity of the medium – its reliance on and its presentation of itself – is likely to intensify.

Andrew Hoskins and Ben O’Loughlin (2007:117)

Archives, then, constitute a territory of images; the unity of an archive is first and foremost that imposed by ownership. (...) Thus, not only are the pictures in archives often literally for sale, but their meanings are up for grabs. New owners are invited, new interpretations are promised. The purchase of reproduction rights under copyright law is also the purchase of a certain semantic license.

Allan Sekula (1987: 116)

On the one hand, there are the headline “flashframes” of memory – the defining visual images of our age that come to anchor the history of events by virtue of their exceptional quality – and on the other, the media provide us with less obvious but nonetheless powerful and enduring images that accumulate in media memory and define not by being extraordinary but by being ordinary, by “fitting” and thus reinforcing existing ideas and conceptions.

Andrew Hoskins (2004: 115)

During the last few years, while I was completing this dissertation, I was also employed as an advisor to the Documentary Committee of the Dutch Film Fund. Coincidently, in February 2011, these two very different activities all of a sudden came together when I received a scenario for a documentary about the European history of post-war immigration, written by filmmaker René Roelofs and essayist and intellectual Professor Paul Scheffer, the author of the influential and contested “The Multicultural Drama” (2000). I had almost completed a first draft of this dissertation when I started reading the scenario for what was supposed to become both a feature documentary and a three-part television series called Land of Promise, named after Scheffer’s 2007 book. Naturally, the topic of the film instantly raised my curiosity, and when I read that the makers had the intention to construct the film from archival material from various European archives, including Sound and Vision, immediately the fictive filmmaker that I had brought up in the introduction of my first case-study came to mind. Although the scope of Scheffer’s and Roelof’s project was much broader – they wanted to focus on post-war immigration in general (instead of only Islamic immigration) from a comparative European (instead of only Dutch)
perspective – I could not help reading the rest of the scenario with this fictive filmmaker in mind and discover what choices he finally made.

Obviously, the makers of *Land of Promise* were faced with the same challenges that my fictive filmmaker was confronted with; challenges that involved the actual searching process, bridging the semantic gap of the archive’s descriptions, and of course the selection of archival material that must convey the historical narrative. As I revealed in this dissertation, Sound and Vision alone already holds a treasury of archival material that deals with post-war immigration. So which images does one elevate in a compilation that must cover such an extensive and complex history? Which images are to be excluded? And what kind of historical narrative does this selection eventually produce? Fortunately, the makers of *Land of Promise* were not fictive, but very real, well-respected, experienced, and well-informed about the topic, and the film premiered during the last edition of the International Documentary Festival Amsterdam (28 November 2013), while the series was broadcast a few months later, in January 2014. Clearly, I cannot leave the opportunity to reflect on the final result of their efforts unexplored. Not because I personally witnessed the trajectory from scenario, via first montage, to final version, or because I want to prove that my fictive filmmaker would have made different choices. But because the final result embodies many of the issues that this dissertation was centred on, and because it raises questions about the potentials and limits of audiovisual history writing through archival stock footage, an issue that I have touched upon in the last chapter, and that I want to explore a bit further in this coda.

In this dissertation I examined the history of televisual representations of Muslims through the “sliver of the window” (Harris 2002b) of Sound and Vision’s holdings and archiving practices. The emphasis has been very much on recurrent elements in televisual stories and histories of Muslims, because it is my contention that a focus on the recursive nature of the medium is the key to understanding the emergence, materialization and operation of stereotyped stories and images of Muslims. I have thus regarded television as a “sophisticated repetition machine” (Derrida 1996/2002: 89) and the archive of Sound and Vision as a facilitating actor in television’s tendency towards repetition. In chapter two, I investigated the changing thematic patterns of programs that have been labelled with “Muslims” and “Islam”, and I have shown that the generic imagery that has been used to visualize stories about Muslims and Islam has remained limited to a handful of cliché images; images

that have continuously been highlighted by archival descriptions as (generic) stock shots for reuse. In chapter three, I directed my focus to the recurring television coverage of Islamic rituals, and have shown that the coverage during the last two decades entailed a constant repetition of formulaic stories. In chapter four, I concentrated on the reiterations of two sequences of archival images, and investigated how these archival images, through television’s constant (uncritical) repetition, have become stereotyped symbols of the past. However, this focus on television as a repetition machine raises yet another question, a question that I so far have not addressed explicitly: namely, which stories and images have not been repeated, have been left aside, or have faded from television’s memory? Despite the practical difficulties of answering a question like this, I think it is an urgent question that deserves to be raised. Today, images are being assembled in the archive of Sound and Vision at an unprecedented rate, digital technologies have facilitated a greater and more immediate access to the archive, and digitization projects such as Images for the Future have made an enormous amount of televisual material easily available for reuse. Clearly, the capacity of the medium to articulate both past and present through archival material has attained new levels. It is likely, as Hoskins and O’Loughlin suggest in this coda’s epigraph, that the ever-increasing amount and availability of images in Sound and Vision, due to digital technologies, will result in an intensification of the medium’s reliance on its own archive. Today, a vast amount of archival stock footage circulates daily on television, both as specific archival material and as more generic stock material in historical documentaries, in template series in news and actualities, in promotional trailers of news coverage, and in background projections for news, actualities and talk shows. Obviously, the ambitious project of Land of Promise has benefitted significantly from the increased accessibility of audiovisual archives and from the availability of digitized archival material. The unprecedented ubiquity and availability of archival (stock) footage does, however, raise the question of whether this results in the circulation of a greater variety of archival footage on television, and whether this stimulates new forms and practices of televisual history writing.

As I uncovered in this dissertation, television’s capacity and convention to compile (hi)stories from archival footage is very typical for the medium. Its tendency to employ archival material to visualize stories about Muslims and Islam and to use archival footage as media templates can be detected in some of the earliest programs that addressed the history of Islam. Already in 1964, for example, the very first informative program that completely revolved around the nature of the religion
of Islam (De Grote Wereldgodsdiensten episode 1: Islam) opened with black and white archival footage of a fight between Christian crusaders and Islamic Saracens that originated from a fiction film to illustrate the way people pictured “Muhammadans”.

Also in the seventies and eighties, as I have shown in chapter two, various informative programs that completely revolved around Islam have employed all sorts of archival footage (both of the Dutch and foreign contexts) to inform its audience about the history of Islam and of Muslim presence in the Netherlands. In the nineties and 2000s, television’s reliance on archival footage to illustrate its stories about Islam and Muslims further intensified, as I brought to light in chapters two and four, and archival footage of both the Dutch and global context circulated not only in numerous historical series and programs, such as the series Islam in the Netherlands (1993) and in various episodes of Andere Tijden, but also in template series in all sorts of news and actuality programs. So while the medium has always displayed a need to employ archival footage, its increased reliance on archival footage is obviously the result of the constantly growing amount of broadcast material – in the early days the archived material in Sound and Vision was simply scarce, because public television’s airtime was very limited and because far from everything was kept – and of technological developments and digitization projects that have made constantly growing amounts of broadcast material accessible and available for reuse.

And while this increased accessibility of the archive and availability of archival footage feeds into the medium’s convention of compiling (hi)stories through its own archival prism, and offers many possibilities for developing new forms of audiovisual

\[457\] De Grote Wereldgodsdiensten (afl.1: De Islam), (NCRV, 04-02-1964). This is also an interesting example of how Islam was framed from a Christian perspective. The program opens with the statement of the presenter that Islam and Christianity have a lot of common, and that therefore Islam deserves our attention and an honest attempt to understanding. Obviously, the template of the crusades and Saracens reveals very old stereotypical ideas about Islam. Karim has argued that this generic notion about Islam is one of the basic frames in the European Christian polemic against the Saracens (Karim 2003: 62). Large part of this program consists of a lecture by a curator of the Tropenmuseum, who explains the five pillars of Islam. It shows images of the Mubarak mosque, that have been reused by the 1966 episode of Kenmerk about ritual slaughter (that I have described in the opening of chapter 3).


\[459\] See for example Islam in Nederland (NOS, 10-10-1993 etc), Andere Tijden (NPS/VPRO, 01-02-2005), 2 Vandaag (TROS, 27-09-2001), Nova (NPS/VARA, 11-12-2001), Heilige Huisjes (NOT, 30-09-2003), Twee Vandaag (AVRO/TROS, 08-12-2005), Islam in Europa (NPS, 05-01-2008).
history writing through archival stock footage (of which Land of Promise is an interesting example), it also shows the urgency to critically reflect on the compilation logic that underlies so much of television’s output. Since television is a mainstream gatekeeper in the current digital media ecology in which images circulate at an unprecedented rate and are remediated across various media platforms, it is interesting to reflect on what is selected for representation and circulation. What archival images are selected to narrate about the past and present? How are these images juxtaposed, and what stories about Islam and Muslims are being told through archival compilations? In this respect, it is not very surprising that Wilders’ Fitna (2008), a very disturbing example of archival compilation, did not meet television’s criteria for broadcasting.\textsuperscript{460} Wilders mobilized all sorts of archival footage of angry Muslim mobs, terrorist attacks and violence against women and homosexuals (excerpts of Dutch television programs, headlines of Dutch newspapers, international footage of 9/11 and other terrorist attacks, and numerous other international sources) to advocate his racist message that Islam is an inherently violent religion. Evidently, public television has not been prepared to offer a platform to Wilders’ political propaganda. However, the compilation logic that Wilders has drawn on, albeit a very extreme example of ripping archival images out of their original context, is quite typical for the medium of television, and is also used by many well-respected highbrow television programs that rely on archival footage and that compile stories by juxtaposing various archival images from different times and places. It is therefore important to turn the spotlight on these kinds of programs and question what archival footage is selected for circulation and what (hi)stories are being told by the juxtaposition of archival footage. How is the past articulated through the selection of archival footage? Exactly which archival images have come to count as knowledge of the past? At the expanse of which other images? Finally, in this coda I further explore some of these questions by taking a closer look at the three part television series of Land of Promise, out of which I recapitulate some of the issues that this dissertation revolved around; I reflect on the televisual logic of compiling stories from archival material and raise some questions for further research.

\textsuperscript{460} Wilders could not find a broadcasting organization that was prepared to air Fitna. On the 27th of March 2008, he made his sixteen minute film available through the online portal LiveLeak.
Land of Promise

Since this dissertation centred on televisual representations of Muslims, I focus therefore on Scheffer’s and Roelofs’ television series and leave their feature documentary film, released in arthouse theatres, aside. Both the film and series are inspired by Scheffer’s book Land of Promise (Land van Aankomst) (2007), both cover the European post-war immigration history, and both make the argument that large-scale immigration first leads to avoidance by both parties, that it unavoidably results in conflicts, and that these conflicts eventually lead to integration and reconciliation. The television series consists of three episodes, which revolve around three distinct stages of the immigration and integration process that the makers distinguish: “avoidance” (vermijding), “conflict” (conflict) and “acceptance” (aanvaarding). The film and series are completely constructed from archival footage from various European archives (Gerard Nijssen who has helped the makers with the research is the Netherland’s finest image researcher) and only music, few captions, and – in the case of the series – Scheffer’s voice-over has been added. Before I move to an analysis of the immigration history that this compilation of archival footage presents, I first briefly describe the narrative structure of each episode and describe the archival footage that has been used to illustrate the narrative.

Avoidance

The first episode opens with a compilation of archival images, accompanied by Scheffer’s voice-over, through which the theme of the series and of this particular episode is introduced. The voice-over says: “The confusion seems to be never-ending, whether it is over Syrian refugees (images of a refugee camp), over guest workers from Rumania and Bulgaria (images of people working on the land), over an innocent children’s festivity (images of a demonstration against “black Pete”) or over black and white schools. There are no clear answers and there is a lack of mutual understanding (images of Thatcher who states that people get scared if a minority becomes too big, and images of riots). Some people say that the white majority displays hostility towards migrants, whilst others say that these migrants disadvantage the autochtonen (images of an interview by Theo van Gogh with Pim Fortuyn, who espouses a critical opinion about our segregated society). Isn’t it about time to leave behind the question of who is to blame and finally acknowledge the

461 These images originate from the famous report by Jaap van Meekren about the 1972 riots in the Afrikaanderwijk in Rotterdam: Televizier (AVRO, 14-08-1972).
fact that our society has irreversibly changed?”. Now a scene from a sketch by Van Kooten en de Bie from the eighties is shown, that ironically comments on the attitude of the Dutch towards immigrants. Then the voice-over resumes: “In the Netherlands incidents keep occurring, while we don’t realise that our neighbouring countries are dealing with the same insecurities. Also in Sweden the suburbs are exploding (images of riots), also in Italy one doesn’t know how to deal with the tragedy of illegal migrants (images of illegal migrants on a boat and a body on the beach), and also in Britain people are struggling with Islam (images of a parade of Muslims on the street, footage of a speech by Angela Merkel who states that multiculturalism has failed, images of a Dutch Muslim boy who says “why do they hate us so much?”, the iconic images of the body of van Gogh on the street, and footage of the speech of Job Cohen on the occasion of this murder). Everywhere in Europe we experience confusing times, and it doesn’t help that our memory is so short (black and white images of trains with migrants). What do we still know about the first guest workers? And what about the migrants from the former colonies? How did they get here? And how did they live in the old quarters during the sixties? Do we remember how it actually all started?”. Finally, the title is shown: Land of Promise. Episode 1: Avoidance.

After this opening address, the first sequence of the episode displays a selection of archival material (the voice-over is silent) that shows poverty in the various countries of origin, the recruitment procedures and medical examinations of guest workers, and the leaving and arrival of migrants by train and boat. It shows among others footage, of a Dutch report about the poverty in Morocco, of a British report about the poverty in the West-Indies, of a German report about the medical examinations of Italian guest workers, and a three minute compilation of the Televizier images: van Meekren explaining the situation in front of the camera, the arrival of Jongejan, the images of the waiting men in the queue, a series of rude rejections by Jongejan, an excerpt from the interview with Jongejan (the “reorder” statement), and the interview by van Meekren with the Moroccan man. It also shows an excerpt from the Dutch report of the DAF recruitments in Tunisia, and a compilation of various images of goodbye scenes in various places around Europe,

462 Kees van Kooten plays the role of the Turkish immigrant Mehmet Pamuk, who is shopping in a Dutch vegetable store. The Dutch shopkeeper (Wim de Bie) wrongly assumes that Pamuk can’t speak Dutch properly, while Pamuk is much more eloquent than the shopkeeper himself. See: Simplisties Verbond (VPRO, 08-02-1984).
463 These images derive from episode of Brandpunt made by reporter Ed van Westerloo. See: Brandpunt (KRO, 27-11-1965).
464 These images originate from: Tijdschrift (NOT, 25-02-1975).
of guest workers carrying suitcases, and of the arrival of trains and ships with migrants in Britain, Germany, Sweden, France and the Netherlands.\textsuperscript{465}

Then Scheffer’s voice-over introduces us to the next sequence: “It is not difficult for the migrants to find a job, but it is hard to find housing. The attitude of the autochtonen is not very open. On the contrary, they react defensively and move out of the quarters where a lot of migrants live (images of a flat with many satellite dishes). The unfamiliar is not immediately embraced, but is kept at a distance (footage of a migrant man holding a slaughtered sheep). And also the migrants are drawn together, so that they can practice their religion together and build their community (footage of migrants sitting together at the dinner table). In fact, every large-scale migration leads to the disintegration of populations. The story usually begins with mutual avoidance”. The following archival sequence shows footage of the miserable housing situation of migrants in various European countries, vox populi of Belgian and British natives who vent discomfort with migrants, footage of riots in Britain, an interview with a Dutch landlord who expresses racist opinions\textsuperscript{466}, footage of low-skilled labourers, interviews with a Dutch and German employer, images of an improvised prayer room aboard a train in Germany, and footage of various festive celebrations of guest workers. The voice-over then resumes: “Every large-scale migration leads to uneasiness and friction. Newcomers are confronted with the fact that their customs and traditions are no longer self-evident. But also the established views of the autochtonen are under pressure.” More archival footage of vox populi (of Swedish, German, and Dutch natives who voice distress about migrants) and footage of an interview with a Dutch employer who states that we need the foreign workers is shown. And finally, after an excerpt of a German report that shows German women who complain about foreigners in their neighbourhood, their lack of language skills, and their headscarves, archival footage of the infamous speech by the British MP Enoch Powell (caption: Birmingham 1968) is shown, in which Powell states that soon the black man will have the “whip hand over the white man”. Then the credits are shown, while Scheffer’s voice-over concludes: “When the amount of migrants grows, it is no longer possible to live alongside but passed one another. For a long time, conflicts can be avoided this way. Because if people don’t live near each other and if no common school is visited, people have nothing to do with each other. Some call it tolerance, but one could also call it indifference. But

\textsuperscript{465} The images of the Dutch context originate from: Toeloop uit het Zuiden (IKOR, 09-10-1966).

\textsuperscript{466} Originating from : Achter het nieuws (VARA, 06-10-1969). This is a very disturbing interview with the Dutch landlord Simons who runs a pension for guest workers.
sooner or later, often soon, the lives of the native residents and the newcomers meet. Then conflicts arise. The many years of mutual avoidance come to an end”.

Conflict
Also the second episode opens with a compilation of archival images accompanied by Scheffer’s voice-over that introduces the theme. The first half of this leader is the same as in the first episode, but after Scheffer’s statement that we should finally acknowledge the fact that our society has irreversibly changed (followed by the excerpt of van Kooten en de Bie) it diverges from the first episode. Now the voice-over says: “We saw the insecurity on the faces of the migrants who arrived in the fifties and the sixties (black and white images of the faces of migrants). Not only was the way they were recruited intimidating (images of the medical examinations of an Italian guest worker that was also shown in the first episode), but they were often not very welcome in the land of arrival (images of a demonstration in Britain and a banner saying “keep Britain white”, and a woman saying foreigners should leave). The inhabitants of the quarters where a lot of migrants were housed in their turn felt overwhelmed, and the shops, the cafes, and the places of worship changed their colours (images of a British café with migrants, and images of the Taibah mosque in the Amsterdam Bijlmer). But the story doesn’t end here. Because after the first migrants, their families arrived in the seventies and eighties. Then everything changes. For all the people involved it becomes clear that something has changed irreversibly. The children of the migrants feel excluded (images of migrant youth hanging around on the street). They express their anger about society (images of a British migrant woman who states that their children are suffering). And also the autochtonic population realizes that their country will never be the same again, and rises up against the loss of their familiar world. And this is how integration involves mutual conflicts and increasing opposition (footage of Sarkozy, and of angry youth in the French suburbs)”. Finally, the title is shown: Land of Promise. Episode 2: Conflict.

The first sequence of the episode opens with the archival footage of Powell’s speech (caption: Birmingham, 1968) that had closed the first episode, a longer excerpt this time, followed by a compilation of archival footage of various European politicians who (critically) address the issue of immigration. Footage of Willy Brandt (caption: Chancellor from 1969-1974), of Margaret Thatcher (caption: Prime Minister from 1979-1990), of Jean-Marie Le Pen (caption: leader of the Front National), of Carl Bildt (caption: Swedish Prime Minister from 1991-1994) is juxtaposed with
footage of a demonstration in Britain, a banner saying “keep Britain white”, and street interviews with British people who express anger about migrants (no captions), footage of the riots in the *Afrikaanderwijk* in Rotterdam (caption: Rotterdam, 1972) that originates from the famous report made by Jaap van Meekren, footage of Janmaat (the Dutch leader of the extremist right party) who speaks in the Chamber about the lack of tolerance among Muslims, and footage of a Dutch demonstration against racism and Janmaat. This first sequence ends with archival images of Ruud Lubbers calling people to vote in Arabic, with a Dutch public service announcement to promote understanding for migrants and with images of a female Italian singer walking on a railway.

While the music of the Italian singer continues, Scheffer’s voice-over introduces us to the next sequence: “Despite their homesickness, more and more migrants decide to settle permanently in the land of arrival. They keep on dreaming about the village where they were born, but they know that with the birth of their children there is no way back (images of migrants with children). At the same time, they experience how hard it is to raise children in a country where they haven’t grown up themselves, and that they don’t really understand or even distrust (more images of a migrant family). The generation conflict is therefore fierce. Parents feel they are losing their children, while the children look upon their parents with mixed feelings, and feel they have let themselves be exploited.” Now a compilation of archival footage is shown that illustrates the end of the belief in the temporariness of the stay of migrants, including: interviews with various Belgian migrant youngsters (Italian, Spanish) who state they will not go back to their countries of origin (with music by Rocco Granata), images of a Swedish classroom with many migrant children, interviews with French migrant children, with a German Turkish girl, with a French Algerian boy, with Belgian Moroccan and Turkish youngsters who talk about living between two worlds, with a Turkish couple in Germany who say that they do not want to go back. This sequence ends with a compilation of archival footage, accompanied by ominous music, of youth hanging around on the street (also shown in the leader), of a German migrant boy who expresses aggression towards the camera, of the aftermath of the stabbing of a French teacher by a migrant youngster, and excerpts of a report about a French suburb that has turned into a ghetto.

467 Televizier (AVRO, 14-08-1972). I have briefly discussed these in chapter 2.
468 I have discussed these images in chapter 4. They originate from: Televizier (AVRO, 07-03-1986).
469 The Postbus 51 announcement (Denk eens aan een buitenlander op z’n tijd, voor de aardigheid) has been reused in the episode Televizier (AVRO, 07-03-1986).
Again, Scheffer’s voice-over introduces us to the next sequence: "It is impossible to understand the history of migration without the experiences of the autochtonen (footage of the complaining German women that was also shown in episode one). Too often, words like racism have been used to describe their discomfort, while they are witnessing with increasing frustration how their environment has changed irreversibly. In the course of the nineties, this discomfort was reluctantly acknowledged (images of the dome of a mosque accompanied by Islamic sounds, and of a parade of Muslims). Only then, it is seen as a natural part of the radical social change that any migration entails." The voice-over is followed by a compilation of archival footage that must illustrate the discomfort and conflicts: a British woman commenting on the parade of Muslims ("rubbish"), an interview with a French man who is crying because he feels so unsafe in his neighbourhood, an interview by van Gogh with Fortuyn in which he espouses a critical opinion about multiculturalism (also shown in the leader), a speech by Jean-Marie Le Pen in which he blames Nicolas Sarkozy for the increase of immigrants in France, a speech by Trevor Philips that warns against segregation, images of flats with satellite dishes (amplified with music), interviews with youngsters who are growing up in French banlieues, interviews with British girls about migrants, a discussion between Powell and an British person from migrant parents about Powell’s ideas on repatriating migrants, a Dutch Muslim boy wondering “why do they hate us so much?” (also shown in the leader), the French writer and politician Azouz Begag who states that there is no such thing as integration without conflicts. The sequence then shows a compilation of archival footage of various demonstrations and riots: a demonstration of migrant youth for equal rights and against racism (caption: Marseille 1983), an British migrant woman who states that their children are suffering (also shown in the leader, no caption), riots in the UK (no caption, original voice-over of news item), riots in French banlieues (no caption, original voice-over), riots and burning cars in Sweden’s Husby (no caption, original voice-over), more riots and burning cars in French banlieues, riots in Belgium’s Molenbeek (no captions, original voice-over, images of two different riots bridging a time-span of 18 years) and the mess after riots in Bradford (no caption, original voice-over). The sequence ends with archival footage of the arrest of a Swedish man who has attacked foreigners (caption: Malmö, 1991), and with footage (no caption) of the infamous speech by Wilders in 2009, in which he complains about the pollution of our streets by Muslims, proposes that Muslim women should pay taxes for their veil (kopvoddentaks).
Finally, the episode ends with Scheffer’s voice-over that states: “Everywhere in Europe, we have seen lengthy years of conflict over migration (images of riots). In the nineties, yet another fierce controversy was added (images of a demonstration of Muslims with a banner of Khomeini, close-up images of the burning of *The Satanic Verses*, a demonstration of Muslim women for their right to wear a headscarf): Islam. The confusion over the building of mosques, headscarves, the freedom of speech (images of the Danish newspaper with the Mohammed cartoons) and homosexuality seems to be never-ending”. While the credits are shown, the voice-over continues: “Attacks by fundamentalists revealed the underlying tensions (images of the London attacks). However, the history of migration in Europe and the United States teaches us that we can conceive of these conflicts as the beginning of integration (again the images of Azouz Begag who states that there is no such thing as integration without conflicts). Everywhere, people are searching for a new feeling of ‘we’. Naturalisation (inburgering) is the new buzzword of the past few years (images of various naturalisation ceremonies). But does it provide us with an answer to the question: how can we despite all the differences live together?” (Footage of the Dutch publicist Anil Ramdas who states that the question whether integration has succeeded is an absurd question).

**Acceptance**

Also the third episode opens with the leader. This time, after Scheffer’s statement that we should finally acknowledge the fact that our society has irreversibly changed (and the excerpt of van Kooten en de Bie) the voice-over says: “We have witnessed lengthy years of conflict everywhere in Europe (images of riots in Molenbeek, also shown in episode two). Sometimes the conflict revolved around the double nationality of newcomers (images of naturalisation ceremonies), and sometimes around the deprivation of the children of migrants (images of the British migrant woman who states that their children are suffering). In the course of the nineties, another fierce controversy over the settlement of a new religion, Islam, develops (images of the dome of a mosque, and a parade of Muslims). Attacks by fundamentalists cause fear and insecurity (images of the London attacks), also within the Muslim communities (images of the Dutch Muslim boy wondering “why do they hate us so much?”, and of a communal prayer). Opinions clash over the building of mosques, headscarves, the freedom of speech (images of the Danish newspaper with the Mohammed cartoons), honour killings and homosexuality (close-ups of the burning of *The Satanic Verses*). However, earlier migrations in Europe and the
United States teach us that we can perceive of these conflicts as the signs of integration (images of the demonstration on the Dam after van Gogh’s murder). Although the debate is intense (images of a proclaiming migrant in Britain, and of an angry Dutch man during the riots in the Afrikaanderwijk), slowly an acceptance of a new reality becomes visible. The formula of the multicultural society is dismissed (images of Merkel’s speech about the failure of multiculturalism), but in the meantime the European immigration societies steadily take shape (images of a naturalisation ceremony). Finally, the title is shown: Land of Promise. Episode 3: Acceptance.

The first sequence of the episode opens with archival footage of Wilders’ infamous speech about the tax on headscarves (also shown at the end of the second episode), followed by a compilation of archival material that needs to illustrate the many conflicts over Islam (without captions): female Muslims demonstrating for the right to wear a hijab, an interview with a Belgian director of a school who has prohibited headscarves, an excerpt from a Swedish report about a migrant girl who was killed by her father, an excerpt from a British report about a parade of Muslims on the occasion of Muhammad’s day of birth (the dome of a mosque a and the parade of Muslims is also shown in earlier episodes), images of various comedians who makes jokes about the controversies over migrants and Islam, demonstrations against Rushdie and book burnings in Britain, people carrying a banner “Death to Rushdie” during the demonstration in The Hague, Mohammed Rabbae who condemns violence against Rushdie⁴⁷⁰, an excerpt of the report about the Danish cartoons (also shown earlier), angry Muslims trampling and burning a Danish flag, demonstrations against the cartoons in Sudan, an interview with Dutch politician Fatima Elatik who says she is shocked by the reactions of Muslims, an interview with Hirsi Ali who states that we need to defend our freedom against radical Muslims, an interview with a member of the AEL (The Arabic European League) in which he states that the freedom of speech is abused to insult Muslims, an excerpt of an interview with van Gogh who talks critically about the multicultural society, news footage of the murder of van Gogh, the opening of the German news with the murder of van Gogh, images of the demonstration on the Dam Square and of Cohen’s speech on the evening of van Gogh’s murder, and an interview with a Dutch taxi driver who is very upset about the events. The sequence ends with a compilation of more hopeful images accompanied by cheerful music: bowling

migrant girls (some of them wearing a hijab) and various images of mixed relationships and marriages.

The next sequence shows archival footage of Muslims performing communal prayer on a street, while Scheffer’s voice-over continues: “The conflict over the settlement of Islam as a new religion is fierce. Attacks have further increased tensions and insecurities on both sides (images of a British migrant who states that the Quran says that we must fight them as they fight us). In the meantime, the debate about the meaning of the freedom of speech is very instructive (excerpt of
Submission), and could be considered an integration course for everyone, newcomers and residents, Muslims and non-Muslims alike (images of a Belgian demonstration against Islam). The struggle over the place of Islam has ushered the farewell to multiculturalism: the idea that society consists of different communities that have little contact. In the years following the millennium, people are searching for a concept of citizenship that isn’t based on a common origin, but on a shared future.” Now a compilation of archival footage to illustrate Scheffer’s analysis is shown: a speech by Cameron in which he criticizes the heritage of state multiculturalism, Merkel’s speech about the failure of multiculturalism (shown before), a speech by Erdogan for German Turks who criticizes the need to assimilate, a speech by Sarkozy about the echec of multiculturalism, an excerpt of a British talk show in which a man of migrant descent argues that he believes in integration instead of assimilation, an excerpt with the Dutch opinion maker Anil Ramdas who states that societies are never finished, and that the question of whether integration has succeeded is therefore absurd (shown before), excerpts of a Dutch video of the settlement program (windmills, a topless woman on the beach, two men kissing), footage of various English and Dutch naturalisation ceremonies, an interview with a Dutch man and his foreign wife while bowling (accompanied by cheerful music), news footage of the fuss instigated by the PVV about double nationalities in the Netherlands and the critical reaction of Gerdi Verbeet, the president of the Chamber.

The next sequence shows footage of a British naturalisation ceremony, while Scheffer’s voice-over resumes: “Symbols, such as the naturalisation ceremony, display the acceptance of a new reality. That is necessary, because with the emergence of the second generation, the children of the original migrants, the transformations of society have become irreversible (images of the French football player Zidane). Besides undeniable problems, such as juvenile criminality and school drop-outs (images of migrant youth on the streets of deprived areas), we witness the creative impulses that have given rise to new writers, musicians, politicians and entrepreneurs (excerpt of a clip of the Belgian-Rwandan singer Stromae). What is striking is that the ones who are doing well don’t immediately feel at home in society. Precisely because they have large ambitions, they are sensitive to unequal treatment (footage of AEL leader Abu Jahjah). But there is no spark without friction. In their frustration we can recognize the will to become someone and to shape the country in which their parents once arrived (black and white images of migrants with suitcases and their arrival by train)”.

The compilation of archival footage that
illustrates the final stage of acceptance that Scheffer identifies consists of images that must depict the success stories of the second and third generation: an interview with the Dutch-Turkish football player Ugur Yildirim (who finally choose to play in the Dutch national team instead of the Turkish), footage of various public performances of Tariq Ramadan (in one of them he states that Islam should be open to criticism, in another he pleases for tolerance and the peaceful coexistence of women with and without headscarves), footage of German-Turkish sociologist Necla Kelek’s award acceptance for her work on the integration of Muslim women, an excerpt of the program of Dutch-Moroccan Ali B. (Op volle toeren), an excerpt of an interview with the Swedish-Burundian Minister of Emancipation and Integration Nyamko Sabuni, and finally, news footage of the inauguration of Dutch-Moroccan Aboutaleb as mayor of Rotterdam (that ends with Aboutaleb making an ironic joke about his Moroccan background).

While black and white images of the first migrants leaving and arriving in trains are shown, accompanied by an Italian song, Scheffer gives his final thoughts and recapitulates: “We have fifty years of migration history behind us, with ups and downs. Conflicts seem to repeat themselves, which could result in pessimism. However, they are conflicts that involve new groups of migrants, at present the Roma from Eastern Europe. In the meantime, the migrants who arrived in the sixties and their children have become part of a new “we” (an excerpt of the Televisiez images of van Meekren’s interview with the Moroccan man). Large-scale migration almost always entails conflicts, but these express the strength of an open society. Yesterday’s outsiders slowly but surely become the established of today and tomorrow. They, in their turn, are often not very open towards new immigrants. It will never be completely easy. But we are not moving in circles (final credits start rolling). For who still talks about the Italian and Greek immigrants that arrived in the fifties? (black and white images of migrants). And who still considers the Surinamese in the Netherlands and the Algerians in France as newcomers? Possibly, in five or ten years, we hear the Moroccan and Turkish community hopefully exhale: no one is talking about us”.

Land of Promise and the logic of archival compilation

Certainly, Land of Promise is a very interesting and unique project; I would argue that it is a project that is symptomatic for today’s aliveness of the archive and for the archival impulse that is the result of the increased accessibility of European
audiovisual archives. I do not know of any other Dutch historical television program that has brought together such a vast amount of European broadcast material, and I admire the archival aspirations of the project, that must have required extensive time-consuming research in various European broadcast archives. Besides, *Land of Promise* might be symptomatic in yet another respect and indicate that the polarization and the pessimism about the multicultural society might have lost its urgency and its persuasiveness. The filmmakers explicitly aim to tell a hopeful story about migration and to urge the audience to look beyond the borders of our own country and put the recent obsessions over immigration and Islam in perspective. This is the more striking, since Scheffer’s book, the source of inspiration of the series, is not so optimistic, making a similar argument as in his “The Multicultural Drama”, namely that political correctness has led to a denial of the negative consequences of immigration. In fact, in a recent study by Leo and Jan Lucassen, *Winnaars en Verliezers* (2011), the authors designate Scheffer as one of the “integration pessimists” (*integratiepessimisten*) and criticize his book for lack of factual proof. Whatever the reason is for Scheffer’s change of heart, it might be symptomatic for a more general fatigue with the pessimistic integration and Islam debate that reigned over the last decade. Before assessing what kind of migration history the series has articulated through the selection of archival footage, it is useful to have a closer look at the formal qualities and the compilation strategy of *Land of Promise*.

**Land of Promise’s direct address narration and conventional appropriation strategy**

Although *Land of Promise*’s archival approach is more radical than most conventional archive-reliant historical series and programs, since it completely relies on archival footage for the visuals and shows unusual lengthy sequences of mere archival footage without explanatory voice-over, its overall organizing logic is quite similar. Like most of television’s historical documentaries, *Land of Promise* shares many of the formal and stylistic qualities of what Bill Nichols (2010) terms – quoting him in extenso – “the expository mode” of documentary:

> The expository mode addresses the viewer directly, with titles or voices that propose a perspective or advance an argument (...). Expository documentaries rely heavily on the informing logic carried out by the spoken word (...). The commentary is typically presented as distinct from the images of the historical world that accompany it. It serves to organize these images and make sense of them similar to a written caption for a still image. The commentary is therefore presumed to come from some place that remains unspecified but associated with
Clearly, the series’ direct address through the voice-over is very much that of the conventional, expository, archive-reliant historical television documentary that advances an argument about the historical world.

The voice-over that steers *Land of Promise*’s narration is that of a disembodied, omniscient, male narrator – an archetypal “voice of God” – that imposes its interpretative framework in a didactic manner. Although the narration is by Scheffer himself, which could convey the story as a personal and subjective enterprise, this is not made explicit. The voice-over might at some points hint that the narration should be understood as a filmic personal essay, for example in the opening address when the voice-over asks the question “isn’t it about time to leave behind the question of who is to blame?”, but most of the time Scheffer remains detached from the images commented upon, and the overall authoritative tonality of the voice-over signposts the story above all as a transparent account of migration history. Already in the opening address of the first episode, the voice-over sets a positivist tone as it presents the topic of the first episode with the phrase “do we actually remember how it all began?”. In the rest of the series, Scheffer’s voice-over persistently gives the impression that we are watching history unfold. Furthermore, the voice-over operates in a conventional manner, namely to anchor the meaning of the images, to set out an argument, to impose unity on the divergent archival images, to enforce a cause-effect structure and to offer a closure of the story. The lengthy sequences of mere archive are constantly connected and made sense of by the pre-emptive and concluding pieces of voice-over that guide the audience’s response to the archival footage. So finally, even during the protracted moments of silence, the preceding, connecting and closing pieces of voice-over assure a limited potential for ambivalence and for alternative interpretations.

In spite of this, the series’ appropriation strategy is more ambiguous than most expository archive-reliant programs. In her work on the reemployment of actuality footage in documentary, Rebecca Swender (2009) points to the limitations of Nichols’ taxonomy for accounting for this documentary practice: “While Nichols’s taxonomy is an eminently useful tool for identifying many of the specifics of how documentaries address spectators, it does not differentiate among documentary types on the question of the reemployment of existing footage into secondary texts” (9). In her *New Documentary* (2000) Stella Bruzzi argues that archival material is
primarily used in one of two ways: “illustratively, as part of a historical explanation to complement other elements such as interviews and voice-over, or critically as a more politicised historical argument or debate” (21). According to Bruzzi, the first is the strategy of most conventional television documentaries, and is straightforward in the sense that “it is not asking the spectator to question the archival documents but simply to absorb them as a component of a larger narrative” (ibid). Swender designates this appropriation strategy “naturalization”: “Archive footage can be incorporated into a secondary text in a manner that draws more or less attention to the “past lives” of the archive footage […]. Archive footage is naturalized when the capacity for the instability of meaning is deemphasized” (6).

Generally speaking, I would argue, Land of Promise’s appropriation strategy is conventional. The footage is mostly reemplotted in such a way that it does not draw attention to its origin or its “past lives” and conveys the story that is invoked by Scheffer’s voice-over. The filmmakers combine material with a high historical specificity with more generic archival material, and its reemploiment serves to support the voice-over’s truth claim about the course of history. The interplay between archival footage and voice-over offers a cumulative understanding of the migration history that is being told. The thematic sequencing of the material, the added music, and the statements articulated by people depicted and by the original voice-overs of the footage, all support the preferred reading of the material verbalized by Scheffer’s voice-over. The footage is treated as generically figurative, since the viewer is denied information about the actual events that the images depict, and the editing is merely used to prove the argument made by the voice-over, a style of editing that Nichols (2010) has coined “evidentiary editing”. So largely, the series employs what Stella Bruzzi (2000) calls the conventional use of archive: “The conventional television use of archive is largely non-dialectical, the purpose of its retrieved archive being to demonstrate what has already been or is in the process of being signalled by other information source such as the voice-over or the words of interviewees” (32).

At certain moments, however, the series’ usage of archival material affiliates it with the documentary tradition of what Bruzzi describes as “compilation film” (ibid: 21): documentaries that are constructed almost exclusively out of retrieved archival material, that adopt a critical use of archival material and that are “democratic in the sense that they do not openly intervene”(39). In her elaboration of the long-standing and complex history of this critical approach to archival footage (that was pioneered by the Soviet filmmakers Esther Shub and Dziga Vertov in the 1920s), Bruzzi
describes compilation films as “rooted to the idea that meaning is constructed through editing (...) they use archival material provocatively and dialectically and compel audiences to think, to question and to seek change” (23). Compilation films, in Bruzzi’s conception, play on the complexity of the relationship between historical referent and interpretation, and use the polemical potential of archival footage to offer an (ironic) critique of history and/or media representations. Through contrapuntal editing, these films can create a dialectical collusion between the inherent perspective of the original footage and its re-appropriation, and can construct alternative narratives and counter-arguments to the inherent narratives of the retrieved archive. Although this is certainly not the dominant compilation strategy in Land of Promise, at certain moments its usage of archival material transcends its main function as a mere illustration of history, and becomes a critical commentary on history. In particular in the first episode, the selection of the material, the editing, and the added music result in a narrative about the initial years of immigration that is simultaneously a critique of the way guest workers and postcolonial immigrants were treated. In several of the lengthy sequences of mere archival material of this first episode, the audience is rendered some freedom of interpretation and is invited to actively think (and to be appalled). In the other two episodes, however, the archive footage is more straightforwardly used as mere illustration, and the editing does not activate its polemic potential. Only sporadically, does the editing manage to instigate a spark of irony.  

Finally, Land of Promise presents itself above all as a historical-didactic series about the European post-war immigration rather than as a (personal) essay that presents a critique of this history. The positivist tonality of the voice-over and its commentary invite the viewer to regard the archival images as glimpses of the past rather than as a critique of (media representations of) the past. If archive footage gives access to the mediated past and thus always has a double historical meaning – it documents both historical events and television’s representation of these events – Land of Promise’s direct address narration and its strategy of archival compilation mainly activate the first meaning and intensifies the strong impression of authenticity and of history unfolding in front of the camera that archival images already inherently have. While this mode of narration is quite compelling, this is not to say that it renders the audience incapable of seeing the material in other ways than the

471 For example at the end of the second episode, when the series ironically cuts from a Swedish report about Laserman who had painted his hair blond to look more Swedish to Wilders’s kopvoddentaks-speech.
perspective of the series. Finally, it is remarkable that the feature documentary does not employ a direct address narration, and thus renders much more freedom to the audience to interpret the footage. Apparently, the medium of television demands a more conventional mode of narration to avoid ambivalence of the meaning of the archive footage and might not be open to a more democratic mode of historiography. I now turn to an assessment of the migration history that the series has constructed.

**From single male guest worker to angry Muslim mob: compiling a historicist narrative**

Firstly, what is striking is that the narrative of the European migration history that *Land of Promise* articulates is exceedingly historicist in character. Historicism is a feature that applies to many programs that (primarily) rely on archival footage (in chapter four I discussed various examples) and often results in simplistic and schematic representations of the past. Allan Sekula (1987) phrases it as follows:

> For historicism, the archive confirms the existence of a linear progression from past to present, and offer the possibility of an easy and unproblematic retrieval of the past from the transcendent position offered by the present. At their worst, pictorial histories offer an extraordinary reductive view of historical causality: the First World War “begins” with a glimpse of an assassination in Sarajevo. (120)

Clearly, the narration of *Land of Promise* imposes a linear development on the migration history that is explicitly informed by the present “confusion” over migration and Islam. *Land of Promise*’s history lesson openly functions as a comforting tale: there is hope for the future, because history has proven that migration unavoidably first leads to avoidance and conflict, but eventually to reconciliation. In broad outline, the story that is being told explicitly by Scheffer’s voice-over is as follows: after the arrival of immigrants from everywhere in Europe (regardless whether they were postcolonial or labour immigrants), a period of mutual avoidance occurred (episode one). Unavoidably, however, migration results in conflicts. The cause of these conflicts lies in the arrival of the children of the immigrants, in the following generation’s conflicts, in the feeling of loss of the autochtone population, and in the coming of Islam (episode two). The struggle over the place of Islam has finally resulted in the end of multiculturalism. And today, naturalisation ceremonies and successful people of migrant descent prove that this has finally resulted in the acceptance of a new reality (episode three). The archival
footage is selected and sequenced to illustrate and support this narrative, to show that this linear development from single male guest worker, to suburban riots and angry Muslim mobs, to final reconciliation applies to the entirety of Europe, and to demonstrate that various geographically separate events, conflicts and developments have similar causes, and are the symptoms of the inevitable course of history. Obviously, this is quite a simplistic, determinist, and shallow account of history.

Clearly, both the selection and the sequencing of the archival footage are at the service of the historicist view of history that the series wants to promote. The narration suggests, both explicitly through the voice-over and implicitly through editing, a linear progression from the first to the last stage, and insinuates that the succession of archival footage is by and large faithful to historical chronology. At various moments, the series uses captions to designate the year of origin of the material and thereby openly communicates its violations of chronology. At other moments, the series is less explicit about its juxtapositions of images that originate from very different historical contexts and in the case of footage with a high historical specificity, appeals to the prior knowledge of the audience to notice this. Furthermore, the archival material seems to be merely picked because it is fitting and reinforces the argument about migration history that the series wants to advance. Both in the case of the historical specific footage and in the case of more generic footage, the archival images are above all treated as emblematic; they are constantly reused in a generic manner to represent various stages in the migration history that the voice-over illuminates, such as the beginning and mutual avoidance in episode one, the emergence of discomfort, the arrival of the second generation and the consequential conflicts in episode two, and the struggle regarding Islam, the end of multiculturalism and final reconciliation in episode three. So in order to tell its historicist narrative, the series homogenizes and generalizes the meaning of the archive footage and disregards the specific historical context of the events that the footage depicts.

Like many other television programs, the series has resorted to the Televizier images and the Rushdie images to mark particular stages in the migration history, and treated the footage as emblematic for these stages. The Televizier images have been employed in the first sequence of the first episode that illustrates ‘how it all began’. Clearly, they operate in a similar manner as in the bulk of television programs that reused the footage (as I analysed in chapter four).
beginning of immigration, but they also stand for the moment in which all the following problems and conflicts that the series highlights are rooted. The Rushdie images, in their turn, have been generically employed in the first sequence of the third episode that illustrates “the fierce controversies over the settlement of a new religion”. The sequence also shows images of Wilders’ infamous speech about kopvoodentaks, of a parade of Muslims in Britain, of riots and demonstrations during the Danish Cartoon crisis, and of the murder of van Gogh, and it resembles many of the template series described in chapter four. In the historicist account of *Land of Promise*, the Rushdie images exemplify not only the struggle over the place of Islam, but they (together with the other footage of the sequence) also mark the end of the era of multiculturalism. This reuse strategy of the *Televizier* and Rushdie images is exemplary for the determinist view on historical causality that the series promotes.

The narrative strategy of imposing a linear development on the migration history (and on the archive footage that must stand for the various stages) results in sustaining visual linkages between events that are temporally very separate and events that are unalike in terms of their historical meaning. For example, the sequence that figures the Rushdie images illustrates the voice-over’s statement that in the course of the nineties another fierce controversy over the settlement of Islam developed. Apart from the Rushdie images (and other imagery from the Rushdie affair), the sequence only shows footage that originates from the first decade of the new century. The Rushdie images (and footage of book burnings in Britain) appear in the middle of the sequence, between recent footage of the fracas about headscarves in Belgium, of an honour killing in Sweden (thereby implying that honour killings are inherent to Islam), of a parade of Muslims in Britain, of a sketch by a comedian who makes an ironic joke about the inclination of Muslims to take hostages, and footage of the Danish Cartoon crisis, of Hirsi Ali and the murder of van Gogh. There is no caption that designates the Rushdie images as originating from 1989, and the series thus disregards the time-lapse between the Rushdie affair and the upheaval about Islam that occurred in the 2000’s. In this manner, the voice-over and editing have generalized the meaning of the Rushdie images as yet another example of angry Muslim mobs, have rendered them in a continuum of the threat of Islam, and have implicitly suggested a direct linear development from the Rushdie affair to the murder of van Gogh.

This is only one example of the general historicist strategy of archival compilation that the series employs, and that often results in a treatment of archival footage as mere generalization that disregards its historical specific meaning. I zoom
in on another telling example of how the series employs archival footage because its visuals fit the stage of immigration history that is being told. In the first sequence of the second episode that revolves around “conflict” (whose source is localized by the voice-over in the arrival of the families of the migrants and the end of the idea that their stay would be temporary), the series first shows footage of various European politicians who (critically) address the issue of immigration, and then it shows various scenes from the famous Televizier report about the 1972 riots in the Afrikaanderwijk by van Meekren. And although there is a caption saying “Rotterdam, 1972”, the footage is treated generically and as emblematic for the stage of “conflict” that the episode narrates, and thereby the historical meaning of the footage is disrespected. The riots in the Afrikaanderwijk happened before the end of the belief in the temporariness of the stay of migrants and before family reunification, and the stakes were housing issues (discontent of autochtonen about the growing amount of pensions for guest workers at the expense of housing for natives). Strictly speaking, the footage thus belongs in episode one, that narrates the initial years of immigration and that dedicates a sequence to housing issues. However, the footage contradicts the main theme of “avoidance” around which this first episode revolves, and is thus shown in episode two to illustrate the stage of conflict. This is yet another example of how the expressiveness of the footage takes over its historical meaning, and how archival footage becomes mere generalization at the service of Land of Promise’s historicist narrative.

Migration history as a visual spectacle and a succession of déjà-vu images
Obviously, the footage of the Afrikaanderwijk is picked not only because of its capacity to illustrate conflict, but also because it is especially evocative. Not surprisingly, the press reviews of Land of Promise highlighted these very images, and described them as “racial riots” that are “shocking”. Much of archival footage that the series displays seems to be selected because it is evocative, dramatic or remarkable. And while this footage is what makes the series so memorable, its generic reuse results in the loss of its historical specificity. The consequence is that the history of this footage stays mute, and what remains is visual spectacle that does not really teach us much about the past. Besides, the series resorts to many cliché images (some of which are clichés exactly because they are so evocative, such as the Televizier images), and that seem to be picked above all for their iterativity and their

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472 See for example reviews in NRC (16-01-2014). Or a review of the feature documentary in Filmkrant (December 2013).
capacity to be used as generalization. Various sequences, in particular in the second and third episode, consist of a succession of déjà-vu images that slide towards interchangeability. I now look closer at some examples from each episode in order to show how often, in Land of Promise, the eloquence and iterativity of the archival footage takes over its historical meaning.

As I mentioned before, in the first episode the selection and editing of the material brings about a narrative about the initial years of immigration that is also a critique of the way immigrants were treated. In particular in the first sequence, the juxtaposition of footage of various recruitment procedures and medical examinations produces a critical commentary on this episode of history. This archival footage, among which the Televizier images, but also less familiar footage such as the German footage of medical examinations of Italian guest workers, and Dutch footage of the recruitment of Tunisian guest workers for automobile manufacturer DAF, is not only used to illustrate “how it all began”, but also to criticize the treatment of guest workers. As I demonstrated in chapter four, the Televizier images have been constantly reused by television for their capacity to instantly evoke outrage. In this respect, it is not surprising that some press reviews mention precisely these images. So evidently, the Televizier images and the other footage of the recruitments have been selected for their evocative nature. However, as I argued in chapter four, the Televizier images are not necessarily representative for the history of the beginning of immigration, since the majority of labour immigrants came on their own initiative. Like in many programs that reused the Televizier footage, the recruitment sequence of Land of Promise (and the first episode in general) once again results in the rather clichéd victimization of the guest worker.

While the first episode exhibits much fascinating and unfamiliar archival footage, in the course of the second episode Land of Promise increasingly becomes a succession of déjà-vu images. The familiar footage of banlieus, riots, and statements by (populist) politicians does not really add to a better understanding of European migration history. The last sequence of the episode consists for a large part of a succession of images of riots in various European cities. The cumulative structure of this sequence homogenizes the meaning of the footage and the various images of riots become equivalent and interchangeable. In sequences like this, migration history is visualized as a spectacle of conflicts and outbursts of violence. Besides the clichéd images of banlieus, migrant youth loitering on the street, and riots, this episode also shows footage that is less familiar and ordinary, and seems to

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473 Filmkrant (December 2013).
have been chosen for its evocative nature. I already discussed the usage of the footage of the riots in the Afrikaanderwijk (these images have been reused by television quite often). Another example is the usage of the footage of Lubbers who invites people to vote in Arabic. This is quite remarkable footage, but it is so severely ripped out of its context that it becomes simply gesture; it is not capable anymore of evoking anything else than amazement. In cases such as this, the loss of the historical specificity of the footage is so severe that it becomes unclear what the footage actually depicts and what exactly it tells us about the past. Again, the shock value of the footage takes over.

Finally, the first part of the last episode that is intended to narrate the stage of “acceptance” consists of a lengthy sequence that must represent the struggle about the settlement of Islam (and that is legitimized by the series by pinpointing this struggle as the end of multiculturalism and the beginning of the acceptance of a new reality). As I have mentioned before, this sequence (and also the sequence of the opening address of this episode) resembles many of the template series that I described in chapter four. It displays all the familiar images of terrorist attacks, statement by Wilders, women with headscarves, parades of Muslims, the Rushdie affair, the Danish Cartoon crisis, the murder of van Gogh, Submission, and Hirsi Ali. Thus again, this succession of clichéd images does not really tell us anything new about the recent past. The series has mainly mobilized imagery of angry Muslim mobs to visualize its story about Islam, and this strategy of compiling Islam is awfully typical for the way television has visualized Islam during the last decade. In this manner, the series contributes to the further development of a television environment that is driven by sensationalism, in which images lose their historical specificity and become emblematic, and in which the repertoire of images of Islam is dominated by clichés.

**Land of Promise’s selectivity**

Unavoidably, for every archival image that has been selected by the filmmakers and accordingly put into circulation in working memory, something else is forgotten. As I previously argued, *Land of Promise* has selected archive footage that is capable of illustrating the arguments that the filmmakers want to make about the past. The positivist tone of *Land of Promise*’s historicist narrative not only amplifies the strong impression of authenticity and of history unfolding in front of the camera that archival images inherently have, but it also conceals the underlying selectivity of the archival images that are linked in *Land of Promise*’s seamless and smooth story. This
dissertation demonstrates that Scheffer and Roelofs could have made a completely different series (at least the part about the Netherlands). While it is not my aim to unmask the series as having made the wrong choices, I do think that a considered reflection of the acts of selection provides insight into the televisual logic of archival compilation and the cultural dynamics that privileges certain images of (Islamic) immigrants over others.

*Land of Promise*’s account of the initial years of immigration revolves around the theme of “avoidance”, and consequently only footage that fits this theme has been selected. Footage that depicts the opposite has been avoided. In chapter two and three, I showed that there is much footage that revolves around different forms of contact between Dutch and (Islamic) guest workers during these initial years. Namely, footage of Dutch who volunteered to teach guest workers, of Dutch who invited them into their homes, who helped them with legal problems and with their political, social and religious emancipation, and who helped to improve their general situation. Besides, as I exposed in chapter three, there is much footage of Muslims and Dutch celebrating Islamic festivals together. The same mechanism is at work in the second and third episode. The series has mobilized all sorts of footage that can illustrate conflict and struggle about Islam, and has thus excluded footage that tells another story. In the sequence that compiles the struggle concerning Islam, the series has resorted to all sorts of (recent) imagery of what I have called angry Muslim mobs. This is only a very limited selection of the enormous amount of footage of Muslims that is available. It is telling that *Land of Promise* has avoided footage from the sixties, seventies, eighties and even nineties that may show an unproblematic relationship between Dutch and Muslims. Apparently, I would argue, the acts of selection of *Land of Promise* have for an important part been driven by recent anxieties and obsessions concerning Islam. In so doing, *Land of Promise* has missed the opportunity to tell an alternative, new and unfamiliar story about the history of immigration and Muslim presence in the Netherlands.

**Final recapitulation and limitations**

Positively, *Land of Promise* is quite exemplary for television’s tendency to compile Islam through a handful of emblematic (archival) images and to reduce Islam to a limited amount of clichéd stories. Despite the fact that so much of Sound and Vision’s archival footage has been digitized and made easily available, the bulk of the footage described in this dissertation and which tells alternative stories about
Muslims in the Netherlands, lingers in a state of archival latency. Apparently, these stories and images have faded from common interest. While there are several pragmatic factors at play here - such as the speed of the production process, copyright issues, the lack knowledge of news editors of the richness of the archive, the lack of time to pursue archival research, the lack of fantasy to think of alternative images to visualize Islam, or other factors related to money or technology – I have exposed that television’s canonization of the same (generic and archival) images is also caused by the compelling logic of the medium, by the archival logic that facilitates television’s conventions, and by political discourses that have pushed alternative images and stories to the periphery.

This dissertation has revealed that television’s need to constantly visualize abstract stories has resulted in a very limited repertoire of generic images such as prayers, mosques, women wearing hijab, and Muslims on the street. These ordinary images now carry connotations far beyond their initial significance, since they have been used to illustrate all sorts of stories about the negative aspects of multicultural society and Islam. The television logic at work here is supported by Sound and Vision’s practices of describing generic stock shots for reuse. These practices have a performative effect and contribute to the consolidation of this rigid visual repertoire of Muslims and Islam. Besides, this dissertation has shown that the medium’s convention to reuse archival images and the medium’s tendency to dwell on the evocative, extraordinary and horrific have canonized certain archival images at the exclusion of others and have transformed these into rather clichéd symbols of the past. In addition, the medium’s compilation logic and its often uncritical and ahistorical reuse of archival footage have resulted in rather clichéd televisual histories of Muslims and Islam that are often very much informed by political discourses of the present. Again, the archiving practices of Sound and Vision support the medium’s convention to reuse archival footage. Sound and Vision thus plays a role in the canonization of archival images by having selected the archival footage for preservation, by having described and highlighted archival material for reuse, and by having digitized archival footage. While television’s picking and choosing of always the same limited number of archival stock images is mainly caused by the medium’s conventions and by political discourses of the present, every repetition of these images multiplies them in Sound and Vision’s collection and descriptions. Finally, increasingly more generic images, which are mere replicas of other images and a constantly growing amount of the same archival images, have accrued in the archive’s collection and descriptions.
The ubiquity of this kind of clichéd imagery in Sound and Vision’s archive hopefully urges television makers who are in a position to access and use the archive to awaken to critical vigilance with regard to the footage that they put in circulation. Television makers should look for alternatives to the succession of déjà-vu images and disturb the canonization of our cultural memory by clichés. They should find ways for more inventive usage of the archive and critical usage of audiovisual sources that could interrupt television’s constant parading of the same enduring images repeatedly and television’s constant amplification of Islam as a threat. They should find alternative ways to visualize their stories, reflect on what might be outside the frame of reportage and recover forgotten images from the periphery. Finally, they should feel the urgency to offer their audiences alternatives to the same old stories about Muslims and Islam. Indeed, it is time for more stimulation of our (historical) imagination.

Due to my historical approach, certain perspectives on the television coverage of Muslims and Islam and the circulation of images might have remained underexposed. I have not taken all the (pragmatic) factors that play a role in the canonization and circulation of images and stories into account. Since in the future, television’s reliance on archival footage is likely to intensify and an increasing amount of (European) television heritage will be digitized, it would be interesting to pursue further research on the factors that are at play in the circulation of audiovisual heritage. As Julia Noordegraaf suggests in her forthcoming book *Performing the Archive: Tracing Audiovisual Heritage in the Digital Age*, one could resort to actor-network theory to account for both the human and the non-human agents (such as copyright issues and technology) that play a role in the cultural process by which certain images are elevated on a pedestal by the archive and remediated across various media platforms. Furthermore, one could also resort to methods developed within digital humanities to further research recurrent themes, topics and images in Sound and Vision’s archive or – as Sonja de Leeuw (2012) suggests- pursue a transnational comparative approach to European television history. It would be interesting to investigate how other European countries have covered topics such as immigration, multicultural society and Islam. Finally, the digitization of audiovisual heritage, the circulation of this heritage across media platforms and the increasing accessibility of this heritage online poses many new and challenging questions about the status of the medium of television and digitized television heritage and about the cultural life of audiovisual heritage. Therefore, in the future, the archive will remain an important topic in the media studies research agenda.