

Orientalism and the Spectacle of the Other

Japan and the Japanese in *Wie is de Mol?*



Master Thesis – Media, Culture & Society

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August 9, 2011

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*We laugh at Don Quixote for peopling La Mancha with the figments of chivalric romance--
for perceiving a giant in a windmill and an enchanted princess in a peasant girl. [...]
Yet from ancient to modern times the West has been equally romantic, equally superstitious,
in its conceptions of Asia.*

– J.M. Steadman, *The Myth of Asia* (1970, 37) –

*The Orient was almost a European invention, and had been since antiquity a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting
memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences.*

– Edward Said, *Orientalism* (1978, 1) –

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Acknowledgements

Before proceeding to the introduction, I would like to thank a few people who have helped me with realizing this research project and indeed these last four years at university.

With regards to this thesis, I thank Anton Jongstra and Aldo Paape of the production team behind *Wie is de Mol?* for their kindness and willingness to answer my questions and provide information about the programme and its production. Thanks also go out to Stijn Joye for his valuable and constructive feedback and to Thomas Lodder for providing me with much needed literature.

I would also like to show my deepest gratitude to my friends and especially my family for their continued support in many different ways throughout the years. Last, but as they say certainly not least, I thank my loving girlfriend Ayako for her support and for letting me stay at her place, thus providing me with a perfect, quiet place to write this thesis. *Domo arigato!*

Martijn Huisman

Tokyo, May 11, 2011

Abstract

Relations between ‘West’ and ‘East’ have long been interpreted and analyzed within the theoretical framework provided by Edward Said in his monumental book *Orientalism*. Since its first release in 1978, *Orientalism* has become an important analytical tool to analyze media representations of non-Western ‘Others’. This study explores representations of Japan, Japanese culture and Japanese society in Western media by taking *Orientalism* as its theoretical starting point. The focus of analysis is the popular Dutch reality television game show *Wie is de Mol?* (*Who is the Mole?*), which took ten celebrity candidates to Japan in its 2010 anniversary season. Building upon theory about *Orientalism*, discourse and cultural stereotypes as well as contemporary media examples of Western Orientalist representations and stereotypes, *Wie is de Mol?* is extensively analyzed in its ‘totality’ – from the production and promotion of the show to its content and reception by viewers. Attention is not only paid to representations of Japan, but also to the (potential) influence of these representations on viewers’ perceptions, ideas and images of other countries (Japan) and people (the Japanese Other). This study shows that, despite press releases and other promotion material in Orientalist fashion, the programme itself provides a fairly balanced and nuanced depiction of Japan, especially compared to other programmes and films under discussion. This is in part due to the nature of the programme, which mostly revolves around the candidates and uses the country as an ‘interactive background’, and the professional practices of the makers of the programme, who mostly try to avoid stereotypes and clichés. However, the programme does largely follow the ‘representational paradigm’ of depicting Japan, as the programme needs to provide images and narratives that are familiar or recognizable for Dutch viewers, of whom most are not familiar with Japan and Japanese society. Stereotypes and clichés are therefore used, but often in innovative and playful ways. The study also indicates that a large part of the audience learns about other countries from watching *Wie is de Mol?*, and that ideas and images of other countries are influenced or even shaped by watching the popular reality game show.

Keywords: cultural stereotypes, Japan, media representations, Orientalism, Otherness, television

I. Introduction

On March 11, 2011, Japan was hit by a heavy earthquake and a devastating tsunami which killed thousands of people, left many more homeless and destroyed property worth trillions of Japanese Yen. Television viewers around the world could see the disaster unfolding live, as footage from helicopters showed the tsunami pushing land inwards, destroying villages in its path. In the weeks after the disaster, Japan appeared in the news daily around the world, not least because of the ensuing problems with the nuclear power plant in Fukushima. Two weeks after the disaster a small article (Van Hintum 2011) entitled *Japanese also cry* appeared in the Dutch newspaper the Volkskrant, in which reporter Malou van Hintum interviewed Henny van der Veer, a Japan expert at Leiden University. Van Hintum wrote that the Japanese people seemed very resigned, even stoical, and wondered if this was something ‘typically Japanese’. Van der Veer answered poignantly that this sort of thinking was more indicative of Western stereotypical thinking than an accurate description of the Japanese response to the disaster. The Volkskrant reporter thereafter remarked that, given the religious and cultural background of the Japanese, they must surely be different from us (Dutch people), to which Van der Veer pointedly answered: “Many westerners think that we have the technological knowledge, and that reflection comes from the East. Nonsense. Many people are disappointed when they visit Japan. It is not the oasis of mystical wisdom they had imagined themselves. Japan is a modern western society, the third economy in the world. A country with a strict separation of church and state” (Van Hintum 2011).

Roughly two months before the March 11 disaster, Japan had also been in the international news. In January, various websites and international media featured a story about a man who had supposedly stolen more than 700 girls gym shoes. The thief had subsequently cooked the girls sportswear and – topped with rice and egg – sold it as food. The story was entirely made up by Kyoko Shimbun, a fake news website (Poole 2011). The same month featured an even wider circulated story about a supposedly new schoolgirl craze in Japan called ‘LED smiles’. This ‘new’ craze, which had Japanese schoolgirls wear LED-lights in their mouths as dental accessories, was featured on various news outlets, among which The Daily Mail and The Guardian (UK) and The New York Times. The Daily Mail wrote that “demand has gone through the roof”, while the two other news outlets reported that the LED-lights were a “quickly sought after” and “must-have accessory”. In reality, no such craze existed. The LED-lights had been used as part of a promotion campaign for a sales event of a Tokyo-based fashion store (Matsutani & Lee 2011; Poole 2011).

These three articles together, there are undoubtedly many more to be found, show that Japan is often thought of as an exotic and strange country where anything is seemingly possible. A country

moreover with a society and culture totally different, almost alien, to the Western mind. As such, even high profile news media like *The New York Times* feature stories about girls stolen sportswear being sold as food and schoolgirls wearing LED-lights as dental accessories. Although these are recent examples, there is a long history of Japan being subject to Western myth making, fantasizing and exoticizing. Ziauddin Sardar (2002) writes that time and space have always stood at the forefront of human imagination and have been part of all cultures. This is also, or perhaps especially, the case in the relationship between the West and the East. Indeed, the ‘classical cultural division’ between West and East – which would also give rise to Orientalism – has been “one of the major cultural fissures in global history” (Nederveen Pieterse 2009, 123). In the case of Japan, this has been and is no different, with Western imagination often being focused on the island nation in the East, geographically so far removed from Europe. From the first description of ‘Zipangu’ (Japan) by the Italian traveller Marco Polo in the thirteenth century as a land full of gold and other riches (Harada 2006) to the first actual European encounters with the Japanese in the sixteenth and seventeenth century and to this day, numerous accounts and representations of Japan in various forms of art and media have been filled with stereotypes, clichés and paradoxes, constantly rendering Japan as the inscrutable, strange, exotic, bizarre and at times dangerous Other (Levick 2005).

How did Japan become the object of Western fantasy and imagination? Stuart Hall (1997a) writes that ‘things’ acquire meaning when they are given a meaning by talking about them, thinking about them, feeling about them, classifying and conceptualizing them and representing them. Meaning is given by how things are represented – through stories, images, emotions, and words. Things, or in this case a country and its people and culture, acquire meaning once they are placed into a certain ‘interpretative framework’.

This thesis, then, explores the interpretative framework that has been and is used in the Western world to describe, make sense of and give meaning to Japan, her people and culture. The interpretative framework used by the West to describe, understand, contain and ultimately control ‘the Orient’ including Japan, has been extensively documented in a variety of academic fields including history and media. The work that laid bare this interpretative framework or discourse about ‘the Orient’ was Edward Said’s pivotal book *Orientalism*, first published in 1978 and since then reprinted numerous times. Although more than thirty years have passed since its initial release, Said’s work stands today as strong and relevant as it did in 1978 and has been regarded as one of the most influential scholarly works in the humanities since the 1970s (Lockman 2010). Until his death in 2003, Said maintained in his writings and critiques that Orientalism had continued to be the dominant mode of viewing and representing the world outside the West (Gray 2009). *Orientalism* is thus *the* work to start with when it comes to analyzing Western (cultural) representations of the non-Western Other and therefore forms the theoretical starting point of this present study.

However, this study expands on Said's work in two distinctive ways. Firstly, although acknowledging the influence of Orientalism on East-Asia, Said focused on the so-called Near East or Middle-East by analyzing 17th, 18th and 19th century French, German and British literature such as scholarly works, political tracts, novels and travel books. By focusing on Japan, this study extends Orientalism geographically to the 'Far East'. Since *Orientalism* was first published, the media landscape has greatly changed and expanded. Contemporary societies have become permeated by the media, and the media have become increasingly important in shaping people's knowledge and images of the world (Hjarvard 2008). By informing and providing a 'window on the world', the media constantly reflect, construct and express cultural and social life (Smith & Bell 2007). In fact, as Silverstone (2007) argues, most people see the world and its people mostly or only through the media. The media, especially audiovisual media such as film and television, therefore have the power to influence or even shape ideas, images and perceptions media consumers hold of other countries and people (the Other) they will probably never visit and/or meet (Haynes 2007). Alongside these developments within the media landscape, Orientalism as a theoretical framework has developed into an 'intriguing and compelling paradigm' not only suited to analyze representations of non-Western Otherness in literature, but also in film and on television (Bernstein 1997). Secondly, then, this study will continue where Said stopped and focus on popular representations of Japan in televisual media texts. Studies exploring representations of Japan or South-East Asia have been carried out before, but almost always in an American context by analyzing American television programmes, films and news (for example: Heinz 1980; Plath 1980; Shah 2003; Inokuchi & Nozaki 2005; Levick 2005; Gray 2009; Shin 2010). Building upon these studies, this research project focuses on depictions of Japan, her people and culture on Dutch television.

The focus of analysis in this study lies on the popular Dutch television programme *Wie is de Mol?*, hereafter abbreviated as *WIDM*. There are several reasons to analyze *WIDM*. Firstly, the tenth season of the programme, which was recorded in 2009 and broadcasted in 2010, took its candidates to Japan. Secondly, *WIDM* has been a popular television programme for more than ten years, with every episode drawing more than one million viewers. The 2010 Japan season drew almost 1.7 million viewers per episode on average, equal to 23.7 percent of all Dutch television viewers. The numbers of the most recent 2011 season are even higher, with almost two million viewers per episode and a market share of almost 26 percent (see Table 2 on page 55). Thirdly, the fact that the programme reaches a large audience and has many (fan-) websites and groups on social networking media makes research into how other countries and people are portrayed in *WIDM* and its influence on viewers interesting and relevant. Fourthly, despite the fact that *WIDM* has been a popular and successful programme for a long time, little academic attention has been paid to the show, although it does seem to be a popular topic among students. Rispens (2007) for

example analyzed strategic interpersonal communication between candidates, while Vermeltfoort (2010) analyzed the 2010 Japan-season of *WIDM* from the perspective of high involvement television. No attention however has, to my knowledge, been paid as to how a popular and mainstream entertainment programme like *WIDM* represents and mediates other countries, societies and cultures and if, and how, this influences viewers perspectives, ideas and images of ‘the world’ and ‘the Other’.

By analyzing the 2010 Japan season, this study not only looks at contemporary representations of Japan, but also provides insight into how *WIDM* in general represents the often unfamiliar, far-away, non-Western Other. As the programme is broadcasted on the state-subsidized public broadcasting channel, it is interesting to see how the Other is portrayed for an audience of almost two million viewers for whom *WIDM* is an important and highly entertaining experience in their weekly ‘media diet’ or ‘television diet’. Next to these viewing experiences, the programme and its candidates have also proven to be popular discussion topics on online (fan) forums and social networking websites as well as in ‘real life’, as I myself have experienced throughout the years that *WIDM* has been broadcasted. In this context, and to prevent any accusations of bias, it should be mentioned that despite watching several seasons I am not a fan of the programme.

To turn to the research questions, then, this thesis explores how representations of Japan, her society and culture produce, circulate and exchange meaning and whether these meanings are incorporated into the daily life of media consumers, in this case the viewers of *WIDM*. The main research question this study will thus attempt to answer is:

*How are Japan and the Japanese represented in the Dutch television programme *Wie is de Mol?*, and do these representations influence viewers images, ideas and perceptions of Japan and its inhabitants?*

In order to answer this question, several other questions have to be asked and answered first. Three sub questions have emerged. As previously mentioned, Said’s *Orientalism* provides the theoretical starting point of this study. However, Said only briefly mentions East-Asia or Japan for that matter, and only analyzed literature to formulate his theories about Orientalism. The first sub question therefore is:

1) Can Orientalism be used to describe and analyze contemporary Western televisual representations of Japan?

Secondly, representations of Japan in *WIDM* can only be interpreted and analyzed if supported by theory and comparisons with other media texts containing representations of Japan. Therefore, the second and third sub question are:

2) Through which representational practices is difference and ‘Otherness’ conveyed?

3) *How are Japan and the Japanese generally portrayed in Western media?*

Before answering the second part of the main research question, theory about the role, functions and influence of television is needed. This leads to the fourth sub question:

4) *Does television influence viewers ideas, images and conceptions of other countries and its people?*

While the main research question will be answered after an extensive analysis of *WIDM* and its reception by the audience, the supporting sub questions will mostly be answered by exploring the literature regarding themes as Orientalism, (televisual) representation, contemporary media, and East-West relations.

To be able to answer all these questions, this thesis has been divided into five chapters. The next, second chapter provides a broad outline of Orientalism, Occidentalism and Eurocentrism, all different yet connected ways of coming to terms with and representing the Other. Special attention is of course paid to Orientalist representations of Japan. Chapter three turns specifically to the media. Two core processes of mass media – representation and mediation – are briefly discussed, followed by a paragraph about television and its potential influence on viewers. Having thus largely completed the theoretical framework, the following three paragraphs provide and discuss several examples of recent Western representations of Japan in film and on television. Chapter four provides a meticulous account of the methodological approach and means of data gathering and analysis employed. Chapter five is an extensive analysis of the *WIDM* Japan-season, presenting the results of the analysis of the qualitative and quantitative data. The conclusion shortly summarizes the previous chapters, provides answers to the research questions and contains a discussion and recommendations for future research. A bibliography containing the consulted literature and other sources of information as well as a comprehensive appendix can be found at the back of this document.

Before continuing to the next chapter, it should be mentioned that this study is not meant as an investigation of the ‘correctness’ of representations and/or to blame media texts and their producers. This study is rather an inquiry into the operations, functions and influence of contemporary representations in popular entertainment media.

II. Orientalism and Japan

In *Orientalism*, Edward Said used the theories of the French philosopher Michel Foucault about discourse and discursive formations (as theorized by Foucault in *Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972) and later works such as *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* from 1977) to describe what he saw as the Western discourse on ‘the Orient’. Before commencing with a broad outline of Orientalism, it is necessary to first briefly elaborate on discourse and discursive formations. Both can be said to be concerned with the production of knowledge and meaning and the relation between knowledge and power. Discourses can be better defined as “ways of referring to or constructing knowledge about a particular topic of practice: a cluster (or *formation*) of ideas, images and practices, which provide ways of talking about, forms of knowledge and conduct associated with, a particular topic, social activity or institutional site in society” (Hall 1997a, 6). These statements or constructions made up of ideas, images and practices thus largely determine how we see the world and what we know and do with it. Importantly, there is always a duality at work within discourses, as they not only reflect reality, but also actively construct reality by ascribing meanings to our world, identities and social constructions (Phillips 2007). Discourse, then, defines the way we talk, think and represent things, for example Japan, while at the same time also limiting and restricting how we talk about those things by ‘ruling out’ other ways of talking, thinking and representing (Hall 1997c). However, discourses always vie with one another for hegemony, or which discourse is ‘most powerful’ and widely accepted. Different discourses can therefore exist at the same time and hegemonic discourses can be challenged and possibly superseded by alternative discourses (Phillips 2007), as discourse is never absolute and resistance is possible.

The discourse that has been prevalent in the West when talking, thinking, portraying and representing ‘the East’, including Japan, has come to be known as Orientalism. Although Said was not the first scholar to write about Orientalism, his polemical work was the first book that popularized the term. Any theoretical framework about Orientalism and the practice of Othering, representing non-Western Others, should therefore start with a discussion of *Orientalism*. In the next paragraph, Orientalism will be extensively discussed, followed by a brief treatise of its two ‘companions’, Occidentalism and Eurocentrism. From there on the focus moves towards Japan, first considering Orientalist representations of Japan and cultural stereotypes and later self-Orientalism. The chapter closes with a paragraph about the Samurai, *the* symbol of Japanese Orientalism and self-Orientalism.

2.1 Orientalism

Anyone reading *Orientalism* will soon notice that it is not an easy book to read, partly because Orientalism itself is a difficult concept and partly because Said, a professor in English literature, writes in a dense and often elusive style filled with complex terms and concepts. In the first chapter of *Orientalism*, Said proceeds to describe Orientalism and its workings. Very generally, Orientalism can be said to be the dominant Western discourse about the Orient, or the countries in ‘the East’ which do not belong to ‘the West’. Said (2003) writes about the Orient as “an integral part of European *material* civilization and culture”, with Orientalism expressing and representing “that part culturally and even ideologically as a mode of discourse with supporting institutions, vocabulary, scholarship, imagery, doctrines, even colonial bureaucracies and colonial styles” (p. 1-2). In other words, Orientalism gives word and meaning to, and thus represents and constructs, the Orient and its perceived Otherness or difference from the Western world.

Although the Orient could be defined as a geographical entity, this would be difficult and arbitrary, for where on the Eurasian continent does the Orient begin and end? Orientalist discourse, however, not only unquestioningly proceeds from this ‘imaginative geography’ called the Orient, but also represents and constructs it as a political and, more importantly, cultural entity (Bernstein 1997). ‘The Orient’ was thus created by the West “through the very operation of the discourse of Orientalism, which defined its object in a certain way, produced widely accepted “truths” about it, and thereby made a certain representation of it appear real” (Lockman 2010, 188). This in turn gave rise to the collective notion which identified ‘us’, Europeans or Westerners, as distinctly and fundamentally different from ‘them’, non-European Orientals. Orientalism propagated the idea that Europe and the Orient were ontologically, meaning in its essential nature or being, radically different from each other (Lockman 2010). Orientalism can therefore be regarded as a “style of thought based upon a ontological and epistemological distinction made between ‘the Orient’ and (most of the time) ‘the Occident’ ” (Said 2003, 2), meaning that Orientalist writing, knowledge, theory, and representations all stem from the basic (assumed) distinction between East and West.

Importantly, the Orient was not only seen as different from Europe, but usually also regarded as inferior, an idea which was instilled and promoted by Orientalist discourse. Hence, Orientalism always creates an Other, which is often a “psychological foil created as a repository for characteristics, ideas and urges that one wishes to disown” (Gray 2009, 223-224). In other words, Orientalist Others are often (projections of) what ‘we’ Westerners do not want to be. However, it should be noted that Orientalism is almost never purely negative, but often a combination of fascination and aversion. Nederveen Pieterse (2009) for example writes of Orientalism as “profoundly ambivalent, part fascination and part disdain, oscillating between attraction and repulsion” (p. 123). The relationship between the Occident (Europe), or the ‘Orientalizer’, and the Orient, the ‘Orientalized’, was thus far from equal. Said writes that the

relationship between ‘East’ and ‘West’ as formed and supported by Orientalism is ultimately a “relationship of power, of domination, of varying degrees of a complex hegemony” (2003, 5). It is from this domination, this style of thought and the basic assumption of difference that a lot of theorizing, scholarly work, literature, and contemporary media texts such as films and television programmes have proceeded. However, it is important to keep in mind that the existence of the Orient and the Occident as cultural, opposite entities is an idea, a creation of the human mind (Said 2003). Europe for example is an idea and not a cultural or even geographical unity, while the Orient was created by histories and traditions of “thought, imagery, and vocabulary that [gave] it reality and presence in and for the West” (Said 2003, 5). Nederveen Pieterse (2009) rightfully notes that the cultural division between East and West was artificial and polemical from the beginning, rather a ‘cultural posture’ than a fair description of East-West relations, with the divide playing “a much larger role in rhetoric and representation than in reality” (p. 126).

Orientalism should not be seen as merely a Western fantasy about the Orient however. Orientalism is rather a ‘system of knowledge’ (or discourse) about the Orient, through which the Orient is ‘filtered’ through to the Western consciousness (Said 2003). Said writes that making sense and understanding the unknown or strange, or the ‘domestication of the exotic’, is a normal human activity. In Orientalism, however, this domestication has led to a limited vocabulary and imaginary to describe Others. As a result, “Orientalism has been a sort of consensus: certain things, certain types of statement, certain types of work have seemed for the Orientalist correct. [...] Orientalism can thus be regarded as a manner of regularized (or Orientalized) writing, vision, and study, dominated by imperatives, perspectives, and ideological biases ostensibly suited to the Orient” (Said 2003, 202). This ‘regularized’ writing or representing the Orient has resulted among others in the fact that certain words, phrases and especially images have become normal and accepted representations. These images often function as representations of a large group of people who, without these images, would be impossible to grasp. In regards to Japan, such an image is for example the Samurai or the ninja as will be discussed later in this and the next chapter.

Orientalism as a system of knowledge or discourse receives its strength and durability partly through cultural hegemony and partly through its reliance on the basic distinction between ‘us’ Westerners and ‘them’ non-Westerners (Said 2003). Both of these pillars by which Orientalism is supported are analyzed in this present study, for cultural hegemony is achieved through the production, circulation, and consumption of cultural and media products. The binary assumption of ‘we’ (Westerners, Europeans, Dutch people) and ‘them’ (Orientals, Asians, Japanese) underlies a wide range of media texts, from literature to cinema and television, with Orientalism to be found in all sorts of media besides the literature analyzed by Said himself. This appearance in a variety of texts is one of the characteristics of discourse, as individual texts operate within the limits set by the discourse, thus at the same time acknowledging and

contributing to the strength and endurance of that discourse. However, Said writes, Orientalism is not simply a large and diffuse collection of texts about the Orient. Orientalism is rather “a *distribution* of geopolitical awareness into aesthetic, scholarly, economic, sociological, historical, and philological texts; it is an *elaboration* not only of a basic geographical distinction [...] but also of a whole series of ‘interests’, [...] it *is*, rather than expresses, a certain *will* or *intention* to understand, in some cases to control, manipulate, even to incorporate, what is a manifestly different (or alternative and novel) world [...] (Said 2003, 12). Orientalism, in other words, is a dominant framework or discourse that makes sense of, contains, represents and constructs the Orient and its inhabitants.

Orientalism knows a long tradition as extensively documented by Said. It became a powerful and pervasive discourse once it had established itself as an academic tradition, as well as a style of writing, thinking and representing the Orient adopted by a long line of artists, travellers, writers and other Westerners dealing with the Orient (Lockman 2010). Orientalism has continued to be powerful and influential to this day, especially through more creative styles of writing and audiovisual media such as film and television, and has persisted as the dominant Western discourse of describing the Orient. One of the reasons that Orientalism continues to prevail in media texts is simply because these texts are the result of human activity. The Orientalist – the Western author, poet, director, screenwriter or television producer – writes about the Orient from the position of being an ‘outsider’. Thus, the Orient is always the passive subject while the Westerner is the active force bringing the Orient to life in for example books, films and television programmes. Gray (2009) writes that Orientalism has remained the dominant style of thinking, seeing and representing the Orient partly due to the fact that “anthropologists, historians, scientists, artists and travellers merely replicate the same tired stereotypes, seeing in other people the difference and strangeness they expect to find” (p. 223-224). Orientalism thus gets reproduced from one text to another, especially since “knowledge no longer requires application to reality; knowledge is what gets passed on silently, without comment, from one text to another. Ideas are propagated and disseminated anonymously, they are repeated without attribution; [...] what matters is that they are *there*, to be repeated, echoed, and re-echoed uncritically” (Said 2003, 116).

Although Said’s work has gained widespread attention and popularity, Orientalism itself had already been recognized and written about in scholarly accounts long before *Orientalism* appeared (Lockman 2010). One of these works is *The Myth of Asia* by John M. Steadman, which was released in 1970 and purported to lay bare the illusions the West had about the Orient, with the Orient not defined as Asia but rather as ‘the myth of Asia’. The works of Said and Steadman are sometimes remarkably similar, with the latter being somewhat of a geographical extension to Said’s analysis of the ‘Near-East’. Interestingly, Steadman for example writes that “many a writer on Asia treats the Orient as though it were a single entity (which it is

not)-- and thus postulates a unity that has no real existence outside his own imagination” (p. 14-15). It leads Steadman to remark that ‘the Orient’ can be seen as a collection of ideas, “a complex of varied and often contradictory meanings” (p. 18). These statements strongly resemble Orientalism as they are strikingly similar to Said’s remarks about the ‘geographical imagery’ and the man-made distinctions between ‘East’ and ‘West’.

Steadman recognizes that underlying all notions of difference between Europe and Asia, which he calls ‘overstated’, is the assumption of a fundamental contrast or difference between the East and the West. Whereas Said attributes these notions and Orientalism in general to the Western need to understand, contain and ultimately control the East, Steadman sees popular and scholarly misconceptions about Asia resulting from oversimplification and exaggeration of difference. Steadman’s argument, and by extension the basis of Orientalist discourse regarding the ‘Far-East’, is captured in the following passage, which strongly echoes the words of Said were it not for the fact that Steadman’s work appeared eight years before *Orientalism* was first published:

Many Europeans and Asians still believe that these concepts distinguish fundamental differences between the civilizations of the Orient and the Occident. East and West, they maintain, are not merely demographic or geographical terms; they are also modes of thinking and feeling-- modes so different as to be virtually irreconcilable. Underlying the manifold and obvious diversity of the Orient, there is nevertheless an Eastern psyche distinct from that of the West, a mentality peculiarly and characteristically Asian. The genius of the East, they insist, is static and introspective, while that of the West is dynamic and extroverted. The Orient, passive and contemplative, has displayed this genius in the cultivation of the spirit; the Occident, active and practical, in the amelioration of its environment (p. 25-26).

Similar to the topic of this study, Steadman is particularly concerned with imaginations of the East, noting that many Western writers exaggerate the mystery of the East and emphasize its ‘exotic aspects’. Consequently, this imagined Orient has become more and more associated with the ‘actual’ Orient, resulting through a combination of facts and imagination to the creation of what Steadman calls a ‘geographical fantasia’. The core of this imaginative Orient is made up by exoticism and vagueness. “Like most myths, the myth of Asia evokes romantic echoes, fantastic overtones. The West has always interpreted the East in poetic terms. Geographical remoteness has given it ‘aesthetic distance’. Unfamiliarity has made it a byword for ‘the marvelous’ ” (p. 36-37). The last sentence echoes the remark of Sardar (2002) that time and space have always been an important part of human imagination. It is this

imagination and representation of Japan that is constructed, circulated, and promoted by contemporary audiovisual media that is analyzed in this present study.

Importantly, in writing about the special place of the Orient in the Western, mainly European, experience, Said remarks that the Orient “is not only adjacent to Europe; it is also the place of Europe’s greatest and richest and oldest colonies, the source of its civilizations and languages, its cultural contestant, and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the Other. In addition, the Orient has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience” (2003, 1-2). Unlike the Orient described by Said, the Near-East, Japan is not adjacent to Europe nor was it ever a colony of Western powers, although Japan was occupied for several years after losing the Second World War. Moreover, from the beginning of the seventeenth century to the second half of the nineteenth century, a period during which the Western powers colonized most of the non-European world, Japan was isolated from the rest of the world save for trading contacts with the Chinese, Koreans, the kingdom of Ryukyu and the Netherlands. The cultural ties which existed between the West and the Orient thus for a long time excluded Japan, nor was Japan the source of the civilizations and languages of the West. This raises the question whether Orientalism is applicable to Japan. Minear (1980) concludes after comparing Said’s *Orientalism* to the history of contacts between Japan and the West that “even in the absence of overt Western domination, the attitudes manifested in the discourse on Japan seem to resemble closely those of Said’s Orientalists” (p. 515). More importantly, Western scholars (Steadman 1970; Minear 1980; Rosen 2000; Lie 2001; Levick 2005; Burman 2007) as well as Japanese scholars (Iwabuchi 1994; Inokuchi & Nozaki 2005; Nishihara 2005; Harada 2006) have long been using Orientalism as a theoretical framework to describe and analyze relations between Japan and the West. Thus, although Japan is different from the Orient as described by Said, the discourse of Orientalism can – and has been – used and applied to Japan.

While many have accepted and build upon Said’s work, there has also been criticism on *Orientalism*. Some have remarked that by attacking all American and European Oriental studies and accusing them of reductionism and caricature, Said did exactly the same as what he accused Orientalists of. Historians in turn have criticized the book for the language Said uses to make his point, the ‘sweeping’ arguments, focus on literature and the failure to sometimes properly situate authors and works of literature in their historical contexts (Lockman 2010). Others have accused Said of using literature indiscriminately by putting scholars on the same level as more liberal novelists, while also ignoring historians and social scientists writing about the Orient altogether (Turner 2009). Said moreover only used literary examples which supported his argument, thus ignoring accounts by Western scholars and writers who actually critiqued Orientalist writings and their authors (Varisco 2009). More importantly and relevant in regards to applying Orientalism to other media, Irwin (2009) writes that by only analyzing 17th, 18th and 19th century European literature,

Said simply ignored popular culture. By writing only about ‘high’ or ‘elite culture’, Said ignored popular media like television and cinema which had, and have, a much greater impact on a much larger audience than the literature analyzed in *Orientalism* ever did.

In the more than thirty years since *Orientalism* was first published, the field of studies exploring Orientalist discourse has greatly expanded and developed as scholars have picked up on Orientalism where Said stopped. Perhaps the most important development, certainly for this study, has been the extension from Said’s literary critiques to other sorts of media such as television and most notably cinema (Bernstein 1997), but also into analysis of advertising images, international news, art and anthropology (Gray 2009). In our contemporary media-saturated world, Orientalist representations are no longer just circulated in books, but also or especially in audiovisual media such as cinema and television. Said (2003) briefly mentions television in *Orientalism* when he writes that the postmodern, electronic world has seen the reinforcement, rather than the demolishing, of stereotypes with which the Orient is viewed. “Television, the films, and all the media’s resources have forced information into more and more standardized molds. So far as the Orient is concerned, standardization and cultural stereotyping have intensified the hold of the nineteenth century academic and imaginative demonology of ‘the mysterious Orient’ ” (p. 26). To this Said added at the end of his book: “cultural images of the Orient [are] supplied by American mass media and consumed unthinkingly by the mass television audiences” (p. 325). Commentators and critics have indeed often argued that television actively constructs, perpetuates and maintains stereotypes (Gunter 1995; as cited in Casey et al. 2007), which gives rise to the expectation that Orientalist representations and stereotypes are to be found aplenty in contemporary popular (entertainment) media like film and television. Importantly, Orientalism can and has been used as an analytical tool to analyze contemporary audiovisual media texts with.

To conclude this outline, Orientalism is a powerful and pervasive discourse which has long dominated and influenced Western talking, thinking, representing and constructing ‘the Orient’, including Japan, often based upon a combination of imagination and fact but always from the underlying motive of containing and controlling ‘the East’. As a discourse, Orientalism – or ‘regime of knowledge’ in Foucauldian terms – deals not just with representations of the East, but ultimately also with knowledge and (material and symbolic) power and the unequal relationship structured around the dichotomy of East (‘them’) and West (‘us’). Nowadays, Orientalism represents the Orient and Otherness across a variety of texts “that can construct social realities as individuals experience them” (Bernstein 1997, 2) as writers, poets, travellers and producers continue to recycle and use stereotypes and Orientalist styles of narrative. Therefore, Orientalism is certainly not ‘something of the past’. Orientalism as a theoretical concept and

analytical tool can therefore be – and has been – applied to Japan and contemporary audiovisual media such as television and cinema.

2.2 Occidentalism and Eurocentrism

Occidentalism and Eurocentrism are two social phenomena directly related to Orientalism. Occidentalism might be called a counterpart to Orientalism, as it usually indicates images and ideas held about the West by non-Westerners. Buruma and Margalit (2004) define Occidentalism as a ‘hateful caricature’ of the West and the ‘dehumanized’ image created of the West by its adversaries. “The view of the West in Occidentalism is like the worst aspects of its counterpart, Orientalism, which strips its human targets of their humanity. [...] Occidentalism is at least as reductive: its bigotry simply turns the Orientalist view upside down” (p. 10). Because Occidentalism has often been the companion of anti-colonialist and anti-hegemonic movements in the non-Western world, it has sometimes been regarded as essentially a ‘decolonizing’, anti-colonialist strategy (Wang 1997). However, Occidentalism is not only a phenomenon and style of thinking about and seeing the West as it can also be found in the thinking of radical anti-capitalists in the Western world itself (Buruma and Margalit 2004). Occidentalism is thus a discourse or particular style of thought about the West and what it stands for. Liberalism, capitalism, belief in universal progress, science and reason, separation of church and state, and rationalism are Western ideas, beliefs and practices that have caused resentment in some parts of the non-Western world, resulting in Occidentalism. Especially where the West has tried to spread its discourse – or what Buruma and Margalit call the ‘imperialism of the mind’ – consisting of these aforementioned ideas, beliefs and practices, resentment against everything Western has been fuelled. Occidentalism, in other words, is a discourse fuelled by resentment of and in defence against Western discourse.

Nishihara (2005) rightfully notes, however, that while Orientalist notions of the East largely came out of economic and politic institutions following colonization, the East has never colonized the West. Depictions of the West by the East therefore belong to the ‘realm of culture’. Whereas Orientalism has been conceptualized, recognized, and analyzed as a pervasive and powerful discourse, Occidentalism is more problematic and regarded as a ‘quasi-theoretical’ concept more difficult to grasp and analyze, not least because Occidentalism has not become an academic discipline nor a dominant discourse (Wang 1997). Moreover, Occidentalism is not a popular and widespread framework for seeing, thinking about and representing the West. Rather, according to Buruma and Margalit (2004), Occidentalism is a phenomenon that reflects anxieties, fears and prejudices of mostly urban intellectuals who feel displaced in a world of mass commerce dominated by the West and ‘Western practices’.

Connected to both Orientalism and Occidentalism is Eurocentrism, a form of ethnocentrism or presumption of the superiority of the self over others. Eurocentrism can be defined as a mode of thought based upon a ‘common sense’ of Europe being the centre of the world and a yardstick to measure non-European countries and people with. Eurocentrism promotes European history and practices while patronizing the non-West, focusing on the (supposed) achievements of the former while emphasizing the real or imagined deficiencies of the latter (Shohat & Stam 1994). Perspectives on modernity, globalization, and history are for example often ‘steeped in Eurocentric assumptions’, as they are seen as having evolved from European activity (and non-European passivity) and expansion from the sixteenth century onwards (Nederveen Pieterse 2009).

Eurocentrism first emerged during colonial times when European nations established hegemony over and controlled large parts of the world outside Europe. Nowadays, traces of European domination are to be found in Eurocentrism, which is “a form of vestigial thinking which permeates and structures *contemporary* practices and representations even after the formal end of colonialism” (p. 2). Eurocentrism has prevailed in contemporary society and media as a hegemonic discourse. Like Orientalism, Eurocentrism is pervasive and for this precise reason often remains unnoticed in culture, everyday language and the media. A simple example is that Greenwich in England functions as the centre of the world, with which the time is measured around the globe. Consequently, this engenders “a fictitious sense of the innate superiority of European-derived cultures and peoples” (p. 1). Shohat and Stam moreover argue that Eurocentrism divides the world into the ‘West and the Rest’, in which hierarchical binaries favouring Europe define the relation between the West and the non-West similar to Orientalism: our nations/their tribes, our culture/their folklore, and so on. Eurocentrism is thus similar to and supports Orientalism.

2.3 Orientalist representations of Japan

The roots of contemporary Orientalist discourse about Japan can be traced back to literary works written by non-Japanese living in Japan in the second half of the nineteenth century. After almost 250 years of having largely isolated itself from most of the world, Japan was ‘opened up’ in 1854. From this time, when foreigners were allowed to enter Japan, Orientalist accounts of Japan with lasting influence started to appear, as Westerners coming to Japan found a ‘different world’ and extensively wrote about it. These writings can be said to still to some extent influence contemporary ideas about Japan. Two early visitors writing about Japan in Orientalist fashion were Basil Hall Chamberlain, who arrived in Japan in 1873 and wrote between 1880 and 1912, and George B. Sansom, publishing between 1928 and 1964. Both writers

saw the world as clearly divided between a West and an East, an often superior ‘us’ (West) and inferior ‘them’ (Japan or Asia as a whole) (Minear 1980).

In his book *The New Japan* sociologist David Matsumoto (2002) traces popular writing about Japan – now regarded as classic writings – from the work of Lafcadio Hearn (1894) to authors like Ruth Benedict (1946), Ronald Dore (1958) and Inazo Nitobe (1969). Of special interest is Ruth Benedict’s book *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*, which first appeared in 1946 and since then has remained one of the most, if not *the* most, influential book in English about post war Japan. According to Lie (2001), Benedict’s work has had a large influence on perceptions of Japan after the Second World War, which can be considered surprising since Benedict never actually visited Japan. Nevertheless, Benedict embarked upon a mission to research and write about “what makes Japan a nation of Japanese” (Benedict 1946; as quoted in Lie 2001, 252). Although her book was well received in the United States as well as in Japan, Benedict ignored cultural diversity as well as rapid changes in Japanese society. Instead, she presented Japanese culture as a homogenous, coherent whole (Lie 2001) as opposed to the multicultural and multiethnic United States, thus emphasizing in Orientalist fashion a basic distinction between ‘them’ Japanese and ‘us’ Americans.

The aforementioned works of literature are according to Matsumoto (2002) all similar in describing supposed core elements of Japanese culture and Japanese people, such as: “humility, perseverance, politeness, modesty, frugality, chivalry, justice, courage, discipline, benevolence, sincerity, honor, loyalty, and self-control” (p. 9). Accompanying these core elements were sometimes also negative notions of the Japanese, such as a perceived ‘inscrutability’ and ideas of Japanese as being sly, sneaky and untrustworthy. These values were not only circulated through the literary works of Japanese and non-Japanese writers alike, but “over time they were idealized, ritualized, and institutionalized to become part and parcel of the Japanese cultural landscape. As such, a fairly homogeneous picture of Japanese culture and society emerged” (p. 9). Matsumoto argues that these views have influenced and continue to influence contemporary ideas and perceptions of Japan and Japanese culture as they are held by Japanese and Westerners alike.

In more recent years, discourse and stereotypes about a homogenous Japan with one ‘mainstream’ Japanese culture have persisted, for example in the influential work of Chie Nakane. In her book *Japanese Society* (1970), Nakane suggested that although Japanese society and culture might change over time, it had and probably would remain to revolve around a core which had always remained the same and was clearly identifiable (Matsumoto 2002). Nakane suggested that “the cultural composition of Japanese society, combined with the social persistence of these structural elements of society across history, has created a relatively homogeneous Japanese culture and society” (Matsumoto 2002, 12). Thus, Nakane proceeded from the presumption of a homogenous Japanese society, providing an account in which similarities were

more important and emphasized than differences between members of Japanese society (Iwabuchi 1994). Scholarly work in a wide variety of fields as well as non-scholarly work and other media have since then echoed Nakane's notions about Japanese society and culture, so much so that these portrayals and supposed core elements of the Japanese, as mentioned on the last page, became increasingly popular and eventually became synonymous to Japanese people and culture (Matsumoto 2002).

In his review of the work of Nakane as well as the earlier mentioned Ruth Benedict, John Lie writes that both works overemphasized the distinctiveness of Japanese culture and society. As such, these works create a "polar contrast between Japan and the West", as they "reify and homogenize the West and ignore altogether non-European societies. The West appears as an antipode of Japan" (Lie 2001, 255). Benedict indeed offered a rather simple but compelling account in which Japan appeared as unique and distinct. Lie argues that this us/them logic, which lies at the core of Orientalism, provided Benedict with a theoretical framework and justified allocating a wide variety of perceived qualities and differences to both the American and Japanese side. Benedict's work was thus shot through with Orientalist discourse, as she used and emphasized the (man-made) distinction between East and West in order to make Japan 'different' and 'unique' from the West, which was presented as homogenous, and the rest of the world.

Authors of later works about Japan such as Edwin O. Reischauer and Nakane Chie herself, 27 years after the release of her influential work, maintained the idea of Japan as having a homogenous culture and society. Following in the Orientalist tradition, Reischauer (1950, 1976; as cited in Minear 1980) for example found a 'Japanese essence, an essential Japan' which sometimes coincided with an 'Oriental essence or an essential Orient'. Interestingly, the foreword to the 1976 reprint of Lafcadio Hearn's work from 1894 even held that, although a lot had changed in Japan, Hearn's views still held validity as the Japanese tradition and character were essentially still the same. This corresponds with what Said (2003) writes about the Orient and the Oriental as being denied "the possibility of development, transformation, human movement". Instead, the Orient, so Said writes, is considered as unchanged and incapable of changing, something which is often indicated by terms such as 'Eastern wisdom' or the 'wisdom of the East'. An example is that Japan, despite changes in the relationship with the West and despite historical, political, economic and cultural changes, has always continued to be seen as a 'unique cultural entity' (Iwabuchi 1994). Contemporary views of Japan thus often resemble or have grown out of views on Japan from over one hundred years ago. According to Matsumoto (2002), some of "these stereotypic images of the Japanese culture and people are no longer merely stereotypes; they are the Japanese" (p. 16). Although a discussion of what Japanese culture and people are 'really' like is not appropriate here and would take too much space, Henny van der Veer remarks that, similar to there not existing *the* (typical) Dutchman, there is also no such thing as *the* (typical) Japanese person (Van Hintum 2011).

In reviewing American newspapers writing about Japan, Levick (2005) distinguishes four types of bias that have long persisted in American news accounts of Japan. In the first place, Japanese people are often presented as caricatures, which in turn reinforce stereotypes which regard Japan for example as a ‘warrior society’ and contemporary Japanese as samurai (‘samurai in suits’). Secondly, Japanese society and culture is more often than not presented as homogenous and/or monolithic, lacking any diversity and moreover having remained unchanged over the past few hundred years. The Japanese are moreover often represented within a framework of being an ‘anonymous mass’ of people all acting alike. Thirdly, American news media often rely on cultural determinism as ‘culture’ is used as an explanation for everything. Thus, “these articles often assume a fixed immutable cultural essence, assuming that certain traits are unique and innate to Japanese people or society” (p. 1). Lastly, Japanese society is often regarded as irrational and inferior compared to the United States or the West in general, a typical element of the hierarchical relationship formed and supported by Orientalist discourse. Although Levick primarily analyzes American newspapers, he writes that these representations are part of a long Orientalist tradition as “there is a historic accumulation of reportage, literature and other forms of art and media that have long represented Japan and other Asian nations as exotic, submissive and backward” (p. 2).

Another important issue which will return in the analysis of *WIDM*, and can also be seen in the film *Lost in Translation*, is the duality of contemporary media representations of Japan. Already in 1989, Yoshimoto Mitsuhiro wrote of the peculiar mixture of two types of images of Japan that were promulgated in so-called ‘cyberpunk’ novels, stories about a distant or nigh future where technology is aplenty. These stories consisted of a combination of “futuristic high-tech images of contemporary Japan and anachronistic images of feudal Japan” (p. 18). Nowadays, such high-tech images of Japan in the future are now recognized as a strand of Orientalism called ‘techno-Orientalism’. Ueno (2002) writes about techno-Orientalism as being “set up for the West to preserve its identity in its imagination of the future. It can be defined as the orientalism of cybersociety and the information age, aimed at maintaining stable identity in a technological environment” (p. 94). In a survey among U.S. middle school students, Inokuchi and Nozaki (2005) found that many students see Japan as being a ‘nation of technology’ as well as boasting an ‘exotic natural environment’. Burman (2007) writes about this phenomenon that Japan offers “both images of the past (of distinct fishing and farming-based cultures and traditions) and the future (as an advanced technological society)” (p. 182). In the view of Inokuchi and Nozaki (2005) both these images of Japan as traditional and high-tech “fit into the reductive, fragmentary, and repetitive character of Orientalist discourse”, noting that different “repertoires of Orientalist discourse can coexist within one writing/utterance” (p. 70). Today, this mixture of traditional and futuristic images of Japan can be found in

a variety of popular media, for example in Sofia Coppola's film *Lost in Translation* (2004) as well as in *WIDM* as will be shown in chapter five.

Having provided an historical account of 'Japanese Orientalism' up to the present, the next paragraphs proceed with the goal of describing at least a part of the collection of ideas, beliefs, images and clichés that make up Orientalist discourse about Japan, starting with a paragraph dedicated to the function of cultural stereotypes and stereotypes commonly held about Japan and the Japanese.

2.4 Cultural stereotypes

Orientalism has long been the dominant discourse with which to schematize, understand, contain and control 'the Orient'. Part and parcel of Orientalist discourse are stereotypes, which actively help to essentialize difference by creating and maintaining a hierarchical relationship between the stereotyped (the Other) and the one who stereotypes. Stereotypes reduce, essentialize and naturalize so that they become 'taken for granted' and 'true' characteristics. Stereotypes thus 'fix' difference and Otherness while maintaining social and symbolic order between insiders ('us') and outsiders ('them') (Hall 1997b). Hall therefore calls stereotyping the 'symbolic fixing of boundaries', as stereotypes create and reinforce a hierarchical ranking of ethnic and 'racial' groups, resulting in binary notions such as 'we/them' and 'East/West'. These binary oppositions are almost never neutral and mostly consist of a 'better', stronger or dominant part ('we') and a weaker or inferior part ('them'). In other words, there is a strong connection between representation, stereotyping, difference and power. This includes "the power to represent someone or something in a certain way – within a certain 'regime of representation' " (Hall 1997b, 259), where regime of representation can also be read as discourse (Orientalism). Stereotypes tend to support the hegemonic discourse as stereotyping involves classifying people, thereby constructing and excluding 'Others' who do not meet the norm, as provided by the hegemonic discourse. It is important to keep in mind, however, that stereotypes can be positive as well as negative, as difference and otherness are themselves ambivalent and not necessarily negative. Moreover, stereotypes help to classify and make better sense of the world by reducing reality to more comprehensible proportions (Hall 1997b).

It is of little surprise that cultural stereotypes have long been used to differentiate and essentialize the Orient, Orientals, Asia and of course Japan and the Japanese. In his book *The New Japan*, Matsumoto (2002) convincingly contests some of these more well-known and well-accepted cultural stereotypes that have long been in use, arguing that contemporary Japanese culture is very different from these traditional ideas and stereotypes that circulate about Japanese culture. By comparing the differences between contemporary Japanese society and culture with traditional Japanese culture, Matsumoto shows that

especially the younger generations are distinctly different from generations born before the Second World War. This makes these cultural stereotypes not only over-generalizations, but also simply not appropriate. Cultural stereotypes which did apply to some extent to these older generations, but are still used today to describe ‘the Japanese’ as a whole are for example a collectivist mentality, controlled emotions, and a seemingly unlimited loyalty to the company and work. However, Japanese culture according to Matsumoto has been and is quickly changing and more and more resembles more individualistic minded societies.

Building upon his own research and that of others, Matsumoto (2002) argues that contemporary Japanese society is very different from what is often considered to be a homogeneous, collective and harmonious society. These and other notions held about Japanese culture and society by non-Japanese as well as Japanese themselves have created an image of a homogeneous, ‘unicultural’ Japan. “These stereotypic images and perceptions of Japan have, for all intents and purposes, *become* Japan” (p. 2). In his book Matsumoto distinguishes and debunks seven of these stereotypes, in the hope that the discussion of these seven major stereotypes will make readers question other or all stereotypes about contemporary Japan. The seven stereotypes discussed are: 1) Japanese Collectivism, 2) Japanese Self-Concepts, 3) Japanese Interpersonal Consciousness, 4) Japanese Emotionality, 5) The Japanese Salaryman, 6) Japanese Lifetime Employment, and 7) The Japanese Marriage. Clearly, some stereotypes are more relevant than others for this present study. However, Matsumoto for example convincingly shows that one of the most common and prevailing stereotypes about the Japanese – collectivity, as opposed to the often celebrated individualism in the West – does not hold true, as especially the younger generations of Japanese are less and less concerned with collectivism, instead opting and striving for individuality and uniqueness. Matsumoto even argues that young Japanese are actually more individualistic than their American counterparts. Another stereotype which Matsumoto debunks is that of Japanese emotionality. According to him, notions of Japanese people hiding their true emotions have contributed to the idea of Japanese being ‘emotionless robots’, a stereotype which can sometimes be found in films and television programmes featuring Japanese characters.

Matsumoto concludes that many views of contemporary Japanese culture are more myth and fantasy than reality: “The evidence [...] forcefully challenges the validity of stereotypic notions about Japanese culture and society, rendering them more myth than truth, more fantasy than reality” (p. 36). Interestingly, as the next paragraph will show, these stereotypical notions are not only held by non-Japanese but also by Japanese themselves (Iwabuchi 1994; Matsumoto 2002; Burman 2007). As such, the Japanese have actively participated in and contributed to a process which has been called ‘self-Orientalism’.

2.5 Self-Orientalism and Nihonjinron

Although Japan is geographically located in Asia, it tried to modernize and ‘catch up’ with, emulate and ultimately belong to the West ever since the opening of the country to foreign powers in 1854. As a consequence, Japanese identity and self-images have long been connected to how the West described, understood and represented Japan as a country in the Orient (Harada 2006). Yoshioka (1995) even argues that Japan actually constituted its self-identity by identifying with the West. Especially after the loss of the Second World War and the occupation of Japan by the Allied Forces, Japanese identity or ‘Japaneseness’, Iwabuchi (1994) writes, was created and maintained by differentiating from the Other (the West). Besides Western Orientalist practices and works about Japan such as Ruth Benedict’s *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (1946), this process depended on performing what has been called ‘self-Orientalism’. This practice of adopting and absorbing Western hegemony to turn oneself into an Other, has also been called ‘auto-Orientalism discourse’ (Lie 2001), ‘auto-exoticism’ (Levick 2005) and ‘reverse Orientalism’ (Sekii 1987; as cited in Harada 2006).

Iwabuchi (1994) best describes self-Orientalism and summarizes the relationship between Orientalism and self-Orientalism when he writes that “while Orientalism enjoys the mysterious exoticism of the Other, self-Orientalism exploits the Orientalist gaze to turn itself into an Other”. Yoshioka even argues that Japanese ‘cultural ideals’ are mediated by a complex and dynamic process as “Japanese culture, its calm outlook (often represented as oriental calmness, impersonality, unity with nature and so on) is created as the effect of incessant identification between the subject and an object, and outside ‘other’ ” (p. 101), with the outside Other of course being the West. As such, ‘Japaneseness’ and Japanese culture have become a “universally acknowledged particularism, as ‘Japan’ and ‘the West’ alike image the Japanese as exotic” (Iwabuchi 1994) with both parties participating in ‘complicit exoticism’.

The relationship between Orientalism and self-Orientalism is thus characterized by ‘a profound complicity’ as both use each other to essentialize the Self. Both need each other in order to be able to differentiate and define themselves (Iwabuchi 1994). This concurs with what Said (2003) writes about the two geographical entities (the Orient and the Occident) supporting and to some extent reflecting each other. Moreover, it confirms Said’s writing that the modern Orient actually actively participates in its own Orientalization. Japan’s self-Orientalism should not be confused with Occidentalism however. Unlike Occidentalism, self-Orientalism is not focused on or against the West, nor even talks about the Other. Rather, self-Orientalism has been a passive strategy to counter Orientalism and exploit notions of Japan held by ‘the West’ in order to create and maintain a Japanese national cultural identity. One major and important example which shows how the Occident or the West has helped shape the Japanese self-image

and identity, as well as shape non-Japanese views and opinions of Japan and her people, is through a body of literature called *Nihonjinron*.

The success of Ruth Benedict's *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* in the United States as well as in Japan can be explained by the fact that, in the words of the historian Kenneth Pyle, "identities are constructed from two kinds of ideas: those held by the Self and those held by the Other" (2007, 130). Benedict's conceptions of Japan as homogenous, unique and distinct from other countries greatly contributed to the idea and perception of the Japanese Self. Not surprisingly, Benedict's work spawned other works outside as well as inside Japan which followed in the same tradition and fashion. Nowadays, many of these works – such as the earlier mentioned work by Nakane Chie – are considered to be *Nihonjinron*, literature describing the perceived uniqueness of Japan and its culture, society, and language. *Nihonjinron* in other words is a body of literature about 'Japaneseness', often based upon binary oppositions between Japan and 'the West', the latter mostly being the United States (Iwabuchi 1994). The Japanese have been "major consumers of their own self-representations" (Burman 2007, 188) as *Nihonjinron* provided a discourse to create and maintain a Japanese cultural-national identity after the loss of the Second World War (Befu 2001; as cited in Burman 2007).

Although *Nihonjinron* has often been criticized for its conservative point of view and ideological function in generating and encouraging chauvinism and cultural nationalism (Mouer & Sugimoto 1972, Dale 1986, Harumi 1990; as cited in Lie 2001), its importance and influence should not be underestimated. For example, partly in response to the claim of Japanese uniqueness made in *Nihonjinron*, contemporary Western historians writing about Japanese history now explicitly urge their readers not to consider Japan's history as 'uniquely unique or exotic' (Gordon 2009). Despite *Nihonjinron* having become more refined and sophisticated throughout the years in response to criticism on the genre as a whole, the underlying assumptions and ideas are still the same. Attributes of Japanese society and behaviour, real and imagined, such as homogeneity and group-orientation (collectivism) are compared with attributes which are thought to belong to the, presented as monolithic, 'West', such as individualism (Mouer & Sugimoto 1986; as cited in Iwabuchi 1994). Matsumoto (2002) writes about *Nihonjinron* that these "stereotypic views about Japanese culture are promulgated not only by Westerners but also by Japanese scholars, writers, and the Japanese public. This is what the Japanese want to think about themselves, and this is how they want to portray themselves to the rest of the world" (p. 20). Cultural themes such as group-ism, hierarchy and 'uniqueness' have all been appropriated by Japanese to distinguish and differentiate themselves from the West and other Asian countries and thus create and strengthen an own, Japanese identity (Levick 2005). Creighton (1995) adds that 'Japaneseness' is ultimately a form of self-Orientalism which predominantly includes notions of "discipline, order, meekness, responsibility, and submission to group goals" (Moeran 1984; as cited in

Creighton 1995, 144-145). *Nihonjinron* has thus strongly contributed to the process of self-Orientalism, which in turn helped create and maintain Japanese identity or ‘Japaneseness’.

This paragraph, then, has stressed the importance of not seeing Japan as a defenceless and innocent victim of Western Orientalism. The Japanese have actively used the ‘Orientalist gaze’ to create, maintain and strengthen an own national cultural identity (‘Japaneseness’) by performing self-Orientalism. Importantly, the Japanese have actively contributed to and participated in Orientalizing and exoticizing themselves. The last paragraph of this chapter focuses on perhaps the most important and visible symbol of Orientalism and self-Orientalism, a stereotype which might be said to live on “the interface connecting Japan to the other” (Yoshioka 1995, 105) where Orientalism and self-Orientalism meet. This stereotype, often found in contemporary media featuring or about Japan, is the Samurai.

2.6 The Samurai

Although the historical samurai officially ceased to exist in the early years of the second half of the nineteenth century, the Samurai has been called the most popular cultural image of Japan and can be seen as *the* symbol of Japanese Orientalism and self-Orientalism (Yoshioka 1995). Yoshioka sees the Samurai as a symbol for the intricate representational mechanism which functions in the relationship between Japan and the West, with the symbol itself bearing almost or no relation to the real historical samurai. Instead, the Samurai has been used to present Japan as a ‘single personality’ or a homogeneous society, serving as an ‘unconscious self-image’ for the Japanese nation. The Samurai as a symbol provided “a homogeneous space of representation when Japan recognized and located itself in relation to the Other” and as such, in Orientalist fashion, “the samurai belong to a perspective restricting the imagination of modern Japan” (Yoshioka 1995, 104). Ueno (2002) writes that ‘Samurai discourse’ (Yoshioka 1995) or ‘samuraisation’ (Befu 1971; as cited in Iwabuchi 1994) created “an illusory image of Samurai which never existed but has been constructed as an interface for understanding the heterogeneous culture” (p. 99). In other words, the Samurai emerged as a modern invention as a result of the relationship between Japan and the West since the middle of the nineteenth century and symbolizes and combines Orientalist and self-Orientalist discourse.

The Samurai has always served two ‘masters’, as he served Japanese as well as Western purposes. First and foremost, the Samurai represents a desire for cultural essentialism both within Japan as well as in the West. In the West, the image of the Samurai is invoked to call something (or someone) ‘typically Japanese’, to signify Japan and contemporary Japanese society. In the West, the Samurai provides an exotic, mythical and thus fascinating symbol of the Japanese ‘Other’. In Japan, the Samurai is also an exotic image

to the Japanese themselves. The image of the Samurai is for example often invoked in Japan to describe the Japanese ‘salaryman’ (Matsumoto 2002). These white-collar businessmen working for Japanese corporations have often been described in popular media as well as in academic writings as ‘samurai in suits’, thus connecting the warrior class of old Japan to the contemporary Japanese corporate environment (Matsumoto 2002). One of the reasons the Samurai has become such a popular and stable symbol for Japan is according to Yoshioka (1995) because “Samurai provide people with a fantasy that the world has not been changed by the impact of modernization”, a statement which indicates that the Samurai somehow represents an essential and unchangeable quality present in Japan and its inhabitants. This of course corresponds with what Said (2003) notes about the Orient being considered by the West as unchanged and even incapable of changing. The Samurai implies continuity as it seemingly connects old Japan to modern times, while the Samurai is also proof that there is something “ ‘real’ and ‘true’ [...] in the Japanese mentality which survives all the cultural and social transformations caused by modernization” (Yoshioka 1995, 108). The Samurai has thus served Western as well as Japanese interests, by among others fulfilling the mutual desire for cultural essentialism, Western fantasies and myths about Japan, and to provide an exotic image and symbol for self-Orientalism for the Japanese. Thus, Yoshioka (1995) writes, Japanese enjoy being represented as Samurai as much as the West enjoys representing Japanese as Samurai. As a result, the Samurai has become one of the most prominent and widespread symbols of the Japanese Other in Western media, and for this reason will return in the next chapters.

The present chapter has shown that Orientalism is not a phenomenon of the past, but as relevant today as it was thirty years ago when Said wrote his book. Since then, Orientalism has been applied to a wide variety of media texts, from literature to audiovisual media such as film and television, art and commercials. Moreover, although Japan was never colonized, Orientalism can and has been used to describe and analyze the relationship between Japan and the West. Orientalism therefore is an appropriate tool to analyze contemporary Dutch televisual media texts about Japan with. However, the chapter also showed that Japan was not simply the ‘victim’ of Orientalist discourse. The Japanese actively used the Western Orientalist gaze to turn themselves into the exotic Other by performing self-Orientalism, of which the Samurai is the most visible and enduring symbol. Yoshioka (1995) writes that images of Others are most easily influenced and distorted through the unconscious, that is when people are free to see and think about the world. This happens by way of education, the social environment and above all by the mass media. The next chapter turns towards the media, in particular cinema and television, and how they represent and mediate the (Japanese) Other.

III. The Spectacle of the Japanese Other

Orientalism not only circulates, but also produces knowledge. Inokuchi and Nozaki (2005) write that Orientalism is productive as it “enables one to produce knowledge [...] by providing a series of sub-topics, images, and vocabularies” (p. 72). These sub-topics, images, and vocabularies – such as the Samurai – are especially articulated and circulated through mass media like television and film. This chapter, therefore, focuses on the media. First, theoretical background about two core practices of mass media, representation and mediation, will be provided, followed by a consideration of television as a (potentially) powerful medium. The chapter will subsequently zoom in on contemporary representations of Japan in popular cinema and television by discussing several relevant examples of recent films and television programmes featuring Japan. The overarching theme of this chapter is to analyze what Hall (1997b) calls ‘the spectacle of the Other’, in this case the mediated representation of the Japanese Other. As such, this chapter will explore how (Orientalist) discourse is produced and circulated in cinema and especially television programmes.

3.1 Representation & mediation

Representation is usually thought of as depicting, describing and/or portraying something or someone. Representation, however, is also crucial in the production and exchange of meaning between people who share cultural characteristics and are thus considered members of the same culture. Central to the process of giving meaning, to for example Japan and Japanese culture, are two so-called ‘systems of representation’. The first system classifies and organizes by establishing concepts to each object, while the second system connects those concepts to signs in various languages (spoken word, written word, drawings, sounds, images) to represent those concepts and thus create and exchange meaning (Hall 1997c). These two systems of representation are used to refer to both real and imaginary things, things we have seen and things we have never seen. Meaning is thus not inherent to objects, but constructed by humans using the representational systems of concepts and signs. In other words, it is not the actual, material social world, but rather the language systems used by humans to represent concepts that construct and exchange meaning (Hall 1997c). In media texts, meaning is encoded into the text by the author or producer and subsequently decoded by the viewer or reader. For this, the encoder and the decoder have to at least ‘speak’ the same language – system of representation – and share certain cultural characteristics in order to understand that there is any meaning at all to be found. In the West, the symbolic sign ‘the Samurai’ has become a natural and accepted way of depicting and referring to Japan and the Japanese. The sign, the

Samurai, stands for ‘something’ – Japan, Japanese people, culture – and therefore produces and circulates meaning.

As the media produce and circulate meaning, it is a key social institute in society as “both in fictional and factual formats it is regarded as a major force for the transmission of culture, including cultural stereotypes” (Haynes 2007, 166). Contemporary mass media represent as well as mediate, as representation, knowing about ourselves as well as others, is only possible through mediation. This process, in which societies have become permeated by – and dependent on – the media, has been called the ‘mediatization of society’ (Hjarvard 2008).^{*} John Ellis (2006) writes that society has become so mediated that effective communication is now only possible when it passes through the mass media, as all communication seems to involve the media. Silverstone (2007) even argues that in our contemporary media saturated world, media consumers tend to accept what they see, hear and read uncritically. “In the mediated space of appearance we no longer need to, nor wish to, nor are for the most part capable of, doubt. The mediated world is what is mediated, and there is no longer significant difference between the world as it appears on the screen and the world that is lived” (p. 51).

This line of thought is shared by Postman (1985) regarding television. Postman writes that television has become so normal and so natural a part of daily life that viewers no longer doubt the reality it presents. Most viewers are even unaware of how and which vision television provides, and what effects this has on them as television consumers. At the same time the images and perspectives television and other media provide do (potentially) influence media consumers. According to Silverstone (2007), what media consumers read and see in media texts provides a lot of the secondary and even primary resources of information for ‘being and living’. “What is seen and heard, understood or misunderstood, loved or hated, is incorporated, both consciously and unconscious, into the cultures of the everyday” (p. 20), indicating that every mediated representation seen, heard and read not only to some extent influences media consumers individually but also society and culture as a whole.

Returning to discourse, Haynes (2007) writes that “representations, positive or negative, are re-produced, not produced, by the media. Nor would representations which are limited, stereotypical or racist, continue to be re-produced if they did not find an audience” (p. 167). This notion is supported by Said (2003), who writes in *Orientalism* that the ‘uninitiated reader’ (or the television viewer) accepts the Western, Orientalist codifications in media texts as the *true* Orient. Media production and consumption as well as the media text itself and its meaning are thus connected by social and cultural contexts. Therefore, as will be discussed in detail in the methodological chapter, production, content as well as reception need to be analyzed in its totality when exploring the role and influence of a media text upon society and vice versa.

^{*} The ‘mediatization’ of society should not be confused with the practice of mediation, or conveying information.

3.2 Television

Since its introduction in the 1960s, television has become a daily routine and part of the living room and bedroom, so much so that most people are hardly aware of its presence anymore. Most children now grow up with television, while their parents receive most of their entertainment and information from the same television. Despite the rise of ‘new media’ such as the Internet, television continues to be regarded as a central institution in all modern societies (Abercrombie 1996; Haynes 2007). This is evidenced by the fact that hour upon hour is spent watching television, with Dutch television owners on average watching 191 minutes of television per day in 2010 (Stichting KijkOnderzoek 2011). Precisely because television has become such a normal part of everyday life, it continues to be an interesting medium to study. For,

its power to construct and determine our view of the world should never be underestimated. Television constantly punctuates, articulates and manipulates the world around us, presenting us with highly constructed and artificial images that inevitably inform and influence our everyday lives and perceptions. Indeed, the potential power of television is so great precisely because we rarely recognise or perceive its internal dynamics at work, so good is it at making itself appear a natural and transparent ‘window on the world’. (Creeber 2006b, 1).

Television does not simply provide a transparent window on the world however. Instead, it offers a construction of this world, a televised version of reality. Haynes (2007) writes that “the media re-presents to us the social world within and beyond our own experience; a re-presentation which is necessarily mutated through perception, interpretation and reproduction” (p. 166). The images we see on television, no matter how ‘real’ or ‘realistic’ they seem, are selected by the programmes producers and represent *a* reality rather than *the* reality. Postman (1985) writes that the media do not simply make statements, but rather create media-metaphors that through their repetition become normal and accepted. One such media-metaphor is for example the Samurai. By classifying, framing, sequencing, reducing and colouring these media-metaphors, television “argue[s] a case for what the world is like” (p. 10) and as such, “how television stages the world becomes the model for how the world is properly to be staged” (p. 92). Of course, how television stages the world is in part dependent on the hegemonic discourse in place. Through its production and circulation of media-metaphors or meaning, television can support and maintain the existing hegemonic discourse – as well as support other, non-hegemonic discourses – whether these discourses accurately describe actual reality (the Orient, Japan) or not.

The fact that the media have the power to create a certain reality – for example ‘the Orient’ or ‘Japan’ – by producing and circulating meaning is supported by Said (2003), who writes that “texts can

create not only knowledge but also the very reality they appear to describe” (p. 94). This creation of reality involves following and maintaining (hegemonic) discourse, or how something is traditionally represented, talked and thought about. Thus, “rather than *innocently* reflecting the world, television re-represents reality i.e. it constructs and articulates it from a particular perspective or point of view” (Creeber 2006c, 48). This happens not only in factual television programmes such as the news, but in all genres from soap opera to action series and even in reality television – as will be discussed later. In the process of televising reality, “television consistently ‘naturalises’ the world around us, forever turning ideological bias into a seemingly ‘*natural*’ representation” (Creeber 2006c, 48). This is especially the case in reality television programmes which depend for their success on appearing authentic, natural representations – ‘real’ people in unscripted situations (Lewis 2004). This so-called ‘authenticity claim’, if the programme or representation is ‘real’ and ‘true’, is central to all (theorizing about) reality television (Hill 2005). To summarize, television has not only become a normal part of daily life, but its messages, images and view on the world have become normal, accepted and largely unquestioned representations of reality.

Although television does not provide a transparent window on the world, it is a major purveyor of images of Others and as such gives meaning to events, people, countries, regions or general issues (Abercrombie 1996). Lewis (2004) writes about this public life on television that “it is an environment inhabited by other people (some like us, others not), and its features are constantly signified by television and the other cultural industries” (p. 297). Television is therefore one of the principle modes of society of knowing about itself and by extension about others (Postman 1985), as it continuously presents and uses otherness and sameness, thus constructing not only individual but also collective global imagery. Indeed, “otherness, difference, sameness are the differentiating and connecting categories that appear on our screens on a daily basis” (Silverstone 2007, 18). The media, with television on the forefront, constantly inscribe difference, among others through the crude stereotypes of Otherness, into media texts and discourse. Silverstone (2007) therefore summarizes the media’s primary (cultural) role as the “endless, endless, endless, playing with difference and sameness” (Silverstone 2007, 19). Television for example ‘markets’ the Orient for Western consumers, as mediation and representation transform “a very far distant and often threatening Otherness into figures that are relatively familiar” by relying on known narratives, images and stereotypes, thus resulting in “the audience [...] watching a highly artificial enactment of what a non-Oriental has made into a symbol for the whole Orient” (Said 2003, 21).

For this reason television has been called ‘bardic television’ by Fiske and Hartley (1978), as it “performs for the culture at large and all the individually differentiated people who live in it” (p. 64). Like the bard of old times, television functions as a mediator of language which serves to confirm and reinforce culture, no in the least by playing with and making use of difference (the Other) and sameness. The notion

of difference is central to the formation of identity, with the mass media conveying ideas about difference such as its dimensions, impact and relevance (Shah 2003). Moreover, television as a modern 'bardic mediator' is a highly centralized medium in contemporary society, so much so that it takes a central place in culture and society. Through this centrality, television is able to attract the attention of and communicate with viewers from all classes and backgrounds within complex and fragmented societies. Television is thus an important, common experience for many people (Abercrombie 1996), for example when a World championship or European championship football is played. Millions of viewers tune in, see the same football match unfolding and celebrate or mourn collectively afterwards. Another such example is *WIDM*, a weekly 'common experience' shared by almost two million Dutch television viewers.

The idea of television being a 'bardic medium' is somewhat echoed by George Gerbner (1998), founder of the much criticized yet somewhat useful cultivation theory or cultivation analysis, who sees television as a 'centralized system of story-telling'. Gerbner sees television broadcasting as the most 'concentrated, homogenized and globalized' medium in the world, which – in conjunction with the Internet – acts as the source of "the most broadly-shared images and messages in history", so that it makes "penetration and integration of the dominant patterns of images and messages in daily life" (p. 177) possible. As television plays a central role in many societies and lives of people, it potentially influences and shapes viewers values, opinions, attitudes, and knowledge through the images, narratives, and patterns it presents its viewers with. Exposure to these television patterns over a long period of times eventually leads to what Gerbner and his colleagues call 'cultivation', or how television independently contributes to and influences viewers conceptions of social reality (Gerbner 1998; Shanahan & Morgan 2004). Shanahan and Morgan add to this that cultivation is "about the implications of stable, repetitive, pervasive and virtually inescapable patterns of images and ideologies that television (especially dramatic, fictional entertainment) provides" (p. 5). Orientalist discourse and cultural stereotypes are of course main examples of such repetitive, pervasive and stable patterns promoted and circulated by television and other contemporary media.

The potential influence of television on viewers is more symbolic than behavioural however, not directly influencing how viewers behave but rather how they see and perceive the world. Importantly, cultivation theory assumes that television maintains social order and ideological systems rather than changing or questioning them (Casey et al. 2007). In other words, television tends to support and reinforce hegemonic discourse such as Orientalism, although the option of resistance and alternative discourses always remains open. In combination with the earlier remarks that television and its representations have become accepted as normal and natural, it shows that television is potentially extremely powerful in disseminating and reinforcing existing stereotypes and discourses such as Orientalism.

However, it is not just television alone which necessarily influences viewers. Lewis (2004) remarks that “even though we only partially accept the truth of the television world, the sum total of everything we do accept (consciously or unconsciously) blends with countless more semiotic fragments from magazines, books, advertisements, and other representations to constitute the vast, pulsing mass of the reality beyond our own” (p. 297). Indeed, it is in the earlier described (playing with) difference and sameness that is “being represented in a particular culture at any one moment, we can see similar representational practices and figures being repeated, with variations, from one text or site of representation to another” (Hall 1997b, 232). In other words, Orientalism is highly dependent for its reproduction and dissemination on intertextuality, or the “accumulation of meanings across different texts, where one image refers to another, or has its meaning altered by being ‘read’ in the context of other images” (Hall 1997b, 232). Although television is a central medium in society, meaning is produced and circulated across a wide variety of different media and media texts.

The next paragraph will therefore provide examples of Orientalism and stereotypes about Japan in film, an influential and popular audiovisual medium closely related to television, not least because films often appear on television. Both are moreover powerful media capable of visually ‘bringing the world to us’ or rather to the screen in front of us. Especially Hollywood cinema, with its global, dominant distribution networks and potential to reach millions of consumers worldwide, has shaped and continues to influence and shape ideas and images of Others.

3.3 Japan on the big screen

Hemant Shah (2003) has written that ‘Asian’ culture, whether ‘real’ or perceived, has long provided inspiration for film and television producers in the United States. Indeed, as early as the 1910s and 1920s, Hollywood filmmakers discovered how Orientalism – films set in exotic settings featuring exotic characters – drew people to the theatre. Numerous films appeared in which “thrills of unbridled passion, miscegenation, and wild adventure in a raw and natural setting” represented ‘the East’ (Bernstein 1997, 3). These films not only provided viewers with exotic images of other countries, but at the same time helped shape and reinforce national identities. The ability of cinema to show other parts of the world made Western viewers into ‘armchair conquistadors’, affirming their power as Westerners while turning the rest of the world “into a spectacle for the metropole’s voyeuristic gaze” (Shohat and Stam 1994, 104). It was not until 1978 that film critics could begin using the theoretical framework provided by Edward Said in *Orientalism* to describe and explain the exotic settings and characters in Orientalist films and what they really ‘stood for’ (Bernstein 1997). Since then, Orientalism as a theoretical framework has been applied to

cinema, among which films dealing with Japan, as Japan and its culture have proven to be interesting topics for Western cinema.

In the first few years of the 21st century, Japan has prominently featured in Hollywood cinema. In 2003 several high profile films were released, such as *The Last Samurai* with Tom Cruise, *Kill Bill Volume 1* with Uma Thurman and *Lost in Translation* starring Bill Murray and Scarlett Johansson. In 2004 and 2005 *Kill Bill Volume 2* and *Memoirs of a Geisha* were released, followed in 2006 by the war film *Flags of our Fathers* and its companion piece *Letters from Iwo Jima*, both directed by Clint Eastwood. The same year saw also the release of the third instalment of the *Fast and Furious* franchise, *Tokyo Drift*. In the summer of 2011 Disney moreover released *Cars 2*, in which its animated American characters visit Japan. This paragraph discusses *The Last Samurai*, portraying ‘traditional’ Japan, and *Lost in Translation*, which depicts contemporary Japan (especially Tokyo) and provides an important example as the film provided inspiration for *Lost in Tokyo* (see next paragraph) and *WIDM*. Both films are moreover evidence of the intertextuality Orientalist discourse depends upon.

Depictions of Japan, her people and culture in Hollywood films have often lead to heated discussions whether these representations were either racist and naive or accurate and well-intentioned (Motoko, Schwarzacher & Tomita 2004). This discussion also raged after *The Last Samurai* (2003) was released, which was mainly criticized for portraying Japanese culture in a ‘stale’ or trite way. Set in Japan in the 1860s, the film tells the story of Nathan Algren, an American soldier haunted by his past. Algren goes to Japan to help modernize the country, and defeat the last samurai who want to hold on to traditional Japanese culture and values. Algren ends up being a hostage of the samurai and eventually not only accepts, but adapts to ‘Japanese culture’ and actually becomes one of the last samurai, thus fighting his fellow countrymen. As a hostage, Algren resides in what Shin (2010) calls ‘Japan Spa’, a small traditional Japanese village in the countryside where stereotypes and ‘Orientalist clichés’ about Zen Buddhism and the *bushido* code (‘the way of the warrior’) still hold true. Although Zen Buddhism is hardly a mainstream part of Japanese culture, *The Last Samurai* follows Orientalist clichés and portrays Japan nonetheless as a ‘Zen country’. Thus, Japan is portrayed as “the mysterious exotic East—a reservoir of nature, purity, calmness, spirituality, and refined sensibilities (‘Japan’)” (p. 1073). Shin argues that this presumed spiritual Orient is a mirror image of the West, used to fulfil its desires such as its longing for spirituality, as the West itself has lost its innocence by way of modernization and civilization. At the same time, the message in *The Last Samurai* that a Westerner is needed to teach the rapidly modernizing Japanese (how) to honour their past bears strong Orientalist and Eurocentric overtones (Shohat & Stam 1994; Motoko et al. 2004). *The Last Samurai* thus tells a story shot through with Orientalist clichés and narratives, as Japan is ultimately used by the West for its own purposes, in this case the ‘personal healing’ of the main character. Interestingly, this

theme also returns in *The Fast and the Furious: Tokyo Drift*, where the American main character goes to Japan to avoid going to jail. Like Algren, the main character in *Tokyo Drift* can start a ‘new life’ in Japan (contemporary Tokyo), making Japan a refuge and once more a place serving Western purposes.

Whereas *The Last Samurai* has its American main character accepting and adapting to ‘traditional Japanese culture’, Sofia Coppola’s *Lost in Translation* (2003) shows the two American main characters not only being lost in translation but also as largely incapable of understanding contemporary Japan as they reside in its capital Tokyo. Although *Lost in Translation* takes place in Japan, it is really about the two Americans, their problems adjusting to life in Tokyo and their flourishing relationship. Importantly, as it also applies to *Lost in Tokyo* and *WIDM*, Burman (2007) writes of the plot of *Lost in Translation* that it “requires a setting that is both geographically and culturally different, yet undemanding. Such a setting distances the two protagonists from their everyday contexts and relationships and engenders a sensibility of cultural estrangement amenable to quasi-anthropological reevaluation of their everyday presumptions” (p. 193). Japan (Tokyo) and by extension her inhabitants thus serve as a foil or background against which the plot and the relationship between the two main characters develops.

Although *Lost in Translation* was seen and praised by many in the West, it was also criticized for its ‘cultural mockery’ and use of stereotypes (Motoko et al. 2004). Kiku Day (2004), herself half Japanese, wrote in *The Guardian* that the Japanese in *Lost in Translation* were ‘one-dimensional’ and ‘dehumanised’, their sole purpose being part of the exotic background for the relationship between the two American main characters. Burman (2007) saw a traditional Orientalist style in the depictions of Japan and the Japanese, as “Japanese people, culture and practices appear at best as inscrutable, and at worst as bizarre or ridiculous” (p. 193). Day (2004) also noticed how contemporary Japan was presented as almost ridiculous and filled with people who have lost touch with their own traditional culture and history. Ancient, traditional Japan, however, consisting of ancient temples, flower arrangement and Buddhist monks chanting, are shown to be ‘the good Japan’ according to Day, thus portraying Japan once again in Orientalist fashion as ‘the mysterious east’. Interestingly, this duality of representations consisting of traditional and modern will return in *WIDM* in the next chapter.

Shohat and Stam (1994) write that while films may be seen as representations ‘only’, they can have real effects in daily life. Films are the result of real-life assumptions, as the making of a film is a human activity. These real-life assumptions are often shared by other people (the audience), as meaning is produced and circulated through discourses such as Orientalism. Films as well as other media texts such as television programmes are thus produced within social and cultural contexts, and are the result of discourse. Importantly, these media texts are also consumed in – and feed into – social and cultural. Films like *The Last Samurai* and *Lost in Translation* are among others successful because they build upon

stereotypes and Orientalist narratives known to Western viewers, such as the East being ‘mysterious’ (*The Last Samurai*) and inscrutable (*Lost in Translation*). These films thus not only acknowledge, but also support and maintain Orientalist discourse about Japan, and in the words of Postman (1985) promote how Japan is to be ‘properly’ staged for Western viewers. In the next paragraph the focus shifts from film to television.

3.4 Japan on the small screen

‘Japan’ not only regularly features in Hollywood cinema, but also in Western television programmes. In 1999 for example, the finale of the tenth season of the internationally popular American animation show *The Simpsons* had its main characters visit Japan. In the episode, entitled *Thirty Minutes Over Tokyo*, Japanese and American culture and the differences between them were highlighted and sometimes mocked in a style typical for the humorous show. Undoubtedly the most famous and most watched television show featuring as well as promoting ‘Japan’ has been *Shogun* (1980), an American television miniseries based upon James Clavell’s best-selling novel under the same name. The novel as well as the television miniseries became hugely popular in the United States and other parts of the Western world, and have since contributed to the popularization of Japan and Japanese culture. However, *Shogun* has also been criticized and condemned in the West as well as in Japan for being “an enormous pastiche of best-seller stereotypes” (Heinz 1980). Although *Shogun* is essentially a cross-cultural love story filled with intrigue, sex and violence, it also provides information about Japanese history, culture and language. As such, the show and the novel have a somewhat instructional tone, especially because throughout the story the main character not only learns the ‘Japanese way of life’, but also adapts and eventually accepts this new way of life similar to the main character in *The Last Samurai* (Smith 1980).

Shogun is set in Japan around 1600, a country riddled with samurai, geisha, castles, and ninja, seemingly representing seventeenth century Japan. However, Plath (1980) writes that *Shogun* does not actually provide viewers or readers with a view on Japan, but rather on a different country which resembles seventeenth century Japan and which he calls ‘Jawpen’, a contraction of the words ‘jawed’ and ‘penned’ to indicate how much nonsense has been written about this country. Although ‘Jawpen’ is made up of traditional elements of Japanese culture, it was in fact ‘invented’ and ‘assembled’ in the West for Western audiences. Plath writes that this ‘Jawpen’ “is one of our cultural opposites, transposed into the twilight zone of myth and epic” (p. 20). ‘Jawpen’ is thus the cultural Other, essentialized through its difference, strangeness and exoticism by the use of popular symbols such as the Samurai. In this aspect, ‘Jawpen’ is very similar to ‘Japan Spa’ (Shin 2010) in *The Last Samurai*, as both provide the setting for the Western main character to accept and adapt to ‘traditional’ Japanese culture.

While *Shogun* and the episode of *The Simpsons* are older, yet influential examples, *Lost in Tokyo* (2007) is a much more recent Dutch example of a television programme featuring Japan. Focusing on *Lost in Tokyo* not only means a switch from American films and television programmes depicting Japan to a Dutch media production, but also a change in genre. Whereas the films and television programmes discussed so far were all scripted fictions, *Lost in Tokyo* (and *WIDM*) both fall in the category of reality television. In contrast to scripted works of fiction, reality television bears resemblance to observational documentaries by way of its camera-work and lack of narration (Murray & Ouellette 2004). Therefore, one of the core features of reality television, or popular factual television as it also called, is that information is presented in an entertaining manner (Hill 2005). Especially the possibility for viewers to ‘see for themselves’ – reality television after all appears more ‘real’ than scripted television and purports to show ‘authentic’ personalities, locations, and situations – makes reality television an entertaining and informing type of television programme (Murray & Ouellette 2004; Hill 2005), as ‘seeing’ is “connected with the informative elements in particular programmes. When audiences connect what they see with what they know, then reality TV ‘elicits from viewers certain kinds of investment of self which other media cannot so easily generate, if at all’ ” (Corner 1995; as quoted in Hill 2005, 89). One of these learning opportunities is for example through the observation of social behaviour, which can make viewers become aware of how similar or different they are from other people and how different or similar other cultures are (Hartley 1999; as cited in Hill 2005). It comes as no surprise that critics and scholars have extensively discussed how reality television represents and if and how these representations influence viewers (Murray & Ouellette 2004).

Lost in Tokyo was broadcasted by the commercial channel RTL5 in September 2007 and was the first Dutch reality television programme to visit Japan. Although *Lost in Tokyo* was slotted at prime-time (20.30) on Thursday evening, it failed to attract a lot of viewers. On the contrary, after only four episodes the show was cancelled due to the low numbers of viewers and the fact that it ‘did not meet the expectations of the broadcaster’ (*Lost in Tokyo* 2007). As *Lost in Tokyo* has not been previously analyzed, save for several short articles on the Internet, the following analysis draws almost entirely upon personal viewing experience and comparisons with *WIDM* and *Lost in Translation*.

Lost in Tokyo is not only in name similar to Sofia Coppola’s *Lost in Translation*, but also similarly revolves around cultural differences and culture shock and uses Tokyo as a foil for its candidates and assignments. As a reality show, *Lost in Tokyo* uses these themes much more than Coppola’s film however. Presenter and voice-over Renate Verbaan explains in episode one: “Twelve inexperienced travellers are dropped in the jungle that is Tokyo. Only the strongest shall survive. From day one they will be confronted by a culture they do not know and do not understand. Daily they are forced to participate in the extreme

Japanese society. Without money and help from outside they have to survive in the biggest and most remarkable city in the world”. In a press release RTL added to this that “*Lost in Tokyo* is an intriguing, individual struggle of twelve Dutch people with a city that surprises, amazes and shocks” (*Onervaren reizigers gaan strijd aan met cultuurverschillen in ‘Lost In Tokyo’* 2007). These first announcements already show a clear Orientalist approach. Tokyo is a jungle that surprises, amazes and shocks and is inhabited by Japanese, who form an ‘extreme society’ where only the strongest shall survive. From the start, Tokyo and Japanese society are made into the inscrutable, strange and shocking Other (‘them’), a place where twelve Dutch contestants with whom Dutch viewers can identify by way of language and culture (‘us’) have to ‘survive’. This Orientalist narrative and use of stereotypes and clichés continues throughout the episodes.

The show is built upon the premise of twelve inexperienced Dutch travellers staying in Tokyo. There they will decide which contestant can adapt best to ‘Japanese culture’ and the ‘extreme Japanese society’ by carrying out assignments. From the first episode, the programme uses a strategy of repeatedly presenting the twelve Dutch candidates as inexperienced travellers, while presenting Tokyo and Japanese culture as inscrutable, alien, extreme, bizarre and shocking. To make this strategy work, the candidates are put into strange situations and made to participate in, indeed, bizarre and extreme assignments presented under the heading of ‘Japanese culture’. Every episode revolves around a theme, among which the porn-industry, the *yakuza* (Japanese mafia), and the entertainment industry in which the candidates meet up with ‘Mr. Hard Gay Man’ and the ‘Tokyo Shock Boys’. Such themes, as well as the content of the assignments, are certainly not central to Japanese culture and society nor to the Japanese entertainment industry. Burman (2007) has written about *Lost in Translation* that, “‘Japan’ appears at a hyper-real remove, as intact and unintelligible, requiring no engagement but rather affording an imagined domain” (p. 193). In *Lost in Tokyo*, this imagined domain is also created and constantly used and abused, affording the programme to let candidates engage in strange, extreme and even degrading assignments in the name of confronting – and participating in – Japanese culture and society. The contestants appear and participate in this highly artificial environment or imagined domain, created by the producers of the show, in order to emphasize difference between Japan and the Netherlands, ‘them’ Japanese and ‘us’ Dutch people. In this the programme succeeds, as the themes and assignments in combination with the language barrier indeed make Japanese culture and society appear alien, inscrutable, extreme, shocking and bizarre.

As noted, the programme revolves around the basic notion of ‘us’ and ‘them’, showing ‘normal’, ‘rational’ Dutch people with whom the viewer can identify entering and ‘surviving’ in an alien and inscrutable society. Throughout the four episodes, the Japanese and ‘Japanese culture’ on the other hand are lumped together with generalizations drawn from the aforementioned non-mainstream themes and presented as strange and bizarre. Presenter and voice-over Renate Verbaan plays an active role in this

process. In the second episode Verbaan explains about entertainment in Japan: “What we find shocking and not done, Japanese laugh about. Because for them only one thing counts: the more pain, the more fun”. This is one of the many examples in which the binary opposition of ‘us’ versus ‘them’ is used, putting ‘us’ – well-mannered and rational Dutch people who find such humour shocking – up against ‘them’, Japanese who laugh about such things and enjoy seeing others suffer. After completing an assignment where pain and laughing about others, not with others, is central, one of the contestants typically remarks: “I find it really piteous for the Japanese that this is part of their culture”. When one of the candidates leaves the programme after having refused to participate in another strange assignment supposedly representing Japanese culture, Verbaan simply states: “She is going back to the Netherlands, because in the end she could not cope with the bizarre Japanese culture”.

In other words, the supposed differences between Japan and the Netherlands, its people and culture are what drives *Lost in Tokyo*. To create and use this sharp opposition, the show turns to extremes such as the themes mentioned before. The difference between Dutch and Japanese is increasingly emphasized and mentioned as the episodes proceed. Consider for example the opinion of contestant Bob on cultural differences between Dutch and Japanese, once again clearly voicing the dichotomy of ‘we’ and ‘them’: “Well, we are not rude. We are maybe more direct. And maybe it is also a bit of hypocrisy of the Japanese, because on the outside he or she might be different than from the inside”. In episode four, Verbaan ridicules and almost scolds the Japanese for not talking in public transport and more generally for not talking to the presenter and the candidates in English under the watching eye of an entire camera crew. Verbaan then proceeds to describe the ‘nature’ of Dutch people: “We Dutch people are quite social. We are open minded, like to make new friends, and having a good time is most important. And, even if you do not speak the language, body language always works right?”.

Lost in Tokyo constantly crudely reworks and recycles the Orientalist theme of essential differences between the Western, Dutch ‘us’ and the Eastern, Japanese ‘them’. Having provided just a few examples in this brief discussion, it is clear that the programme is one long exercise in Othering or making Japan appear inscrutable, extreme, bizarre and shocking. As it was broadcasted on a commercial channel, the one hour long programme was frequently interrupted by commercials. Interestingly, one of these commercials can still be seen in the four episodes available online. The commercial encourages viewers to send a text message in order to win a vacation to Japan. The commercial ends with: “Let yourself be enchanted by the magic of the East” (*Laat je betoveren door de magie van het Oosten*). Building upon the image of Japan presented in the programme, the commercial appeals to notions of Japan possessing a so-called ‘magic of the East’. It hardly needs any explanation by now that this is clearly an Orientalist statement and style of thought.

As appears from this brief analysis, *Lost in Tokyo* would have been an interesting programme for analysis in this present study. However, the low number of viewers and the fact that only four of the ten episodes were broadcasted makes the programme unsuitable for extensive analysis. Interestingly, the makers of *WIDM* mentioned *Lost in Tokyo* in my interview with them (see appendix A), and spoke of it with a certain disdain and aversion. Its portrayal of Tokyo, Japanese culture and the Japanese as well as the disrespectful way the makers of *Lost in Tokyo* had shot the episodes – with almost total disregard of the inhabitants of Tokyo or good manners for filming in public – did not incite much sympathy with the producers of *WIDM*. *Lost in Tokyo* may thus consciously or unconsciously have influenced the creators of *WIDM* on how not to depict and represent Japan.

3.5 Orientalism and stereotypes revisited

By providing examples of recent films and television programmes about Japan, the previous two paragraphs showed that Orientalist discourse, stereotypes and clichés are (still) prevalent when it comes to depicting Japan and the Japanese. Indeed, as Gray (2009) notes, Othering and Orientalism are common practices of the media when it comes to representing, describing, making sense of and constructing the non-Westerner and cultural difference. In other words, the endless playing with difference and sameness by the media as observed by Silverstone (2007) goes hand in hand with Othering and Orientalism when representing ‘the East’ and Japan. With regards to the medium under discussion, television, Creeber (2006c) points out that it “is particularly susceptible to the use of stereotypes because the medium often needs to establish character almost instantly before an audience loses interest and switches over or off” (p. 47-48). Television has to present information in a short time and in less complex ways to keep viewers interested and ‘connected’, and for this reason often makes use of stereotypes. Because stereotypes are culturally transmitted, they are often shared by producers as well as audiences and thus provide effective tools for communicating messages, ideas and images (Haynes 2007). Producers of television programmes are according to Haynes therefore usually aware of stereotypes and may use these consciously or unconsciously to convey certain meanings and messages in their media texts. Interestingly, Anton Jongstra and Aldo Paape, the makers of *WIDM* interviewed for this study, were also largely aware of stereotypes and clichés about Japan but mostly tried to avoid these (as will be discussed in more detail in chapter five).

Stereotypes contribute to viewers coming to an understanding of other people and cultures (‘the world’) who are ‘different’ or ‘not like us’. This usually happens through a system of binary opposites – ‘split figures’ – or ‘tropes of representation’ as Hall (1997b) calls them, such as ‘West/East’, ‘Dutch/Japanese’, ‘normal/bizarre’, and – particularly applicable to Japan – ‘repelling-because-different/

compelling-because-strange-and-exotic'. However, as mentioned earlier, stereotypes are not necessarily negative and can be positive as well as negative in the same way that difference and otherness are ambivalent as thus possibly positive as well as negative (Hall 1997b). Inokuchi and Nozaki (2005) note that values attributed to Others might be negative and depreciative as well as positive and in exaggerated praise. As a result, Others are often represented through “images that are ‘degraded’, ‘mystified’, ‘romanticised’, ‘exoticized’, or ‘glorified’ ” (p. 62). An example of these positive stereotypes is provided by Rosen (2000), who writes that Western images, stereotypes and metaphors regarding Japan and Japanese culture and history have created a ‘romantic version’ of Orientalism. This romantic version of Orientalism “paints a picture of Japan whose sophisticated culture with its indigenous traditions are in close harmony with nature [...]; tiny bonsai trees, exotic geisha girls in kimono, manicured rock gardens, the unfathomable mysteries of Zen Buddhism, shiatsu and macrobiotic cooking, signify for us a people who are deeply intuitive and aesthetically attuned in a way that we are not”. While these images and stereotypes can be positive as well as negative, both ultimately create, maintain and accept difference and have far reaching effects as both limit and control, practices both prevalent in (Orientalist) discourse. Shah (2003) notes that these images and stereotypes can be understood as “ ‘controlling images’ in the sense that negative stereotypes provide justifications for social control and positive stereotypes provide normative models for Asian thought and behavior” (p. 1). Whether positive or negative, stereotypes – or even a romantic version of Orientalism – essentialize the Other and construct and ascribe identities to the Other as well as to the Self (Woodward 1997; as cited in Shah 2003).

From the literature and the film and television examples emerge several recurring cultural stereotypes. These clichés and stereotypes are part of what Hall (1997b) describes as “the whole repertoire of imagery and visual effects through which ‘difference’ is represented at any one historical moment as a regime of representation” (p. 232). The following clichés and stereotypes are part of this ‘representational paradigm’ which represents Japan, her society and culture. These include in the first place the Samurai warrior and the *bushido* code (Heinz 1980; Iwabuchi 1994; Yoshioka 1995; Matsumoto 2002; Ueno 2002; Motoko et al. 2004; Levick 2005; Nishihara 2005; Shin 2010), the calmness and spirituality of Zen Buddhism (Smith 1980; Rosen 2000; Motoko et al. 2004; Shin 2010), the exotic geisha (Smith 1980; Iwabuchi 1994; Rosen 2000; Nishihara 2005; Shin 2010), the ‘sneaky’ ninja (Shah 2003; Shin 2010), the Japanese worker or ‘salaryman’ as a money grubbing ‘economic animal’ offering him or herself up totally to the company (Matsumoto 2002; Motoko et al. 2004; Shin 2010), and the closely to the former connected ‘ruthless *yakuza*’ or Japanese gangster (Rosen 2000; Shin 2010). Being part and parcel of Orientalist discourse, it is expected that (some of) these clichés and stereotypes will show up during the analysis of *WIDM* in chapter five.

The previous and current chapter have provided the necessary theoretical framework with regards to Orientalism, stereotypes and the functions of the media in general and television in particular. As television has become part of daily life, with the images and messages it broadcasts regarded as normal and natural, television is a powerful medium with a potentially large influence on viewers perspectives, ideas and images of other countries and peoples (the Other). Television, in conjunction with other media as discourse depends on intertextuality, moreover tends to support and reinforce rather than challenge hegemonic discourse such as Orientalism, of which *Lost in Tokyo* is a clear example. By discussing *Lost in Tokyo* the focus of attention moved from scripted, fictional film and television to reality television, a genre to which *WIDM* also belongs. How *WIDM* portrays the Japanese Other and whether these depictions influence viewers is extensively analyzed in chapter five, which answers the main question. First, however, chapter four will present a detailed account of the methodological framework used and means of data collection and analysis employed.

IV. Methodology and Data Collection

Televisual mediation, Silverstone (2007) writes, is a practice which involves individuals on not only the production side of media texts (producers and editors) but also, although perhaps to a lesser extent, viewers who consume these media texts. Producers of television shows have ideas about who will watch their show and which expectations viewers have. As such, television producers, and by extension the programmes they make, are to a certain extent influenced and shaped by the audience or rather the imagined audience and its expectations (Abercrombie 1996). In other words, the audience is an important element in the ‘totality’ of a media text. This study therefore not only analyzes the production and content (*WIDM*), but also the reception by the audience. This chapter, then, discusses the various methodological approaches and the means of data collection and analysis employed.

4.1 The ‘totality’ of a media text

The methodological approach in this thesis largely follows the methods used by the Glasgow University Media Group (GUMG), of which Greg Philo is the most relevant author. The work of the GUMG has analyzed the role of media in the construction of public knowledge. Although the group initially focused on the influence of news media, other television genres such as soap opera and television dramas have also been analyzed. Philo argues against using quantitative content analysis and text-only analysis, as they are hampered by their inability to explain the social and ideological structures in which the media text is produced, as well as for not knowing the importance or significance of the text to its audience (Philo 2007). Instead, Philo argues for a qualitative analysis in which meanings and how these are conveyed and received are analyzed. The methodological tool for this is discourse analysis. Based on their own research, Philo and his fellow members of the GUMG moreover drew the conclusion that

“in terms of methods [...] it was not possible to analyze individual texts in isolation from the study of the wider systems of ideology which informed them and the production processes which structured their representation. It was also necessary to simultaneously study processes of audience reception before making judgments about social meaning and the potential impacts of texts on public understanding” (Philo 2007, 118).

Thus, analyzing the media text as well as the production and reception processes became the basis of the methodological approach used by the GUMG. According to Philo, discourse analysis – especially

the Critical Discourse Analysis as championed by Norman Fairclough – alone is limited in the conclusions it can draw. Instead, media researchers need to trace “the communication of messages from their inception in contested perspectives, through the structures by which they are supplied to and processed by the media, then to their eventual appearance as text and finally to their reception by audiences” (Philo 2007, 125), and thus regard and analyze production, content and reception as a total system. Interestingly, Edward Said (2003) also recognizes the ‘three-way relationship’ between the represented (the Orient, Japan and the Japanese), the re-presenter (Western media texts, *WIDM*) and the Western consumer of Orientalism (the television viewer). This approach is supported further by Hall (1980), who writes that production constructs a media text and the ‘message’ it contains. However, this message is already influenced and framed by meanings, ideas and practices. These include the routines of production, technical skills, professional ideologies and opinions, and importantly also assumptions about the audience and what it expects. As the production process is in part influenced by its reception and consumption, consumption is essentially a part of the production process. Hall therefore concludes that production and reception are “differentiated moments within the totality formed by the social relations of the communicative process as a whole” (1980, 119). Production, content (television text) and reception are thus the key dimensions in analyzing the circulation of meanings in mass media communications and as such need to be examined together (Hall 1980; Abercrombie 1996; Hall 1997a; Philo 2007). Importantly, the term circulation shows that there is interactivity and interrelatedness between these elements, instead of one-way, top-down flow from production to reception (Abercrombie 1996; Hall 1997a; Philo 2007).

This study roughly uses the same methodological approach as proposed above and used by the GUMG, albeit with a small addition. Besides the production of the programme, its content and reception, so-called ‘extratextual information’ (Creeber 2006a) in the form of press releases and online articles announcing and promoting the 2010 Japan-season of *WIDM* will be analyzed. A brief analysis of these promotion materials will provide a more complete picture of how the tenth, anniversary season of *WIDM* was marketed and framed by the Dutch press and how this helped shape audience expectations. Although labour intensive given the amount of material, analyzing content as well as its production, promotion and reception contexts provides detailed insight into the circulation of meaning in – and influence of – media texts (Philo 2007).

Besides analyzing the ‘totality’ of the media text, combining qualitative and quantitative methodological approaches contributes to the validity and reliability of the research. As every methodology has its strengths and weaknesses, a combination of approaches bundles these strengths and (potentially) compensates for weaknesses. The methodological approaches used in this study support each other and serve to strengthen the overall validity and reliability. The qualitative discourse analysis, which is central to

this study and largely builds upon the researchers interpretation, is for example not only supported by literature and comparisons with other media texts, but also by the interview with the makers of *WIDM* and a quantitative survey of viewers (Baarda & De Goede 2006; Boeije, 't Hart & Hox 2007). Such a methodological approach moreover avoids 'textual determinism', or basing the study and its conclusions purely on one dominant reading by the researcher (Creeber 2006a).

The first element to analyze within the 'totality' of the media text, then, is the production process and the author of the media text. Regarding literature about 'the Orient', Edward Said writes in *Orientalism* that "everyone who writes about the Orient must locate himself vis-à-vis the Orient; translated into his text, this location includes the kind of narrative voice he adopts, the type of structure he builds, the kinds of images, themes, motifs that circulate in his text—all of which add up to deliberate ways of addressing the reader, containing the Orient, and finally, representing it or speaking in its behalf" (2003, 20). Hence, Said looks at authority or the human source of a text, which in the case of *WIDM* is the Dutch producer and editor who creates a representation of Japan for audiences in the Netherlands. This approach is supported by Philo (2007b), who writes that the first thing to look at in studying the production process of a media text is the 'professional ideology' of the author(s) and the institutions for which they work and represent. In other words, how do professional practices and personal beliefs and values influence the media text that is produced? To answer these questions and acquire more detailed knowledge about *WIDM* and its production, the makers of the programme were interviewed (see §4.2).

The next paragraphs describe in detail the methods of gathering and analyzing data applied in analyzing production, promotion, content and reception of *WIDM*. The media text under discussion, the Japan-season of *WIDM*, and promotion materials were analyzed by carrying out a discourse analysis (see §4.3), while the reception of the show by its viewers was analyzed by way of an online survey (see §4.4).

4.2 Production (interview)

Interviewing is a good research method to find out motivations, thoughts, views and professional practices and learn more about the production process of *WIDM* (Baarda & De Goede 2006). In order to get qualitative, in-depth data about the 'Japan-season' and the production of *WIDM*, Anton Jongstra, Senior Editor (*eindredacteur*), and Aldo Paape, former Senior Production Manager*, were interviewed by way of a semi-structured interview. Jongstra has been the creative brain behind *WIDM* for many years, among others deciding about which country to go to and who of the ten candidates will be the Mole. Paape was for several seasons head of production, and in that capacity handled among others the logistics and the

* Paape left *WIDM* after the 2010 Japan season and now works for *Expeditie Robinson*, a reality game show on a Dutch commercial television channel.

budget for the programme. Both men have been working on *WIDM* for many seasons, and thus have had a great influence on the shape and style of the programme. As Gregory (2000; as cited in Allrath, Gymnich & Surkamp 2005) notes, the creator(s) and producer(s) of a television show are the most influential persons within the production process of a television programme and primarily responsible for guiding and maintaining the actual 'shape' of the programme. Moreover, the producer wields substantial power as the link between creative and commercial aspects of the programme, while at the same time contributing to and participating in the creative process (Abercrombie 1996). Interviewing Jongstra and Paape thus seemed an excellent opportunity to gather interesting and vital information.

After getting in contact with Jongstra via the AVRO, the broadcaster of *WIDM*, a date and location for an interview was agreed upon. The interview took place on April 1, 2011 in Amsterdam, and lasted for about two hours. The interview was recorded on tape for transcribing purposes. Preparations for the interview included creating a list with open-ended questions divided among several topics. During the interview itself other topics came under discussion and new questions arose in response to answers by the two interviewees. As recommended by the literature (Boeije, 't Hart & Hox 2007), the recordings of the interview were transcribed the next day with the help of notes taken during the interview. Two weeks later, Jongstra moreover answered a few additional question by e-mail to complete the interview. The actual interview and the questions answered by Jongstra were later edited and combined into one file.

As expected, the interview yielded a wealth of information not to be found elsewhere. Although the production of the Japan-season had taken place roughly eighteen months earlier, the two interviewees seemingly had no trouble remembering details of the production process. The interview provided not only information about the production and goals of the show, but also about individual motivations and , professional practices of Jongstra and Paape. The interview thus strongly supports the analysis of the show as well as the interpretation of the survey results.

The interview was entirely conducted and transcribed in Dutch and can be found at the back of this document under Appendix A. All quotes from Anton Jongstra and Aldo Paape used in the next chapter come from the interview.

4.3 Content (discourse analysis)

The ideas and images held in the West about 'the East' as described in the previous chapters are part of Orientalist discourse and make up so-called 'discursive formations'. Analyzing such formations means investigating how things are represented, studied and thought about and how knowledge produced by discourse exerts power by constructing identities and relations (Hall 1997a). A critical analysis of media

texts can show how groups and individuals and their (supposed) identities are represented and stereotyped (Smith & Bell 2007). Since this study is concerned with issues of Orientalist discourse, executing a discourse analysis is a logical extension of the earlier chapters and a way to explore and analyze Orientalist discourse. In recent years, discourse analysis has become increasingly popular in a variety of scholarly fields, among which media studies. Although this type of analysis was initially used to examine only spoken and written language, it has also increasingly been used to analyze images and sounds. Within media studies concerning television programmes, discourse analysis is used to explore the way in which the text (the programme) conveys meaning (Casey et al. 2007).

As discourse analysis gained popularity in academic circles, various strands came into practice. Often it is unclear which type of analysis is used or even what is meant exactly by discourse analysis. Smith and Bell (2007) give the following definition of discourse analysis: “[it] involves a close examination of the text, including visual imagery and sound as well as spoken or written language. It is concerned with both the form of the text and its social context, its constructions, distribution and reception. It aims to understand and elucidate the meanings and social significance of the text” (p. 78). Discourse analysis is thus not simply an analysis of what can be heard and seen, but also looks at point of view and social and cultural contexts. Discourse analysis thus aims to find the “meaning behind the social construction of words, sounds and images” (p. 80). To discover these underlying meanings, ideas and messages, the connotative level – what can be seen and heard – as well as the denotative level – the underlying meaning – have to be analyzed, which means looking at how images connect to broader meanings and themes and in this case to discourse or discursive formations (Hall 1997c).

Analyzing the connotative and denotative level of a text by way of discourse analysis is a matter of interpretation by the researcher. Analyzing culture is always interpretative, as meaning is ambiguous and there is no such thing as a ‘true’, ‘fixed’ or ‘final’ meaning (Hall 1997a). Some critics argue that such qualitative analysis provides ‘subjective’ and ‘arbitrary’ readings of media texts, as discourse analysis is a qualitative approach to data, and therefore per definition more interpretative and speculative in nature than a quantitative approach (Creeber 2006a; 2006c). However, interpretations are unavoidable and necessary when investigating media texts, but these interpretations need to be backed up with theory and evidence from other studies (Smith & Bell 2007). The discourse analysis carried out in this study is supported by the extensive use of literature, theory, and comparisons with other media texts. Moreover, although it is the most important element, the discourse analysis is supported by the analysis of other elements which make up the ‘totality’ of the media text that is *WIDM*.

As noted earlier, discourse analysis has been used in different ways in different academic fields without any general guidelines as to how exactly apply this methodological tool in practice. Antaki, Billig,

Edwards and Potter (2003) recognize six shortcomings of discourse analysis of which researchers should be aware, as to be less susceptible to critiques that anything in discourse analysis ‘goes’ or is allowed. These six shortcomings are: 1) under-analysis by summarizing and not providing enough explanation and/or actual analysis, 2) under-analysis through taking sides by praising or scolding media texts instead of analyzing, 3) under-analysis through over-quotation or through isolated quotations without making any comments or provide context and/or analysis, 4) a circular identification of discourses and mental constructs without substantiating these claims, thus ‘fitting’ the media text under discussion into a discourse, 5) undertake false survey or extrapolate and generalize data from a limited amount of respondents to larger populations, 6) analysis that consists of simply spotting features, thus paying attention to details but not to the media text in its totality. Shortcomings one to three and six are avoided in this thesis by providing a detailed analysis which includes all facets of *WIDM*, while four and five are somewhat more dangerous for any research. However, with shortcoming four in mind it is possible to carry out a proper analysis of *WIDM*, without beforehand regarding it as an exponent of Orientalist discourse. Lastly, pitfall five is avoided by only drawing conclusions in regards to the case under discussion, thus avoiding extrapolating the data from the analysis of *WIDM* to make universal statements about contemporary Orientalist discourse in popular media.

The discourse analysis was carried out by watching the ten episodes of *WIDM* in Japan – fifty minutes each, in total about 8,5 hours of television – twice and taking notes during these viewings. Later, these notes served as the foundations for the actual discourse analysis. Special attention was paid to what is shown (visual) as well as what is heard (audio) in dialogue, voice-over, and other diegetic (in the original recording) and non-diegetic sounds (not in the original recording, music for example). Interactions with Japanese people, statements about Japan and her culture, images, sounds et cetera have all been carefully recorded, interpreted and analyzed. However, most announcements and conversations in *WIDM* are not about Japan, but about the assignments, other candidates and about who the Mole is. All these conversations have not been recorded, as they do not provide any relevant information. Moreover, such a complete analysis of all ten episodes would have cost a lot of time (and space) and would have resulted in a lot of non-relevant material and this thesis not being completed in time.

As to the analysis of media texts for Orientalism and stereotypes, Said (2003) offers some help: “the things to look at are style, figures of speech, setting, narrative devices, historical and social circumstances, *not* the correctness of the representation nor its fidelity to some great original” (p. 21). Levick (2005) additionally provides three important points to look for in a media text about Japan, based upon portrayals of Japan in the news in the United States. The thing to look at first is if Japan is exoticized, for example by the use of words such as ‘mysterious’, ‘unique’, or ‘strange’. The second indication is if

Japan and Japanese society are presented as monolithic and/or unchanging, as was shown in chapter three to be the case in many writings about Japan. Sentences featuring words like ‘The Japanese are...’ or ‘fundamentally’ or ‘typically Japanese’ should be treated with suspicion. Thirdly, as already discussed in the previous chapters, images of samurai or warriors are often misappropriated when representing Japan. These pointers as well as the earlier discussed properties of Orientalism and cultural stereotypes about Japan were kept in mind during the analysis of *WIDM*.

The complete discourse analysis of the Japan-season of *WIDM* can be found at the back of this document under Appendix B.

4.4 Reception (survey)

Research about the reception of media texts by the audience can roughly be divided into four periods: ‘effects’, ‘uses and gratifications’, ‘encoding/decoding’, and ‘media culture’ (Casey et al. 2007; Creeber 2006c). Since 1980, the ‘encoding/decoding model’ coined by Stuart Hall has been the most popular and widely used approach to theorize the reception of media texts by the audience. Hall (1980) argues that media texts are ‘polysemic’, meaning that they can be read and interpreted in various ways. The message in a media text first needs to be decoded by the viewer before it can make any impact, influence or even entertain viewers. In this regard, television programmes are like books in that they need to be ‘read’ and interpreted by an audience (Abercrombie 1996). Hall outlines three possible readings of a television programme: the ‘dominant reading’, ‘the negotiated reading’ and the ‘oppositional reading’. In the dominant type of reading, the viewer accords (or decodes) the same meaning to the programme as was encoded into it by its author(s). This means the viewer finds the message or the meaning in the text normal and takes it for granted. The ‘dominant reading’, also called the ‘preferred reading’, is essentially the dominant way of looking and perceiving the world in the media and society in general (Abercrombie 1996). A ‘negotiated reading’ contains elements of acceptance and adaptation as well as ‘oppositional elements’, as meaning is only partly decoded and/or accepted. In the ‘oppositional reading’ style, the viewer decodes the programme totally contrary to the encoded meaning (Hall 1980). Hall and the many studies using his model that followed, assumed an active audience that could decode programmes in several ways and consciously accept, partly accept, or reject the meaning in media texts (Creeber 2006b).

Although the encoding/decoding model has often been heralded as the last phase in audience and reception studies (Philo 2007), it also has its shortcomings and therefore has endured criticism. The model was for example originally designed to analyze television news programmes. It is much more difficult however to find out the ‘preferred’, ‘negotiated’ or ‘oppositional’ reading of other television programmes

such as drama or reality television like *WIDM* and *Lost in Tokyo*. Secondly, Hall's three categories were purely hypothetical and according to some critics oversimplify the 'social structure' of audiences (Abercrombie 1996). Thirdly, Philo (2008) argues, Hall's model virtually ignores the power that media yield in 'shaping taken for granted beliefs' and thus influence viewers. Research by the GUMG as well as other studies have shown that the power and influence of the media should not be underestimated nor undervalued. Although media texts can and indeed are to some extent polysemic, they are still created by individuals (writers, producers, directors) with professional and personal beliefs, practices and ideals. Viewers can actively interpret media texts, but interpretation is ultimately 'framed' or limited by the authors of the text and the meaning encoded into the text. The critiques of Philo on Hall's 'encoding/decoding' system therefore seem valid.

This study therefore combines the methodological approaches and theories of Hall, Philo and the GUMG, assuming that viewers are active but within certain boundaries as defined by the media text and its author(s). Although the encoding/decoding model and the work of Philo and the GUMG might seem incompatible at first, both in fact stress the importance of analyzing the content as well as the production and reception process. Moreover, Philo (2008) himself writes that audiences can indeed sometimes be active to some extent, and accept, negotiate or oppose the meaning of texts.

For the collection and analysis of data about audience reception, a survey was designed and published on SurveyGizmo.com, a popular website for online surveys often used by students. The survey was created with the goal of finding out about the influence of the Japan-season of *WIDM* on viewers, as well as general viewing experiences of the *WIDM* audience. The survey, which can be found under Appendix C, was created in the first two weeks of March and subsequently refined after deliberation with the thesis supervisor. After a short testing period it was finally launched on March 29 and kept online until April 24. During this time, the survey was widely promoted via e-mail to family and friends, on social networking websites Facebook and Hypes*, and by posting messages on the forums of the official *WIDM* website and fan-websites such as www.wieisdemol.com. Many of the survey respondents came from these (fan-)websites and can thus be regarded as regular viewers and fans of *WIDM*. In slightly less than one month, 155 people filled in the questionnaire, with about a same amount of people abandoning or leaving the questionnaire before completion. Unfortunately, the incomplete surveys could not be retrieved and analyzed because of the limitations of SurveyGizmo. Of the 155 respondents, almost 60 percent (92 respondents) completed the survey in the first three days after it was launched. By posting updates on message boards and social networking sites the number of respondents gradually increased, with another fifty respondents filling in the survey between April 1 and April 10. The last two weeks, from April 11 to

* The Dutch equivalent of Facebook.

April 25, only yielded thirteen responses, the last one on April 22. Bearing in mind the usual difficulties of finding enough respondents, the time period of roughly one month to gather responses seems to have been sufficient.

Although surveys are often purely quantitative in nature, the survey designed for this study combined a quantitative approach with a qualitative approach, as seven out of the twenty-five questions allowed respondents to answer in their own words. Compared to closed-ended questions which provide answering categories to choose from, open ended questions allow capturing alternative explanations and diversity in responses (Jackson & Trochim 2002). The seven questions were not mandatory, but many respondents answered them nonetheless, probably in part due to the possibility to win a small prize when completely filling in the survey. Whereas all quantitative data was analyzed with SPSS, the responses to the open questions were colour-coded by performing a code-based analysis, or thematic coding method, so as to reduce the raw text data into more manageable and analyzable themes (Krippendorff 1980; Weber 1990; as cited in Jackson & Trochim 2002; Boeije, 't Hart & Hox 2007). Grouping together similar responses made analysis much easier and thorough. This process proved largely impossible for question number two, which asked respondents to note down their image of Japan and the Japanese in a few words. Some respondents indeed used only a few words, while others wrote entire sentences. The responses to this question were therefore analyzed differently, by performing a word-based analysis (Jackson & Trochim 2002) and count recurring words and phrases.

The strength of this survey, then, lies in the fact that it supports the qualitative, more interpretative data with quantitative, quantifiable data. It also represents a cross section of *WIDM* viewers in terms of age, gender, education and television viewing patterns (see Appendix C). Its weakness, however, is that the survey was held almost one full year after the season of *WIDM* in Japan was broadcasted on Dutch television. Possibly too specific questions were therefore replaced with more general questions about viewing experiences. Several respondents still remarked that they could not remember the Japan-season or their viewing experiences very well. Most respondents, however, had no troubles answering the questions.

Lastly, after all data was gathered in SPSS, several adjustments were made. Initially, five of the twenty five multiple choice questions offered five possible answers: 'totally agree', 'agree', 'agree nor disagree', 'disagree', and 'totally disagree'. In retrospective, as also indicated by several respondents, the first and last answer were unnecessary, as they were too similar to 'agree' and 'disagree' and hence only formed a complicating factor in answering the question. For this reason, the answers 'totally agree' and 'agree' as well as 'totally disagree' and 'disagree' were merged into the 'new' categories 'agree' and 'disagree' before commencing the data analysis.

V. Lost in Japan: *Wie is de Mol?*

Chapter three contained an analysis of *Lost in Tokyo*, the first Dutch reality programme to visit Japan in 2007. In some aspects, *Lost in Tokyo* and *WIDM* are quite similar. They both build upon the premise of difference, strangeness, and exoticism for example, as is evidenced by the simple fact that both programmes took place in a country (Japan) far removed from the country where the programme was actually broadcasted (the Netherlands). Three years after *Lost in Tokyo* and after nine successful seasons with increasing numbers of viewers, *WIDM* celebrated its tenth anniversary in 2010 in Japan. This chapter contains an extensive analysis of this 2010 Japan-season of *WIDM*, including an analysis of its production, promotion and reception by the audience, which starts with a general introduction to the program.

5.1 *Wie is de Mol?*

WIDM is based upon a Belgian television programme format and is produced by IDTV, the second largest television production company in the Netherlands. The programme is made for and broadcasted by the AVRO (*Algemeene Vereniging Radio Omroep*), a public broadcaster on one of the three Dutch public channels on which several subsidized broadcasters have airtime. The AVRO considers itself to be an independent broadcaster, not bound to any political or religious currents and organized around the values of freedom, tolerance and (own) responsibility. AVRO's mission statement is: "The independent AVRO stimulates freedom in our society by offering cross media content from a liberal minded attitude to life" (*Wat wil de AVRO?* 2011). The AVRO focuses primarily on culturally and socially relevant themes, while also catering to a broad audience through drama series and amusement programmes. According to the website, all these programmes are made from the two starting points of integrity and a high level of quality. One of these high quality amusement programmes is *WIDM*, which is usually broadcasted on Thursday-evening at prime-time from 20.30 to about 21.30.

Integrity and a high level of quality are perhaps some of the reasons why *WIDM* has been one of the most successful programmes in the history of Dutch television. The 2010 Japan-season of *WIDM* drew an average of almost 1.7 million viewers, with only two episodes attracting slightly less than 1.5 million viewers (see Table 1). The most recent, 2011 season even approached the two million viewers mark (see Table 2). Not surprisingly, the show has been nominated several times for the Gouden Televizier-Ring, a prestigious award for the best Dutch television programme of the year, and was voted as the best amusement programme in 2001. Because of its continued success, preparations for a twelfth season to be broadcasted in 2012 are currently underway.

Throughout the years *WIDM* has gathered a group of fans who not only watch the programme and try to uncover who the Mole is, but who are also active on the official website and its forum as well as fan-websites and social networking websites such as Facebook and its Dutch equivalent Hyves. These online boards and clubs have thousands of members, a small part of which actively engages in discussion and speculation about who the Mole is, which candidate will leave the show next week and where the next season will take place. Interestingly, the creators of *WIDM* regularly check these websites and forums to see what the fans think of the programme. This indicates that the creators are indeed aware of and thus to some extent influenced by the audience and its expectations of the programme, showing the interrelatedness and interaction between production and reception as discussed in the methodological chapter.

| Episode | Viewers | Market share |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|--------------|
| 1 - Nagasaki | 2 040 000 | 27,3 % |
| 2 - Nagasaki | 1 735 000 | 24,1 % |
| 3 - Nagasaki | 1 526 000 | 23,2 % |
| 4 - Nagasaki & Sendai | 1 798 000 | 25,9 % |
| 5 - Sendai & Yamagata | 1 702 000 | 24,4 % |
| 6 - Yamagata | 1 804 000 | 25 % |
| 7 - Yamagata & Tokyo | 1 423 000 | 20,2 % |
| 8 - Tokyo | 1 463 000 | 21,2 % |
| 9 - Tokyo | 1 685 000 | 23,7 % |
| 10 - The Netherlands (conclusion) | 1 558 000 | 22,1 % |

Table 1 - Amount of viewers and market share (amount of viewers compared to total television audience) per episode of *WIDM* in Japan. Source: SKO Kijkcijfers (obtained per request on March 21 through personal correspondence)

As the name suggests, *WIDM* is all about finding out who of the ten Dutch celebrity candidates is the Mole, the person who sabotages the assignments and challenges the candidates have to face in every episode. Whether the programme takes place in Australia, Mexico or Japan, every season of *WIDM* follows the same pattern, with the ultimate goal of uncovering who the Mole is. At the end of every episode, all candidates have to complete a test with twenty questions about the identity of the Mole. The candidate with the least amount of correct answers has to leave the programme and is sent home. Every week one of the contestants leaves the programme, until in episode nine only three contestants are left. In the final tenth episode it is revealed who is the winner, the loser and the Mole. The winner is the person who answers the most questions about the identity of the Mole correctly in the final test.

Although the origins of the programme can be traced back to several television genres, such as drama, soap opera, and game-show, *WIDM* is ultimately a reality game show – a sub genre of reality television (Murray & Oullette 2004). However, the different genres underlying *WIDM* have made the programme into a kind of hybrid. In her 2007 study of strategic interpersonal communication between candidates, Rispen notes that *WIDM* has fused game elements (assignments and challenges, test, sending

home of a candidate every week) with elements from soap opera (cliff hanger, working together as a group), reality television (the camera always seems to follow the candidates everywhere) and drama (fights between candidates, candidates leaving the show and the response of the remaining candidates). According to Couldry (2004), every reality game show uses a specific myth of how the social world is represented on screen, thus implicating a direct link between what is shown on television and what is ‘really’ out there in the world. Some reality game shows use the myth that physical challenges, often in exotic or unknown settings, which acquire working together as a team, show an important aspect of human reality. This is certainly the case with *WIDM*, where the contestants almost always work together as a team while often facing physical challenges.

Importantly, for over seven years *WIDM* has taken place in exotic settings and locations, usually countries far away from the Netherlands where the show is broadcasted (see Table 2). According to Rispens (2007), one of the functions of taking candidates to foreign countries is to get them out of their ‘natural habitat’ and present them with assignments, obstacles and challenges at unknown locations in unknown settings. According to the creators of *WIDM*, Anton Jongstra and Aldo Paape, both viewers of the show as well as the AVRO want the show to take place in foreign countries. This not only guarantees more viewers than if the show would take place in the Netherlands, but an interesting and attractive country can also help in getting Dutch celebrities to participate as candidates. As *WIDM* relies on secrecy, about who the Mole is and which candidates make it to the final, Paape says that shooting the programme in foreign countries also helps to reduce the chances of being noticed by other Dutch people who might give away these secrets.

| Season | Amount of viewers per episode (average) | Market share |
|--------------------------------|---|--------------|
| 2005 Australia & Indonesia | 1 449 000 | 20,4 % |
| 2006 Argentina | 1 106 000 | 16,6 % |
| 2007 Thailand | 1 189 000 | 17,3 % |
| 2008 Mexico | 1 512 000 | 21,8 % |
| 2009 Northern-Ireland & Jordan | 1 460 000 | 21 % |
| 2010 Japan | 1 674 000 | 23,7 % |
| 2011 El Salvador & Nicaragua | 1 921 000 | 25,9 % |

Table 2 - Average amount of viewers and market share (amount of viewers compared to total television audience) of the last seven seasons of *WIDM*. Source: SKO Kijkcijfers (obtained per request on March 21 through personal correspondence)

Although the programme takes place in foreign countries in often exotic locations, the makers explicitly state that *WIDM* should not be seen as a travel programme. Paape explains about the goal of the programme: “In the first place it is entertainment, because it is television. It is not really a vital necessity of life. But once you are there, you also want to show the beautiful places in a country. But that is extra. It is not a travel programme. We do not go to Japan to show how beautiful Japan is”. These remarks correspond with what Corner (1999; as quoted in Hill 2005, 80) writes about reality television as having

“primarily developed as a medium of entertainment and diversion, with its knowledge-providing role as a secondary function”. *WIDM* is in the first place a reality game show revolving around the candidates, the assignments and challenges and above all the mystery of who the Mole is. Whereas in *Lost in Tokyo* Japan, or rather Tokyo, functioned as a foil for the inexperienced twelve Dutch travellers, in *WIDM* Japan is the background against which the assignments in every episode are carried out and the search for the Mole is undertaken. In this aspect, *Lost in Tokyo* is much more focused on actively ‘using’ Japan than *WIDM* is. This does not mean, however, that *WIDM* shows nothing of the countries and its peoples the programme visits, as the following analysis will show.

The next three paragraphs present the results of analyzing the production and promotion of *WIDM* (§5.2), the content of the programme (§5.3) and its reception by viewers (§5.4).

5.2 *Wie is de Mol?* in Japan

In 2009, Japan was chosen by Anton Jongstra as the country where the tenth season of *WIDM* would take place. Jongstra explains his choice for Japan: “For me personally it was *the* country I wanted to visit. Of course, you could say, ‘go there on vacation or something’. But I am in the fortunate situation that it is also my work. I was so curious about Japan, I expected so much of it. That it was different. Yes, a different world. And therefore it seemed perfect for *De Mol* [*WIDM*]”. In Jongstra’s expectations of Japan are already found preconceived notions of Japan as somehow being ‘different’, even a ‘different world’. As television programmes are produced within social and cultural contexts, these remarks by Jongstra are significant and important as they show which expectations – finding difference – the makers had when they decided to go to Japan.

After deciding on Japan as the country of destination, Jongstra and other members of the production team prepared by reading literature and studying travel books and online information. This indicates that the production of *WIDM* itself is at least partly based upon intertextuality, as inspiration and information is gotten from other media texts. This could also possibly partly explain the continued existence of Orientalist narratives in representations of Japan, as they ‘transfer’ from one text to another. Subsequently, Jongstra and his colleagues visited Japan several times. During these trips, they visited locations and designed the assignments and challenges which the candidates would face later. To help find suitable locations a Japanese production company and other local people were hired, thus opening up the possibility for self-Orientalism from the side of these Japanese producers. However, as Jongstra and Paape explain, the makers of *WIDM* only depend on local producers for the locations and practical issues during the shooting of the programme. The Japanese producers had no influence on what was recorded and what

was ultimately broadcasted in the Netherlands. Although the Japanese producers did influence the choice for locations that would be used in *WIDM*, they probably had little opportunity to influence the programme and engage in self-Orientalism.

Interestingly, as it sheds light on their professional practices and views on making a popular television programme, Jongstra and Paape stress their believe that they and fellow production members of *WIDM* uphold certain moral rules during the shooting of the programme. For example, the *yakuza* (Japanese mafia) were not mentioned in episode two, although one of the assignments clearly depicted the mafia, mainly because the Dutch producers thought the Japanese crew would not like this. Although the Japanese crew never complained about it or even talked about it, the Dutch makers of the programme decided it was better to not actually mention the ‘men in black’ being yakuza. Another example is the assignment in a later episode at the famous Shibuya Crossing in Tokyo. Although many television programmes shoot on or near the crossing without an official permit, among which *Lost in Tokyo*, the makers of *WIDM* wanted a permit. Paape explains about filming on Shibuya Crossing: “We were in doubt for a long time. Many people said, ‘just do it’. [...] But we had Japanese people working for us. If they [the Japanese authorities] would find out that we had Japanese working for us, they would get into trouble. Which we did not want, because those people did a lot of good work for us”. And thus, Paape says: “From that you can conclude that *De Mol* [*WIDM*] has people who still have morals. Who do not want to insult the local culture. [...] No, we think about that a lot. This programme is made with enormous collaboration with local people”. This collaboration of course leaves the door open for self-Orientalism on the part of the Japanese producers, but there are no direct indications that the Japanese had any influence on the programme besides recommending locations and taking care of practical issues such as getting permits for shooting.

These professional practices, morals and personal outlooks about representing other countries and people are also largely supported by the attitudes of Jongstra and Paape to the use of stereotypes and clichés. Although Jongstra says that they as makers of *WIDM* are not really aware of it, they try to avoid clichés as much as possible, simply because they do not like it personally. Paape thinks that the programme is sort of a mix, partly confirming clichés but also avoiding at the same time the ‘standard stereotypes’ such as geisha, samurai and ‘cosplay’ (costume and role playing). As the programme is broadcasted on the public channel with an audience of almost two million viewers, it would seem that the AVRO as well as the makers of *WIDM* have a responsibility to provide a balanced and ‘honest’ portrayal of other countries and people. Jongstra does not agree: “It is not our responsibility. The broadcaster does request that we watch what we show of a culture and the country. But I have to say, we already do that ourselves. It is not in our

nature to emphasize extremes. And we always show the country and the candidates as they are, because that is often special enough!”.

Promotion

Prior to the first episode being broadcasted on January 7, 2010, the Japan-season of *WIDM* was promoted through a variety of media outlets such as television, radio and newspapers. Already in December 2009, the new season was officially presented to the press. On this occasion presenter Pieter-Jan Hagens remarked about Japan in front of the camera of Dutch news and entertainment programme *Shownieuws*: “A bit mysterious I think. Things are strange. First impressions are strange. The bus drivers there wear white gloves. It is a country where everything is a bit different. That is why it suits *Wie is de Mol* very well I think” (*Perspresentatie nieuw seizoen Wie is de Mol* 2009). Later, Hagens added to this in an interview: “Nothing is what it seems in *de Mol*. I have experienced Japan as the perfect country for this unforgettable tenth series. In Japan things are different. It is mysterious. Toilet seats are heated and taxi drivers wear white gloves.” (*Wie is de Mol: één grote mindfuck* 2010). One of the contestants, Barbara Barends, was moreover quoted as saying on the radio: “It was very special. It is not a country you just go to for vacation. It is very different. The movie *Lost in Translation*, it is like that” (*Pieter-Jan Hagens: ‘Wie is de Mol in Japan spannend’* 2009). These quotes from Hagens and Barends in interviews with the Dutch press clearly present Japan in an Orientalist fashion, as everything ‘there’ in Japan is a bit different and mysterious, implicating its abnormality, strangeness and exoticism compared to ‘us’, ‘normal’ Dutch people in the Netherlands. Moreover, the remark by Barends shows how a popular film like *Lost in Translation* can influence ideas, images and perceptions of Japan – and even shape how Japan is interpreted and understood – as (some) viewers interpret and consequently ‘internalize’ the portrayal of Japan in *Lost in Translation* as an accurate and truthful representation of Tokyo, her inhabitants and cross-cultural problems during encounters with ‘the Japanese’. Barends remarks also confirm the role of intertextuality in supporting and maintaining (Orientalist) discourse and ideas held about Japan.

The remarks by Hagens and Barends, which could be said to be quite innocent, are clearly put in the shadow by the promotional message for *WIDM* 2010 that appeared on the website of the public broadcast organization (*Publieke Omroep*). The second paragraph entitled ‘Bizarre Japan’ described the location of the new series as following: “Japan, the land of the rising sun, the artificial perfection, the special food and the strange language. The perfect country to play the tenth season of *Wie is de Mol*” (Laan 2010). The title of the paragraph is already indicative for the Orientalist mindset of the author. The so-called ‘artificial perfection’, ‘special food’ and ‘strange language’, although not at all explained, all help in

the process of ‘Othering’ Japan into an alien, strange, exotic, bizarre and thus attractive country for *WIDM* to take place, in the same style *Lost in Tokyo* presented Japanese society and culture as strange and bizarre. As the article was posted on the official website of the public broadcasters, it was probably read by many *WIDM* viewers and fans, thus shaping expectations of the new *WIDM* season and of Japan.

Having discussed the production process and the promotion of the Japan-season, the next paragraph proceeds with an extensive analysis of the ten episodes of *WIDM* in Japan.

5.3 Japan in *Wie is de Mol?*

Every episode of *WIDM* follows the same pattern, beginning with a review of the previous episode, followed by a short introduction by presenter Pieter-Jan Hagens and the leader. The leader of the programme is the same in every episode, save for shots of the candidates which are either accompanied by a green fingerprint, meaning the candidate is still in the show, or a red fingerprint, meaning the candidate has left the show. The leader of the Japan-season is a compilation of images from various episodes, accompanied by music not specific to the Japan-season, as it has been used in the leaders of the last few seasons of the programme. Besides shots of the candidates, the leader contains images of daily life, nature and architecture: a street full of street-signs in Japanese, a young lady in kimono crossing the street, hundreds of people at Shibuya Crossing in Tokyo, nature near Sendai, the sun going down behind the Tokyo skyline, shots of nightly traffic and neon lights, a ninja in the dark, a young, dressed up woman with green hair, a man on the street wearing a mask, a young woman with blond hair, shots of Yamadera temple, the beach in Odaiba (Tokyo), nature, a plaque with Japanese signs, a volcano crater, men in black suits with black sunglasses and guns (*yakuza*) and lastly a group photo in front of a temple. Several things are striking about the leader. Firstly, the shots of a ninja and to a lesser extent *yakuza* in the leader provide the viewer with something recognizable, as the ninja is a stereotype or cliché comparable to the Samurai. More importantly, there is the interplay between nature and the city (Tokyo) and between ninja and Japanese dressed in traditional kimono versus young, extravagantly dressed Japanese with dyed hair. The contrast between on the one hand nature and the city and on the other hand traditional versus modern is a recurring and major theme in the series.

After the leader, the episodes proceed with a combination of assignments alternated by intervals, in which the candidates discuss the assignments and talk about other candidates, suspicious behaviour and about who the Mole is. During such intervals, *WIDM* often shows shots of infrastructure, architecture, nature and daily life in the form of Japanese people in their daily activities or simply walking by. Japanese young and old in kimono are often shown, the kimono being a typical ‘marker’ of Japanese identity

(Creighton 1995). At other times, young Japanese with remarkable (to Dutch viewers) haircuts and clothing are shown. The survey carried out for this study shows that these images are greatly appreciated by respondents, and it is exactly from these images that respondents draw inferences about Japan and its people. Why are these shots put into *WIDM*? Aldo Paape explains: “As with the music, it means a certain atmosphere. You want to show that it is Japan. So when you are at a river somewhere, you want to know that it is a river in Japan. So you accentuate that with music and by editing in those shots”. This is an interesting remark, as it implies that ‘Japan’ can be depicted or represented by showing certain images. Moreover, these images have to be understood by Dutch viewers, who probably have never visited Japan and do not know particularly much about it. In other words, in showing Japan, the makers of *WIDM* have to put in shots and narratives which are recognizable for the audience. These, of course, often belong to the already dominant discourse or interpretative framework, in this case Orientalism, with which viewers are familiar through other media texts such as *Lost in Translation*.

Another interesting element of *WIDM* is its soundtrack. Music is often the most powerful and influential type of sound in a film or television programme, as “music can transform the moving image, making it more dramatic, moving or exciting”, so that “music is rarely accidental as it can so clearly play a crucial role in the overall style and mood that a TV programme is trying to create” (Lury 2005; as cited in Creeber 2006a, 41). Music also plays an important role in *WIDM*. Paape says that the music in *WIDM* serves to support the general atmosphere that is visually portrayed. Jongstra explains that the music in *WIDM* “creates atmosphere. Without music the programme would be boring to watch. That is why we often use film music or music from television programmes”. *WIDM* has a soundtrack which has largely remained the same throughout the years and consists mainly of music taken from films, computer games and other television programmes. For the introduction, leader, test, and execution, the programme always uses the same music. The music used in the rest of the episodes, however, is chosen in accord with the country, location and setting where the programme takes place. The music used in the Japan-season was for example different than the music in the eleventh season in Nicaragua and El Salvador. As music is an important element in the analysis of *WIDM*, as it is used to create a certain atmosphere, it is interesting to hear which, when, and how music is used to create a ‘Japanese’, ‘Asian’ or ‘Eastern’ atmosphere.

Interestingly, the soundtrack of the Japan-season draws heavily from the Chinese film *House of the Flying Daggers* (2004). A quick analysis (see Appendix B) shows that songs of the soundtrack of this film appear several times in episode one, three and five and also in other episodes. Jongstra explains about the use of such music: “We try not to exaggerate it. What we could have done was use all sorts of Japanese or Asian music. We deliberately did not do this. [...] We often choose Western music which contains such elements. But which is Western music”. However, the soundtrack of *House of the Flying Daggers*, which

contains music largely based upon drums and flutes, certainly does not sound Western, but rather ‘exotic’, ‘mysterious’ and ‘Eastern’ or ‘Asian’ to Western ears, although it is difficult to pin down what exactly makes it so. Importantly, the combination of classic music and ‘Eastern’ or ‘Asian’ sounding music is from time to time used strategically in *WIDM* to create (and enhance) a certain ‘Eastern’ or Japanese atmosphere.

Noteworthy is also the absence of a voice-over in *WIDM*, especially when compared to the excessive use of a voice-over in *Lost in Tokyo*. The only time a voice-over is used in *WIDM*, is when the candidates have to make the test to decide who has to leave the show. In contrast to *Lost in Tokyo*, nothing is told about Japan, its people and culture directly by a voice-over. This leads to the question whether viewers have to get such information from what is shown on screen. Jongstra: “We show Japan through the locations and the assignments. We try to give the assignments a ‘local touch’, as for example with the karaoke. But in Japan it was less than usual”. Regarding the absence of a voice-over, Postman (1985) writes that a television programme must be an independent and complete package for which viewers do not need any previous knowledge. *WIDM* does not make use of a voice-over to give the viewers information about Japan, nor does it give a lot of other information about the country where the programme takes place. Viewers therefore do not need any previous knowledge, as argued by Postman, or viewers watch the show with preconceived notions and images of Japan based upon previous media (viewing) experiences, and the dominant discourse of interpreting and understanding the non-Western, Japanese Other. The absence of a voice-over or a ‘guiding narrator’ in *WIDM* also means that viewers have more freedom to interpret and give meaning to what is seen and heard on television. Viewers are thus invited to come to their own conclusions about Japan, in contrast to *Lost in Tokyo* where the voice-over constantly explains Japanese culture and society.

Despite the absence of a voice-over, *WIDM* still has to convey certain information to its viewers. This is done among others by the use of captions, which are for example used to indicate what day it is and where the candidates are. At the beginning of every episode a map of the world is shown to indicate where Japan lies. This map transforms into a map of Japan, to indicate the city or location where the candidates are exactly. As Vermeltfoort (2010) notes, most viewers are not familiar with the countries and cities where *WIDM* takes place, but through these captions viewers are informed of the location and the setting (a school, theme park, theatre). Especially compared to *Lost in Tokyo*, *WIDM* conveys very little direct information about Japan. However, as the analysis of the ten episodes shows, quite a lot of what can be called indirect information about Japan and Japanese culture is conveyed by the programme.

The episodes

In the first episode, the Japan-season is introduced by presenter Pieter-Jan Hagens standing in front of the Tokyo skyline at night. Hagens: “Ten well-known Dutch fight for the money in *Wie is de Mol?* For the tenth season they travel to the country of shogun and samurai. They travel to Japan”. In the first thirty seconds of the programme, images presumed to be familiar to viewers at home are called up as Japan is presented as ‘the country of shogun and samurai’. Although the programme takes place in contemporary Japan, with presenter Hagens even standing in front of the skyline of one of the biggest cities in the world, the Samurai is immediately called up as a symbol of (contemporary) Japan.

Later in episode one, the candidates meet presenter Hagens at a temple in or near Nagasaki. As the candidates walk up the long and steep stairs, the accompanying soundtrack – in the form of what seem to be enhanced bird sounds in combination with ‘mystical’, ‘Asian’ style music from *House of the Flying Daggers* – creates a somewhat mysterious atmosphere. This is reinforced by the visuals, with shots of the candidates ascending the stairs interspersed with shots of priests in traditional clothing. When the candidates almost reach the top of the stairs, the large temple doors suddenly swing open and presenter Hagens is seen waiting in the courtyard. Hagens simply tells the candidates and the viewers at home: “Good morning. Welcome in Japan” (see Image 1). This scene immediately sets the mood, for it indicates Japan as a traditional country with ‘mysterious’ temples and rituals. The bird sounds and music give an impression of mystery, calmness, and exoticism. Together with the words of the presenter, it gives the impression that this *is* (contemporary) Japan. In other words, in episode one ‘traditional Japan’ is heavily favoured in both the leader as well as the first shots of the candidates in Nagasaki.



Image 1: “Welcome in Japan” (episode 1 – 9.22)

In the same episode the candidates are seen sitting on *tatami* (Japanese type of mats covering the floor) at low tables in what can be described as a traditional Japanese room, complete with sliding doors (*shoji*). On the table are all sorts of food, predominantly sushi, which is shown in close-up. A Japanese woman dressed in kimono watches over the candidates as they eat with chopsticks. As the analysis of the next episodes shows, fish seems to play an important role in the series. Almost at the end of the episode the candidates leave the hotel, providing a clear illustration of the theme of traditional and modern. As the candidates prepare to get into the bus to go to another location, a Japanese woman dressed in a pink kimono runs through the courtyard to take photos of the candidates with her mobile phone. Interestingly, the modern (mobile phone, bus) is thus again combined with the traditional (kimono, peaceful courtyard) in this short interval.

While episode one ‘establishes’ the candidates as well as the country and locations, episode two already shows less of Japan and her people and is much more concerned with the candidates and the various assignments. As in every episode, there are shots of daily life and Japanese, old and young, walking on the street, some in kimono, others in more ‘futuristic’ and modern clothing. Candidate Van der Hoff privately entrusts the camera, and the viewer at home, about the difficult assignment in Nagasaki as the local population was not of a lot of help. The reason: no one seemed to speak any English. Indeed, most of the Japanese people the candidates approach are shown as not understanding any or hardly any English. This theme, however, is not capitalized upon in the rest of the series, in stark contrast with *Lost in Tokyo* and *Lost in Translation*, which ridiculed the Japanese from time to time for not speaking proper English.

The second assignment of episode two takes place in the abandoned Dutch theme park Huis ten Bosch, where the candidates have to find money but at the same time avoid the ‘men in black suits’, based upon the *yakuza* (Japanese mafia). Several Japanese men in black suits, wearing black sunglasses and black laser guns, patrol the park in search of the candidates. All of them look concentrated, serious and show no emotion whatsoever, following the convention of the stereotype mentioned in chapter three of emotionless, cold, and ruthless *yakuza*. Although it was not mentioned in the programme itself, these ‘men in black suits’ referred to the Japanese mafia. Jongstra: “Yes, certainly. Of course. And Dutch people would understand it. But we just did not formulate it like that”. This is an interesting statement, because it confirms the idea that *WIDM* builds on viewers preconceived knowledge, ideas and images of the country. After all, viewers can only recognize a depiction of the Japanese mafia in the ‘men in black suits’ if they already have some knowledge about Japan and her society.

Episode three features several interesting scenes of which the first takes place at a driving school. Presenter Hagens tells the candidates: “Here we will see what your Dutch drivers license is worth in Japan. [...] Don’t forget, Japan is a country of rules”. This is followed by a rapidly edited compilation of all sorts

of traffic signs. The remark about Japan as a country of rules is interesting, as it marks Japan as different, as a country with a higher amount of rules than other countries. If Japan is ‘a country of rules’, this implicates that the Netherlands is much less a country of rules. In other words, such statements tend to support notions of difference or Otherness.

However, the most interesting part of the episode takes place when the candidates lunch in Geisenkaku Garden, a traditional Japanese building surrounded by a large Japanese garden. As the building is shown for the first time, ‘Eastern’ and ‘abstruse’ or ‘mythical’ sounding music in combination with enhanced bird sounds is heard, very similar to the atmosphere created at the temple in episode one. Once inside, the candidates are greeted by a woman in kimono who sits down on her knees, bows and welcomes them by saying *irasshaimase* (welcome in Japanese). This welcome is not translated, and for most of the viewers unfamiliar with the Japanese language it might seem strange, even exotic, especially when regarded in the context of the entire atmosphere composed of the location, the music, the woman in kimono and the use of Japanese language. The mysterious atmosphere is not only experienced by the viewers at home, but also by the candidates themselves. Not knowing what is going to happen, candidate Pieters remarks: “It is a bit ominous”.

As it turns out, the visit to Geisenkaku Garden is used to unite the viewers in this anniversary season of *WIDM* with former presenters Angela Groothuizen and Karel van de Graaff, both joining the candidates for lunch. Especially the role of Groothuizen in this part of the episode is interesting. First she recalls memories of being at the same place thirty years earlier, herself wearing a kimono. Then, when the group wants to start drinking, she proceeds to toast in Japanese by using a rather aggressively sounding made up word (‘hatchi’). Subsequently, the food is served, among which are sushi and *sashimi* – or what Dutch people usually simply term as raw fish. A large plate is brought into the room and put on the table, containing sushi and in the middle a large fish head pointing towards the ceiling. The plate is shown up close, and immediately the peaceful and somewhat soothing music changes into music that can best be described as creating a ‘sinister’ atmosphere. Moments later, candidate Lubach draws a face as if not liking the fish he is eating. The emphasis on fish is increased even further when Groothuizen tells the candidates about her visit to Japan thirty years earlier, mentioning that ‘everything was always fish’, even when she thought it was candy. Meanwhile, more sushi is brought in by the servants, which is emphasized by way of a close-up. Groothuizen: “Those people look at the fish and think, let’s make some more fish for those Dutch people”. Candidate Lubach: “For the entire week”.

In summary, this scene not only echoes the part with the temple in episode one (traditional, mysterious), but also strongly emphasizes the consumption of sushi by Japanese in image and conversation. Groothuizen’s anecdotes, which make it seem as if the Japanese only eat fish, the close-ups, and the music

used to shift the mood when a large fish head appears on a plate with sushi, all contribute to a rather negative image. Interestingly, one of the survey respondents remembered this part of the episode and commented that, “the game with the food gave a ‘dirty’ image of customs in Japan”. All together, the scene presents a distinctively traditional Japanese environment including kimono-clad servants and lots of sushi. It is in this environment that viewers at home can readily identify with the Dutch candidates and former presenters who enter this strange, mysterious and exotic environment (‘Japan’) where people seemingly only eat raw fish.



Image 2 - The candidates lunching at Geisenkaku Garden. In the back servants in blue kimono and on the table the large plate with sushi and the fish head (episode 3 – 27.21)

Episode four in turn provides little interesting or relevant information. During the first assignment, one of the questions refers to the samurai. Although very minor, it is the second reference to the samurai after the introduction of presenter Hagens in episode one. Later, the candidates leave Nagasaki and head for Sendai, a city on the east coast of Japan. The assignment takes place in the woods and shots of a temple or shrine are showed, while the test is made near a building which looks traditional, ‘typically’ Japanese. Although the episode is not very interesting or relevant, it does reinforce the connection that ‘traditional’ Japan is the ‘real’ Japan, and is to be found alongside beautiful nature in the countryside. This is also the main theme of the fifth episode, which takes place in Sendai and Yamagata. The first assignment brings the candidates to a chain of small islands. The candidates can be seen sitting in a boat, the peaceful and calm atmosphere reinforced by the music, as the candidates are heard giving commentary (non-diegetic, edited in later) to what the viewer sees on screen.

Van der Hoff: “We were piloted through a magnificent territory”.

Sissing: “Yes, the surroundings were amazing”.

Vogel: “It was also a bit mysterious with all those small islands, I found it very beautiful”.

Van der Hoff: “Yes, I thought I was in some sort of painting. You saw many small islands with rocks and bamboo. And in between you saw fishnets, the sun just went under a bit. Yes, it was so heavenly beautiful”.

Sissing: “Yes, than you are really in Japan”.

In these few utterances, the candidates seemingly only paint a picture of what they saw and experienced during the assignment. On a deeper, underlying level however, emphasized by the last remark by candidate Sissing, this image somehow connects with previous notions or images of what Japan ‘really’ is or should be like. Islands, sunset, fishing nets, bamboo, ‘a bit mysterious’; ‘than you are really in Japan’. If viewers at home did not have an image of Japan yet, this scene provides them with one visually and through the commentary of the candidates.

For the third assignment, the candidates visit a theatre where they are divided into two groups. In the theatre they have to do karaoke, albeit in a different, especially for *WIDM* adapted way. The two groups of candidates are put into separate rooms in the theatre and made to perform songs on the big screen for the other group to guess. Here the makers of *WIDM* used the typical cliché of karaoke in a very innovative way. *Lost in Translation* and *Lost in Tokyo* also featured karaoke, but in the ‘regular’ setting of a unknown Japanese karaoke bar, and by showing karaoke as something rather foolish or funny that can only be done when drunk. However, *WIDM* uses karaoke in an innovative and positive way which, according to Jongstra and Paape, garnered enthusiastic responses and praise after the broadcasting of the episode on television. In one of the intervals of this episode, fish is emphasized once more as the candidates can be seen eating sushi in a so-called ‘kaiten-sushi’ restaurant where food can be grabbed off a conveyor-belt.

In episode six, the candidates visit a Buddhist temple in the countryside. Similar to the first episode, the candidates are seen climbing the steep stairs with presenter Hagens waiting at the top. This time he tells the candidates and the viewers at home: “Good morning. The Buddhist temple-complex of Yamadera is twelve hundred years old”. What follows are shots of the temple, including rather peculiar looking statues and the woods surrounding the temple. Typically, the bird sounds are heard once again. The *mise en scène* – the combination of editing techniques, visuals and what is heard – makes the temple and the scene seem calm, mysterious and exotic, following stereotypical depictions of Japan as a ‘Zen country’. The Buddhist temple is not just a ‘twelve hundred years old Buddhist temple’. It stands for something, for a traditional, mysterious Japan where calmness and quietness prevails, lending itself to contemplation and reflection. Typically, these surroundings could have very well featured in *The Last Samurai* as a place for Tom Cruise to learn about ‘Japanese culture’ and become a samurai.

In the same episode, the candidates participate in a tea ceremony. Similar to the lunch in episode three, the candidates take their shoes off and sit down at low tables. Inside, an elderly Japanese woman dressed in a white kimono serves the guests with tea. During all this, the visuals are accompanied by music resembling traditional Japanese *shamisen* (a Japanese-style banjo) music. Anton Jongstra explained in the interview that the tea ceremony was undertaken, because Jongstra had also done a tea ceremony himself during one of his research-trips to Japan. Jongstra: “I thought it was so unusual that I wanted to do something with it, but we could not think of any assignment. Therefore we made the candidates do such a ceremony and make it into a ‘group-process’”. In other words, although the tea ceremony could not be combined with an assignment, the makers of *WIDM* wanted to use the tea ceremony nonetheless, for it was regarded as unusual and thus different or ‘typically’ Japanese.

In episode seven, the remaining candidates leave the countryside and travel to Tokyo. From here on the show takes a different turn, in part because of the urban surroundings in the form of the concrete jungles of Tokyo. As the candidates are seen sitting in the bus and being driven into Tokyo, the candidates express their feelings. Candidate Vogel: “It was a kind of computer game you ended up in”. Although she probably had no such intention, this remark somewhat ties in with techno-Orientalist images as discussed in chapter two. Entering computer game-like Tokyo provides a sharp contrast with the previous episodes, which mostly took place in the countryside. Traditional and modern are the dominant themes underlying this episode and are once again contrasted. Episodes seven, eight and nine largely take place in Tokyo and put a lot of emphasis on the chaos, bustle and sheer amount of people on the streets of Japan’s capital. Shots of daily life show Japanese of all sorts of professions and ages, from businessmen (‘salaryman’) to schoolchildren, elderly women in kimono, and young Japanese dressed up extravagantly. Often, the enhanced sounds of traffic stress the chaos and bustle in the streets.

During the first episode in Tokyo the candidates carry out an assignment in a crowded market street. Two candidates note the bad smell when they pass a market booth. Immediately, the camera zooms in on the booth, so that the viewer sees that it is raw fish that is the source of this smell. In the same episode, two candidates go out for dinner. When the ordered food is brought to their table, the camera again zooms in on the fish on the plates although there is also other food present. Moments later, candidate Lubach can be seen picking up a piece of fish with his chopsticks and putting it in his mouth. Once again, raw fish is emphasized as the main and seemingly only staple of the Japanese diet. In another assignment one of the candidates gets several Japanese to help him complete the assignment. Although they do not seem to understand or speak English very well, they try to help anyway. This is in stark contrast with how the Japanese were portrayed and used (or abused) in *Lost in Tokyo* and also to some extent in *Lost in Translation*. Especially in the former, discontent and even anger about Japanese not

speaking English was repeatedly visible and audible. *WIDM* shows the Japanese in a much more respectful way than *Lost in Tokyo* and *Lost in Translation* did. It should also be mentioned that the first place the candidates visit in Tokyo is Shibuya, one of Japan's major youth fashion centres. However, the type of fashion to be found there is often quite different from what we in the Netherlands are used to. Thus, when visiting Shibuya one can see quite a lot of extravagantly dressed young Japanese with equally extravagant hairstyles. While the number of Japanese dressing up like this only comprises a small group, television programmes (like *Lost in Tokyo*) and films often tend to focus on this group and make it seem representative for Japanese society as a whole. Remarkably, *WIDM* refrains from this type of representation.

The most interesting event or rather style of editing occurs at the end of episode seven, when the last assignment of the day has just ended and the candidates are about to take the test. The entire episode has shown the viewer the chaos and bustle in the concrete jungles of Tokyo, one of the biggest cities in the world, filled with skyscrapers and neon lights. After the last assignment, an overview shot is shown of an area near Shinjuku Station, the busiest train station in the world. It fades into black to return moments later to a shot of a peaceful traditional Japanese building with a large garden (see Image 3 and 4 on the next page). This is an example of the internal workings of the programme or the underlying theme, which plays with traditional and modern elements of Japan, with nature and the countryside as well as the urban and the high-tech, but in the end always favouring the traditional and nature.

In episode eight, presenter Hagens gives viewers a bit of information about the Japanese: "For a long time they were known for their art of copying, the Japanese. This is the Tokyo Tower. Wherever you are in the city, you can see him. This fake Eiffel Tower". These remarks, which compared to the other episodes and scarce statements about Japan are quite bold and straightforward, are an example of Edward Said's writing that figures of speech in Orientalism are "always symmetrical to, and yet diametrically inferior to, a European equivalent, which is sometimes specified, sometimes not" (2003, 72). The notion of the Japanese being known for a long time for their 'art of copying' (*kopieerkunst*) is a remark which harks back to Orientalist notions held about Japan, and the whole Orient for that matter, as it clearly sets up a hierarchical binary between those simply copying (the imitators, the Japanese) and the original creators (presumably the West). As discussed earlier, such opposite binaries almost never consist of two equal parts, but an inferior and superior part. In this case, creation is more highly regarded than imitation. Moreover, as Rosenstone (1980) writes, the idea of Japan imitating and copying the ways of others has long been part and parcel of American thinking about Japan, with such opinions first being voiced in 1856. Consequently, this stereotype of Japanese as simple copiers of works of others, such as Western technology and architecture, has remained in use for a long time.



Image 3 - At Shinjuku Station in Tokyo (episode 7 – 43.15)



Image 4 - After fading to black, this shot of a traditional building and garden is seen (episode 7 – 43.18)

Episode nine is the last episode recorded in Japan and largely takes place in Odaiba, a manmade island in the bay of Tokyo. At the very beginning of the episode, the recurring theme of traditional versus modern is shown beautifully in a shot situated in an interval in between assignments. On a denotative level, the shot just seems one of the many in these intervals, only serving as decoration or setting the mood and location. However, on a connotative level the shot symbolically shows the contrast between modern and traditional Japan (see Image 5 on the next page). Modern, high-tech Japan can be seen on the left in the distance in the form of a rather square building of steel and concrete. On the right side, in the front, trees which are often found in ‘traditional’ Japanese gardens are seen, symbolizing (traditional) Japan. The two ‘Japan’s’ are separated from each other by distance and the water. This shot can be regarded as a metaphor for the whole series of *WIDM* in Japan: showing both sides of the country (traditional versus modern or high-tech, nature and countryside versus urban). but decidedly favouring the nature and more traditional

side. In this shot, the traditional, nature side is in the front and dominant, while the six episodes preceding the ‘Tokyo-episodes’ also predominantly feature nature and traditional Japan (such as temples and tea houses). In short, over the course of the ten episodes, the image of ‘traditional Japan’ is strongly favoured, despite the fact that the programme takes place in contemporary Japan, with three episodes recorded in Tokyo.



Image 5 – ‘Modern Japan’ in the back left in the shape of steel and concrete buildings, ‘traditional Japan’ in the front on the right (episode 9 – 2.12)

Although viewers are hardly given any direct information about Japan, episode nine provides some information in the form of questions to the remaining three candidates as part of an assignment. Presenter Hagens asks candidate Vogel among others about the name of the Dutch trading post in Nagasaki, the Tokyo Tower, and the tea ceremony. The last two questions are particularly interesting. Hagens: “Which Japanese art did the samurai not practice?”. And: “Against which mystical Japanese warrior will you have to battle later?”. Candidate Sissing responds: “We doubt between samurai and ninja’s”. The last assignment indeed involves ninja, which presenter Hagens announces with: “Be careful, there are ninja’s. Very well trained warriors, who will do anything to catch you and conquer your treasure”. The ‘question assignment’ as well as the ‘ninja assignment’ refer to samurai and ninja as fierce, well-trained ‘mythical’ Japanese warriors. This idea or image is supported by shots of the ninja in the dark, dressed in black with only their eyes visible, doing somersaults and kicks while looking concentrated, serious and even angry. The ninja is used in a rather stereotypical way and can be seen as being similar to, and in this episode being the replacement of, the Samurai as previously discussed. The ninja moreover plays the same role as the *yakuza* in episode two, its presence can be explained with what Anton Jongstra calls the need of *WIDM* for ‘spectacle’ and ‘attackers from outside’. Thus, Jongstra says, “we thought we should do something with

ninja or samurai. Hence the ninja”. This indicates that even on the production level, the Samurai and ninja were seen as quite similar and interchangeable, both belonging to the realm of Japanese ‘mythical’ warriors, of which one was needed as an ‘attacker from outside’.

The last episode of the series traditionally takes place in the Netherlands, with the candidates gathering together to discuss their experiences and have the Mole revealed. Even in this last episode, references to sushi are made. When the candidates enter the room, there are all sorts of food and drinks on the table. During the ensuing conversation there is a close-up of the sushi on the table.

Schrijver: “That looks Japanese I think. Did any of you notice anything about it? About Japan?”

Akkerman: “I was never a sushi-man. But now I understand why. Because over there it is as it should be. It is bizarre, early in the morning... I had to get used to that, that was adapting, instead of a cup of coffee and a sandwich it was really like this” [points to sushi].

Barend: “I can’t stomach any more sushi !”

Again, the idea is promulgated that Japanese only eat sushi day in day out, from early in the morning until late in the evening, with candidate Akkerman literally calling it ‘bizarre’. As the previous pages have shown, raw fish (sushi and *sashimi*) is regularly a topic of conversation as well as being shown in close-up. In this the camera is not neutral, as it ‘selects’ what viewers see and how they see it, for example by zooming in or out, using specific camera positions, lenses and so on. By visually singling out sushi, the camera draws the attention of viewers, making them more aware of the object as if it plays a crucial role in the programme (Allrath, Gymnich & Surkamp 2005). As such, raw fish is a prominent and recurring theme in the *WIDM* Japan-season, as it is repeatedly presented as the main, or almost only, daily staple of the Japanese diet. However, Japan is a very Westernized country and actually very accustomed to ‘international food’. As one of the ‘food capitals’ of the world, Tokyo houses hundreds of thousands of restaurants (including the well known American fast food- and family restaurants to be found around the globe) which not only serve Japanese cuisine, consisting of much more than just fish, but also all sorts of non-Japanese food from all over the world. Especially considering the variety of what can be considered to be Japanese food, it is rather strange that *WIDM* puts so much emphasis on sushi and *sashimi*.

The previous pages have shown that *WIDM* is not a travel programme, and thus does not provide a lot of direct information about Japan, but rather uses the country as a backdrop against which every episode takes place. As such, the camera mostly follows the candidates and presenter Hagens throughout the programme. The focus lies strongly on the Dutch candidates, who appear as ‘active’, whereas the Japanese appearing in the programme appear mostly ‘passive’ and as part of the background against which the programme takes place. In assignments, Japanese rarely play any significant role, even in for example an

assignment where the candidates have to drive together with Japanese driving instructors on a driving circuit. Instead, the Japanese are mostly used as decoration in intervals to set the mood and show something of the country and its people. Importantly, the Japanese are thus not allowed to speak (and represent) themselves, but are spoken for by the candidates and the presenter and ultimately the programmes producers and editors.

As Japan mostly serves as a background in *WIDM*, one of the questions during the interview with Anton Jongstra and Aldo Paape asked whether *WIDM* in this aspect is similar to the film *Lost in Translation*. Jongstra: “Yes, they can be compared. In that film it is about those two [Bill Murray and Scarlett Johansson]. And they use Japan to show how difficult life sometimes is. And that is also quite the same with *De Mol* [*WIDM*]. We do our own thing, our own game, we have our own mystery, and the background is Japan”. This resembles the notion of Burman (2007) about *Lost in Translation*, with ‘Japan’ appearing “at a hyper-real remove, as intact and unintelligible, requiring no engagement but rather affording an imagined domain” (p. 193). In *WIDM*, this imagined domain is also created as Japan is largely used as a ‘interactive’ backdrop. Jongstra says that the backdrop (Japan) also regularly comes to the front, through the use of shots of daily life and by designing assignments specific to the location and country where the programme takes place. Jongstra: “We use things from that background to increase our own mystery. Ninja for example, or karaoke in a theatre. Because karaoke is something Japanese. But literally doing Japanese karaoke goes too far for us, because we do not understand it. How the Japanese do it... we do not understand. The viewers will not understand. So we do something different with it”.

The assignments and challenges sometimes indeed involve Japanese culture and elements, such as the tea ceremony and the ninja game in episode nine. In other episodes, however, the assignments and challenges are not specifically related to Japan. The assignment at the Megami Ohashi Bridge in Nagasaki in episode one and the assignment at the Mogi High School in episode four are examples of assignments that could have taken place on any large bridge or in any school building. However, the assignments that do involve Japanese culture (tea ceremony, ninja, Buddhist temple) certainly ‘tell’ the viewer something about Japan and its culture. To summarize, *WIDM* does not provide a lot of direct information about Japan but through the assignments, locations, settings, music, and shots of daily life conveys a lot of indirect information and images to its viewers. The question remains whether these images influence or shape the ideas, images and perceptions viewers of *WIDM* have about Japan. The next paragraph turns towards the audience reception of the Japan-season.

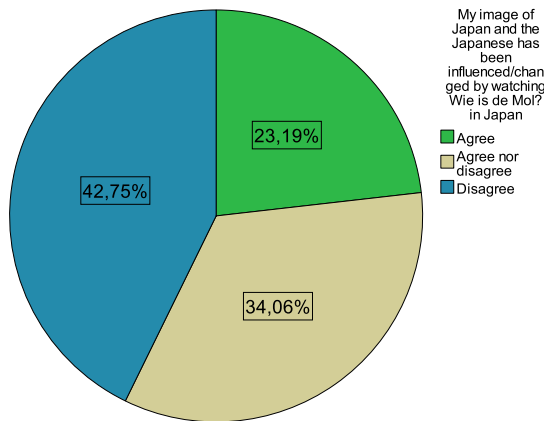
5.4 Audience reception

During the interview, the makers of *WIDM* were asked whether they think the programme influences viewers ideas, images and perceptions of the world. Aldo Paape thinks that *WIDM* does influence how viewers see and think about other countries and people. “I think so. That is why we do not ridicule a country by using stereotypes”. Jongstra adds: “I am not sure. I do think that a country like El Salvador has gotten a much more positive image than it had before because of *Wie is de Mol?* Because of its civil war-history and everything. Because of *Wie is de Mol?*, people have gotten the idea that it is a country to visit for vacation. Which it is. I think that the image of Japan has not really been changed by *Wie is de Mol?*”. After carrying out a literature review, Lewis (2004) concluded that viewers partly interpret reality television according to the distance to the world represented on screen. The closer the world on screen is to their own environment, the more viewers look at it critically. Conversely, representations of cultures with which viewers are less familiar and which are farther away from their own environments and surroundings tend to be accepted as real and truthful representations. This sheds some light onto how and to what extent *Lost in Tokyo* and *WIDM*, as reality game shows purporting directly and indirectly to show ‘real reality’, might influence and even shape viewers perspectives of Japan and Japanese culture. After all, Japan, her people and culture are probably less known among Dutch television viewers, and much farther away geographically, than Germany or Belgium for example.

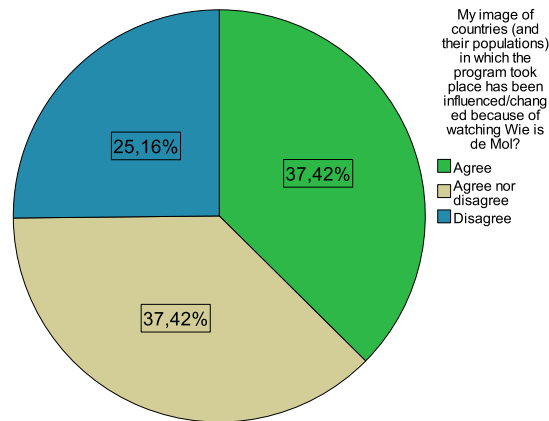
The best – and also more reliable and quantifiable – information about the audience, however, comes from the audience itself, in this study through the use of an online survey. The survey yielded 155 complete responses ($N = 155$), of which 70 by male respondents (45.2 percent) and 85 by female respondents (54.8 percent), with an average age of 25.1 years. Most of the survey participants were highly educated, as 25.2 percent had attended university, 18.7 percent HBO or its predecessor HTS (both one level below university level in the Dutch education system), and no less than 29 percent had attended gymnasium or VWO, the two highest levels of education in middle school. Most respondents moreover regularly have the chance to see something of the world outside the Netherlands, as 43.9 percent indicated to go on vacation abroad once a year, 18.7 percent of respondents travelling abroad twice a year, and another 20.6 percent going on vacation abroad once every two to four years. Interestingly, as a clear indication of Japan not being a popular and thus familiar destination, only seven respondents indicated to have ever visited Japan. With regards to the amount of television watched on average per day, no less than 43.9 percent of respondents answered they watch between one and two hours of television a day, with twenty percent of respondents watching between three and four hours, and 18.1 percent watching less than one hour per day. This shows that despite the rise of new media, i.e. Internet and online social networks, television is still a popular medium central in young people’s ‘media diet’. Of the 155 survey participants,

138 had seen the ‘Japan-season’ of *WIDM* and seventeen had not. These seventeen did however see other seasons of *WIDM*, and could therefore complete the more general questions about the show and their personal viewing experiences.*

The first question asked respondents whether their image of Japan and the Japanese had changed because of watching the Japan-season (see Graph 1). Only 23 percent of respondents answered positively, almost 43 percent answered their image had not been changed and 34 percent agreed nor disagreed. After more than one year since the initial broadcasts, most of the respondents do not think that their ideas and images of Japan and her people have been changed because of watching the Japan-season of *WIDM*.



Graph 1 - Image of other countries changed or influenced by watching *WIDM*



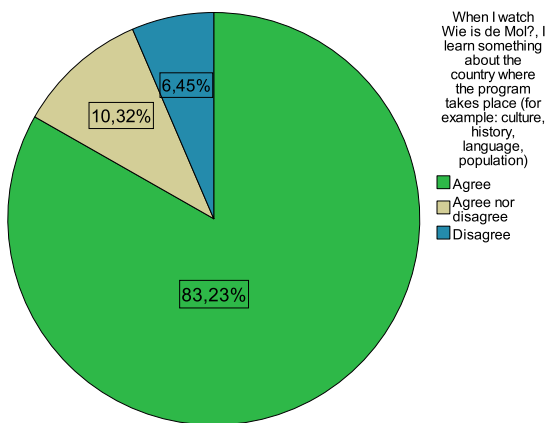
Graph 2 - Image of Japan changed or influenced by watching the Japan-season of *WIDM*

However, the survey shows a different result when respondents are asked if their images and ideas about other countries and peoples were the programme has taken place (excluding Japan) have been changed or influenced by watching *WIDM*. To this question, 37 percent answers positively, with another 37 staying neutral and only 25 percent answering negatively (see Graph 2). In other words, slightly more than one third of all viewers thinks their image of other countries is influenced or shaped by *WIDM*, while only 23 percent of the viewers of the Japan-season indicated that their image of Japan had been changed. This difference might be explained by several factors. First, when answering the question about the influence of *WIDM* on their images of other countries, respondents have likely referred to the last season in Nicaragua and El Salvador, which lies fresh in memory as it was broadcasted from January to March 2011. After more than one year, respondents might have largely forgotten about the Japan-season. Secondly, the Japan-season was perhaps simply not very innovatory or special, and might simply only have confirmed viewers preconceived images and ideas. With both questions, it should be kept in mind that respondents might not like to admit that their conceptions of the world are to some or even large extent

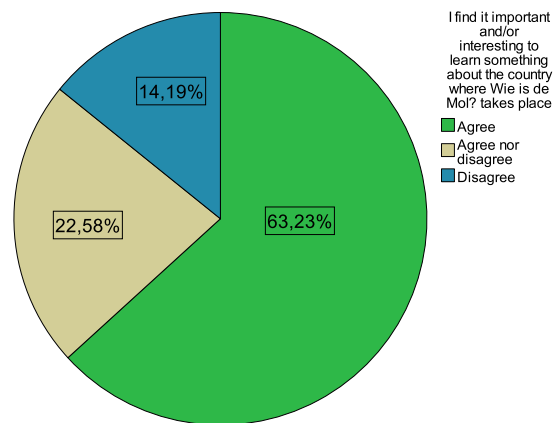
* For more information about the distribution of respondents, see Appendix C.

shaped by entertainment television programmes like *WIDM*. Lewis (2004) notes that people tend to privilege factual television such as the news, rather than reality television or television fiction, as a source of knowledge about the ‘real world’, as the former is seen as more convincing and based in facts and reality.

Interestingly, however, no less than 83 percent of respondents indicated to learn something about the country where *WIDM* takes place, for example about its culture, history, and language. Although several respondents also said that *WIDM* is a game show and not a travel programme, viewers in general do seem to learn about other countries. Only six percent of the respondents indicated not to learn anything about countries where *WIDM* takes place, with another ten percent answering neutrally (see Graph 3).



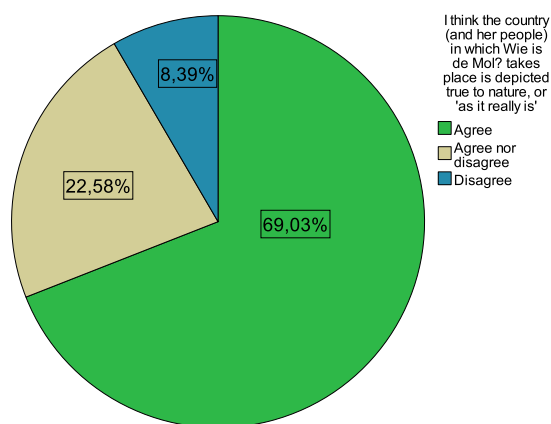
Graph 3 - Learning from *WIDM*



Graph 4 - Importance of learning from *WIDM*

When asked if they find it important to learn something about the country where the programme takes place, the percentage of respondents answering positively drops to 63 percent. Although this is still the majority, fourteen percent did not find it important to learn something about a country, while almost 23 percent of respondents remained neutral (see Graph 4). These numbers somewhat correspond with those mentioned by Hill (2005) in her study of reality television. Hill argues that, next to authenticity, viewers find information in reality television important. This statement is supported by a UK survey from 2000, which showed that 75 percent of survey respondents enjoy information as a programme element in reality television programmes the most. Yet, “audience responses to information are complex because the didactic elements of more traditional popular factual television have transformed into more amorphous learning elements in contemporary reality programming” (p. 105). In combination with the fact that many viewers make a distinction between formal and informal learning, learning itself is more of an optional than an integral part of the viewing experience when watching reality television (Hill 2005). However, the survey shows that taking in information or learning something from *WIDM* seems to be a common practice among a large percentage of viewers.

Lastly, regarding the representation of other countries and people, no less than 69 percent of the respondents thinks that *WIDM* presents a truthful depiction or ‘as it really is’. In other words, the majority of respondents believes that the televisual reality of *WIDM* corresponds with ‘real reality’, with only eight percent of respondents answering negatively and another 22 percent agreeing nor disagreeing (see Graph 5). The fact that many viewers think *WIDM* depicts countries and people truthfully, might indicate that these viewers accept the televisual reality of *WIDM* as real and authentic and are therefore (more) inclined to learn something from the programme about other countries and cultures.



Graph 5 - Country truthfully depicted

In order to see whether watching *WIDM* actually makes viewers do something with their viewing experiences, respondents were asked if they had looked up information about the countries where *WIDM* had been, and if they had ever planned to travel to these countries. Only 27 percent of the respondents indicated to have looked up information. Only seventeen respondents, eleven percent in total, had ever planned a vacation to a country where *WIDM* had taken place. With regards to Japan, almost sixteen percent of respondents answered to have looked up information about the country, while 84 percent did not. Lastly, a little over five percent of respondents indicated to have planned a vacation to Japan because of seeing the country in *WIDM*. From these questions, Japan clearly emerges as a less popular country than other *WIDM*-destinations, which might be explained in part because the survey was distributed not long after the March 2011 earthquake, tsunami and problems with the nuclear power plant in Fukushima. Moreover, the Japan-season of *WIDM* might be less popular among viewers than other seasons of the series.

In addition to the quantitative, multiple choice questions discussed above, the survey also contained several open questions to obtain more and better understanding of respondent’s ideas and images of Japan and their viewing experiences in general. The first of these questions asked respondents to describe their image of Japan and the Japanese in a few words. This question garnered a wide variety of answers, ranging from a few words to whole sentences. Stereotypes mentioned in chapter two can be found in the answers of many respondents, as many describe Japanese people for example as disciplined, polite, respectful, modest, complaisant and hard working. Traditional Japanese culture is also mentioned often, usually in conjunction with the remark that Japan is also high-tech and futuristic. Interestingly, these comments follow the representation of Japan in *WIDM* as combining traditional and modern, countryside with the city. Some respondents thought Japan to be ‘mystical’, while others emphasized the high-tech elements and gadgets. Such remarks seem to confirm the argument of Inokuchi and Nozaki (2005), as

discussed in chapter two, that both these images of Japan as traditional and high-tech “fit into the reductive, fragmentary, and repetitive character of Orientalist discourse” (p. 70).

The second question asked respondents to indicate how, if at all, their image of Japan and her inhabitants had changed because of watching the Japan-season of *WIDM*. This question yielded 31 responses, of which ten respondents indicated that their image of Japan had become more positive with regards to the country as well as its people. Another seven respondents commented positively about the amount and beauty of nature in Japan. Seven respondents indicated that their image had not changed, although four of them indicated that their image was more ‘complete’ because of watching *WIDM*. Five respondents commented on the character of the Japanese, finding them more friendly and more Western than expected. One respondent commented that, as a viewer, you are always influenced by what you see, but that a television programme is not the right instrument to make judgments about a country and its people. Two respondents recognized the duality of Japan as shown in *WIDM*, and said they had enjoyed the variety of locations and settings and the mixture of traditional and modern, which had contributed to the beauty of the country being portrayed very well. Interestingly, one respondent commented about her image of Japan: “I think it is more ‘normal’, or ‘everyday’ (*alledaags*). Before I had an image of the culture like people think that Dutch people wear wooden shoes”. This is an interesting remark, for it shows that *WIDM* is also capable (for some viewers) of breaking through stereotypes and instead present a more realistic or ‘authentic’ depiction of another country and its population.

The question about what they liked about the portrayal of Japan in *WIDM* was answered by 88 respondents and yielded an enormous variety of answers. 43 respondents praised the beautiful nature and architecture in Japan, with a fair amount of respondents especially valuing the variety of locations (countryside and city). Eight other respondents particularly commented on the balance between traditional and modern and countryside and cities, with one respondent summarizing this stance as “diversity in all areas, culture, nature, architecture”. Interestingly, although a minority, five respondents commented that they had learned little or nothing about Japan, because *WIDM* does not show a lot of the country and/or he or she only watched the programme for the game aspect, not to see or learn anything about a country. One such reaction: “The programme is very much focused on the group. The country mostly serves as a background, so you do not learn so much from it”. Three respondents said that Japan had seemed ‘mysterious’ and ‘calm’, impressions linked to Orientalist discourse about the East being mysterious and ‘the wisdom of the East’. These impressions were probably based upon the assignments which took place in the temples and the tea house. One respondent commented about the positive way *WIDM* shows the country where the programme takes place, and the role of assignments in providing ‘indirect’ information: “*WIDM* always portrays a country in a beautiful way. By doing the assignments on special locations, you

get to know the country as you get along. That is one of the unique ways *WIDM* uses”. Another respondent commented about the authenticity of the program: “The assignments are adapted to the country where the programme is going, so the candidates get more feeling with the country and the viewer sees the country as it really is”. Thus, both the multiple choice questions as well as the open questions indicate that *WIDM* does provide information and images of other countries and people, albeit not ‘direct’ information but rather by way of the assignments taking place in many different locations and the intervals containing shots of daily life.

The question what they did not like or thought confusing about the Japan-season was answered by 62 respondents. Notably, six respondents answered that Japan only served as the background for the assignments, or that he or she had mostly or only paid attention to the game and finding out who the Mole was. Three of those six moreover indicated that the goal of *WIDM* was not to provide such information in the first place as the country is only an ‘instrument’ or ‘stage’ for *WIDM*. Five respondents said that the programme could have used more interactivity with the Japanese or shown more different locations. Admittedly, as also confirmed by Anton Jongstra, the Japan-season featured little contact between the candidates and Japanese people, showing less about daily life and the Japanese themselves. Three respondents commented about Japanese people working very hard. According to two of them this was not sufficiently shown in *WIDM*, while the other respondent thought it was shown unjustly, as he or she had heard from family that only in Tokyo people work ‘really hard’. This is an example of how a viewer with perhaps more knowledge about Japan and its people looks at the programme differently, or more critical. Of course, it is important to remember that out of the 155 respondents only seven had visited Japan, so that many viewers’ ideas and images of Japan and Japanese culture and society are formed through mediated experiences such as *WIDM* and *Lost in Translation*.

Lastly, 65 respondents answered the question whether their image of other countries and its people (excluding Japan) had been changed by watching *WIDM*, and if so, how their image had changed. This question yielded a wide variety of interesting and often detailed answers, as they were often based upon the recent experience of watching the 2011 season. Eleven survey participants clearly indicated that they watch the programme for the game and the candidates, and pay no or hardly any attention to the country, its people and culture. However, an almost equal amount of respondents (ten) indicated to learn something about a country from watching *WIDM*. Supporting the idea that television programmes and films can influence viewers, one of these respondents wrote: “Your image of a country is often shaped by one or two experiences you have seen sometime. In *WIDM* you see much more of those countries, all positive images. It is important however that the game is dominant and the ‘stage’ supportive”. Eight respondents said that *WIDM* shows other countries and their peoples in a positive way, and often improves images held by

viewers, most notable about Nicaragua and El Salvador. Another eight respondents wrote that *WIDM* is a game show and not a travel programme or informational programme, and that the games and finding out about the Mole is most important. Some of these respondents explicitly voiced their opinion that *WIDM* is not a programme to learn anything from in the first place. Five respondents said that *WIDM* shows ‘daily life’ in a positive way, thus making viewers see and learn more about a country and its people. Another five respondents said that *WIDM* not only influences, but also shapes their image of certain countries, because they did not know anything or much of the country before. One respondent commented: “Countries where I have never been, I remember by television images”. Interestingly, two respondents were very critical and wrote that *WIDM* only shows positive or romantic images, thus letting viewers think that they know a country. One respondent answered that “because *WIDM* takes place in relatively unknown countries, the viewer during the series learns more and more about a country. [...] With unknown countries this happens much quicker, that *WIDM* shapes viewers image. With well-known countries the surroundings are less surprising I think, so the viewer focuses more on the game itself (because the surroundings are already familiar)”. These remarks support the results of the literature review undertaken by Lewis (2004), as discussed at the beginning of this paragraph, that viewers partly interpret reality television according to the distance to the world represented on screen.

This chapter has presented an extensive analysis of the production process, promotion, content as well as audience reception of the 2010 Japan-season of *WIDM*. Supported by the interview with the makers of the show, Anton Jongstra and Aldo Paape, the analysis showed that during the promotion of the show Japan was made into the strange, exotic, and even bizarre Other in accordance with Orientalist styles of representation. The discourse analysis of the programme showed that the underlying theme of *WIDM* is difference, mostly between traditional and modern elements of Japan and nature and the city. Next to this, there is of course the basic difference between the Dutch candidates and production team and the country where the programme was recorded. *WIDM*, like *Lost in Tokyo* and *Lost in Translation*, is therefore based upon the premise of difference. *WIDM* does largely follow the ‘representational paradigm’ in depicting Japan. It does so, or rather has to, to be able to have its viewers identify with the representations on screen, mostly because no direct information is given by a voice-over. As such, the programme has to present the country and its narrative within a framework that is familiar or understandable to its viewers. *WIDM* thus invites viewers to view Japan to a certain extent with an Orientalist gaze, as ‘inherited’ from other media texts such as *Lost in Translation*.

Unlike the other two, however, *WIDM* does not actively engage in Othering Japan and the Japanese. Although it regularly makes use of clichés and stereotypes such as ninja, samurai, *yakuza*, karaoke,

sushi and Zen Buddhism, these are often used in innovative ways. Moreover, certain themes such as Japanese hardly speaking any English or depicting extravagantly dressed youth as representational for the entire population are avoided. This is in part because the makers of *WIDM* personally dislike using stereotypes and clichés and, because of using locals in the production process, uphold a certain morality when recording the programme. This confirms the notion of Shohat and Stam (1994) that media can actively participate and contribute to the process of Othering (*Lost in Tokyo, Lost in Translation*) as well as promote cross-cultural understanding or portray other countries and people in positive ways (*WIDM*). However, it should not be forgotten that *WIDM* is not a travel programme in the first place, and that the country where the programme takes place functions primarily as the backdrop for the candidates and the overarching assignment of finding out who the Mole is. Unlike *Lost in Tokyo*, *WIDM* is not primarily engaged with and focused on Japan or its culture and society, although it still conveys a lot of ‘indirect’ information about Japan and Japanese culture.

Lastly, Japan does not seem to have left a lasting impression on viewers of *WIDM*, despite the fact that the country was in the news a lot because of the March 2011 earthquake, tsunami and nuclear power plant disaster. The passing of time since the initial broadcasting of the Japan-season and the broadcasting of the recent eleventh season might have played an important role in this. Most survey respondents indicated that their ideas and images of Japan had not changed because of *WIDM*, although more respondents indicated that their perceptions of other countries and peoples had changed. Interestingly, no less than 83 percent indicated to learn something from *WIDM* about the countries the programme visits. The survey also showed that only a small part of respondents extends their viewing experience to looking up information about a country or even planning to go there on vacation. Many respondents also indicated that *WIDM* always depicts countries in a beautiful way, leading to viewers having more positive images and ideas of those countries. Although 83 percent of viewers indicates to learn something, the question whether viewers are influenced by the televisual representations of Japan in *WIDM* seems more difficult to answer. It is now time to turn to the conclusion of this study, which provides answers to the research questions posed in the introduction.

VI. Conclusion

This study has looked at the operations, functions and influence of contemporary representations of Japan in popular entertainment media, specifically the Dutch reality game show *Wie is de Mol?* Relations between ‘West’ and ‘East’, especially mediated representations, have long been shaped by the hegemonic discourse called Orientalism. Since Edward Said wrote about it and popularized the term in 1978, Orientalism has become an important analytical tool to analyze Western media representations of the non-Western ‘Other’. Although it originally dealt with the analysis of literature about the Near-East or Middle-East, other scholars have picked up where Said left and have expanded Orientalism to among others the Far-East, including Japan, as well as to other types of media such as television programmes and films. Analysis of these popular media confirm the writings of Said that standardization and cultural stereotyping have increased in audiovisual representations of non-Western Others. The analysis of Western representations of Japan and the Japanese in films and television programmes in this study supports these findings.

Stereotypes as well as Orientalist narratives based upon cultural essentialism, i.e. ‘we’ and ‘them’, often underlie Western media texts representing and mediating the Oriental ‘Other’, as Orientalism and ‘Othering’ are still common practice in the media when it comes to constructing, describing, understanding and representing (cultural) difference. This is no different in regards to Japan, its society and culture, although this study showed that the Japanese themselves have actively used and absorbed the Western Orientalist ‘gaze’ in a process which has been called self-Orientalism, or the ‘Othering’ and ‘exoticizing’ of the Self. Whether depicted as traditional or contemporary and high tech, Japan is often depicted in the West as strange, inscrutable, mysterious, exotic, and at time bizarre and shocking. In films and television programmes taking place in Japan, such as *Lost in Translation*, *Lost in Tokyo* and *WIDM*, this is often accomplished by creating an ‘artificial environment’ in which difference and strangeness are emphasized. These representations are of course not always negative. There is for example also the tendency to paint a traditional or romantic picture of Japan, of which the Samurai is the most potent and visual symbol.

Returning, then, to the main research question of this thesis: *How are Japan and the Japanese represented in the Dutch television programme Wie is de Mol?, and do these representations influence viewers images, ideas and perceptions of Japan and its inhabitants?* An extensive and detailed analysis of the production, promotion, content, and reception by the audience was carried out to answer this question. Although early press releases and other promotion material for *WIDM* presented and described Japan in clear Orientalist terms, the programme itself provided a more balanced and nuanced depiction. This is in the first place because *WIDM* mainly focuses on the Dutch candidates, the assignments, and about finding out who the Mole is. The country, its people and culture where the programme takes place come in second and mostly serve as a

background to the assignments, although this background is actively used and shown during assignments and intervals in between these assignments. However, the fact that Japan mostly serves as a background makes that, especially compared to *Lost in Tokyo*, there is much less attention for and direct information about Japan and the Japanese. Secondly, *WIDM* largely avoids clichés and stereotypes due to the professional and personal values and morals of the producers of the show, who simply do not like to use clichés and stereotypes, in part because *WIDM* is always made in collaboration with the local population.

Yet, *WIDM* largely follows the ‘representational paradigm’ of depicting Japan, as the programme needs to provide images and narratives about Japan familiar or at least recognizable and understandable to its viewers. As such, it makes use of clichés and stereotypes about Japan in assignments, such as the Samurai, ninja, yakuza, sushi, karaoke, and Zen Buddhism to name a few. Admittedly, these are often used in innovative and playful ways, such as doing karaoke in a film theatre. Moreover, as it builds on the premise of difference, the programme constantly contrasts the traditional with the modern, the countryside with the urban and high-tech. Ultimately, the programme seems to prefer and emphasize ‘traditional Japan’, as represented in the various episodes with assignments in temples and the tea ceremony. This can be explained in part by the simply reason why *WIDM* went to Japan in the first place: the makers of the show expected to find a ‘different world’ in Japan. Moreover, the programme *has* to show difference between the Netherlands and Japan, as going to another country (difference) is part of the central premise of *WIDM*.

This leads to the second part of the main research question. There have been various phases and lines of thoughts regarding the reception of media texts by the audience, as some researchers have regarded audience as passive while others have regarded them as active and capable of interpreting media texts in different ways. Media scholars like Roger Silverstone even argue that as we live in a media saturated world, we tend to uncritically accept what the media presents us with. Most researchers writing on media use and consumption agree that television influences its viewers at least to some extent. Research has shown that viewers tend to learn from reality television, a genre to which *WIDM* and *Lost in Tokyo* also belong as reality game shows, as reality television purports to be ‘authentic’: ‘real’ people in (largely) unscripted settings. The survey carried out for this study supports these notions, as no less than 83 percent of the respondents indicated to learn something about other countries and people from watching *WIDM*, while 63 percent also found it important and/or interesting to learn something about other countries from *WIDM*. However, a much lower percentage of viewers (37 percent) indicated that their images and ideas of other countries had changed because of *WIDM*, and only 23 percent thought that watching the Japan-season had changed their ideas and images. Additionally, the survey showed that only a small group of respondents extends their viewing experiences to looking up information and/or planning a vacation to

countries shown in *WIDM*. In other words, while many viewers indicate to learn from the programme, *WIDM* does not seem to influence its viewers very much in regards to knowledge about other countries such as Japan. However, the fact that viewers learn from *WIDM* about other countries, indicates that their knowledge, images, and ideas are influenced to a certain extent, although to what extent remains difficult to measure.

In retrospective, carrying out a detailed and complete analysis of *WIDM* was very rewarding, as it provided a lot of information and insights not to be gotten from analyzing only the production, content or reception of the show. Especially the interview with Anton Jongstra and Aldo Paape yielded insightful and relevant information to support the results of the content analysis. However, the research was also limited, as it took place one full year after the episodes were broadcasted on television. Although Jongstra and Paape seemingly had no troubles recalling the production process of the Japan-season, several survey respondents indicated they could not remember *WIDM* in Japan very well. As a consequence, the survey avoided too specific questions and mainly consisted of more general questions about viewing experiences. Future research on television programmes and its reception would do well to carry out a survey as soon as possible after the broadcasting of the programme. Moreover, *Lost in Tokyo* as the focus of analysis might have yielded very interesting results, as the show completely focused on Japanese culture and society. Due to the cancellation of the show and the passing of time since the original television broadcasts, a full analysis including interviews with its producers and a survey of viewers would have been impossible. However, on its website RTL mentions that it wants to give *Lost in Tokyo* a new chance in the future. If this indeed happens, the programme would be a very interesting subject for further analysis and research.

To conclude, then, by carrying out an extensive analysis of *WIDM* and other contemporary Western representations of Japan in popular media, this study supports the writings and critiques of Edward Said, who – until his death in 2003 – maintained that Orientalism was not a phenomenon of the past, but still the hegemonic discourse or dominant style of describing, understanding, representing and ultimately controlling the non-Western Other. This is an important conclusion and a potential point of departure of future research, especially with the increased and increasing importance on the world stage of ‘the Orient’ – Japan and ‘newcomers’ such as China and India.

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Appendix A – Transcript interview Anton Jongstra and Aldo Paape

The interview with Anton Jongsma (Senior Editor – *eindredacteur*) and Aldo Paape (former Senior Production Manager of *WIDM*, now working for *Expeditie Robinson* on the commercial channel RTL5) took place on Friday, April 1 in Amsterdam from around 20.15 to 22.00. The entire interview was conducted in Dutch and has therefore also been transcribed in Dutch.

AJ = Anton Jongstra

AP = Aldo Paape

MH and questions in bold letters = Martijn Huisman

Clarifications and additions to the original text have been placed between square brackets []

Wat is precies jullie rol bij de productie van *Wie is de Mol?*

AP: Ik was productie leider, zo kan je het noemen. Het hoofd van de productie, uitvoerend producent, productie leider. Ik regelde samen met een aantal mensen de productie. We regelden alle locaties en alle opdrachten, om die mogelijk te maken. Productie houdt eigenlijk in dat je probeert om alle mensen op het juiste tijdstip met de juiste spullen op de juiste plek te krijgen.

AJ: En wat ik deed is eigenlijk... Wie dan? En waar dan? Het begon eigenlijk met van 'waar gaan we naartoe?' En, 'wat gaan we daar doen?' Dat moet ik dan altijd bedenken. En dan daarnaast, 'oké, dan gaan we er zus en zo naartoe'. Dus eigenlijk is het heel simpel. Als het om geld gaat, en regelen en afspraken met mensen, dan is het Aldo. En voor mij is het alleen maar, 'wat doen we?'. En waarom. En waar. Maar hoe we daar dan komen is weer voor Aldo. Dus ik heb het leuke werk.

AP: Ik heb de logistieke ellende.

Waarom speelt *Wie is de Mol* zich af in verre landen? [stilte] Waarom niet op Terschelling bijvoorbeeld?

AJ: Ja, of Drenthe. Dat noemen we zelf altijd als voorbeeld. Een deel van de kijkers wil gewoon heel graag iets van een land meekrijgen. De AVRO, de uitzender, de zendgemachtigde, wil dat ook. Dus ja, je hebt meer kijkers als je het in een leuk en spannend land doet. Zo simpel is het.

MH: Is dat wat jullie denken of wat jullie bijvoorbeeld middels kijkersonderzoek weten?

AJ: Dat denken we. In seizoen twaalf zouden we het ons misschien kunnen veroorloven om *Wie is de Mol* op Terschelling op te nemen. Dat zou kunnen. Dan zouden we misschien nog best wel veel kijkers hebben.

MH: Maar minder?

AJ: Maar zeker minder. Maar nog steeds een miljoen denk ik.

AP: Kijk, een bijkomend voordeel is ook dat je in de verre landen wat minder Nederlanders tegen komt die het geheim zullen en kunnen verklappen.

MH: Ik las dat er op Internet berichten waren verschenen dat Pieter-Jan Hagens en de hele club waren gezien op Narita Airport [vliegveld nabij Tokio].

AJ: Klopt.

MH: Het was dus ver van te voren al uitgekomen dat het programma zich waarschijnlijk in Japan zou afspelen?

AJ: Sterker nog, wie er in de finale zat. Dat stond in juni al op het Internet. Ja, heel triest. Maar de mensen hadden zelf niet in de gaten wat de gevolgen waren voor ons.

MH: Dat is toch wel vervelend?

AJ: Ja, dat is heel vervelend. Maar wij hebben het gewoon doodgezwegen. Niet op gereageerd en toen is iedereen het gewoon weer vergeten. Ik heb niemand erover gehoord.

AP: De sociale media zijn op het ogenblik dusdanig allround aanwezig dat het heel lastig wordt. Het voordeel is... het uitlekken van de kandidaten lukt niet. Dat is nog nooit voorgekomen. En van de crew

weet men ook niet wie dat zijn. Dus als een buitenlandse filmploeg ergens is, ook al zijn het Nederlanders, dan kunnen ze daar nog niet aan zien dat het voor *Wie is de Mol* is. Dus dat is nog een voordeel.

Met welk doel wordt *Wie is de Mol* gemaakt?

AP: In eerste instantie is het vermaak, want het is televisie. Het is niet echt een eerste levensbehoefte. Maar als je er eenmaal bent, wil je ook wel heel graag de mooie plekken van het land laten zien. Maar goed, dat komt er dus bij. Het is geen reisprogramma. We gaan niet naar Japan om te laten zien hoe mooi Japan is.

MH: Maar het is dus wel een soort van secundair doel om kijkers wat te laten zien van de wereld?

AP: Ja, dat is zeker zo.

Waarom zijn jullie naar Japan gegaan?

AJ: Voor mij was het persoonlijk *het* land waar ik ooit nog een keer naartoe wilde. Dan kun je zeggen, ‘ga eens op vakantie of zo’. Maar ik verkeer in de gelukkige omstandigheid dat het ook mijn werk is. Ik was zo benieuwd naar Japan, ik verwachtte er zoveel van. Dat het anders was. Ja, gewoon een andere wereld. En het leek mij daardoor dus ook perfect voor *De Mol*. Daarom wilde ik graag naar Japan. Dus dan ga je dat uitzoeken.

MH: Dus op jouw instigatie is dat proces gestart en daarna uitgewerkt door...

AJ: Ja.

AP: Ik was geen voorstander.

MH: Want?

AP: Ik heb nooit iets met Japan gehad. Ik heb sowieso niet zoveel met Azië. We hebben ooit in Thailand opgenomen en dat vond ik ook niet echt het leukste land om te bivakkeren. Dus ik had enige vrees dat het in Japan ook die kant op zou gaan qua menselijke contacten. En daarnaast is het ook een vreselijk duur land. We zijn eigenlijk een jaar te laat gegaan, want een jaar ervoor was het heel goed te doen. Maar toen was het net verkeerdt.

Maar hoe begint dat dan? Jullie vliegen naar Japan en dan gaan jullie kijken voor locaties?

AJ: We laten ons daarin wel adviseren door mensen met wie wij daar in zee zijn gegaan. Die zeggen dan, ‘dat is mooi en dat is mooi, en daar moet je naartoe’. Dat komt omdat zij daar contacten hebben. En dat vinden wij verder niet erg, want wij hebben ook contacten nodig. Als we dan zien dat het daar mooi is... En Nagasaki, daar wilde ik zelf ook naartoe omdat dat Holland Village daar is. Dat wilde ik zien. Geweldig is dat. Nagasaki, allerleukste stad van Japan. Van waar ik in Japan geweest ben dan. Ik vond dat echt heel erg leuk. Maar in dat Holland Village, dat Huis ten Bosch, hebben we helemaal niks gedaan. Drie kwartier geweest. Toen hebben we een andere Holland Village gevonden wat al acht jaar geleden failliet was gegaan. Het stond al acht jaar leeg. Een hele Zaanse schans, molens, Hoorn was nagebouwd.

MH: Ik wist niet dat er twee parken waren.

AP: Je had eerst Holland Village, dat was redelijk succesvol. Toen dacht een andere ondernemer, ‘hé, dat is succesvol, ik ga het groter en nog mooier maken. En die heeft op twintig kilometer daarvandaan Huis ten Bosch gesticht. Dat andere park is meteen failliet gegaan, want die hadden geen klanten meer. Het is voor ons veel interessanter om een park te vinden wat eigenlijk helemaal vergaan is.

MH: Het zag er inderdaad verlaten uit, desolaat.

AJ: Volledig vervallen. Roltrappen overwoekerd door struiken en zo.

AP: Prachtig. Jij zult denken, ‘je gaat naar Japan, waarom ga je dan in godsnaam niet naar Kyoto toe?’

MH: De culture hoofdstad van Japan.

AJ: Daar zijn we ook geweest. Daar kregen we van alle kanten te horen, ook van onze lokale mensen, ‘je krijgt niks geregeld, want ze zijn totaal verwend door alle film ploegen’.

AP: Onmogelijk om vergunningen te krijgen.

AJ: Wel een hele mooie stad trouwens.

Wordt *WIDM* in Nederland bedacht of is er ook veel improvisatie ter plekke?

AJ: Nee, niet in de opname periode. Als we gaan filmen is het voor mij de vierde keer dat ik op die locatie ben en voor Aldo de derde keer. Wij hebben dus dan al drie reizen gehad van te voren, waarbij de laatste reis is gekoppeld aan de opnames. Maar dat uitdenken gebeurt tijdens de eerste drie bezoeken. Als er eenmaal gedraaid wordt, dan wordt er niet meer geïmproviseerd. Zo weinig mogelijk.

MH: Dus alles staat al vast?

AJ: Ja.

MH: De spellen en de ideeën daarvoor komen allemaal tot stand tijdens die eerdere bezoeken aan een land?

AP: Van tevoren heb je soms ook wel ideeën, maar je moet locaties zien te vinden waar het realiseerbaar is. Het gebeurt vaker andersom. Dat je ergens komt, een locatie ontdekt, en denkt, 'hier kunnen we wel wat mee'. Zo mooi, zo interessant, zo intrigerend, daar wordt wat bij bedacht.

In de aftiteling van *Wie is de Mol* staat een lange lijst met Japanse medewerkers en productiebedrijven. Welke rol speelden de Japanners precies bij de totstandkoming van het programma?

AP: Vooral de productie. Wij hebben altijd heel veel lokale mensen in dienst. Want ja, dat is noodzakelijk. Omdat je dan alle locaties leert kennen die je wil kennen. Om alles te regelen is het ook noodzakelijk. Ze werken dus ook mee met het organiseren van de opdrachten en ze begeleiden ons daar bij. De mensen die we in dienst hadden hebben we dus volledig productioneel gebruikt. We hebben een heleboel locaties via hun weten te regelen. We hebben voor Shibuya, dat kruispunt waar iedereen filmt maar waar wij vergunningen voor wilden hebben om niet het risico te lopen om te worden weggestuurd, uit den treure contact met hun en met de Nederlandse ambassade gehad om dat voor elkaar te krijgen. Uiteindelijk wel gelukt, op een tijdstip dat er haast geen mensen rondliepen. Maar goed, dat was wel een hele leuke opdracht. Ze hebben ons op heel veel manieren geholpen, maar het ging wel heel moeizaam, dat moet ik wel zeggen. Het was voor hun heel lastig.

Die opdracht in Shibuya in aflevering acht was wel bijzonder. Maar hadden jullie niet liever op een drukker moment op de dag gefilmd?

AP: Dat mocht niet. We hebben ook heel lang zitten twijfelen hoor. Want heel veel mensen zeiden, 'doe het gewoon'. Want wat in Japan ook zo is, ze zijn heel erg beleefd. En als je als Europeaan daar bent zijn ze heel erg voorzichtig om jou te beledigen. Dus als je doorzet heb je dikke kans dat ze niks tegen jou zeggen. Maar wij hadden Japanse mensen in dienst. Als zij [de Japanse autoriteiten] erachter kwamen dat wij Japanners in dienst hadden, dan zouden deze daar enorm veel last van hebben. En dat wilden we ook niet, want die mensen deden heel goed werk voor ons. We hadden het natuurlijk wel kunnen doorzetten, maar dan hadden we schijt aan al die Japanners. 'We doen het gewoon, we kijken wel wat er op televisie komt'.

AJ: Dat heeft *Lost in Tokyo* gedaan. Die hebben hun finale, die nooit is uitgezonden, op Shibuya gefilmd. Met ongeveer vijf camera's. En elke keer hoorden ze weer over de porto, 'oké, camera team vier is nu opgepakt'. Of in ieder geval weg. 'Oké, vijf is nu ook weg, maar vier is weer terug. Oh, twee is weer weg'. En zo hadden ze steeds wel minstens twee camera's draaien.

MH: Maar dat is toch totaal respectloos?

AJ: Ja, klopt. Vind ik ook onbegrijpelijk.

MH: Maar hoe weet je dat als het nooit uitgezonden is?

AJ: Wij hebben gesproken met mijn collega van dat programma.

Werden de Japanse medewerkers ook ingezet voor het bedenken van spellen, of alleen voor het vinden van locaties?

AJ: Nee, het bedenken van de spellen doen we helemaal zelf. Wij laten ons wel adviseren over de locaties. En soms vragen we specifiek naar een locatie. Bijvoorbeeld, 'we zoeken een heel druk kruispunt'. En dan vinden zij die voor ons.

Hoe zit het met de voorbereiding in Nederland?

AJ: We gebruiken Internet, reisgidsen en we lezen boeken. Ter voorbereiding op Japan heb ik bijvoorbeeld *Tekkels in Tokyo* gelezen. Maar verder varen we op wat onze lokale producers aandragen.

In aflevering twee bezochten jullie inderdaad dat Holland Village. Op een gegeven moment wordt door presentator Pieter Jan Hagens gezegd, 'pas op voor de mannen in zwarte pakken'. Doelde die opdracht op de yakuza [Japanse maffia] en was dat misschien te moeilijk voor de kijkers?

AJ: Ik denk dat dat te maken heeft met de Japanners, die spreken niet over de yakuza. En wij durfden dat ook niet aan. Het waren gewoon mannen in zwarte pakken voor ons.

MH: Maar het was wel gebaseerd op de yakuza?

AJ: Ja, zeker. Natuurlijk. En de Nederlanders zouden dat ook wel begrijpen. Maar wij hebben dat gewoon niet zo geformuleerd.

AP: Niet echt een gespreksonderwerp daar.

AJ: We durfden bij de lokale mensen met wie we werkten het woord yakuza niet te noemen, want dan gingen ze weer volledig op tilt. Helemaal in de stress.

MH: Het was dus uit een soort van zelfbescherming?

AJ: Ja, ter bescherming van onze lokale mensen.

Hadden de Japanners met wie jullie samenwerkten nog enige inspraak in de eindmontage, in wat er op tv werd vertoond in Nederland?

AP: Nee.

MH: Omdat je net zegt dat de yakuza niet werden genoemd vanwege die lokale mensen.

AJ: Omdat wij dat dachten. Wij dachten dat zij het niet leuk zouden vinden als wij yakuza zouden hebben. En dat we dan misschien daar helemaal niet mochten filmen.

AP: Daaruit kan je concluderen dat *De Mol* ook een soort mensen heeft die nog een moraal hebben. Die dus niet de plaatselijke cultuur voor het hoofd willen stoten.

MH: Dus niet ten koste van alles het programma maken?

AP: Nee, daar denken we heel erg aan. Dit programma wordt gemaakt met enorme samenwerking met de lokale mensen. Dat is ook het mooie van de serie, dat je veel direct contact hebt met de lokale bevolking. Waardoor je ook helemaal in de cultuur duikt. Je hoort heel veel dingen die je niet zal merken als je op vakantie gaat, ook niet als je drie maanden gaat. Omdat je dan toch op een hele andere manier met mensen omgaat dan als je elke dag echt contact hebt om bepaalde dingen mogelijk te maken, met locatie-houders en dergelijke. Dan leer je de gebruiken ook heel goed kennen.

AJ: Maar het is wel zo dat binnen de uitzendingen zelf, met de kandidaten, er heel weinig interactie met de Japanners was. Veel minder dan in andere landen.

MH: Was er buiten de afleveringen op televisie wel veel contact tussen de bevolking en de kandidaten?

AJ: Nee. We houden daar heel erg van, contact tussen de kandidaten en de bevolking, en zetten het dan ook altijd in de uitzending.

Iets dat me enorm opviel was de rol van muziek in het programma. Welke rol speelt muziek volgens jullie?

AJ: Hetzelfde als in speelfilms. Muziek is stemming maken. Zonder muziek zou het gewoon saai zijn om naar te kijken. Daarom gebruiken we heel vaak film muziek of muziek uit series. En daar zit sowieso al een soort van spanning in. Daardoor wordt het spannend om naar te kijken. Het is natuurlijk ook heel spannend om naar te kijken. De opdrachten, de actie, en daarnaast spanning om wie de Mol is. Ja, het is gewoon een film-wet.

AP: Het is wel goed dat je het zegt hoor. Want heel vaak wordt muziek ondergewaardeerd. En sterker nog, wij krijgen altijd heel veel klachten dat de muziek te overheersend is en dat mensen het niet kunnen verstaan en daarom het spel niet begrijpen. Het zijn dan wel vaak wat oudere mensen die een nieuwe televisie hebben gekocht, waarbij ze niet helemaal doorhebben dat ze hem anders kunnen instellen.

AJ: Dit jaar niet één klacht. Wel over dat er zoveel gevloekt werd. Heel veel mails op gekregen dit jaar.

In het Japan-seizoen komt bijvoorbeeld veel muziek voor uit de Chinese film *House of the Flying Daggers*. Is dit om een soort van Oosterse sfeer op te roepen?

AJ: We proberen de dingen niet te overdrijven. Wat we hadden kunnen doen is allemaal Japans of Aziatisch getingel of gepangel. Dat doen we dus bewust niet. We hebben ook in Jordanië gefilmd, in het Midden-Oosten, dan kun je ook van dat gezang erin doen. Doen we ook niet. We kiezen meestal wel voor Westerse muziek waar dat soort elementen inzitten. Maar wat dus wel Westerse muziek is. Ook omdat wij als westerlingen, als Nederlanders, er helemaal gek van worden als we dat de hele tijd horen.

MH: De muziek speelt dus wel een belangrijke rol om de sfeer als het ware aan te geven?

AP: Te ondersteunen.

MH: De muziek die in Japan is gebruikt is bijvoorbeeld het afgelopen seizoen niet gebruikt in El Salvador en Nicaragua?

AP: Nee.

AJ: Wel een paar basis dingen. Maar in principe wordt voor elk land aparte muziek gekozen.

Dient het land waarin het programma zich afspeelt als een soort van achtergrond of exotisch decor waartegen het spel zich afspeelt of zie ik dat verkeerd?

AJ: Ja, dat is wel zo. Het is voor de kijkers een extra trigger om te kijken. Het spel alleen vinden ze heel leuk, maar als het in een leuke omgeving is vinden ze het nog leuker.

AP: En wat ook meespeelt, ook voor de makers zelf, is dat het zeer uitdagend is om op plekken te komen waar je van denkt dat daar je hersens gaan werken om nieuwe spellen te bedenken. Dat heb je wat sneller in een exotisch land dan dat je in Drenthe een hunebed tegen komt die je al in je jeugd hebt gezien.

AJ: Dat is wel zo. Als je een vulkaan ziet waar je dan in vier minuten vanaf kunt rennen... [in vijfde aflevering *WIDM* in Japan] Ja, dat is wel heel leuk, dat heb je op Terschelling niet.

Tussen de verschillende onderdelen in de afleveringen worden vaak straatbeelden gemonteerd, waarin bijvoorbeeld een vrouw in een kimono langs loopt of een Japanner met een aparte haardos. Zit daar nog een idee achter?

AJ: Dat is gewoon mooi.

AP: Dat is net als die muziek, het betekent een bepaalde sfeer. Je wilt toch ook wel laten zien dat het in Japan is. Dus als je ergens bij een rivier staat, wil je wel weten dat die rivier in Japan is. Dus dan accentueer je dat door muziek en beelden er tussendoor te monteren.

AJ: Het wordt ook heel goed gewaardeerd door de kijkers volgens mij.

MH: Dus het spel speelt zich af tegen de achtergrond van Japan, maar die achtergrond komt wel regelmatig duidelijk naar voren?

AJ: Ja, op dat soort momenten kun je dat heel goed inkleuren.

Hebben jullie de film *Lost in Translation* gezien?

AJ: Ja.

MH: *Lost in Translation* gaat over Bill Murray and Scarlett Johansson in Tokio, waarbij Tokio eigenlijk fungeert als de achtergrond waartegen hun relatie zich afspeelt. Is Japan in *Wie is de Mol* ook te zien als de achtergrond waartegen het hele spel zich afspeelt? Is *Wie is de Mol* dus te vergelijken met *Lost in Translation*?

AJ: Ja, eigenlijk is het wel te vergelijken. Het gaat bij die film om die twee. En ze gebruiken Japan om aan te geven hoe moeilijk het leven soms is. En dat is bij *De Mol* ook wel zo. Wij doen ons eigen ding, ons eigen spel, we hebben ons eigen mysterie, en de achtergrond is Japan. En we gebruiken dingen uit die achtergrond om ons eigen mysterie te vergroten. Bijvoorbeeld een ninja, of karaoke in een bioscoop. Want karaoke is iets Japans. Maar letterlijk Japanse karaoke doen gaat te ver voor ons, want dat snappen wij niet. Hoe de Japanners dat... daar begrijpen wij echt niets van. Daar zullen de kijkers niets van begrijpen. Dus daar doen wij ons eigen ding mee. Maar het is wel zo, we doen geen karaoke opdracht in Mexico.

Het viel me op dat er niet of nauwelijks gebruik wordt gemaakt van een voice-over.

AJ: Eén tekst, en die is al zes jaar hetzelfde. ‘Tijd voor de test. Twintig vragen over de identiteit van de Mol. Degene die de vragen het slechtst beantwoordt moet onmiddellijk naar huis. Behalve de Mol. De Mol blijft altijd in het spel’.

Er wordt dus op die manier weinig verteld over Japan, haar bevolking en de cultuur. Moeten kijkers dat zelf uit de beelden halen?

AJ: We laten Japan zien door de locaties en door de opdrachten die we doen. We proberen er wel een lokaal tintje aan te geven, zoals bijvoorbeeld met dat karaoke. Maar in Japan was het wel minder dan normaal. Want we wilden bijvoorbeeld wat doen met dat Noh-theater. Aldo weet misschien hoe die onderhandelingen gingen voor dat Noh-theater in Yamagata.

AP: Wat de Japanners natuurlijk heel sterk hebben is dat ze niet belachelijk gemaakt willen worden. Dus ze willen hun cultuur beschermen, daar zijn ze terecht heel erg trots op. En zodra je met een idee komt van een tv-spel in combinatie met hun honderdduizend jaar oude cultuur, dan is het heel erg moeilijk. Dus het is uiteindelijk misgegaan omdat zij dat gewoon niet toestonden. De locatie ook niet, want we hadden al heel veel water bij de wijn gedaan. Maar uiteindelijk zijn ze toch afgehaakt. Ze vonden het blijkbaar toch te eng om daar een in hun ogen plat tv-programma op los te laten.

Hoe kwamen jullie erbij om spellen te doen met ninja, yakuza, karaoke, thee-ceremonie enzovoorts?

AJ: Omdat *Wie is de Mol* vaak wat spektakel en ‘aanvaller van buiten’ moet hebben, dachten we dat we iets met ninja’s of samoerai moesten doen. Vandaar de ninja’s. In het verlengde daarvan: in Holland Village, dat failliete pretpark vlakbij Nagasaki, hadden we zogenaamde ‘bad guys’ nodig. Dus toen kwamen we bij de yakuza uit. En ja, dat geldt ook voor de karaoke. We wilden daar wel wat mee, maar dan niet op de manier zoals de Japanners dat doen. Daar kunnen wij als Nederlanders vrij weinig mee. Daarom hebben we dat vertaald naar de bioscoop. En de theeceremonie, die hebben we op een research-reis zelf gedaan. Ik vond dat zo apart dat ik er het liefst zelf iets mee wilde doen, maar we konden er geen opdracht bij verzinnen. Daarom hebben we de kandidaten zo’n ceremonie laten doen en hebben we er een ‘groepsproces’ van gemaakt.

Zijn jullie je bij het bedenken en produceren van *Wie is de Mol* bewust van stereotypen, en zo ja, hoe staan jullie tegenover het gebruik van die stereotypen?

AJ: Ach, wat is een stereotype? Ik heb ooit een aflevering gezien van *The Amazing Race*, een Amerikaans avontuurlijk reisprogramma met kandidaten, en toen deden ze één dag Amsterdam aan. De kandidaten moesten een kast in een huis takelen en een fiets zoeken op Amsterdam CS. Het ontbrak er nog aan dat ze op klompen moesten lopen. Hoe dan ook, wij zijn ons er niet echt bewust van, maar we proberen de clichés zoveel mogelijk te vermijden omdat we er zelf gewoonweg niet van houden. Nu zul je zeggen, hoe zit het dan met die ninja’s en de karaoke? Dan zeg ik, we hebben cosplay, lolita en Visual Kei links laten liggen, evenals de geisha’s. Daar kunnen we gewoon niks mee. En met ninja’s en aangepaste karaoke wel.

AP: Het is denk ik een mix, een beetje bevestigend maar toch ook wel de standaard stereotypen voorkomen.

***Wie is de Mol* wordt uitgezonden op de publieke omroep en bekeken door bijna twee miljoen mensen. Brengt dit een grotere verantwoordelijkheid met zich mee om bijvoorbeeld een integer beeld te schetsen van een land en het te laten zien ‘zoals het is’?**

AJ: Nee, vind ik niet. Het is niet onze verantwoordelijkheid. We krijgen wel het verzoek van de omroep om te letten op het in beeld brengen van cultuur en het land. Maar ik moet je zeggen, dat doen we al uit onszelf. Het ligt niet in onze aard om de uitwassen te benadrukken. En we laten het land en de kandidaten ook altijd zien zoals het is, want dat is vaak al bijzonder genoeg!

Denken jullie dat *Wie de Mol* het wereldbeeld van kijkers beïnvloed? Met andere woorden, hoe kijkers andere landen en bevolkingen zien?

AP: Ik denk van wel. Daarom maken we een land ook niet belachelijk door het gebruiken van stereotypen.

AJ: Dat weet ik niet echt. Ik denk wel dat een land als bijvoorbeeld El Salvador door *Wie is de Mol* een veel positievere imago heeft gekregen dan het daarvoor had. Met het burgeroorlog-verleden en zo. Mensen zullen door *Wie is de Mol* het idee hebben gekregen dat het een land is om naar op vakantie te gaan. En dat is ook zo. Ik denk dat het beeld van Japan niet echt is veranderd door *Wie is de Mol*.

Appendix B – Discourse analysis

This appendix contains descriptions of all relevant elements in the ten episodes that make up the *WIDM* 2010 Japan season. For practical reasons and because *WIDM* is a Dutch programme, the descriptions of the episodes have been noted down in Dutch. Conversations or opinions voiced by candidates and the presenter have been written down verbatim. Episodes of *WIDM* are very similar to each other and typically follow the same structure, consisting of the following elements or blocks:

(Introduction) – Only in the first episode of the season.

Review – A short review of the previous episode, showing which assignments were done and which candidate was eliminated.

Introduction – Map of the world which transforms to a map of Japan to pinpoint the location of the candidates. Presenter Pieter-Jan Hagens gives a short introduction of about thirty seconds to this week's episode.

Leader – Shows the candidates who are still in the show (marked with a green fingerprint) and who have already left the show (red fingerprint), accompanied by shots of daily life, Japanese people and fragments from various episodes.

Interval – Candidates discuss what has happened during last week's assignments and especially during the test and the elimination. Sometimes shots of the contestants on their way to the first assignment.

Assignment 1 – The first assignment is played. Shots of the assignment and the candidates in action are accompanied by candidates explaining how they experienced the assignment.

Interval – Short interval between assignments. Often candidates travel to the location of the next assignment and discuss the previous one.

Assignment 2

Interval – Short interval between assignments. Often candidates travel to the location of the next assignment and discuss the previous assignment.

Assignment 3

Interval – Candidates evaluate the day (assignments, who they suspect is the Mole) together or alone.

Test – Candidates have to make a test on the computer about the identity of the Mole. During the test, comments and flashbacks are shown.

Elimination – By presenting either a green screen (pass) or red screen (fail) presenter Hagens reveals which contestant has to leave the show and go home.

Episode 1 – Nagasaki – 07/01/2010

Introductie (00:00:08)

[Presentator Hagens staat in Tokio voor een nachtelijke skyline]

Hagens: “Tien bekende Nederlanders strijden om de pot in *Wie is de Mol?* Voor de tiende serie reizen ze af naar het land van shogun en samoerai. Ze reizen naar Japan.” [shots van Japan; een ninja, het drukke kruispunt in Shibuya, een helikopter, de brug in Nagasaki, een ladder] “Geld voor de pot verdienen de deelnemers met het uitvoeren van opdrachten, maar de Mol in hun midden saboteert die. Wie in de laatste aflevering de Mol ontmaskert, wint de pot. Wie is de Mol? Niemand is te vertrouwen, en niets is wat het lijkt.”

Leader (00:00:36)

Een combinatie van allerlei shots: een straat met allerlei borden in Japanse tekens, een Japanse jongedame die in kimono de straat oversteekt, kandidaat Arjen Lubach, versnelt shot van Shibuya Crossing waar honderden mensen oversteken, kandidaat Tim Akkerman, natuur in de buurt van Sendai, piratenschap in Nagasaki, kandidate Sanne Vogel, versnelde ondergaande zon achter Tokio skyline inclusief Tokio Tower, nachtelijke beelden van Tokio met passerende auto's en neonverlichting, deelnemer Erik van der Hoff, beelden van ninja in actie in het donker, deelnemer Barbara Barend, jongedame verkleed met groen haar (cosplay) op straat, Japanse jongen met mondkapje op straat, voorbij lopende Japanse jongedame met blond kapsel, kandidaat Manuel Venderbos, beelden van een tempel (Yamadera) en die (stand)beelden, kandidate Loretta Schrijver, strand in Odaiba, kandidaat Frits Sissing, Japanse natuur (vulkaan), bordje met Japans teken, krater, kandidate Kim Pieters, mannen in zwarte pakken, zonnebrillen en wapens ('yakuza'), kandidate Hind, groepsfoto voor een tempel.

Introductie Kandidaten (00:01:28)

Kandidaten reizen naar Japan (00:05:04)

Kaart van de wereld waarop Japan wordt getoond en vervolgens waar Tokio ligt. Aankomst op Tokio International Airport (Narita Airport). Beeld van televisiescherm met daarop Japanse tekens. Kaart verschijnt weer, ditmaal om de afstand en locaties van Tokio en Nagasaki te tonen.

[soundtrack *House of the Flying Daggers – Nr. 11 – Farewell Nr. 1*]

Kandidaat Tim Akkerman probeert al direct Japans te praten met de Japanner die de kandidaten opwacht op het vliegveld. Nachtelijk straatbeeld van Nagasaki, meisjes in minuscule kleding met roze knuffel, neonverlichting.

Opdracht 1 – Megami Ohashi Bridge (00:12:12)

[soundtrack *House of the Flying Daggers – Nr. 9 – No Way Out*]

Dag 1 in Nagasaki. Kandidaten verzamelen bij een tempelcomplex, dat in combinatie met de muziek en vogelgeluiden als zeer rustiek en mysterieus aandoet. Tempel-medewerkers in traditionele Japanse kledij in beeld, biddende man, groep schoolkinderen die trappen naar tempel beklimt. Grote tempeldeuren slaan open als kandidaten trap beklimmen, daarachter wacht presentator Hagens.

Hagens: “Goedemorgen. Welkom in Japan.” [spannende muziek, vogelgeluiden]

Beelden van Nagasaki (stad, gebouwen), straat met verkeersborden uit leader, voorbij lopende Japanners, jongedame die in kimono de straat oversteekt, Japanners wachtende voor stoplicht, oudere vrouw in kimono met paraplu die voor stoplicht wacht, groepje Japanse meisjes.

Interval (00:25:35)

Beelden van Nagasaki. Oude brug, riviertje waarin koi karpers zwemmen.

Van der Hoff: “En toen kregen wij allemaal, per persoon, 2000 Yen.”

Lubach: “No books? Oké, arigatou.”

Opdracht 2 – Voorwerp-opdracht Nagasaki riviertje (00:28:00)

Interval (00:38:40)

Nachtelijke beelden van Nagasaki; neonverlichting. [**Oosters’ aandoende muziek**]

De groep zit op tatami-matten aan lage tafels in een ‘typisch Japans vertrek’ met schuifdeuren. Op tafel allerlei Japans voedsel, vooral vis. Oudere Japanse dame in kimono staat er bij en kijkt ernaar. Kandidaten eten met stokjes.

Test (00:40:53)

De kandidaten verlaten het hotel. Japans personeel buigt bij de uitgang als kandidaten het hotel verlaten. Japanse dame in roze kimono rent door binnenplaats om met haar telefoon foto’s te maken van de kandidaten voordat die de bus instappen. Dame in kimono en kandidaat Akkermans buigen het hoofd na het maken van de foto. Als de bus weg rijdt zwaaien kandidaten naar Japanse medewerkers/eigenaars hotel en vice versa. [**rustige muziek**]

Eliminatie (00:45:55)

Episode 2 – Nagasaki – 14/01/2010

Review vorige week (00.00.06)

Introductie (00.00.48)

In drukke winkelstraat in Nagasaki, op de achtergrond lopen geüniformeerde schoolmeisjes.

Leader (00.01.18)

Interval (00.02.10)

Opdracht 1 – Tram-opdracht Holland Slope (00.02.58)

Straatbeelden van Nagasaki. Voorbijrijdende trams. [**spannende, ‘Oosterse’ muziek**]. Beelden van geüniformeerde schoolkinderen wachtende bij tramhalte. Enkele straatbeelden; twee oudere dames in kimono op straat onder een parasol.

Voor de opdracht benaderen de kandidaten enkele Japanners. Lubach tegen een groep geüniformeerde schoolmeisjes: “Hello, do you speak English?”

Van der Hoff [privé voor de camera]: “Nou, ik heb weleens gehoord dat het ontzettend moeilijk is om te communiceren met Japanners. En dan denk ik, ‘ja, jongens, je schrijft iets op en je vraagt waar het is’. Maar het was verschrikkelijk. We werden van links naar rechts gestuurd, en iedere keer dan waren we ergens en

dan dachten we, ‘we zijn in de buurt’, en dan wees iemand weer de andere kant op. [beelden van kandidaten die Japanners aanspreken]

Lubach: “Do you speak better English?”

Pieters: “Do you speak English?”

De andere kandidaten overkomt hetzelfde als ze proberen Engels sprekende Japanners te vinden. Straatbeelden; twee Japanse dames in kimono (zelfde als enkele minuten eerder), verkeersregelaar.

Jonge Japanse meisjes lopen voorbij en worden uitgebreid in beeld gebracht. [klassieke muziek]
Schoolkinderen in uniform bij bushalte in beeld.

Opdracht wordt in Peace Memorial Park succesvol afgerond. [Muziek uit House of the Flying Daggers]
Straatbeelden van Nagasaki en kandidaten die op weg zijn naar een nieuwe verblijfplaats. Bij de deur schoenen uit.

Interval (00.16.54)

Zittend op tatami, eten aan lage tafel.

Opdracht 2 – Huis ten Bosch (00.18.40)

Hagens: “Goedemorgen. Je moet van mij aannemen dat je nog steeds in Japan bent. Je gaat zometeen naar buiten. Doe voorzichtig. En ontdek dat je in een droom bent terecht gekomen. Een boze droom. Er mogen maximaal twee van jullie tegelijk naar buiten. Je mag ook in je eentje. Vind het geld binnen een uur. En kijk uit, voor die mannen in de zwarte pakken.

Japanners in zwarte pakken, met zwarte zonnebrillen en lasergeweren lopen door het park om kandidaten af te schieten. Eén van de Japanners zit in een donkere controlekamer en geeft in een zware, onnatuurlijke en dus vervormde stem via portofoon aanwijzingen in het Japans aan zijn ‘handlangers’ buiten op straat.

Interval (00.33.42)

Opdracht 3 – Jokkers (00.33.53)

Test (00.42.10)

Eliminatie (00.46.30)

Episode 3 – Nagasaki – 21/01/2010

Review vorige week (00.00.06)

Introductie (00.00.48)

Hagens doet de introductie voor een traditioneel Japans gebouw waar later de lunch zal plaatsvinden.

Leader (00.01.16)

Interval (00.02.07)

[soundtrack House of the Flying Daggers – Nr. 6 – *Taking Her Hand*]

Opdracht 1 – Driving School (00.03.35)

Rij-instructeurs zijn geheel zwart in het pak, dragen witte handschoenen.

Hagens: “We gaan hier zien wat jullie Hollandse rijbewijs waard is in Japan. [...] Vergeet niet, Japan is een land van regels.” [korte shots van allerlei verkeersborden]

Lubach: “Hier schijnen ze dus op een parkoers te leren autorijden. Echt met zebrapaden, stoplichten, en inparkeerhaventjes, en hellingproefjes.”

Een klein beetje contact tussen Nederlandse kandidaten en de rij-instructeurs. Sommigen spreken wat Japans, anderen proberen wat Engels.

Interval (00.15.55)

Bustocht naar volgende opdracht. [spannende muziek] Beelden van Japanse woningen en natuur gezien vanuit de bus.

Opdracht 2 – Lunch in Geisenkaku Garden (00.16.34)

[soundtrack House of the Flying Daggers – Nr. 19 – *Until the End*]

Overzicht-shot van Geisenkaku Garden bijgestaan door muziek en wederom vogelgeluiden. Effect is dat het gebouw en de algehele sfeer aandoen als mysterieus, rustiek, ‘Oosters’. Schoenen uit, kandidaten naar binnen. Kandidaten gaan op kussentjes zitten aan lage tafels.

[‘Oosterse’ muziek speelt voort]

Vrouw in blauwe kimono komt kamer binnen gelopen. [Oosterse muziek] De vrouw gaat op haar knieën zitten en maakt diepe buiging. ‘Irasshaimase’ (welkom in het Japans). Even later komt ze terug met drankjes en schenkt ze de glazen vol. Het buigen en inschenken van glazen komt ‘gedienstig’ en ‘nederig’ over.

Pieters: “Het heeft een beetje iets onheilspellends”.

Van der Hoff [tegen de groep]: “Hebben jullie iets gelezen over de eetgewoonten in Japan?”

Van der Hoff [privé voor de camera]: “Het was een hele ongemakkelijke sfeer op de een of andere manier. Omdat iedereen toch gespannen was. Niet wist wat er zou gaan komen.”

Angela Groothuizen, voormalig presentatrice van WIDM, betreedt plotseling de kamer.

Groothuizen: “Hier heb ik gefilmd met de Dots. Ik kom hier aan dertig jaar geleden, stond ik hier. Van der Hoff: “Een videoclip?”

Groothuizen: “Ja, met die kimono’s aan. Dat was hier in die tuin.”

Karel van de Graaff, de voorganger van Pieter-Jan Hagens als presentator van WIDM, betreedt eveneens plotseling de kamer. Bediende in kimono brengt drank binnen voor Van de Graaff en Groothuizen.

Groothuizen: “Zeg, zullen wij eens een glas... Op de Mol”.

Pieters: “Wat is proost in het Japans? Weet iemand dat?”

Groothuizen: “Hatchi” [of iets dergelijks, een zelfbedacht woord]

Er wordt met stokjes gegeten. Bedienden brengen allerlei voedsel aan tafel, waaronder vis. Er komt een groot dienblad met vis op tafel met daarop het hoofd van een vis dat omhoog kijkt. Close-up in beeld gebracht waardoor het benadrukt wordt. Direct verandert de droomachtige muziek naar een soort van ‘sinistere’ sfeer.

[Lubach eet op een moeilijke manier wat op, trekt een beetje vies gezicht]

Groothuizen: “Oh jongens, dit ziet er goed uit. Het is een soort gemarineerde vis.” [grote kreeft op plank met voedsel in beeld] “Alles, toen dertig jaar geleden, als we dan dachten, ‘we hebben snoepjes’, dan was het toch weer vis. Oh, het is tofu.”

Voedsel, ‘rauwe vis’, wordt uitgebreid in beeld gebracht. Bediendes brengen nog meer voedsel.

[rustige muziek op de achtergrond]

Groothuizen: “Die mensen kijken nu naar die vis, en die denken, ‘nou, we zullen nog eens wat vis maken voor die Nederlanders”.

Lubach: “For the entire week”.

Sake komt nog in beeld en wordt door kandidaten genoemd.

Barends: “Wil er iemand sushi?” [sushi in beeld]

Lunch ten einde [‘Japanse aandoende muziek, gepingel’]

Interval (00.35.25)

Compilatie van beelden: Nagasaki vanuit de verte, schrijn, jongedame in kimono die de straat over steekt.

Test (00.38.22)

Vindt plaats in een traditionele Japanse tuin. In beeld: bonzai, standbeelden.

Eliminatie (00.41.25)

Barbara Barend ligt uit het spel, maar krijgt kans om erin te blijven.

[‘Oosterse’, spannende muziek (trommels, panfluit), ook ‘mystieke’ muziek bij aftiteling]

Episode 4 – Nagasaki & Sendai – 28/01/2010

Review vorige week (00.00.06)

Introductie (00.00.40)

Schilder die prachtige landschap nabij Nagasaki schildert. [‘mystieke’ muziek met veel trommels]

Leader (00.01.15)

Interval (00.02.02)

Enkele straatbeelden: man die zijn lunch uitpakt om buiten op te eten, modieus gekleed meisje met parasol die over straat loopt, haven en brug (van eerste aflevering) van Nagasaki.

Opdracht 1 – Mogi High School (00.03.38)

Een van de opdrachten, gedaan door Kim Pieters, is een multiple choice vraag. ‘Wat deden de samoerai’s niet?’ (schoonschrijven, bloemschikken, papiervouwkunst).

Interval (00.15.50)

Kandidaten vertrekken naar Sendai, althans een natuurgebied in de buurt van Sendai. [vlotte, energieke muziek, soort van junglemuziek]. Kandidaten krijgen sleutel van goedlachse Japanse bij receptie. Opstaan en ontbijt de volgende morgen [rustige, traditionele, 'Japanse' muziek]

Opdracht 2 – Zandzakken dragen (00.18.30)

Interval (00.30.11)

Opdracht 3 – Nachtelijk avontuur (00.31.25)

Hagens: “We hebben sake, we hebben wijn, we hebben lekker eten. Maar eerst moeten jullie nog even een opdracht doen”.

Beelden van natuur en tempel/schrijn. [rustige, enigszins mystieke muziek]

Test (00.45.30)

Beelden van traditionele Japanse gebouwen. Test wordt gemaakt bij één van die gebouwen.

Eliminatie (00.47.22)

Episode 5 – Sendai & Yamagata – 04/02/2010

Review vorige week (00.00.06)

Introductie (00.00.45)

Leader (00.01.15)

Interval (00.02.04)

Neonverlichting met Japanse tekens bij nacht, beelden van in een kaiten-sushi (lopende band) waar de kandidaten sushi eten. Sushi komt in close-up voorbij en wordt van de band gepakt.

[soundtrack House of the Flying Daggers – Nr. 5 – *Battle in the Forest*]

Opdracht 1 – Matsushima Islands (00.03.30)

De kandidaten varen in een bootje naar een eiland.

Van der Hoff: “We werden in een boot door een prachtig gebied geloodst.”

Sissing: “Ja, de omgeving was waanzinnig.”

Vogel: “Het was ook een beetje mysterieus met die kleine eilandjes, en ik vond het echt heel erg mooi.”

Van der Hoff: “Ja, ik had het idee dat ik in een soort schilderijtje zat. Je zag allemaal kleine eilandjes met rotspartijen en bamboe-scheuten. En tussendoor zag je weer visnetten hangen, de zon ging net een beetje onder. Ja, het was zo hemels mooi.”

Sissing: “Ja, dan ben je echt in Japan.”

[rustige muziek, beetje Oosters]

Kandidaten proberen in dit spel een tempeltje te bouwen; een ‘typisch Japans’ bouwsel.

Interval (00.20.00)

Beelden van deelnemers die in bus slapen op weg naar Yamagata. Neonverlichting in de nacht met daarop Japanse tekens. [rustige muziek]

De volgende dag zijn de deelnemers op weg naar volgende locatie

[muziek uit House of the Flying Daggers]

Van der Hoff: “We reden omhoog en we zagen in de verte al de bergen aankomen.”

Sissing: “Langzamerhand zagen we ook wat sneeuw verschijnen. Dat is natuurlijk toch weer bijzonder als je in Japan bent.”

Opdracht 2 – Zao Crator (00.22.12)

Borden langs het pad met daarop Japanse tekens (kanji). [rustige, enigszins mystieke muziek]

Van der Hoff: “Nee, het is van links naar rechts. Dat lijkt mij het meest logisch.”

Vogel: “Uh nee, Chinezen... of Japanners die lezen...”

Lubach: “Van boven naar beneden, maar vaak...”

Interval (00.33.39)

Straatbeeld in Yamagata. Japanse tolk van kandidaten komt in beeld, kandidaten vragen haar de Japanse tekens uit de eerdere opdracht te vertalen.

Opdracht 3 – Karaoke (00.34.50)

Kandidaten arriveren bij een bioscoop en moeten kiezen voor zaal één of twee. Daar spelen ze vervolgens het ‘karaoke-spel’. Kandidaten moeten het team in de andere zaal duidelijk maken, via het grote scherm maar zonder geluid, welk nummer ze uitdragen.

Test (00.43.01)

Eliminatie (00.46.10)

Episode 6 – Yamagata – 11/02/2010

Review vorige week (00.00.06)

Introductie (00.00.41)

Leader (00.01.07)

Interval (00.01.52)

Straatbeelden van Yamagata [Oosters aandoende ‘pingelmuziek’]. Vanuit de bus onderweg naar opdracht beelden van het Japanse platteland; rijstvelden.

Pieters: “Het is grappig he, dat hier eigenlijk een beetje die rijstvelden op een Nederlandse manier gewoon plat liggen als een soort landbouw stukjes.”

Opdracht 1 – Yamadera (00.03.29)

Beeld van tempel en natuur [energieke muziek]. Kandidaten lopen de trap op, Hagens wacht net als in aflevering één voor een tempel.

Hagens: “Goedemorgen. Het boeddhistisch tempelcomplex van Yamadera is twaalfhonderd jaar oud.”

Beelden van het tempelcomplex en omgeving.

[typisch Oosterse muziek, shamisen en fluit, vervolgens verandert de muziek naar meer mysterieus en rustig]

Gebruik van beelden en muziek geeft een ‘mysterieuze’ sfeer, en weer die vogelgeluiden. Shots van enigszins vreemd ogende standbeelden en van het donkere bos om het tempelcomplex heen. [continue Oosters aandoende muziek]

Interval (00.14.54)

Theeceremonie Yamagata (00.15.05)

Kandidaten arriveren bij traditioneel Japans gebouw voor de theeceremonie.

[typische Oosterse muziek speelt]

Schoenen uit bij entree, beelden van Japanse tuin. Oudere Japanse vrouw in witte kimono voorziet de kandidaten van drinken (thee). Lage tafel, shoji (schuifdeuren). Bediende zet voedsel (of drankje) neer en maakt diepe buiging, gelijk de lunch in aflevering drie.

[‘typisch’ Japanse muziek, getokkel op shamisen]

Interval (00.18.40)

Opdracht 2 – Museum (00.19.10)

Interval (00.27.17)

Opdracht 3 – Mogamigawa River (00.28.32)

Interval (00.40.20)

Test (00.41.23)

Eliminatie (00.44.36)

Episode 7 – Yamagata & Tokyo – 04/03/2010

Review vorige week (00.00.06)

Introductie (00.00.45)

Leader (00.01.30)

Interval (00.02.12)

Van der Hoff: “Als dit duizend euro uit de pot kost, dan kost het maar duizend euro. Want Tokio moet je zien voor je sterft.”

Nachtelijke beelden van Tokio vanuit de bus [opzweepende muziek]. Neonverlichting bij nacht met daarop Japanse tekens, Japanse tekens op het wegdek, verkeersborden.

Sissing: “We reden de stad in. Het zijn allemaal wegen die over elkaar heen gaan, waardoor je zo door die stad heen vliegt.”

Van der Hoff: “Het begint met een reeks flatgebouwen en het houdt maar niet op.”

Tokio Tower bij nacht in beeld.

Pieters: “Het is niet te beschrijven, het is zo groot. Het is de grootste metropool op aarde.”

Vogel: “Het is een soort van computerspel waar je in terecht kwam.”

Sissing: “Ik heb nog nooit zoiets meegemaakt. Nou, dat is me toch wel een duizend euro waard.”

Shots van Tokio Tower bij nacht, neonverlichting, en een overzichtshot vanaf Odaiba op de baai van Tokio.

Opdracht 1 (00.05.00)

[opzwepende muziek] Kandidaten rijden met de bus door het drukke Tokio. Kruispunt Shibuya. Overzicht-shot van honderden mensen die kruispunt oversteken (zelfde fragment als in leader), shot vanaf straatniveau van mensen die oversteken, oudere vrouw met mondkapje op, shots van Japanners van allerlei pluimage die voorbij lopen. Meisje dat voorbij rent, Japanners die wachten voor het stoplicht, voorbijrijdende auto's. [geluid van toeterende auto's is geïsoleerd], overzicht-shot kruising. Er wordt een beeld van drukte en chaos geschetst.

Hagens: “Goedemorgen. Vandaag mengen jullie je onder de inwoners van Tokio”.

[opzwepende, spannende muziek] Japanners in beeld die oversteken. Vrouw en een man met muziek op, vrouw met parasol, overzicht-shot van Shibuya en Tokio in de achtergrond.

[opzwepende, spannende muziek]

shots van Shibuya; passerend verkeer, overstekende mensenmassa's

Interval (00.14.47)

[opzwepende, soort van jungle muziek] beelden van vele reclameborden in Shibuya, voorbij lopende mensenmassa, billboard met animatie, beelden van individuele Japanners die staan te praten of voorbij lopen. Er wordt een sfeer/beeld geschetst van drukte, chaos.

Opdracht 2 – Achtervolgingspel (00.16.15)

Beelden van druk verkeer, veel mensen. Veel reclame-uitingen. Beelden van een wijk nabij het spoor. Voorbijrijdende trein. Man die op een trappetje zijn producten aanprijst. Er staan kraampjes, het lijkt een markt. [spannende muziek]

Hagens: “Sanne en Erik, jullie volgen dadelijk een bepaalde route door deze drukke wijk.”

Kandidaten doen achtervolgingspel door drukke wijk met nauwe straten waar allerlei markt-kraampjes staan.

Van der Hoff: “Oh, lekker.”

Vogel: “Wat een stank.”

[Shot van vis bij een marktkraam]

Interval (00.28.33)

Kandidaten betrekken nieuw hotel. Overzicht van Tokio vanaf bovenste verdieping.

Nachtelijke beelden van Tokio. Voorbijrijdende treinen van bovenaf gezien, skyline, Tokio Tower, kandidaten doen boodschappen, beelden van drukte op straat.

Diner (00.30.00)

Meer shots van bovenaf van voorbijrijdende treinen en nachtelijke skyline. Eten komt op tafel, bestaande uit sake, rijst, vis, soja. Hoewel er meer op het dienblad staat, wordt de sashimi (rauwe vis) in close-up gebracht. Soja-saus wordt ingeschonken. Kandidaat Lubach pakt stuk vis van het bord met stokjes, wordt wederom in close-up gebracht.

Weer nachtelijke beelden van skyline Tokio.

Opdracht 3 – (00.32.56)

Beelden van Shibuya van bovenaf. Kandidaten Lubach en Sissing lopen vanaf Shinjuku Station naar presentator Hagens. [spannende, ietwat mysterieuze muziek]

Hagens: “Goedemorgen jongens. Jullie weten, Tokio is de stad van de elektronica.”

Lubach: “Een stad van 37 miljoen inwoners, een metropool”

Kandidaat Van der Hoff chartert twee jonge Japanners om mee te helpen de opdracht te doen slagen. Spreken weinig Engels, maar worden niet belachelijk gemaakt of iets dergelijks. Voor het eerst weer wat contact tussen kandidaten en Japanners.

Spel eindigt bij drukke Shinjuku Station, omgeven door mensen, gebouwen en reclame-uitingen. Druk, chaotisch.

Test (00.43.16)

Beeld gaat op zwart en overgang naar een traditioneel Japans gebouw midden in een grote tuin.

Eliminatie (00.45.24)

Episode 8 – Tokyo – 11/03/2010

Review vorige week (00.00.06)

Introductie (00.01.01)

Leader (00.01.24)

Interval (00.02.09)

Beelden van traditioneel Japans gebouw en tuin (zelfde als vorige aflevering). [droevige muziek]
Straatbeelden Tokio; man die kar met goederen duwt, voorbij lopende jongedame, marktmedewerkster die wat drinkt, oudere vrouw in kleurige kledij, vrouw met mondkapje op, jongetje met mondkapje op, filmpje op billboard. [traditionele, Japanse aandoende muziek]

Opdracht 1 – Gesprekken (00.05.14)

Interval (00.07.35)

Nachtelijke beelden van Tokio; neonverlichting, verkeer op straat, nog meer neonverlichting, Tokio Tower.

Opdracht 1 – Gesprekken (00.07.56)

Opdracht 2 – Tokio Tower (00.09.06)

Hagens: “Lange tijd waren ze beroemd om hun kopieerkunst, de Japanners. Dit is de Tokio Tower.”

Shots van Tokio Tower van allerlei posities, ook van veraf met op de voorgrond voorbijrijdende trein.

Hagens: “Waar je ook bent in de stad, je ziet hem staan. Deze nep-Eifeltoren.”

Beelden van Tokio skyline bij nacht. Straatbeeld vanuit auto. Veel neonverlichting. Japanners die zebepad oversteken.

Opdracht 1 – Gesprekken (00.18.01)

Interval (00.19.32)

Kandidaten gaan naar de receptie om ‘Japanse tekens’ te laten vertalen. Japanse receptioniste spreekt goed Engels.

Opdracht 1 – Gesprekken (00.24.00)

Interval (00.25:20)

Overzicht-shot van Tokio vanuit Shibuya. Trein rijdt op de voorgrond richting de achtergrond en vice versa. Beelden kruispunt Shibuya. Twee mannen met mondkapjes. Ambulance die voorbij rijdt. Voorbij fietsende man. Drukke en chaos.

Opdracht 3 – G-cans (00.25.44)

Opdracht 1 – Gesprekken (00.34.45)

Interval (00.41.10)

Kandidaten verlaten hotel. Beelden van een druk kruispunt met veel verkeer. Straatbeeld met twee meisjes en verscheidene Japanners in pak (‘salarymen’) bij het stoplicht, beelden vanuit auto/busje van een rivier met op de achtergrond skyline. Overstekende Japanners en op de voorgrond passerend verkeer, trein rijdt enigszins in de verte voorbij, dichterbij rijdt nog een trein rijdt voorbij en als deze gepasseerd is blijkt erachter nog een trein stil te staan. Japanners die zebrapad oversteken, twee Japanners op een scooter, overzicht-shots van een drukke straat, overstekende Japanners, busje rijdt hoogbouw in via een snelweg [neutrale muziek]

Test (00.43.30)

Eliminatie (00.45.20)

Tussen rijstvelden in, met op de achtergrond enkele woningen. Hagens staat voor wat lijkt op een schrijn/tempeltje in het rood.

Episode 9 – Tokyo – 18/03/2010

Review vorige week (00.00.06)

Introductie (00.00.52)

Leader (00.01.16)

Interval (00.02.06)

Beelden van Odaiba. Interessant beeld: een shot dat precies wordt opgedeeld in het midden. Links, in de achtergrond, een modern, vierkantig, high-tech gebouw. Rechts, op de voorgrond, bomen die sterk doen denken aan een meer traditioneel Japan. Japanse man en vrouw die zitten te eten in het gras. [vogelgeluiden en traditioneel aandoende muziek met trommels] Korte terugblik op vorige week, kandidaten tussen de rijstvelden.

Terugblik in Nederland 1 (00.03.34)

[aanzwellende muziek] overzicht-shot van baai van Tokio gezien vanaf Odaiba, Kabuki-cho, drukte op straat bij nacht, neonverlichting, straatbeelden van drukke en overstekende mensen, neon-verlichting, Japanse jongeren die straat oversteken. Volgende dag, shots van lichtkrant met Japanse tekens,

overstekende mensen, trein die voorbij raast over een brug over de weg, 'Welcome to Akihabara' billboard met anime afbeeldingen, verkeersbord, Odaiba met reuzenrad.

Opdracht 1 – Gesprekken (00.07.38)

Opdracht 2 – Strand in Odaiba (00.00.06)

Middels vragen aan kandidate Vogel komen kijkers meer te weten over Japan.

Hagens: "Hey Sanne, hier is een verrekijker en hier is een porto. Ik heb een paar vragen voor je. En als je het antwoord weet kun je dat aan je collega's doorgeven. Met nog een boodschap erbij."

Hagens: "De eerste vraag. Hoe heette de Nederlandse handelspost in Nagasaki die daar de handelspost was tot 1859?"

Hagens: "Welke toren is negen meter lager dan zijn replica in Tokio?"

Hagens: "Hoe noemt men dat typische Japanse boekje dat Arjen kocht in aflevering één?"

Hagens: "Welke Japanse kunst beoefenden de samoerai niet?"

Hagens: "Bij welke Japanse ceremonie is conversatie over de schilderkunst en uitzicht op de tuin van groot belang?"

En over de aanstaande opdracht met de ninja is ook een vraag:

Hagens: "Tegen welke Japanse mystieke krijgers moeten jullie het straks opnemen?"

Sissing: "We twijfelen tussen samoerai en ninja's."

Interval (00.24.40)

Beelden van Tokio vanaf de snelweg. [spanning opbouwende muziek] Versnelde beelden van de baai van Tokio (van licht naar donker).

Opdracht 3 – Ninja laserspel (00.26.31)

Hagens: "Maar pas op, er zijn ninja's. Zeer goed getrainde krijgers, en die zullen alles uit de kast halen om jullie in de boeien te slaan en jullie buit te veroveren."

Versnelde beelden van de baai van Tokio (van licht naar donker).

Beelden van een ninja die vechtbewegingen maakt in het donker maar verlicht door een grote lamp. Ninja die salto's achterover maakt, ninja die trappende bewegingen maakt. Geheel in het zwart gekleed, alleen ogen zijn zichtbaar. Kijken serieus, boos, geconcentreerd.

Pieters: "Het is toch donker. En op een gegeven moment zie je allemaal van die zwarte figuurtjes rond rennen. Heel onheilspellend."

Vogel: "Ik was gewoon heel bang. Want ik dacht, we maken gewoon geen schijn van kans."

Gebruik van lampionnen als indicatoren voor geld. [spannende muziek, afgewisseld met muziek met Oosterse/Japanse invloeden]

Nachtbeelden van Tokio. Trein rijdt voorbij. Overzicht-shot van baai van Tokio met op de achtergrond Tokio Tower. Veel hoge gebouwen bij nacht, verlichting, neonverlichting.

Sissing: “Wat was dit spannend. Die kleine kereltjes die door die bosjes slopen.”

Test (00.40.56)

Eliminatie (00.45.35)

Episode 10 – Nederland – 25/03/2010

Review vorige week (00.00.06)

Leader (00.00.34)

Terugblik in Nederland (00.03.08)

Kandidaten Venderbos, Schrijver en Akkerman betreden kamer. Er staat allerlei voedsel en drank op tafel.

Schrijver: “Dat ziet er Japans uit volgens mij.”

Close-up van sushi.

Schrijver: “Hebben jullie daar nou nog wat van meegekregen? Van dat hele Japan?”

Akkerman: “Ik was nooit zo’n sushi-man. Maar nou begrijp ik ook waarom. Want het is daar gewoon hoe het moet. Het is bizar, dat je ‘s ochtends vroeg... Daar moest ik wel even aan wennen, dat was een omschakeling, in plaats van een bakje koffie en een broodje was het gewoon echt dit.” [wijst naar sushi]

Interval (00.03.05)

Beelden van Nagasaki; haven, straat met allerlei borden met Japanse tekens, Japanners die voorbij lopen [muziek *House of the Flying Daggers*]

Terugblik in Nederland (00.03.28)

Barend: “Ik kan geen sushi meer zien.”

Appendix C – Survey

Welkom bij deze online enquête over Wie is de Mol.

Mijn naam is Martijn Huismans, student Media & Journalistiek aan de Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam. Voor mijn masterscriptie doe ik onderzoek naar hoe kijkers het AVRO televisieprogramma Wie is de Mol ervaren, in het bijzonder de tiende editie die in 2010 in Japan plaats vond. Middels deze vragenlijst hoop ik daar meer over te weten te komen.

De enquête bestaat uit vijftientwintig vragen (waarvan het merendeel multiple choice), en neemt niet meer dan tien minuten in beslag om in te vullen. Aangezien deze enquête een belangrijk onderdeel vormt van mijn onderzoek, nodig ik iedere Wie is de Mol kijker van harte uit om mee te werken en de vragenlijst in te vullen. Onder respondenten die de enquête geheel invullen worden bovendien twee bioscoopbonnen ter waarde van tien euro verloot. Alvast bedankt!

Uiteraard is deelname aan deze enquête geheel anoniem. Antwoorden worden strikt vertrouwelijk behandeld en nooit aan derden doorgegeven. Indien u akkoord gaat en mee wilt werken aan dit onderzoek, klik dan op 'Next'.

** NB: Vragen met een rood sterretje zijn verplicht*

1. Heeft u het tiende seizoen van *Wie is de Mol?* dat zich afspeelde in Japan gezien?

- Ja, alle afleveringen bekeken.
- Ja, maar niet alle afleveringen bekeken.
- Nee, niet gezien [→ automatisch naar vraag 9].

2. Welk beeld heeft u van Japan en de Japanners? Gebruik bij voorkeur enkele kernwoorden om dit beeld zo volledig mogelijk te schetsen. _____

Kunt u aangeven of u het eens of oneens bent met de volgende stellingen:

3. Mijn beeld van Japan en haar bevolking is beïnvloed/veranderd door het kijken naar *Wie is de Mol?* in Japan.

- Helemaal mee eens
- Mee eens
- Niet mee eens, noch mee oneens
- Mee oneens
- Helemaal mee oneens

4. Indien uw beeld van Japan en haar bevolking is veranderd door te kijken naar *Wie is de Mol?*, kunt u aangeven hoe dat beeld is veranderd? _____

5. Het bekijken van *Wie is de Mol?* in Japan zette mij aan tot het opzoeken van meer informatie over Japan.

- Klopt Klopt niet

6. Het bekijken van *Wie is de Mol?* in Japan zette mij aan tot het plannen van een reis naar Japan.

- Klopt Klopt niet

7. Wat vond u positief en/of aangenaam aan het beeld dat van Japan werd geschetst in *Wie is de Mol?* _____

8. Wat vond u negatief en/of verwarrend aan het beeld dat werd geschetst van Japan in *Wie is de Mol?* _____

9. Heeft u afleveringen van één of meerdere van de andere seizoenen van *Wie is de Mol?* die zich in het buitenland afspeelden gezien?

- Ja, ik heb alle seizoenen en alle afleveringen gezien.
 - Ja, ik heb enkele seizoenen/enkele afleveringen gezien.
 - Nee, ik heb nog nooit een aflevering van *Wie is de Mol?* Bekeken. [→ Bedankt voor uw belangstelling, maar helaas komt u niet in aanmerking om aan deze enquête deel te nemen]
- Kunt u aangeven of u het eens of oneens bent met de volgende stellingen:*

10. Als ik naar *Wie is de Mol?* kijk leer ik iets over het land waarin het programma zich afspeelt. (bijvoorbeeld cultuur, geschiedenis, taal, bevolking)

- Helemaal mee eens
- Mee eens
- Niet mee eens, noch mee oneens
- Oneens
- Helemaal mee oneens

11. Ik vind het belangrijk en/of interessant om iets te leren van het land waarin *Wie is de Mol?* zich afspeelt.

- Helemaal mee eens
- Mee eens
- Niet mee eens, noch mee oneens
- Mee oneens
- Helemaal mee oneens

12. Ik denk dat het land (en haar bevolking) waarin *Wie is de Mol?* zich afspeelt natuurgetrouw wordt afgebeeld in het programma, oftewel 'zoals het echt is'.

- Helemaal mee eens
- Mee eens
- Niet mee eens, noch mee oneens
- Mee oneens
- Helemaal mee oneens

13. Mijn beeld van landen (en bevolkingen) waarin het programma zich heeft afgespeeld is beïnvloed/veranderd door het kijken naar *Wie is de Mol?*

- Helemaal mee eens
- Mee eens
- Niet mee eens, noch mee oneens
- Mee oneens
- Helemaal mee oneens

14. Indien eens of oneens met de vorige vraag, kunt u kort aangeven waarom u dit denkt?

15. Het bekijken van *Wie is de Mol?* heeft mij aangezet tot het opzoeken van meer informatie over een land waarin het programma zich afspeelde (Japan niet meegerekend).

- Klopt
- Klopt niet

16. Het bekijken van *Wie is de Mol?* heeft mij aangezet tot het plannen van een reis naar een land waarin het programma zich afspeelde (Japan niet meegerekend).

Klopt Klopt niet

17. Hoelang kijkt u gemiddeld televisie per dag?

- Ik kijk haast nooit televisie
- Minder dan 1 uur per dag
- Tussen 1 en 2 uur per dag
- Tussen 2 en 3 uur per dag
- Tussen 3 en 4 uur per dag
- Meer dan 4 uur per dag

18. Hoe vaak gaat u gemiddeld op vakantie naar het buitenland?

- Ik ga niet op vakantie naar het buitenland
- Eens per twee tot vier jaar
- 1 keer per jaar
- 2 keer per jaar
- 3 keer per jaar
- 4 keer per jaar of meer

19. Bent u weleens in Japan geweest?

Ja [→ laat vraag 20 zien] Nee

20. Zo ja, kunt u aangeven hoe lang u in Japan bent geweest?

21. Wat is uw geslacht?

Man Vrouw

22. Wat is uw leeftijd?

23. Wat is uw hoogst genoten opleiding?

- VMBO/LBO/LTS/MAVO
- HAVO
- VWO/Gymnasium
- MBO/MTS
- HBO/HTS
- Universiteit
- Overige, namelijk

24. Indien u wilt mee dingen naar één van de twee bioscoopbonnen ter waarde van tien euro, vul dan hier uw e-mailadres in.

25. Opmerkingen/vragen/suggesties

Klaar! Bedankt voor uw deelname aan deze enquête.

Survey respondents distribution

Table C1 - Gender

| | Frequency | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------|-----------|---------------|--------------------|
| Male | 70 | 45,2 | 45,2 |
| Female | 85 | 54,8 | 100,0 |
| Total | 155 | 100,0 | |

Table C2 - Age

| | Years |
|----------------|-------|
| Minimum | 11 |
| Maximum | 62 |
| Mean | 25,1 |

Table C3 - Education

| | Frequency | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|---------------|--------------------|
| VMBO/LBO/LTS/MAVO | 9 | 5,8 | 5,8 |
| HAVO | 17 | 11,0 | 16,8 |
| VWO/Gymnasium | 45 | 29,0 | 45,8 |
| MBO/MTS | 14 | 9,0 | 54,8 |
| HBO/HTS | 29 | 18,7 | 73,5 |
| University | 39 | 25,2 | 98,7 |
| Other | 2 | 1,3 | 100,0 |
| Total | 155 | 100,0 | |

Table C4 - Amount of television per day on average

| | Frequency | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------------------------------|-----------|---------------|--------------------|
| Less than one hour a day | 28 | 18,1 | 18,1 |
| Between one and two hours | 68 | 43,9 | 61,9 |
| Between two and three hours | 16 | 10,3 | 72,2 |
| Between three and four hours | 31 | 20,0 | 92,2 |
| More than four hours | 8 | 5,2 | 97,4 |
| I almost never watch television | 4 | 2,6 | 100 |
| Total | 155 | 100,0 | |