



*" The old fishing village on the IJsselmeer is world famous, attracting a huge number of tourists "*



# Volendam Behind the Scenes

**a case study on the identity and authenticity of a tourism destination**



*- Carla Flores Miralda -*





Master Program Tourism Destination Management

Dissertation

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A case study on the identity and authenticity  
of a tourism destination**

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I hereby declare that this dissertation is wholly the work of Carla Flores Miralda. Any other contributors or sources have been referenced in the prescribed manner or are listed in the acknowledgements together with the nature and the scope of their contribution.

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## Executive Summary

In a globalized world issues of identity and authenticity are highly discussed and put on the test these days. This research is dealing precisely with these topics in the specific context of Volendam. Volendam is a town located 22km from Amsterdam. It has a rich history that can be traced back since mid 1400's, it began as a fishing village that followed the Catholic religion and today is one of the most popular tourism destinations in The Netherlands.

The main goal of the research was “to evaluate Volendam as a tourist destination in terms of the identity and authenticity”. This goal will be complemented with the following research questions:

1. *What is Volendam's identity?*
2. *How is authenticity being used in Volendam's tourism industry?*
3. *What is the relationship between identity and authenticity in the tourism destination?*
4. *Which stakeholders can be considered important in terms of identity and authenticity for the destination?*
5. *How is the success of Volendam perceived in terms of identity and authenticity by these stakeholders?*

In order to achieve the above established goal and questions, different data was necessary to be obtained. Secondary data was collected mainly through internet and desk research of various academic and non-academic sources. Furthermore, primary data was obtained directly from different sources: local population of Volendam, local tourism businesses, local tourism-related organizations, the local Municipality, tourism operators in Amsterdam and international tourists. The methods of primary data collection were selected upon the results of a pilot study, in order to finally execute in-depth semi-structured interviews, covert interview/conversations, and participative and non-participative observations. All methods were employed in Breda, the destination itself as well as in Amsterdam, which is the visitor generating region.

The findings of the investigation concluded that Volendam has dual identities: a local identity and a parallel constructed identity, these identities were found to exist in different geographical areas of the town. The local identity is the one which belongs to the residents and can be found in Volendam's backstage. The latter one is used for the commercial purposes in the tourism industry of Volendam and is the essence of the self-referential staged authenticity, which is the type of authenticity that Volendam presents to its visitors. The host community, local tourism businesses, non-local tour operators and tourists were identified as the main stakeholders of the destination in terms of its identity and authenticity. Based on their perception on the identity and authenticity, and the application of the Real/Fake Matrix specifically to the latter, it was concluded that the destination is satisfactorily successful, yet a Fake-Real offering.

The given future recommendations are addressed to elevate the current status of the tourism destination in such a way that the host community is more satisfied with it at the same time that the destination is perceived to be more authentic. Furthermore, it is recommended that the local

stakeholders from the destination get together and in consensus elaborate a management and development plan for the future sustainability of the tourism industry.

## Preface

I found the source of inspiration for the topic of this research on the reflections that dawned upon me after having experienced a Kecak Dance performance in Bali. While doing a fieldtrip in the island together with a group of colleagues, we one day did a tour around some of the sites of the island, the last site the Uluwatu Temple located above the ocean at the top of a cliff. It was almost sunset and the dance was about to begin when we arrived. Quickly we had to get ourselves wrapped in sarongs and run to the dance area, where some bleachers were organized in a U form. I took a seat and shortly after a group of men entered the stage, sat on a circle and started to sing what more than chants seemed like a hypnotizing spell. With the sun setting and an orange sky as the background, the chants of the Kecak dancers and the far away sounds of the ocean, I was trapped. The dance started to get more intense when other characters entered the stage and a story started to build, I did not understand it, but was totally engaged in it, trying to not take the usual millions of pictures that I take in order to absorb the act at its fullest.

Unfortunately my amusement did not last long. My hypnotic state of being was abruptly interrupted when one of the characters of the dance, in the middle of the performance, stood in front of a tourist, made a peace sign with his hand, and posed for a picture. *What?! – I thought, Isn't this a ritual, something special, or spiritual, ancient traditions?!* In that moment my connection with the dance was lost, just like in the movies when the shrink counts backwards and the patient wakes up startled after a session of hypnosis, not knowing what had happened. The show, not performance or dance anymore, lasted some more time. Yeah, the sunset was great, the Balinese dance was different, but I was not deeply moved by it anymore. I felt silly later on, back in the hotel, when I was looking at the pictures and realized that along with my friends and myself, other two hundred (this an approximate exaggeration) tourists were also watching the show. Of course it was neither a ritual nor something special. It was a show that was probably put on several times a day, every day of the week, all year long. Later reflections and conversations with friends, I came to the conclusion that that Kecak Dance show had 'catered to my needs and the needs of the other tourist'.

Sometime later, back in The Netherlands, a friend of mine invited me to visit 'typical Dutch towns' near Amsterdam. We went to Edam, Volendam and Marken, my favorite one the second. The impression I had from Volendam, which I transmitted to my mother, explaining her I would like to show that town to her, together with the reflections on the previous experience finally illuminated me during the process of choosing a topic to research for my dissertation.

Moreover, I would like to say that this research has not only given me the chance to explore this destination's identity and authenticity, but also a chance to explore my own self's identity and authenticity; and I must admit, it has definitely provided me with more insight and knowledge on both objects: Volendam and myself.

## Acknowledgements

This research would not have been possible without the guidance, collaboration and encouragement of fortunately, I am happy to admit, many many people around the world.

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Last but not least, I would like to express infinite thanks to my family. Not only because they carefully followed the process of this accomplishment but because they unconditionally supported me through this one and all of the previous ones. Without them I would not have made it where I am now. They are not only a source of encouragement but a source of inspiration.

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Carla Flores Miralda.

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

Who are you? What do you want others to think of you? What do you get if others think of you in that sense? These are all questions (and their possible answers) that are somehow related to the topics of this research: identity and authenticity. The exploration of these topics is today not only interesting but of great value, responding to a series of events that are marking the way both, identity and authenticity, are being perceived today. This particular investigation explores issues of identity and authenticity specifically in the context of a tourism destination, Volendam. Tourists and actually consumers in general, are out on the quest for what is real; and on the other hand tourist destinations and offerings in general, are trying their best to present themselves and their offerings as real as possible.

The main goal of this research is to evaluate Volendam as a tourist destination in terms of the identity and authenticity. This goal will be achieved along with the research questions, through the whole manuscript. It will begin by presenting the background to the study and setting the context of the destination, followed by the presentation of the main goal and research questions. Chapter 2 will present with the research design and the methodology applied in order to reach the purpose. Relevant literature review and theories on the topics will be exposed in Chapter 3. The analysis of the findings and application of the theory to the specific topics in the destination are included in Chapter 4. Chapters 5 and 6 will correspondingly present the conclusions along with the recommendations and further considerations drawn from the results of the investigation. Finally, the last Chapter will discuss the limitations of this research together with suggestions for further research.

## 1.1 Background

Globalization has today well reached all corners of our planet; it is not merely another word for the growing transnational economy. It is largely driven by technology and economic interests, but it must be kept in mind that it carries along a wide range of processes that are not in themselves technological or economic. With the increasing lack of boundaries for flows of meanings, world markets, mass media, many are saying that today's world is rapidly becoming one single place with one single culture. Patterns of consumption also seem to merge in certain respects; people's desires nearly everywhere seem to be more similar by day. Yet, it appears that the more fabricated the world seems, the more the demand for what is real. Trends are targeting for 'realness' and for 'genuinity'. With globalization, we have moved from scarcity to abundance, and today we are moving from abundance to authenticity (Lewis & Bridger, 2000). At the same time in recent years, it has been witnessed the growth in many societies around the world, of movements and efforts seeking to strengthen the collective sense of uniqueness, often aiming at globalization processes, which are seen as a threat to local distinctiveness and identities. Yet the standards by which we judge the realness, the genuine, the unique, the distinctive, the authentic or identities are no longer the same. Moreover, it is seen that identities and authenticity is being negotiated.

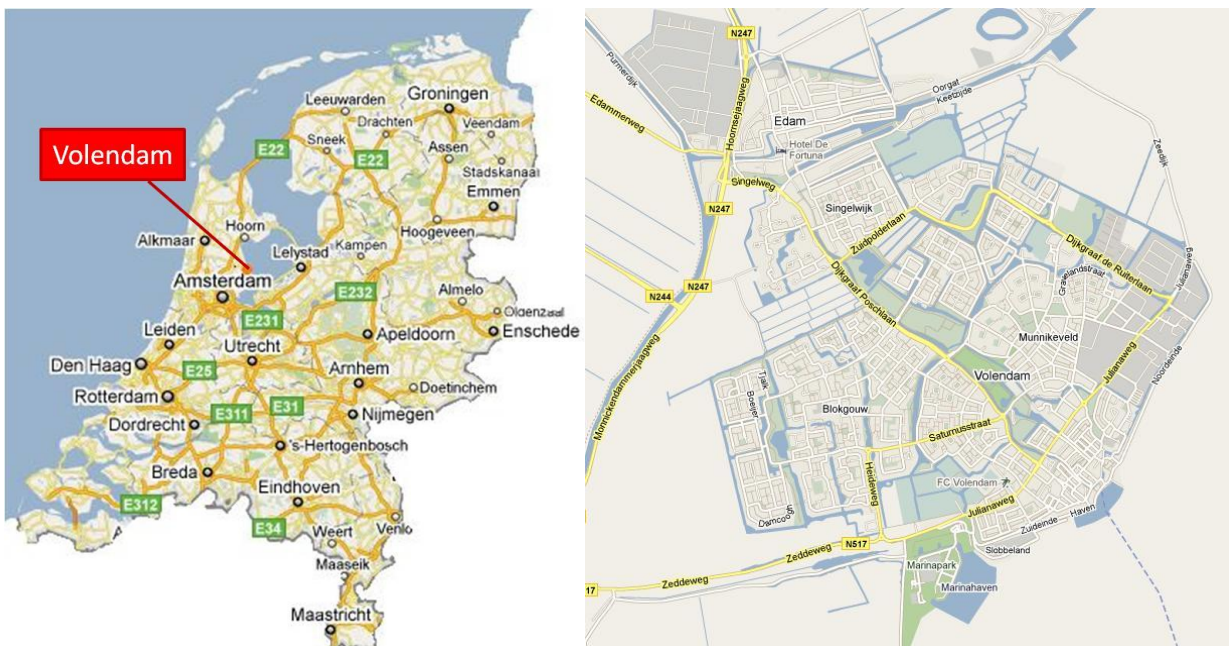
Such negotiations are taking place on the basis of their market value, and more often it is seen that along with culture, identity and authenticity, which is an issue related to being true to one's self, are being commoditized.

In tourism these trends are also being observed. More and more, tourists are seeking for local identity and the authentic, and at the same time, destinations are responding by putting the local identity out there and presenting themselves as the 'real deal'. Tourists are on their quest to find their own *selves* by exploring the *other*, and they wish this experience to be felt as authentic as possible. Still, tourists are seen to be expecting to be confronted with the authentic, but not necessarily with reality. Finally, the emergence of constructivist, post-modern perspectives allow the possibility of adjusting meanings to the convenience, resulting in different perspectives of the same object, be it culture, heritage, identity and even authenticity.

## 1.2 The destination: Volendam

Volendam is a town located approximately twenty-two kilometers northeast of Amsterdam, in the province of North Holland (see Figure 1). It belongs to the Edam-Volendam Municipality (Edam-Volendam Gemeente in Dutch), Edam being another much smaller neighboring town, famous for its cheese with some touristic activity as well. Since the Edam-Volendam Gemeente runs both villages, the available statistics are shared by them. By the year 2008, Edam and Volendam registered to have a total population of approximately 28,500 inhabitants, but according to the Chief of Cabinet of the Gemeente, Volendam had an approximate population of 22,000 (C. Kwakman, personal communication September 26, 2010) by the same year.

Figure 1: Map of Netherlands and map of Volendam



Source: Google Maps

### 1.2.1 History

The current location of Volendam was originally a small harbor for the neighboring town of Edam. The harbor was located at the mouth of the IJssel River. Around the mid-fourteenth century, a shorter route to the Zuyderzee was dug by inhabitants from Edam, who also by then constructed there their own separate harbor. In this way, the need for the original harbor no longer existed and the area was dammed and land was reclaimed. Thereafter, local farmers and fishermen settled and formed the new community of *Vollendam*, whose name means something like ‘filled dam’ in Dutch (Wolters, ND.).

These first settlements can be traced down to the year 1462, from when it started developing into a prosperous fishing village. Unlike the other neighboring towns who were mostly Protestants, Volendam followed the Roman Catholic religion, something that is deeply rooted into their local culture. Later by the year 1870, Volendam had already become a destination for many artists who were inspired by the village; and along with the artists, journalists also found Volendam and the visiting artists to be a topic for them. Around 1881, the Hotel Spaander was established by a local entrepreneur, Leendert Spaander, who saw the opportunity of creating a unique art collection with the work of the many artists, especially painters, who visited the town. In occasions these paintings and art works were given as a form of payment in exchange for the provided accommodation. According to Crelis Kes (personal communication, October 3, 2010), a local tour guide, Mr. Spaander was responsible for the initiation of a more formal tourism activity when in the late 1800’s he started bringing groups of people from Amsterdam to visit Volendam. Already by the year 1891 the town had the biggest fleet of fishing boats (258 fishing) on the Zuyderzee and by the 1900 a colony of international artists had been formed and established in Volendam, including famous painters such as Picasso and Renoir (The rough guide to The Netherlands, 2008) who were frequent to the town. Aside from attracting artists, Volendam became target of many tourists as well, “with its authentic houses, fishing harbor and colorful (also national) dresses” (Volendam Museum Guide).

In 1932, with the construction of the closing dyke, the Zuyderzee was transformed into a freshwater lake, known as the IJsselmeer. As the water became fresh, the fishing activity suffered a huge decline and the local population of Volendam started to change economical activities and traditions: they learned other skills related mostly to construction and lost great part of their traditional fishing activities and clothes as well. Nevertheless, the village has kept on attracting tourists and selling, in less amounts, fresh water fish, like the eel for which Volendam is very famous for. Traditional clothes went from being the daily vestment to be worn for the tourists, in most cases; although every year on the fourth weekend of June, there is a special event organized in Volendam in which locals are invited to wear the traditional costume (C. Kwakman, personal communication, September 26, 2010).

### 1.2.2 The tourism activity in Volendam

Today Volendam is a well-known destination, not only among international tourists, but in The Netherlands as well. Many famous Dutch artists, particularly from the music industry, and football players come from this town. Currently several TV soaps and reality shows about famous people

from Volendam (such as Jan Smit) are being broadcasted on national television in The Netherlands. The TV soaps and reality shows not only present the life of the famous, but also promote the image of the 'every-day-life' of Volendam (H. Duin, personal communication, October 20, 2010). Although, Volendam has become very attractive to national tourists in The Netherlands, especially in the past five years due to the TV soaps and the reality show (M. Wiffrie, personal communication, October 9, 2010); this research will only concentrate in Volendam as a destination for international tourists.

In the tourism activity, since its beginnings, Volendam has had a lot of success. In terms of the planification and organization of tourism, the community surprisingly does not have an official entity or a destination management organization (DMO) exclusively in charge. The activity is being monitored by the Office of Economic Affairs of the Edam-Volendam Municipality; and so far, Volendam does not count with a policy for the strategic development of tourism. According to Marcella Wiffrie (personal communication, October 19, 2010) who is the Policy Officer of Economical Affairs of the municipality of Edam-Volendam, currently the tourism activity is taking its first steps to design the vision for tourism development, and main stakeholders such as the local community and tourism operators (especially from Amsterdam) are being consulted. Nevertheless, you can find a few organizations dedicated to tourism and the tourists like the VVV (Vereniging voor Vreemdelingen Verkeer, or Tourist Association)-Volendam, the Stichting Tourist Promotion or (STP). The VVV is mainly a volunteer association that provides general information for tourists, most cities and towns in The Netherlands have at least one office and Volendam is not the exception. The STP is a foundation established in 2005 that, like the name says it, is in charge of promoting Volendam as a tourist destination basically through Dutch and international tourist operators as well as in international tourism fairs such the ones in Berlin and London, for example.

According to Hans Duin (personal communication, October 20, 2010), head of the STP, and to the Edam-Volendam Municipality (2010) Volendam receives approximately two million visitors spread around the year. The high seasons are said to start around mid-April and last until August. The rest of the year is considered to be low season. Nevertheless, in an interview carried out with Lindberg tours, one of the main tour operators that take tourists on excursions to Volendam, it was stated that Volendam has a constant year-long flow of tourists that although it fluctuates through the seasons, the amount of tourists is always significant (R. Bakker, personal communication November 19, 2010). Volendam's main incoming markets are from Europe (including national tourists), India, Indonesia, Russia, China and Japan. Almost three quarters, of these tourists are taken in organized tours by the different tour operators, mainly from Amsterdam. It is worth mentioning that Volendam is not sold by the tour operators as a product itself, but instead together with other destinations such as: Marken and Zaanse Schans. In average, the excursions last approximately four and a half hours, allowing tourists to mostly have a quick glance at the each of the destinations.

Volendam can be attractive in different ways for different markets. For the national market, although it is not the focus of this research, as stated before, it will be briefly described. The main attraction today is the possibility to be in the place where the TV soaps and reality shows are being

filmed or see the famous musicians and football players in their town. Nostalgia is also a motivation for national tourists since Volendam presents its visitors with the atmosphere of an old and traditional Dutch village (M. Wiffrie, personal communication October 19, 2010).

For the international markets Volendam fulfills the expectations for the search of the Dutch stereotypes, such as the traditional costumes, wooden shoes, cheese, typical houses, the boats in the harbor and even the tulips and Amsterdam souvenirs which are actually alien to the town (Thissen, 2010). Although Volendam is full of these stereotypes for an economical benefit as Thissen mentions, it has to be admitted that the town does charm its visitors with the 'cozy' atmosphere, the possibility to take a picture wearing the traditional costume and walk around the dike, the historic city center and the labyrinth of little streets behind the harbor.

### **1.3 Research goal and questions**

The present is an exploratory research of a case study on a tourism destination. Specifically, aspects of the destination's identity and authenticity will be explored. The consideration of several crucial factors was necessary before establishing the definitive research goal of the investigation. These factors were as follows:

1. Novelty: has the research already been done by others?
2. Relevance: can the results of the research on the given problem be of practical value to the researcher as well as for others in the field?
3. Feasibility: is it possible to conduct the research and achieve the goal with the available resources (including the researcher's own expertise)?
4. Researchable: can the necessary data for the research be collected and analyzed?

Once these factors were considered and evaluated together with the purpose of this research, the main goal of this research was defined: it was elaborated in such a way that it would provide focus to the research and delimit its scope. In this way, the main goal of the investigation is:

***“To evaluate Volendam as a tourist destination in terms of the identity and authenticity”***

To be able to achieve the main goal of this research, several research questions (RQ's) have been designed. Careful consideration has been taken in order to draw these questions and successfully reach the overall research objective, previously mentioned. The RQ's of this research are:

RQ1: *What is Volendam's identity?*

RQ2: *How is authenticity being used in Volendam's tourism industry?*

RQ3: *What is the relationship between identity and authenticity in the tourism destination?*

RQ4: *Which stakeholders can be considered important in terms of identity and authenticity for the destination?*

RQ5: *How is the success of Volendam perceived in terms of identity and authenticity by these stakeholders?*

## 2 Research design

As many authors have pointed out, the design, strategies and methods of research selected depend very much on the goal and research questions of the investigation (Robinson, 2002). For the purpose of this specific investigation, a research design and methodology has been custom created in order to achieve the main goal and answer the subsequent research questions. It is important to mention that a flexible research design was chosen and the process of investigation was iterative, in the sense that through the gathering of data and the identification of new insights, the main goal, research questions and methods evolved and were adapted along the way. Therefore, repeated revision of the different components of the research was necessary throughout the whole research process.

Parting from the fact that there was little prior knowledge and that the research questions are relatively broad, this research is determined to be an open-end descriptive research in which the research questions intend to explain *what* is going on instead of *why* (Baarda, 2010). The present research has been chosen to be qualitative and was conducted under an interpretative paradigm, in which the interest is being set on the “meanings, symbols, beliefs, ideas, and feelings given or attached to objects, events, activities, and others by the participants in the setting” (Bailey, 2007). In other words, the research and the researcher focused mainly on evaluating the destination in reference to its identity and how authenticity is being used. Although it was established that this research is descriptive, it is not to be understood that it is merely describing the issue, but that the description of what is going on in reference to the issue, a critical analysis will follow.

This investigation took place in a time frame of approximately four months, starting in September and lasting until mid-December, 2010. It is important to take note that previous preparation was necessary before the actual research was executed; this previous work includes the exploration and consideration of other topics for research, assessment from other experts on the field of tourism and the revision of literature in general, among others. The geographical coverage of the research was mainly the area of Volendam and Amsterdam as well, where relevant tour operators are located. Other phases of the research, specifically the desk research and most of the collection of secondary data, was done in Breda at and through the library of the NHTV University of Breda.

This chapter is divided into two subsections, secondary data collection and primary data collection that will describe two of the three different phases of this research. The third phase consisted in the critical analysis of the collected information and writing of the final manuscript. The different phases of the research were not completely executed in a sequential manner and were even sometimes executed simultaneously. It is worth mentioning that previous to the phases referred, there was also a whole phase of preparation in order to land on the preliminary topic for this thesis.

Taking into consideration all that has been previously discussed in this chapter, the most appropriate methods for data collection and analysis, as well as for the writing of the final report,



were selected accordingly. The use of multiple methods and techniques allows triangulation to be applied without neglecting the need for the production of a trustworthy research.

## **2.1 Methodology**

Two types of data were collected and used along the process of completion of this qualitative research, secondary and primary (qualitative) data. The secondary data mainly served the purpose of providing the necessary material to support the first sections of the final manuscript: contextual analysis, research design and methodology; and the literature review. On the other hand, through the use of different techniques and sources, primary data was collected and used mostly on the construction of findings, in order to critically analyze these and draw conclusions. Yet, it is important to take notice that when it is mentioned that secondary and primary data were used “mainly” in those sections, it does not imply that it was exclusively used in those sections. In many circumstances, the complementary analysis of both data was valuable, especially for the final sections of the report.

### **2.1.1 Secondary data collection**

The collection of secondary data began since the beginning of the research and was carried out in order to:

- Broaden the researcher’s knowledge on the topic, the use of authenticity in the tourism destination context, and on the case study destination area, Volendam;
- Ensure clarity, focus and originality in the research;
- Identify and revise literature and theories surrounding the discussion of authenticity on the tourism context, as well as conclusions and findings of past studies related to this investigation’s topic and destination.

To successfully reach all that was intended with the secondary data collection and make it complete, it was necessary to use different techniques and sources. Table 1 below shows a complete overview of the various techniques and the sources used to gather secondary data and specific notes on them. The literature revision focused on the specific topics of identity and authenticity.

**Table 1: Overview of secondary data collection techniques and sources**

Technique	Sources	Notes
<b>Internet research</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online academic databases</li> <li>• Online newspapers</li> <li>• Tourist information sites for The Netherlands and Volendam</li> <li>• Other internet sources</li> </ul>	Although some of the internet sources were not completely reliable, these could offer different insights to the researcher through the analysis of the content.
<b>Library and desk research</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic books related and relevant to the research topic</li> <li>• Theses and dissertations related to the research topic and destination area</li> <li>• Tourist guides</li> <li>• Other printed material (eg. brochures, museum guides, etc.)</li> </ul>	Most of the library and desk research was carried out at and through NHTV University of Breda's Library.

### 2.1.2 Primary data collection

The primary data collection was done in order to obtain the findings that would lead to the achievement of this research's goal and also provide with the answers to the research questions. Different techniques were used to gather primary data and well as sampling strategies, the latter were based on Bailey's (2007) 'Purposeful sampling strategies'.

The tourism industry of Volendam, as well as in any other destination, has a large number of stakeholders due to the many suppliers, producers, intermediaries and consumers of the industry, not to mention the impacts that the activity has in a destination. Nevertheless, for the purpose of this research this large number of stakeholders was narrowed down based on the desired results and the overall goal. In the end, six different local and non-local stakeholder groups were chosen to be taken into account for the investigation:

- Local population
- Local tourism businesses
- Local tourism related organizations
- Local municipality
- Non-local tourism operators
- Tourists

These stakeholder groups will be described below in order to provide clarity of which actors of the tourism industry of Volendam have been taken into account as well as from which perspectives will the issues of identity and authenticity of the tourism destination was analyzed. Moreover, the different techniques of data collection used with each stakeholder group will be described (see Table 2). It is worth mentioning that previous to the final execution of the field research, a pilot study was conducted in order to test the selected methods. In this pilot study a lack of willingness from some of the stakeholders was identified, along with biased responses. From the results of the

pilot study multiple alternative methods of primary data collection were then chosen to ensure an appropriate sample size as well validity for the research. The sample size was determined by many factors: the novelty of the responses and the variety within each stakeholder group, the specific sampling strategies will be further exposed. Further details regarding the field research will be provided in Chapter 4.

Observation, mostly non-participative, was another technique that was employed in situ at all times during the field research. As Gray (2009) well puts it, “The central intent of observation is to generate data through observing and listening to people in their natural setting (...) and to discover their social meanings and interpretations of their own activities”. It required a systematic effort on behalf of the viewer in order to be able to analyze and interpret the behavior of those being observed, in this case, the locals. Due to the qualitative nature of the present research; most of the observations were unstructured, although this does not signify that there was no forethought to them.

**Table 2: Overview of primary data collection**

Stakeholder group	Sampling strategy	Technique	Sample size
<b>Local population</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intensity: selection of cases that can intensely manifest the phenomenon.</li> <li>Maximum variation: cases considered to be different.</li> <li>Critical case: selection of cases that that have potential for logical generalizations and maximum application of information.</li> <li>Random</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In-depth semi-structured interviews</li> <li>Covert interview/ conversations</li> <li>Observation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5 locals</li> <li>22 locals</li> </ul>
<b>Local tourism businesses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Snowball: cases that have been referred by other participants.</li> <li>Criterion: based on them meeting certain criteria of interest.</li> <li>Critical case</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In-depth semi-structured interviews</li> <li>Covert interview/ conversations</li> <li>Participative observation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5</li> <li>10</li> </ul>
<b>Local tourism-related organizations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Criterion</li> <li>Critical casa</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In-depth semi-structured interviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3</li> </ul>
<b>Local municipality</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Snowball</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In-depth semi-structured interviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2</li> </ul>
<b>Non-local tourism operators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Importance: selection of those cases with most importance or influence.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In-depth semi-structured interviews</li> <li>Participative and non-participative observation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2</li> </ul>
<b>Tourists</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Typical case: selection of cases that normal, average, typical.</li> <li>Confirming/disconfirming: cases that could have potential for supporting or refuting analysis.</li> <li>Critical case</li> <li>Random</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Semi-structured interviews</li> <li>Covert interviews</li> <li>Observation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9 tourists</li> <li>24 tourists</li> </ul>
<b>Other</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Snowball</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In-depth interview</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 author of a research</li> </ul>
<b>TOTAL informants</b>			83

*Local population.* Since this research is dealing with identity and authenticity, topics that are deeply connected to social processes, in a specific community – Volendam; it was very important to consider the local population. A total of twenty-seven local inhabitants of Volendam were approached, from the total amount, five in-depth interviews were carried out, which lasted approximately between forty-five minutes to one hour and a half. The remaining twenty-two inhabitants were approached through covert interview/conversations that took place with the use of different sampling methods: intensity, maximum variation, critical case and random (see Table 2 for more insight). The covert interview/conversations lasted between 3 to 40 minutes and were carried out in different locations of Volendam such as cafés and restaurants, bus stops, streets located in non-touristic areas of the town and the church among others; making it possible to find informants of different ages and occupations and not limiting to those who are directly engaged or linked to the tourism industry.

*Local tourism businesses.* Mainly micro and small size enterprises (European Commission, 2010), the local tourism businesses can be considered as the producing side of the tourism industry of Volendam. Located mostly, if not entirely, in the dike area of Volendam, the local tourism businesses are comprised mainly by cafés, restaurants, souvenir shops, photo-shops, roll-on food shops and hotels. Although not precisely considered as a tourism enterprise, but mostly as entrepreneurs, local tours guides were also included in this stakeholder group.

*Local tourism-related organizations.* This stakeholder group is formed by those other tourism-related organizations of Volendam: the Museum of Volendam, VVV-Volendam, and STP who were contacted for interviews.

*Local Municipality.* The Edam-Volendam Gemeente was contacted in order to obtain the perspective of the local authorities.

*Non-local Tour Operators.* Although tourism operators are also tourism businesses, these were not classified into that stakeholder group due to the fact that they are not located in Volendam and most probably have a different perspective and role in terms of the research's topics.

*Tourists.* Without the tourists and their presence in Volendam, this research would not have been conducted and neither would the tourism industry exist in the destination. It is important to make clear that *only* international tourists were considered for this research. A total sample size of thirty-three tourists was achieved, and it was determined by many factors, including the time frame of the research, the desire to obtain responses from tourists with different profiles and the novelty of the responses. By the novelty of the response it is meant that this stakeholder group was not approached anymore once their responses were repeating and new information was no longer obtained from them.

*Other.* An in-depth interview took place with an anthropologist who had executed a social, interpretative research about Volendam's local identity.

### 3 LITERATURE REVIEW

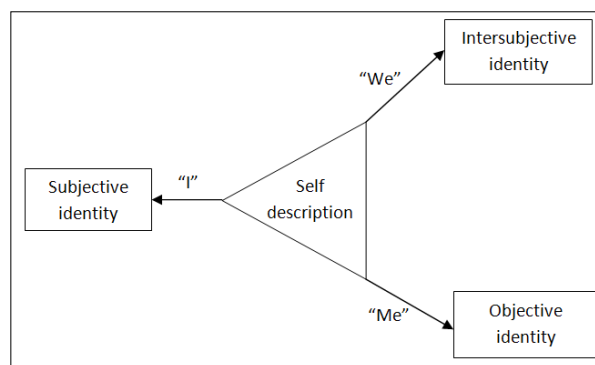
This chapter is the result of an extensive revision of literature related to the topic of research. The chapter will be divided into subsections dedicated to the two main topics of the research: identity and authenticity. Each topic will be firstly introduced in a general context and later be discussed in the tourism context relevant to the purpose of this investigation specifically.

#### 3.1 Identity

Identity at a first glance could seem like an easy concept to grasp. But in reality identities, like culture, are dynamic, and as Neyens (2001) and Eriksen (1994) say: identity and culture are negotiable, changeable and relational (as cited in Thissen, 2010). Which is why, for all these motives, identity should be seen as complex. Descriptions of identity and cultures can be compared to instant snapshots; these are taken in a specific moment in a specific place. Burns and Novelli (2006) describe that identity can be a sense of “who we are”, drawn from a group to which we belong, but that analogically identity can also derive through the comparison with those who instead belong to other groups, consequently with ‘different identities’. Other authors also debate that identity is the result of a social pressure between: a) the need for validation and similarity to others that humans have and b) an opposite but compensating need for uniqueness and individualization. In other words, identity minimizes the pressure by allowing people to feel identified within a group and at the same time to feel different and unique when compared to another group (Van Rekom & Go, 2006).

The following figure presents a model that visualizes the essential differentiation between the different uses of the concept ‘identity’ made by Weigert (1986 in Van Rekom & Go, 2006). Starting with the sense of identity expressed with the basic question “Who am I?” the author explains that the answer can be given from three different perspectives, that he names the three ‘basic modes’ of identity. The first answer is the self-awareness that all individuals take as a central aspect of reality of everything that happens to them or that they do. Parting from self-awareness, Weigert then discusses the three different modes of identity that he proposes; ‘subjective identity’ (‘I’), ‘objective identity’ (‘Me’) and intersubjective identity (‘We’).

**Figure 2: Weigert’s basic approaches to identity**



Source: Van Rekom & Go, 2006.

As mentioned above, humans are aware as actors of their own behavior. When a person asks him or herself the question “Who am I?” that person remembers that it he or she was involved in the previous action and that is what it Weigert refers to as ‘Self as the subject of self’s knowledge’. For the construction of identity it is only important that there is a constant consciousness of ‘self’ or ‘I’. Weigert defines this ‘pure I mode’ as the ‘subjective identity’. This approach to identity of persons is different than that one defined in terms of personality traits since “the I mode does not enable me to tell others about *Me*. Vice versa the *Me* mode of self is irreducible to the I mode of self as subject” (Weigert, 1986 in Van Rekom & Go, 2006, p. 81). This mode is referred to as the ‘objective identity’, referring precisely to the description of the object of identity – “the identity of an object corresponds to its definition” (Van Rekom & Go, 2006) meaning that the characteristics of the object are defining features. These characteristics mentioned here are also what defines a person as a member of a group, if they fit in with the ideas and ways shared by the group or not, in this sense, identities can create a sense of belonging, locating an individual in a society or community; that is his or her ‘intersubjective identity’. The *We* mode is then based in sets of rules that are taken for granted about the group’s identity, which according to Weigert (1986) can be opened by analyzing “the right to say *We*” (in Van Rekom & Go, p. 81). The *We* modality of identity is a very powerful one and easy to identify in many situations. Names such as Catalans, Basques, Tibet and Québec, among others, represent local identities capable of creating intense emotional connections and feelings of loyalty, and even in some cases self-sacrifice on behalf of the members of such groups (Van Rekom & Go, 2006). This *We* mode provokes cohesion among the group, tying it together and forming a strong sense of belonging and differentiation from the others. It is the shared element among a specific cultural group or community.

Cohen (1985) explains that above all, community is a symbolic reality and as such it is considered to be then a social construction (1985 in Ruíz & Hernández, 2007). Together with the individual, community is perhaps the main reference point for creating identities. It is therefore a level of identity. Strong collective identities connected to spaces give birth to a strong sense of community. This is how the link between identity, place and community is shaped. Community, as an important point of reference, calls out for constant definition and stabilization (Corsane, Davis & Murtas, 2009). Common experience and shared uses of meanings give rise to a community (Ruíz & Hernández, 2007).

Furthermore, it is also necessary to put in an up-to-date context the study of identity. By up-to-date it is meant to discuss the issue of identity in today’s globalizing world. Identity, like said before is ever changing, adapting itself to a changing world. Flows of meaning (Hannerz, 1992) have crossed their borders flooding other lands and mixing with different ones. This is why globalization is a topic that cannot be left outside of the discussion of identity nowadays. Thomas Friedman explains his view of what is occurring in terms of the politics of progress with his analogy of “The Lexus and the Olive tree”. In his view, half of the world is “dedicated to modernizing, streamlining and privatizing their economies in order to thrive” (Friedman, 2001, p. 31 as cited in Burns, 2006, p. 15); while the other half of the world is hugging the olive tree, the olive tree being

a symbol of “traditional values (and local and anchored identities)” (Burns, 2006). Although Friedman’s view is mostly oriented towards processes of progress in times of globalization, his discourse and view can be applied to cultural and social identity as well. Some cultures and communities, especially those who are part of large-scale and powerful societies are open and eager to modernize their world. But on the contrary, there exist smaller-scale societies, and not only small-scale but other communities, that simply prefer to “stick to traditional values and morals”. In his book *Cultural Complexity*, Ulf Hannerz (1992) points out that just because we live in a globalized world, it implies that culturally there will be a global homogenization of it, not only because of the communication flow but by own decision of the cultures themselves.

### 3.1.1 Identity and tourism

This research though is being done in the tourism field, and thus it is also necessary to analyze identity in the tourism context. The paragraphs below will provide with insight to the connections within tourism and identity.

It is not necessary to break one’s head thinking how it is possible that tourism and identity can be interconnected. Just think about the numerous cases around the world where traditions, clothing, ceremonies and other manifestations of heritage, culture and *identity* are the actual attraction and *raison d’être* for the tourists. Guatemala is a destination with an amazing flora and fauna, but moreover tourists visit the country because of the high levels of ethnicity that can be found. In the same manner, tourists are curious to observe and gaze at the different rituals and dances performed in Bali (Barker, Putra & Wirantha, 2006). Traditional dresses and costumes have been successfully exploited for tourist purposes by local entrepreneurs in Volendam since the 1890’s (Benjamin, 2002; Koning & Koning, 2002 in Van Rekom & Go, 2006). And so, around the world it is possible to find examples as these; and even though they do not make literal reference to identity, it is intended that, if not understood this way, the direct association between ethnicity, rituals and dances, and traditional dresses and costumes is assumed by the reader.

“In one of its many interpretations, tourism is understood as a communication setting, a space in which to relate, become closer or more distant, hence its inherent identity-related dimension” (Abraham, Waldren & Macleod 1997; Urry, 1990, 1994; as cited in Ruiz & Hernández, 2007). It is when the tourism activity has as a focus culture, traditions and heritage, that the link between tourism and these is highlighted. In the tourism activity, the conscious notion of cultural differences is constantly evident since “the construction of differences takes place around ideas such as “natural” vs. “civilized”, leisure vs. work and exotic vs. mundane, and rich vs. poor, sexual vs. repressive, powerful vs. powerless” (Anon cited in Burns & Novelli, 2006, p.2). It was already mentioned previously, that identity is not only felt through establishing similarities amongst a group, but about comparing oneself to others. Through these differentiations it is possible to put in evidence one aspect of identity, power and tourism: social identity becomes then a commodity. The relationship between tourism and the cultural politics of a destination is complicated since it “involves the way in which appropriated local cultures are represented in brochures and other media” (Dann, 1988, 1996 as cited in Burns, 2006, p. 15). This means that in some occasions it is seen as necessary to construct an identity that can be attractive and appealing for consumers and

at the same time easy to sell, or as Franklin (2003) puts it: “a constructed identity within the global culture of international tourism”.

The problem, in terms of tourism, is that if local identity vanishes completely the same would happen with the purpose of the tourists in that destination, leading to a probable inevitable disappearance of the tourist flow. In the end, the question of whether local identity will succumb to the influence of tourism and disintegrate depends much on how the community evaluates itself in terms of values. Van Rekom and Go (2006) state that such evaluation is made by the community through the comparison of their relative status of their local group identity with the status of the ‘outsiders’, who in this case would represent a global identity. The authors affirm that if the community perceives their group identity as higher in status, then it is likely that the local identity will resist the outsider influences. The same would happen if the social structure of a low-status community prevents its members from switching to other groups, usually higher in status.

This discussion can be considered to be related once more around globalization, that some authors argue leads to a domination of a global consumerism in which everything (goods, services, information, time and even identity) is valued in terms of its market value, instead about keeping a sense of home, community and identity (Arnoud, Price & Zinham, 2003 in Van Rekom & Go, 2006).

Despite what has been previously mentioned, tourism can also contribute positively to enhance local identity and increase the living standards of the host community, through the encounters between hosts and guests and the awareness on behalf of the local community of the visitor’s motivation(s) to the destination. In reference to one of the examples previously mentioned, Van Rekom and Go doubt if “whether (...) the Dutch town of Volendam would have maintained its own identity so clear without the tourists streams which remind the inhabitants continuously of their special character”. But, it is up to the host community to maintain their local identity because external influences will penetrate, no matter how strong the community’s walls are built.

### **3.2 Authenticity and its different shades**

Definitely authenticity a familiar word but a difficult one to describe, not to mention research and analyze (Wang, 1999; Steiner & Reisinger, 2006; Pine & Gilmore, 2007; Belhassen, Canton & Stewart, 2008; Jones, 2010). As mentioned in the contextual analysis, authenticity as a concept has been analyzed from various disciplines, specially the social ones. It has been object of study for more than 30 years (e.g. Duncan, 1978; Lowenthal, 1985; MacCannell, 1976; Relph, 1976; Taylor, 1991; Wang, 1999; Lewis & Bridger, 2000; Scouten, 2006; Belhassen & Canton, 2006; Hall, 2007; Pine & Gilmore, 2007; Beverland, 2009; Knudsen & Waade, 2010). Scrutinizing into all of these researches would be never-ending as well as repetitive to a certain extent. What it is worth mentioning is the evolution of the concept that becomes evident when reviewing authenticity-related literature.

The implications of the word authenticity have undergone changes that come from a traditional objective perspective into one that is less rigid and more flexible and subjective. In other words, this concept is no longer only inherent to objects, but is rather thought of as a culturally



constructed quality that can vary according to who is observing and in what context that person is observing what, and more recently as something that can be experienced or performed (Knudsen & Waade, 2010). The difference between the usages of the idea of authenticity creates then the different approaches of the concept. In the following paragraphs this discussion of how authenticity has evolved through its different approaches – objectivism, constructivism and post-modernism – will be reviewed more deeply, providing also clarity with the different types of authenticity that derive from the various approaches (objective authenticity, constructive or symbolic authenticity, and existential authenticity correspondingly). Wang (1999) suggests this classification of the different theoretical approaches to authenticity (see Table 3 from Wang, 1999) by previously mapping out the conceptual development of the term over the last four decades previous to him. Although Wang's work was published more than two decades ago, his validity is still proven today with the numerous authors that make reference to his work and use it as a base: Jones, 2010; Knudsen and Waade, 2010; Belhassen, Canton, Stewart, 2008; Kim and Jamal, 2007; Steiner and Reisinger, 2006, to mention some.

According to the Oxford English Dictionary (2002), authenticity means “really proceeding from its stated source”. The term originally derives from the Latin *Authenticus* and the Greek *Authentikos* which means ‘worthy of acceptance, authoritative, untrustworthy, not imaginary, false or imitation, conforming to an original’ (English Word Information, ND.). It is precisely this strict sense of the word that builds the bases of the objectivist approach. The objective authenticity is that which can be proven, in this case, there is an absolute and objective criterion that is used to measure authenticity. Wang (1999) describes the objective-related authenticity to be referring to the ‘authenticity of originals’, according to him the use of objective is mostly museum-linked.

Moving on to the constructivist approach, in his article *Rethinking Authenticity*, Wang (1999) states that this approach suggest that reality can be seen as the result of various versions of our own interpretations and constructions. Wang quotes Schwandt (1994) and his constructivist statement: “knowledge and truth are created, not discovered by mind”. From these statements it is clearly possible to already imagine what is the view of this approach on authenticity is: a social construct. Authenticity then, in the constructivist sense is rather thought of as a culturally and personally constructed quality that varies according to who is observing what and which context. Correspondingly, according to this approach it can be deduced that there can be various versions of authenticities regarding the same object.

Furthermore, in reference to the postmodernist approaches it is necessary to clarify that these are not a single one nor they are unified or well-integrated (Wang, 1999). These approaches make reference explicitly to experiences that are undertaken through tourism. These approaches reflect upon a subjective nature and holds that authenticity is an existentialist state in which as Belhassen et al. (2008) determine that “(...) one is true to one's real self in a given moment”. Existential authenticity derives from this approach. This paper will refer to this type of authenticity on the account of the post-modernist approaches. It is then, through the aid of post-modernist views that authenticity can be considered as an emotional experience. In other words, postmodernist approaches to authenticity, or existential authenticity, focus on the subject rather than the object.

Therefore authenticity, as seen from the existentialist perspective, is a state of being related to an emotional realm rather than a characteristic dependent on the object's qualities. In addition to this, Wang suggests that existential authenticity can be divided into two: intra-personal authenticity and inter-personal authenticity (1999). Intra-personal authenticity ascribes to the circumstances when one's feelings of being true to oneself are not directly related to others; and on the contrary inter-personal authenticity is that which are related to others.

**Table 3: Wang's taxonomy of three different types of authenticity in the tourism experience**

Object-related authenticity	Activity-related authenticity
Object authenticity: refers to the authenticity of originals. Correspondingly, authentic experiences in tourism are equated to an epistemological experience (i.e., cognition of the authenticity of original).	Existential authenticity: refers to a potential existential state of being that is to be activated by tourism activities. Correspondingly, authentic experiences in tourism are to achieve this activated existential state of Being within the luminal process of tourism. Existential authenticity can have nothing to do with the authenticity of the toured object.
Constructive authenticity: refers to the object by tourists or tourism producers in terms of their imagery, expectations, preferences, beliefs, powers, etc. there are various versions of authenticities regarding the same objects. Correspondingly, authentic experiences in tourism and the authenticity of toured objects are constitutive of one another. In this sense, the authenticity of toured object is in fact symbolic authenticity.	

(Source: Wang, 1999: 352)

More recently, Pine and Gilmore (2007) introduce a 'new genre of authenticity': referential authenticity. It is the response to the way in which people tend to consider that which renders tribute to some previous place, object, person, event or idea as authentic. It is interesting to observe today how people can identify the most artificial places and objects as authentic. The possibility of visiting or owning the next best thing to the original, people find that these recreate what they otherwise would not be able to experience. Pine and Gilmore explain that in order to appeal to referential authenticity, it is the best to reverently refer to something which is already perceived as authentic, without imitating or trivializing. Furthermore, the authors identify several principles that, when applied on an offering, these can result in referential authenticity:

- Pay personal tribute
- Evoke a time
- Pick a place
- Make it matter
- Be realistic

### 3.2.1 Authenticity in the tourism research context

In the tourism field, authenticity was first brought to the literature by Dean MacCannell at the beginning of the 1970's; the concept was used for studying tourist motivations and experiences from a sociological perspective. From then on, authenticity has been a common topic in the field studied by plenty of authors such as Brown, Moscardo and Pearce, Harkin, Shenhav-Keller, Silver,

Cohen, Daniel, Salamone, Turner and Manning, Bruner, Urry, Belhassen, Canton, Reisinger and Steiner, Wang and many more. It has been related to studies and discussions about tourist satisfaction and experiences, production of souvenirs, and local identity, culture and heritage, to mention some. This section will begin by providing a discussion revolving the concept of authenticity in tourism research relevant to this paper. Subsequent, the paper will continue by presenting a framework proposed by Jamal and Hill (2004) which, according to the authors, is intended to help organize the task of developing indicators of authenticity, especially but not limited to heritage-based areas and cultural destinations. The authors explain that this framework is a reaction to Wang's typology of authenticity as well as to other authors with similar views.

MacCannell (1999) affirms that tourist settings can be observed as a continuum or an entity that goes through a gradual transition from one condition to another. In this continuum, the first and front-most region is the one that is mostly there for the purpose of showing (or what MacCannell denominated 'staged authenticity', which will be discussed further on the paper) and the back-most region being the one that is most authentic, the 'back stage'. The same author would compare the search for authenticity as the modern version of the human concern with the sacred. As he points out, the arguments on authenticity reflect an anxiety of existence about what we are, what is the objectively true of the human condition (1999). In the same way, but more recently, John Urry (2002), author of *The Tourist Gaze*, compares the tourists' quest for authenticity as that of the pilgrims in other times and places different from the everyday life. Although, different from the pilgrim who pays tribute to a single center, tourists pay homage to an enormous series of centers, or better said, attractions and destinations. All of these statements make clear references to an existential perspective to observe authenticity, through which tourism is tied to social constructs, converting the tourist into a social metaphor and a victim of modernity:

"The dialectic of authenticity is at the heart of the development of all modern social structures. It is manifest in concerns for ecology and front, in attacks on what is phony, pseudo, tacky, in bad taste, mere show, tawdry and gaudy. These concerns conserve a solidarity at the level of the total society, a collective agreement that reality and truth exist somewhere in society, and that we ought to be trying to find them and refine them". (MacCannell, 1999, p.155)

On the other side, The International Cultural Tourism Charter (International Council on Monuments and Sites, 1999) describes authenticity as the relative integrity of a place, an object or an activity in relation to its original creation. In the context of living cultural practices, the context of authenticity responds to the evolution of the traditional practice. In the context of an 'historic place' or 'object', authenticity can encompass the accuracy or extent of its reconstruction to a known earlier state.

The above quote and statement seems to have identified potential components of authenticity as well as of inauthenticity or spuriousness – the everyday, the tasteless or tacky – which would result on social discontent. MacCannell (1999) argues that identifying 'real' French homes and 'actual' Dutch towns as true sights or "genuine structures" seems to suggest that some type of parameters must exist to classify them as such.

The fact about authenticity in cultural tourism destinations is that visitors want to consume the sensation of 'authenticity', but indeed not necessarily 'reality'. Many tourists have an interest in heritage and culture, but most of the times have minimal knowledge about the destination. In this sense, authenticity becomes a social construct that can also be determined in part to the actual knowledge and frame of reference that the individual possesses on the specific destination. In the tourism context, as it was observed in the social sciences, it is also possible to classify the concept of authenticity from different approaches. What determines the classification of the concept in this case is then the nature of the tourism experience. Wang proposed, based on the different approaches that the concept can have, three different types of authenticity in the tourism experience – objectivist authenticity, constructivist authenticity and existential authenticity. According to him, the first two, objectivist and constructivist authenticity are object-related, and the latter one, existential authenticity, is classified as an activity-related authenticity in tourism. This last subdivision is derived from the object of focus of authenticity of each approach: the objectivist and constructivist approach both refer to the characteristics of the object (even though the latter approach can be subjective and it can depend on who is gazing what, it is based upon the object's characteristics), while existential authenticity is an experience encountered by a person, being the individual and the emotions felt the center of focus. He also notes that the analysis of authenticity in tourism can benefit by clearly differentiating two areas of the study: that of the toured object (object authenticity) and that of the experience of authenticity. In the end, Wang suggests that existential authenticity can be an alternative source in tourism regardless the authenticity of the toured object.

According to Jamal and Hill (2005) those academics who approach authenticity from a geographical perspective often argue for emphasis on place and space in which the object is experienced. Still they agree on the fact that discussions of authenticity regarding politics of identity and ethnicity are increasing. Lately, it has been observed that more and more academics of the field argue that a post-modern, existential approach to authenticity can be the most suitable to evaluate experiences of contemporary tourists (Belhassen, Canton & Stewart, 2008; Kim & Jamal, 2007; Reisinger & Steiner, 2006; Steiner & Reisinger, 2006; Wang, 1999). Nevertheless this approach appears to disjoint existential authenticity from the toured object and from the social and political contexts that help to immerse it with significance. Jamal and Hill part from this and the works previously mentioned and focus on the relationship between object and experiences as one that is "integrally woven into a physical and cultural matrix"; arguing that time and space play important roles. Based on the criteria mentioned above, Jamal and Hill (2005) build a framework in which the importance of understanding certain assumptions that influence researchers' views and understanding of authenticity is reflected. Their framework also allows a better comprehension of the scope and range of the study of authenticity in tourism and emphasizes on the fluidity and flexibility of the concept. Finally they base their framework on the perspective that understanding various dimensions and aspects of authenticity is a more advantageous way of working with the concept than a perspective which considers authenticity to be divided into discrete categories.

Continuing with the belief that time and space are of great value in the discussion of authenticity, Jamal and Hill integrate Kirschenblatt-Gimblett’s description of time involved in heritage tourism: historic time, heritage time and visitor time; in order situate the three dimension of authenticity that had been already established by Wang. In other words, Jamal and Hill combine Wang’s (1999) classification of the types of authenticity with Kirshenblatt-Gimblett’s “types of time in heritage tourism” (1998 as cited in Jamal & Hill, 2004). Before presenting Jamal and Hill’s proposed framework (see

), this paper will first describe the different times that locate the dimensions of authenticity.

**Table 4: Dimensions and Aspects for Addressing Authenticity**

Dimensions of authenticity			
Aspects of authenticity	Objective (Real)	Constructive (Sociopolitical)	Personal (Phenomenological)
Time	Historic time	Heritage time	Visitor time
Space	Real and genuine found in pre-modern locations, outside one’s spurious society. (e.g. sights, scientifically dated material artifacts, ‘genuine’ objects, etc.)	Production (manufacture) of attraction, community, destination; enclavic space. (Social-political landscapes influencing nationhood, destination image, sense of place, heritage/historic reconstructions, etc.)	Interactive, performative, touristic space; heterogeneous space. (Tourists and residents engage in sense making, narrative and interpretative meaning-making encounters with situated place and contextual space)
Approach	Scientific and positive paradigms	Constructivism and social constructionism; postmodernism	Interpretative and narrative approaches
	Realist; essentialist (authenticity is a fixed property of object/event)	Meanings negotiated and emergent; political contest among stakeholders; space is mediated by technological and ideological forces, symbolic and constructed authenticity.	Psychological (perceptions/emotions); experiential and existence based, phenomenological, where meanings emerge through the social relations that situated and embodied in the touristic space (and place).

Source: Jamal & Hill, 2004

‘Historic time’ refers to the objective point or period of time in which the object or event in discussion takes or took place in history, thus a realistic view of authenticity. It is mostly historians and scientists who are interested in situating records and events in their precise historic time (e.g. carbon dating). ‘Heritage time’ then, in contrast to historic time, heritage time is located within a constructivist approach where the object, event or site is enclosed in an “intersubjective and discursive matrix” (Jamal & Hill, 2004), i.e. authenticity can become present through negotiation or be achieved through its staging. In this case, objects and events of a particular time may be appropriated to construct a story that conforms to the economical, social and/or political interest of a specific realm or domain. The parameters of examination of the heritage space include the situated objects, representations and material artifacts, as well as the people and narratives of the place. All these elements inscribe a heritage story in which a heritage plot constructs the heritage time as the legitimate time frame in which the destination is to be identified and interpreted by

the visitor. Finally, as Jamal and Hill describe, 'visitor time', can be seen as a transcendence of time. In this case, the tourist is aware that a specific event took place in another time in the past, but at the same time is aware and takes conscious of that moment's importance in relation to his or her own life, so that the experiential moment can be in the past, present and even future simultaneously. This allows the visitor to evaluate the authenticity of an attraction, destination or re-enacted site, object, event, etc. against several dimensions, including how well the sight or site resembles the original one. Jamal and Hill associate the visitor time to Wang's existential authenticity.

### 3.2.2 Staged authenticity

"At every work level, in any company, workers need to understand that in the Experience Economy, every business is a stage, and therefore work is a theater" (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). As it was previously motioned, it is Dean MacCannell who takes the credits for the term 'staged authenticity' (Chhabra, Healey & Sills, 2003). This term is referent to the act that host communities perform when they package the culture (including themselves) in order to appeal attractive and sell it. As MacCannell puts it, "to the degree that this packaging alters the nature of the product, the authenticity sought by the visitors becomes 'staged authenticity' provided by the touree" (MacCannell, 1979, as cited in Chhabra, Healey & Sills, 2003). The act of staging authenticity is, in most cases, a response to the need of postmodern tourists who expect experience to be produced but presented as real, that not always have the time to cross the globe to find these experiences, and finally the tourist who has been socialized into consuming by gazing. Urry (2002) refers to the work of Boorstin who analyzes 'pseudo-events' (1964):

"Isolated from the host environment and local people, the mass tourist travels in guided groups and finds pleasure in inauthentic and contrived attractions gullibly enjoying 'pseudo-events' and disregarding the real world outside. As a result tourist entrepreneurs and the indigenous populations are induced to produce ever more extravagant displays for the gullible observer who is thereby further removed from the local people".

So far the previous paragraphs have described the concept of staged authenticity in the tourism field and literature. The following paragraphs then put forward how tourism can be analyzed in terms of how it can affect the hosts' and guests' decisions on whether they choose to be authentic or not.

*Heritage tourism.* Existential authenticity and heritage have intimate relationships, since it seems like people look into their past and not only identify but understand themselves. Many authors have argued that the Western society more often lacks identity and sense of where they come from (Reisinger & Steiner, 2006). This can be blamed on a globalizing economy and increased urbanization as well as the migration of populations. Today, societies rely on museums and galleries, guides and interpreters to illustrate to them the past, their heritage.

It is common today to see how populations, ethnic groups and people in general can stage their traditions, dances, ceremonies, and their heritage, through performances or shows, basing these demonstrations mostly on stereotypes. These shows usually allow minimal contact between

guests and performers. Occasionally, but not always, others of the same groups manifest themselves providing for tourists their own interpretations of their culture, sometimes in response to more demanding visitors, with performances that are to a certain extent more close to the reality, to the 'back stage' (MacCannell, 1999) or with what Taylor (2001) called 'sincerity'.

*Host authenticity.* Steiner and Reisinger (2006) quote Ritzer (1993) on the fact that "mass marketing homogenizes and standardizes major destinations to achieve efficiency and control in product delivery". Pine and Gilmore also argue in the same sense that in today's experience economy, globalization is taking care of submitting goods, services, images, ideas and even experiences to be evaluated based on their value in the market. Homogenization leaves in this sense little or no opportunity at all for individuality but instead indicate conformity and even uniformity; in this way it is improbable that tourism, especially mass tourism, will stimulate authenticity among hosts and destinations. Tourists impose their values by applying economic pressure reducing then any intent of the host community and the destination to strive for authenticity. However, these arguments should not be taken as the rule, and it should also be taken into consideration that it can also be the case that host communities decide that staging their culture is the way they choose to present themselves to others.

Some authors argue that the staging and commoditization of culture is not always accompanied by negative consequences. Rather it can be manner of preserving and maintaining local culture and traditions, that otherwise, without the demand and value for these, would most likely vanish (Van Rekom & Go, 2006). In other words, staged authenticity in a way protects host communities from the intrusion of the tourists and visitors, but at the same time allows them to perceive the economical benefits from the activity (MacCannell, 1973 as cited in Urry, 2002; Maoz, 2006). In rare occasions, but still possible, tourism can even reinforce and enhance local culture and identity. Furthermore, Steiner and Reisinger (2006) mention that it is important to remember that authenticity is about free choices, and not about sustaining traditions or being true to the past, such issues are relevant for object authenticity, but in the case of tourism it is not the tourists who should decide how they portray their culture and thus authenticity in the particular destination, but it is the choice of the host community and its local residents.

*Tourist authenticity.* When products are packaged, priced, marketed and branded to attract tourists, the emphasis is then on sales and profit, rather than the product or experience. Of course, not all tourists are looking for packaged culture; neither are all destinations packaging their culture. Others prefer to avoid opportunities of experiencing authenticity in the destination by placing themselves in what can be compared to an 'environmental bubble', they search for accommodation in style with their place of origin, look for familiar tastes in food and in general are just not interested to get in touch or deal with the difficulties of interacting with the local culture. These types of tourists simply choose not to search for authenticity, but it is their choice.

In their book 'The soul of the new consumer: Authenticity – what we buy and why in the new economy', Lewis and Bridger (2000) state that the world has been developing from "scarcity to abundance and from abundance to authenticity". This and studies on tourist demand have shown

that there are some people out there who are interested in self-discovery and authenticity in their experiences: it is precisely these people who become the tourists who reject packaged and customized cultures. This does not imply that tourists are looking always for the exotic, primitive or remote, but simply to discover authenticity by experiencing the life of the destination, including change and development (Li, 2000 in Steiner and Reisinger, 2006). Not to be underestimated are the mundane and banal, the depthless and fun aspects of tourism that can have the potential to facilitate existential authenticity (Pons, 2003).

More recently and to a more general application, Pine and Gilmore (2007) explain that companies in general stage an experience whenever they engage customers, connecting with them in a personal and memorable way. The authors argue that in the experience economy, the economic function is to stage offerings of a memorable nature with personal key attributes that are revealed over a period of time as a supply method in which the seller is the one who stages and the customers are actually treated and thought of as guests and the factors of demand are sensations. They affirm that in the end, staging experiences is not about entertaining, but about engaging the customers.

### 3.2.3 Real/Fake Matrix

In their book 'Authenticity: What consumers really want', Pine and Gilmore (2007) propose that in general products and services, or offerings as they call them in the book, can become authentic, following the line of the constructivist approach, although not mentioned in the book. Furthermore, the authors identify two standards from which authenticity flows in thought and action: 'being true to your own self' and 'being who you say you are to other'. The first one makes reference to the importance of being earnest, consistent and self-directed focuses on one's perception of one's self. The second one, being trustworthy, honest and compassionate focuses on one's behavior towards others. Not all fakes are equal, the book admits, these can be good or bad fakes. The standards today are no longer real versus unreal, but instead the standards focus on the merits of the imitation. According to them, what makes the good ones better than the others is their "improvements upon reality" (Pine & Gilmore, 2007). But if "*real fake* and *fake fake* exists, then there must be a *fake real* and a *real real*". Following these standards, the authors propose a 2x2 matrix, in which the two standards for authenticity are the axes. Resulting in the Real/Fake Matrix (see Figure 3).

The matrix provides then a mental model and a prescription for construct a path towards rendering authenticity through the offerings of a business. The X axis of the matrix describes a self-directed relationship between the organization and its own input: is what the organization offering true to itself and to the organization? The Y axis describes the other relationship between the organization and its customers: is what the organizations offers what it says it is and not false to any customer? Pine and Gilmore debate that companies must apply it to "render authenticity with every commodity, good, service or experience offered", and call these two standards the Polonius Test:

1. Is the offering true to itself?



2. Is the offering what it says it is?

The answers to the questions then constitute four modes of authenticity – Real-Real, Real-Fake, Fake-Real, and Fake-Fake – each represents a means by which offerings can be perceived as real or unreal.

**Figure 3 Real/Fake Matrix**

<i>Is what it says it is</i>	<b>Real-Fake</b>	<b>Real-Real</b>
<i>Is not what it says it is</i>	<b>Fake-Fake</b>	<b>Fake-Real</b>
	<i>Is not true to itself</i>	<i>Is true to itself</i>

Source: Pine & Gilmore, 2007

#### 4 ANALYSIS OF CASE STUDY FINDINGS

The purpose of this research, as previously established is to evaluate the tourism destination of Volendam in reference to its identity and use of authenticity. The findings and results of the field investigation that will help accomplish the overall goal as well as answer some of the research questions are presented below. This chapter will also provide with insight on how the field research was conducted.

The field research consisted in the implementation of different research and sampling methods, already discussed in the methodology section; yet in order to justify these results this section will go deeper into the actual process of the field investigation itself. Different than the desk research which was entirely done in Breda, the field research consisted in many visits to the destination – Volendam, the tourist generator region – Amsterdam. In between these visits, the analysis of the findings and the planification of future visits were done in Breda. In a time frame of one month and a half, from the end of September until mid November, total of five visits were done, lasting each between two days up to two weeks in order to take the most advantage out of each trip. Along the course of the field research the purpose of each visit changed. Each visit together with its purpose and achievements will be exposed below (see Appendix 1 for further details on the interviews). Important to mention is that the technique of observation was a common denominator to all of the visits.

*Visit 1: Volendam.* With the purpose of exploring the destination and to become familiarized in the first visit the researcher engaged in a tour of the destination. Observations were conducted and photographs were made for later analysis. Identification of the initial stakeholders was achieved. This exploratory visit lasted two days and it was done over one weekend on purpose to find the maximum tourist activity.

*Visit 2: Volendam.* Lasting three days, the second visit had the main goal of collecting contact information from different stakeholders in order to arrange the first interviews. For the fortune of the research, two interviews were held on site and although there was no previous preparation these interviews resulted to be very productive. The first interview was held with one of the volunteers from the VVV and the second one with the Chief Spokesperson of the Municipality. From these interviews not only was information collected but also other relevant stakeholders were identified.

*Visit 3: Volendam.* Previously arranged, during this visit four interviews were conducted with: the Policy Officer of the Economic Affairs Department from the Municipality, The Museum of Volendam, the Director of the STP, the Director of Hotel Spaander and with a Dutch anthropologist, author of a published research on Volendam's identity. The contact information of other relevant stakeholders was also obtained for possible future interviews. This third visit lasted two weeks.

During this visit a pilot study was implemented in order to identify the willingness from locals and tourists to collaborate with in-depth interviews. In this way, six in-depth interviews were held with

two local residents from Volendam and four tourists who were visiting the destination and agreed to collaborate. Many more locals and tourists were approached, without any success. From the identified lack of willingness on behalf of the tourists and local stakeholder groups it was decided to carry on covert interview/conversations in the future, without giving up the attempts to achieve in-depth interviews. The covert interview/conversations were designed to be flexible and obtain unbiased and ensure sufficient information, without making the informant feel stressed to have to answer questions for a research during his/her holiday or day.

*Visit 4: Volendam & Amsterdam.* In-depth interviews were arranged and conducted with the two most important and popular tour operators that organized excursions to Volendam: Lindbergh Excursions and Tours&Tickets Excursions. Permission was obtained from the also to approach tourists for interviews as they returned from the excursions to Volendam. In this way it was possible to obtain five more in-depth interviews from tourists who had been in Volendam with the excursions. Furthermore in Volendam three in-depth interviews with locals were achieved. One day of the field visit was dedicated to interview souvenir shops in the act, achieving three interviews with souvenir shops and one photo shop in total. Three more days of this visit were dedicated to engage in covert interview/conversations among locals and tourists, successfully achieving a total of twelve conversations with locals and ten with tourists. These conversations took place in many different locations of Volendam, including the bus ride from the destination back to Central Station in Amsterdam. In total this visit lasted one week. The different conversations lasted between 3 minutes up to one hour approximately.

*Visit 5: Volendam & Amsterdam.* In the fifth and final visit, it was accomplished to meet with one local freelance tour guide from Volendam in Amsterdam. Furthermore, the covert interview/conversations that were held in this visit were as follows: ten locals, fourteen tourists and ten with personnel from souvenir shops. In this visit the researcher also assisted to an opera concert by the local chorus group held in Volendam's church.

#### **4.1 Dual identity**

Along the process of investigating Volendam's identity, it resulted curious to discover that the response to the same question, 'What is the identity of Volendam?' could be different. It was all a matter of who was consulted and from which perspective was the identity seen: from the local perspective or from tourist perspective. More curious it resulted when even the locals gave different responses to the same question, indicating in this sense that Volendam's identity is possibly being negotiated depending on the purposes that it is required to perform. It was concluded that Volendam has then a dual identity: the local identity and a parallel constructed identity with commercial purposes. Interestingly, both identities seem to exist, but are not completely confined, in different geographical locations of the town (see Figure 4). The map below shows how it is possible to make a distinction of the areas where each identity can be found. Note that although in the map the boundaries are well established; in reality these are more flexible. The green area represents the local identity – the city of Volendam, the orange the constructed identity – the historic center, the red the area where the constructed identity is manifested the most – the harbor, and the blue color is the water of the IJsselmeer.

**Figure 4: Geographical distinction between local identity and constructed identity**

Source: adapted from Google Maps

Both identities will be described, the latter one in the form of a narration that will take the reader on a 'tour' through Volendam. The narration of the tour, a part from providing the reader with the possibility of *experiencing* the tourism destination, will also create the space to introduce the discussion on the issue of authenticity in the tourism destination.

#### 4.1.1 Local identity – The 'Backstage'

Referring to MacCannell's (1999) work, he describes that tourism destinations can have different regions, being the most authentic region the one that was on the backmost section of the continuum, he denominated this region the 'backstage'. This backstage region to which MacCannell refers to is, in the case of Volendam, its local identity and everyday life of the town and not the tourist destination. It is the most authentic region, viewed in the objectivist sense, of this particular tourist setting that has been shaped by the years since the first settlements of the town until what Volendam is today. This identity is what can distinguish this town and provide a sense of belonging to its' people. The following description is the result of an extensive research mainly within the local population. Conversations, interviews and observations of behavior lead to the identification of what will be presented below. As mentioned previously in Chapter 3, identities are ever changing and the reader should interpret this as a snapshot of Volendam's identity taken to specific people in a specific moment and in specific places.

Noted at first glance when consulting local's about their way of their identity is how proud they are about their 'little town' (M. Wiffrie, personal communication, 2010). Locals immediately start presuming on how hard working the people from Volendam are, that the town has always produced many celebrities, singers and soccer stars (H. Duin, C. Kes, personal communication, 2010), and how they always desire and strive to achieve (L. Thissen, personal communication, 2010) and be the best (H. Duin, personal communication, 2010). In addition, they also proudly

mention that they try to always 'stick and stay together' (C. Kes, personal communication, 2010) and that they are very competitive among each others in the community, in the materialistic sense. Interestingly, when these characteristics of the Volendam identity are given by the local inhabitants, they are related to aspects of their heritage.

In general, Volendam's local identity is deeply rooted in their society and is a strong one. As a community they possess a strong sense of cohesion, established through a strong sense of place, belonging and social pressure for similarity. They have set high walls to mark the boundaries and frontiers of their community for both outsiders and insiders to come in or leave correspondingly. The community has self-imposed strict values, norms and expectations for its members, but at the same time it offers to its members a good and safe life if they stay inside these walls and reach the necessary extent of what Thissen described as the Volendam 'yardstick' (personal communication, 2010).

The hard working spirit of the Volendammers is reflected today in their working schedules and the good quality of life that is lived in the town. Most of the Volendam working population commutes daily and a work in the construction industry and another big percentage work six or even seven days a week, are self-made businessmen and the majority of the inhabitants own their house (local resident, personal communication, 2010). Several informants associated the hard working trait with their previous traditional economic activity: fishing. "The fishing life was a tough one with long seasons fighting in the sea" (C. Kes, personal communication, 2010), this is one of the many remarks made by the locals associating Volendam's hard working population to their fishing heritage.

Related to this hard working community is the desire to strive for the best. The proud comments of the locals in reference to their celebrities (the band The Cats who were popular in The Netherlands during the 60's, Nick Schilder and Simon Keizer, Jan Smit, to mention some in the music industry and Cees Keizer and Wim Jonk, famous football players) and their popularity and achievements have been adopted and taken as their own. Volendam, according to many informants, has always tried to be the best and to stand out since they can remember. The town has always been politically attached to the neighboring community of Edam, but this has not been to the content of the Volendam population. Volendammers refer to the fact that they should be separated and have an independent municipality or, at least be Edam the town under the municipality governance of Volendam, since the latter one is bigger in size, population and wealth (C. Kwakman, personal communication, 2010), and even also constitute a majority in the town council (Koning & Koning, 2002). This fact, that might seem unimportant and insignificant for outsiders, has planted among the Volendammers a desire that has grown over the years to be the best one and prove themselves to be able "to do it" by themselves. Not only were they politically under the governance of the Edam municipality, but they were neither allowed to have their own church. For many years, around mid 1800's, the inhabitants of Volendam had to struggle and persevered until they finally accomplished their mission and built their own church. From these events a feeling of collective injustice emerged among the Volendam population (Koning & Koning,

2002 in Van Rekom & Go, 2006). The need for distinction is not only among the neighboring populations, but in the Netherlands as well, not as the best, but as holding a special place.

Moreover, Volendam is a community that possesses a strong sense of belonging and cohesion. From both, the outside and the inside, the community is considered to be a closed one. Volendam has built high walls in order to prevent outsiders from entering or at least to make it hard for them to enter and be a part of the community. At the same time these walls prevent insiders and members of the same community from leaving. Comments and statements such as “People from Volendam only marry with other people from Volendam” (C. Kes, personal communication, 2010), or “... we even have a high school in the town so the kids do not have to go away to study”, or “he is not from Volendam because even though he was born here, his family was not originally from this town” (local residents, personal communication, 2010), they all reflect how the community establishes frontiers to mark who is a member and who is not a member. One case of a young girl, born and raised in Volendam was brought to light during the investigation by a local resident, this girl moved to another city in the country to study, but before she did she was pressured by her friends to stay in Volendam and threatened her to end their friendship with her if she left, arguing that she had to choose between them and leaving the town, and if she left she had to leave forget about her friends and Volendam. The latter case shows the strong social pressure that the community exercises and which does not allow its member the possibility to possess double or combined identities. Yet, having mentioned this, the people of Volendam, those who choose for the membership to the community live happily and are satisfied; they feel safe. Precisely this is what is thought to be the ‘Volendam’s yardstick’, the social pressure to conform to the prevailing values and norms, by which the locals are measured. In Volendam, locals derive their identity, partly or wholly through the membership to the community and a sense of sameness, based in sets of rules that are taken for granted about the group’s identity, “the right to say *We*”. Other groups and individuals are hereby excluded on the basis of their otherness. Heritage once more plays an important role in Volendam’s current local identity: the origins of Volendam being a closed community can be traced back to the times of settlements of the town. Volendam was a Roman Catholic enclave in a largely Protestant region, leading them to isolation mostly due to a religious segregation. Even though, the town did interact with the rest of the country especially through the commerce of fish, marriage between Catholics and Protestants was highly disapproved by the Priest (C. Kwakman, personal communication, 2010).

Identity, if it is not only constructed based upon the similarities within a group, but also by comparison to other groups with different identities, then such marked differences between groups as the difference in religions can mean, could clearly justify the tight boundaries of Volendam’s society. A sense of injustice and the belief that the local status of Volendam was lower than the deserved (such as what is felt by Volendammers in reference to having their municipality in Edam) consequently could have produced that Volendammers jointly embrace their own group and local identity.

#### 4.1.2 Constructed identity – On the ‘stage’

Like this “(...) we move to the world famous fishing village of Volendam on the border of the former Zuiderzee (now called IJsselmeer) – with its wooden houses and locals wearing their colorful style of dress” (Lindbergh, 2010). After a fast drive from Amsterdam, as the tourist approaches the town of Volendam, on the right hand of the road a windmill appears, soon the bus stops and then it is necessary to step out, in Volendam. If required, tourists can swing by the VVV where they can be provided with information and maps. The VVV is located right next to the Museum of Volendam. In short distance walk through “an ancient maze of narrow streets, wooden houses with white lace curtains in their windows and little canals” (Lonely Planet, 2007), the tourist arrives at a dyke with a small harbor. The dyke has at one side a line of cafés and souvenir shops, one after the other one, on the other side is the harbor with plenty of boats in the water. The street is busy with many other tourists who are walking, usually with cameras or bags in their hands. The cafés are busy with people occupying most of the chairs and waiters, some of them dressed in traditional clothes, running to fill the orders. The souvenir shops are no different: filled with tourists and Dutch stuff (Thissen, personal communication, 2010): tulips, windmills, wooden shoes, cows, Delftware, postcards, and Amsterdam: Amsterdam t-shirts, Amsterdam hats, scarves, cups, bags, etc. To take something along that reminds the tourist of Volendam, he or she can buy a t-shirt, a postcard or a doll dressed in the local costume. Alternated with the cafés and souvenir shops, the tourist finds small photo shops, with stands in the streets that hold photo albums promoting their works. The photo albums are full with pages of pictures with people, of all races and ages, dressed in the same traditional dresses as the ones seen used by the locals of Volendam. Women are wearing “tight bodices and brightly stripped skirts” (Eyewitness Travel, 2008), wooden shoes, the traditional red necklace and a white laced hat; in their hands they are either holding a bouquet of tulips or some cheese. The men also wear hats, but these are black, and a pair of ‘box-looking pants’ (Thissen, personal communication, 2010). The backgrounds of the pictures change as well: some look like old-style typical Dutch kitchens and others look like Volendam’s harbor. Also typical for the tourist to find is the ice-cream shop and the rolling-shops that sell fish and fries; smoked eel is most probably what the vendor would recommend. In the water, along with the other boats is the boat that takes tourists every fifteen minutes to the nearby town of Marken.

Further on the dyke appears the Hotel Spaander that opens its doors to those who wish to admire the collection of paintings on the walls. Depending on the time and organization of the trip, the tourist can go to the Volendam Museum, wander along the maze of streets behind the dyke, or hurry up and catch the next boat to Marken. In the museum displayed can be found original artifacts, scenes of “four authentic interiors” and old fishermen’s cottages (Volendam Museum, N.D.), a fishery with “a true replica of the Volendam North Sea botter”, an exposition with the traditional costume’s history since the 1800’s, a collection of paintings and drawings of many artists that had temporarily stayed in Volendam, a room with projections of “a nostalgic-art deco compilation of documentary films”, and finally a room covered with mosaics made from over eleven million cigar bands, made by a local artist. Written before thanking the visitor for visiting in the ‘Museum Tour Directions’ handout is: “Since 1995 the colorful decorations of world famous

buildings and works of art besides province-arms, windmills and other typical Dutch symbols have been a major attraction of the Volendam Museum". After this, those who came in the coach buses had even less time, as the visit in Volendam is of approximately one hour the maximum and probably saw less than what this tour has presented, but surely leave with a "bag full of memories" in their hands (tourist, personal communication, 2010).

The previous narration was of a "complete tour of Volendam" (VVV, personal communication, 2010), elaborated with the results of careful observation, active participation and analysis of conversations and inquiries with tourists, locals, tour guides, tourist information offices and employees from tourism businesses. It is a narration of an average, normal day in Volendam as a tourist during the summer peak season. As it was previously mentioned, this narration will help define the identity that has been constructed for the tourists and how it was built over the years.

Volendam's constructed identity started to emerge since the times when the works of art from the painters who were inspired in the town were exposed outside of the country, as their main inspiration and object depicted were the locals, in their traditional dresses and fishing activities (Volendam inhabitant, personal communication, 2010). Like this, the first images of Volendam that crossed national boundaries were of a fishing village where people used traditional costumes. Moreover, when L. Spaander started bringing tourists, local entrepreneurs and artisans of the village saw the opportunity of selling dolls with the costumes and wood carvings along the dike area, which since then has been the 'tourist area' of Volendam, later on the tourists' amusement for the traditional clothes was taken profit of and the idea of selling pictures to the tourists wearing the Volendam dress was also exploited. It is in this manner that slowly through time, Volendam has created a self-imposed image and constructed an identity of the fishing village where locals wear traditional clothes and live in "cute little houses painted in green" (tourist, personal communication, 2010) as one of the interviewed tourists said.

The constructed identity is not built from scratch; instead it borrows elements from the local heritage, which were once real, genuine and authentic from the objective perspective in a historic time (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998 in Jamal & Hill, 2004). This heritage is today a commodity in the tourism context, a commodity that has been strategically used in order to produce economical benefits. Nevertheless, these elements have most definitely had the possibility to linger through time thanks to the commercial benefits they have brought to both Volendam and all of those who benefit from the tourism activity. It is like this that the process of cultural and heritage commoditization happens, taking into account only those elements that especially distinguish Volendam and moreover, those which can be attractive to tourists and consequently can be 'sold'. More recently, this self-constructed identity has been also adopted as 'Volendam's image' by the tourism operators that offer excursions to Volendam, transmitting and promoting this image and constructed identity to much far distances than ever before and than what the destination itself does. Through its portrayed constructed identity, Volendam offers the possibility to confirm tourists' stereotypes of not only Volendam, but Holland as well, meeting their expectations and leaving their hunger to see the 'real Netherlands' satisfied after their visit. Volendam has not only kept alive its heritage for the amusement of the tourists, but has also incorporated other elements



of the stereotyped Dutch identity: the tulips, delftware, windmills, cheese and Amsterdam (and Amsterdam's stereotypes as well); all which represent instant associations to Holland but not exclusively to Volendam. These elements have been incorporated as the narration described, mostly among the souvenirs. Hans Duin, owner of a souvenir shop at Volendam's dike and Director of the STP, said that his store (like the rest of the souvenir shops) mostly offered Dutch and Amsterdam souvenirs because they are 'easier' to sell since those 'images' are already well-known and popular (personal communication, 2010). In short, Volendam has constructed an identity based on 'easy to sell images' that are found in the own local heritage as well as those popular Dutch images that are already in the minds of the tourists.

#### 4.2 Authenticity in the context of Volendam as a tourism destination

Tourists want to experience authenticity but not necessarily reality; this is precisely what Volendam is giving to its visitors. In this section, theory will be applied directly to the destination and specifically to the destination's performance on authenticity, to demonstrate how Volendam is using aspects of objective, constructive and existential authenticity all together (see Table 5).

**Table 5: Approaches of authenticity applied in Volendam**

Dimensions of authenticity			
Aspects of authenticity	Objective (Real)	Constructive (Sociopolitical)	Personal (Phenomenological)
Time	Historic time	Heritage time	Visitor time
Subject	Genuine objects. Possible to find in Volendam Museum and dike area. Heritage and history.	Constructed identity	Atmosphere, Tourist experience.

Research among stakeholders was conducted and certain elements which indicated authenticity in Volendam were identified. Interestingly, most of the people coincided in the same elements: the traditional costume, the wooden houses, the harbor, the museum and the tours (which gives the tourists the feeling that what they have been told is true), the seafood, painting exhibition at Hotel Spaander, and finally Volendam's atmosphere. The presence and combination of all these objects and subjective elements results in that, on one hand Volendam *performs* authenticity while, on the other hand, visitors can *experience* authenticity. Figure 5 illustrates the popularity of each of these elements, the bigger the font of each element, the more popularity it had among the respondents. It has to be added that although the words are in different colors and positions, this has no relation to the responses.

Figure 5: Elements that indicate authenticity in Volendam



Analyzing Volendam from an objectivist perspective certain objects and events can be identified, those original and genuine artifacts and also their heritage, all belong to a historic time. It is mostly in the Museum of Volendam where these artifacts of objective authenticity can be found. From a constructivist perspective, where the heritage time is located, authenticity arises in Volendam when the objects and heritage from the historic time are used to serve the purpose of attracting visitors and generating economical benefits. All these elements inscribe Volendam's heritage story (constructed identity) in which a heritage plot constructs the heritage time as the legitimate time frame in which the destination is to be identified and interpreted by the visitor, thus constructive authenticity. Finally, existential authenticity, or personal authenticity as Jamal and Hill refer to it, can be detected on the destination through the tourists' experiences in the visitor time. In this way and through the analysis of the destination it is possible to argue that Volendam possesses aspects of the various approaches from which authenticity is defined in the literature.

Nevertheless, and although several aspects of the different approaches of authenticity were identified in Volendam, the combination of all these finally results in the *staging* of authenticity. As MacCannell (1999) established, it is the staged authenticity the first and front-most region of the tourism setting continuum which is there for the gaze of the tourists. Furthermore, the fact that what Volendam's staged authenticity is rendering tribute to a past period of time of their history or heritage makes it a referential authenticity, thus self-referential. In conclusion, by combining objective and constructive authenticity Volendam is offering a self-referential staged authenticity for tourists to experience.

### 4.3 Link between identity and authenticity

Once the identity of the tourism destination has been established as well as the manner in which authenticity is being presented in Volendam, it is possible to determine then what is the relationship between these two, if not already obvious.

Taking what was said in the literature review, identity can be thought of as the answer to the question: 'Who am I?'. But in this case, the discussion is not about individuals, but moreover about a tourism destination. So in order to not anthropomorphize the issue of the identity of a destination, the question can be then rephrased as: "What is Volendam (the tourism destination)?" The answer to this question has already been discussed and the identity of Volendam has already been established, nevertheless, the answer to the question also provides with the essence of Volendam's tourism. Identity, be this real or constructed, is precisely the core of Volendam's staged self-referential authenticity. In the end, due to the nature of Volendam's tourism, the identity of the tourism destination and authenticity are dependent on one another. The constructed identity would not exist if it would not be staged and referred to (and vice versa) in Volendam's tourism industry, neither would the tourists visit the destination. Thus, the identity and authenticity are the complement of each other in Volendam as a tourism destination.

### 4.4 Stakeholders' importance and perceptions on success

The tourism destination of Volendam has, like any other tourism destination, has a great number of stakeholders inside and outside the destination. This research itself has consulted many stakeholders of Volendam's tourism industry; yet this number is reduced when the stakeholders are then considered in terms of their importance regarding the identity and authenticity. By important stakeholders, it is meant those stakeholders who play an important role in terms of their influence on or by the destination's building of identity and authenticity.

Furthermore it is relevant to identify how these stakeholder's perceive Volendam in terms of the tourism identity's and authenticity's success. The success can be determined by the satisfaction of each stakeholder towards these, as well as how successfully the purpose of these is accomplished. In other words, Volendam's constructed identity and self-referential staged authenticity have the ultimate goal to attract visitors and produce revenue, in this manner if this goal is achieved and the relevant stakeholders are satisfied, it can then be concluded that Volendam's (tourism) identity and authenticity are successful. The table below provides an overview of the stakeholder's importance and satisfaction regarding identity and authenticity. It is important to mention that the results are based on the current situation in the destination by the time the research was executed. Those stakeholders marked in red are considered to be important, the ones marked with orange are not so important, while yellow means not important.

**Table 6: stakeholder’s relevance and satisfaction in terms of identity and authenticity**

	Local population	Local tourism businesses	Local tourism-related organizations	Local Municipality	Non-local tour operators	Tourists
<b>Influence &amp; Role</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Builders of constructed identity</li> <li>• Performers of staged authenticity</li> <li>• Main referential social group</li> <li>• Active</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main builders of constructed identity</li> <li>• Main performers of staged authenticity</li> <li>• Active</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Displayers or Promoters</li> <li>• Passive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No influence at all (currently)</li> <li>• Absent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoters of destination</li> <li>• Passive in construction but very active in promotion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consumers of identity and authenticity</li> <li>• Represent the demand</li> <li>• Active</li> </ul>
<b>Perception of success</b>	Satisfied	Satisfied	Satisfied	Satisfied with projects for the future	Satisfied	Satisfied
	Slightly unsatisfied					Unsatisfied

In order to provide more insight on the way each stakeholder exercises influence on Volendam’s constructed identity and self-referential staged authenticity, as well as their satisfaction in reference to these, the following sections will go deeper on each stakeholder.

*Local population.* The local residents of Volendam represent one of the builders of Volendam’s constructed identity; they are also one of the stakeholders who are responsible for staging authenticity, and the descendents from the time of history to which the tourism theme is rendering tribute to. In this sense, it is possible to state that they are a point of reference for comparing what is real from what is not. From this perspective, Volendammers are seen as active stakeholders in terms of identity and authenticity building. Moreover, when consulted, the local population in their majority expressed to be satisfied with the constructed identity and the staged authenticity that the destination was projecting. Although a small percentage of the population manifested to feel that the constructed identity was, as one of the informants said, “stereotyping or even stigmatizing the whole community” (Thissen, 2010). In other words, the constructed identity was, most of the times, from an outsider’s perspective considered to be the ‘real’ identity of the community. This seemed to slightly upset some of the inhabitants who think “Volendam is much more than a fishing village” (local inhabitant, personal communication, 2010). The reason for the unequal division of cells in the table, when determining the satisfaction, is because it is intended to show that the percentage of those who are unsatisfied was less than the others who expressed to be satisfied. But in the end, most of the population agreed that the constructed identity, although it could stereotype the population, contributed to maintain certain traditions alive.

*Local tourism businesses.* They are the main actors in the show, to put it this way. They are the ones who dress up with the traditional costume, they theme their venues according to the constructed identity and also the ones who have the most contact with the tourists. It is important to note that most of the business owners and employees in the dike area are locals from Volendam, yet it is necessary to mark the difference between these because they have more influence on the tourism identity and a bigger role to play in the staging of the authenticity than the other local inhabitants, who mostly remain 'backstage'. This stakeholder group manifested to be content with the whole performance of the tourism industry, including the constructed identity and authenticity. They said to be selling and in the case of hotels be booked most part of the year, which for them brings satisfaction no matter what is the identity (Souvenir shop personnel, personal communication, 2010).

*Local tourism related organizations.* This stakeholder group includes all of those tourism-related organizations that are not the businesses in the dike area not the local authorities, meaning the VVV, the Volendam Museum and the STP. Basically these organizations do not exercise influence in the identity or authenticity of Volendam, they mainly promote the destination and its identity, and in the specific case of the Museum, they display this identity and authenticity. Although the museum does display identity and authenticity they are also considered to be passive as the rest of the organizations of this stakeholder group since they merely make a display. The rest, the VVV and STP simply promote the already constructed identity, and would continue to do it weather this identity changes or not. In this sense they are only a channel or medium to transmit the image, thus considered not so important.

*Local municipality.* This stakeholder group is the least influential on Volendam's identity and authenticity. Although they are the local authorities, they actually do not control the development of the industry and only monitor it to some extent. Despite what was just stated, it came into the light that the municipality is starting to gain interest in increasing the level of their participation in Volendam's tourism industry, but this has yet to happen. For these reasons, the local municipality is not considered to be important in terms of the tourism identity and authenticity.

*Non-local tour operators.* As mentioned above, these are the tour operators located in Amsterdam, although in this case it is also possible to include all the others that also sell the destination. Even if they are considered to be the most important generators of visitors (STP & Economical Affairs department: Edam-Volendam Municipality personal communication, 2010) for the destination, they have and will continue to promote and sell the destination whatever its identity is, as long as it sells (Lindbergh Excursions, personal communication, 2010) and thus be satisfied with it. Still, their role is important since they are the main promoters and transmitters of Volendam's tourism product.

*Tourists.* Already mentioned as the *raison d'être* of Volendam's constructed identity and self-referential staged authenticity, the tourists are considered to be the other most important stakeholder next to the local tourism businesses, in terms of identity and authenticity of Volendam's tourism. They are the ones who consume and/or purchase the tourism products and

also represent the demand who’s trends and preferences are definitely taken into consideration, thus the identity and staged authenticity of Volendam would most likely respond and adapt to these changes in demand, changing the product accordingly. For these reasons, the tourists are considered as an important stakeholder. In terms of their satisfaction to the tourism offerings, tourists were mostly satisfied with it. A small percentage of the tourists did manifest to have perceived the destination to be ‘a little too phony’ or ‘fake’ as two different respondents said. There was a difference in the types of tourists and their responses. All of the ones who manifested to have perceived the destination as unauthentic were independent travelers (i.e. had arrived to Volendam by themselves and not in an excursion. As in the case of the locals, who some manifested to be slightly unsatisfied, the division of the cell in that table is not equally distributed to represent that the percentage of unsatisfied tourists is much smaller that the percentage of the satisfied ones.

Although the different stakeholders were consulted about how satisfied they felt in terms of the identity and self-referential staged authenticity of the tourist destination of Volendam, Pine and Gilmore’s (2007) Real/Fake Matrix was also applied in order to identify the perceived authenticity of the tourism destination. First it was necessary to identify what was the real self of the offering, Volendam: a traditional town tourism destination. Then, it was identified what Volendam says it is: ‘an old fishing village with small wooden houses and locals wearing traditional clothes’. Most definitely Volendam is true to itself, but it is not true to what it says it is. Once in the location and also through the pictures and images of Volendam it is possible to perceive the town as very traditional, and also at a first glance it might seem like a fishing village. But in reality the fishing activity decreased and has almost disappeared in Volendam since a long time ago. Moreover the town has not completely preserved its character for six centuries, as the VVV says in its webpage. The dike area, during peak seasons, is not only full with people but with coach buses that also transit. And the souvenirs that render tribute to Holland mostly (see Apendix 2) can ‘confuse the tourists of where they actually are, instead of reminding them that they *are* in Volendam’ as one of the respondent tourists acknowledged.

For these reasons, which were identified not only by the researcher but by different respondents, Volendam is classified as being a Fake-Real offering (see Figure 6). This is mainly the reason why most of the tourists can be satisfied with the Volendam, yet a small percentage expressed to have felt the destination a little too phony for their taste. Of course, tourists have different standards by which they judge authenticity. Recommendations on how to deal with this result will be given later on the manuscript.

**Figure 6 Volendam in the Real/Fake Matrix**

Is what it says it is	Real-Fake	Real-Real
Is not what it says it is	Fake-Fake ● Volendam	Fake-Real
	Is not true to itself	Is true to itself

## 5 CONCLUSIONS

Volendam is a special place. It most definitely has a strong local identity with tight boundaries and rooted values. Curiously, the town has still managed somehow to create and live with a parallel constructed identity for commercial purposes as a tourism destination. This can be partly advocated to the geographical enclave in which the tourism activity takes place in the town, physically separating in this manner, the everyday 'real' Volendam life, from the 'touristy dike area'. Definitely the economical benefits that the tourists' presence brings to the town also result in a higher tolerance on behalf of the local residents towards the alien tourists. This geographical separation not only lowers levels of annoyance from the locals, but it also helps create a localized atmosphere that suits the theme of the destination. Volendam, in this sense does not necessarily negotiate its identity, traditional values since the Volendam 'Yardstick' is resisting strongly; the community has instead created a sort of alter identity that brings direct economical profit and indirect cultural benefits as well. Referring to the analogy of the Lexus and the Olive Tree, Volendam could be seen as both: holding on to the local identity, yet at the same time opening the doors of their community to flows of tourists, yet only to a specific area of the community. Authenticity is manifested in all the possible ways, starting with objective authenticity through genuine artifacts until providing tourists with existential authenticity experiences. Yet, the result of all these modes of authenticity applied in the destination is a self-referential staged authenticity.

The tourist destination of Volendam can be seen as a theatre where a constructed identity is put as authentic on stage, locals (and more specifically those who mostly interact with the tourists in the dike area) are the actors and the tourists represent the public, and the 'real Volendam' is the backstage where the actors return after the show to carry on with their lives. The constructed identity, which is derived from Volendam's heritage, indicates then the props that will be used on stage in order to achieve an atmosphere and a self-referential authenticity. The constructed tourism identity becomes in this way, the essence and referential element of the staged authenticity. In Volendam's tourism destination theatre, apart from the actors, other players or stakeholders are also involved behind the scenes, although not necessarily in the backstage, only behind the scenes. Some of the stakeholders are important and others not so much. Locals and local businesses were already said to be the actors on stage. Non-local tour operators are the producers who promote the show (or destination) to all the potential public and generate the most amounts of spectators. The spectators who gaze at and experience the show are then the tourists. The rest of the players or stakeholders perform a secondary role in terms of the tourism destination's identity and authenticity.

Although the show has so far been satisfactorily performed, the lack of a local stage director could result detrimental for the future developments of not only the identity and staging of the self-referential authenticity, but of the overall development of the tourism activity in Volendam in the long run. Moreover, critical analysis indicates that the destination seems to be sitting in a 'comfortable position' taking the advantages of their satisfactory success with little efforts, while the main visitor generators and promoters are actually non-local tour operators. This could well

put the destination in a dependent position later on, not only with the numbers of incoming tourists, but also in terms of the transmitted image of the destination's identity. Nevertheless, today the relationship is symbiotic. Despite the success of the destination in visitor numbers and popularity, in reference to the identity and authenticity of the destination, a small percentage of locals and tourists, as well as the results of the application of the Real/Fake Matrix, revealed that there is, to a certain degree, a level of 'phoniness' in the destination that, on one hand stigmatizes the whole community into a stereotyped image; and on the other hand can disappoint some visitors. Some locals manifested to feel that Volendam has much more to offer and a few tourists perceived Volendam a 'little bit too fake', confirming the results which indicated Volendam as a Fake-Real offering.

In the bigger picture, Volendam's tourism industry does not only have an impact at a local level, it seems to be also that Volendam is a complement to the offer of Amsterdam, especially since it is Amsterdam the one who sells Volendam the most. Furthermore, the Volendam's tourism identity and self-referential staged authenticity most definitely transcends its boundaries and contributes to the tourism industry of the whole country, having effects on the national tourism identity of country, confirming or disconfirming stereotypes and images; especially since Volendam is one of the most popular destinations in The Netherlands, after Amsterdam.



## 6 RECOMMENDATIONS AND FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions of the research, the following recommendations have been drawn. These have been elaborated taking into consideration the future success of the tourism destination.

1. This first recommendation is addressed towards the improvement of how authenticity is being rendered to in Volendam, in order to reduce the negative perceptions some of the stakeholders manifested along the research. Volendam scored as a Fake-Real offering in the Real/Fake Matrix, in order to appear more authentic, the tourism destination has to opaque the inconsistency between what the destination says it is and what is done. Specifically for this matter, the following course of action is suggested:
  - *Asses the current state.* Although in this research it was already established that Volendam's self-referential staged authenticity is perceived as Fake-Real, stakeholders must get together and jointly discuss what the offering of the destination is as well as what is said that the offering and destination is in that specific moment. In order to obtain real results, honesty and harshness need to be applied to the discussion. For now, the results in the Real/Fake Matrix that were achieved through this research will be considered: Fake-Real.
  - *Accept that state as the fate of the destination.* Trying to aim towards converting the destination's state into Real-Real could bring many risks, including being perceived more fake than before. Therefore it would result better to embrace the status of the destination and work on it in order to leverage the specific mode, Fake-Real: the inauthenticity should be masked.
  - *Overcome the fake.* A greater focus on those elements that indicate authenticity should be set. Volendam, as a Fake-Real, should concentrate on the 'being true to self' aspect. The causes of why the destination might be perceived as inauthentic should be eliminated, altered or transformed. The experience that the Volendam provides should be memorable and should engage tourists in a more inherently personal way, not forgetting that these experiences should be referential to Volendam's heritage and/or history as much as possible. The themed environment should be taken to another level. For example, create more attractions involving the fishing theme, the artists and paintings, and re-create the past life-style of the town *and* engage tourists in interactions with these attractions). Considerations on the creation of 'edutainment' (combination of education and entertainment) attractions should be done.
  - *Signify the real.* Finally, those elements found in the destination that stand as the most authentic on their own (see Figure 5) should be considered and the way these are presented should be elevated. Volendam should attempt to predominantly establish these signature elements.

2. Moreover the creation of a tourism destination management and development plan is recommended. This is an issue that should be discussed among the local stakeholders. It is necessary to identify if the establishment of a local DMO is necessary or not. This is not directly suggested to the destination due to its success so far without it. Yet the creation of a plan with future objectives is necessary in order to direct the current developments of the destination and ensure future sustainability. This is not only recommended in terms of the identity and authenticity of the destination but more in terms of the general development of the destination. Issues such as destination image, identity and authenticity, promotion, visitor generation and attraction, market research, stakeholder management, generation of tourism statistics, among others should be discussed and should also be taken care of locally in such a way that the dependency on other non-local parties is reduced, increasing a 'self-sustainable' tourism growth. If in the end it is determined that through the independent commitment of the local stakeholders this plan could be executed, then there might not be a need for the creation of a DMO, but otherwise, Volendam should also consider a central local organization that could take care of this. In the end, what this recommendation is urging to suggest is that the control over the development of Volendam's tourism destination remains at a local level. In this way the identity of the destination can be ensured at the same time that the local population does not go through what they have already gone through (i.e. with the shared municipality or when they were not allowed to build their own Catholic church).
3. As a future consideration, Volendam should take into account and obtain awareness on the fact that currently its tourism offer is not very diverse. This could, in the future and in case that the market trends change and Volendam's tourism product results not to be as appealing as it currently is, be prejudicial to the sustainability of the destination. In order to diversify their current offer, destination zoning would have to be implemented in such a way that the different tourism products do not clash with each other.
4. These recommendations all imply changes and as future consideration it should be analyzed the possibility that the 'closedness' of the host community could affect and even hinder the flexibility and adaptability of the tourism destination for future changes.

## 7 LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

Every research, no matter how well it has been conducted, has limitations. This investigation is no exception to the statement. The limitations of this research will be addressed in terms of the time frame of the research, the language barriers and the possible generality of a case study.

*Time frame.* Analyzing identity and authenticity is not an easy task, especially in a short period of time. The level of insight of the findings is intimately related to the time frame of the investigation: most definitely a more extended period of time or even a fully participant observatory research would have given the researcher more detailed and accurate findings about the topics under investigation; more intimate familiarity would have been possible not only with the destination but with the host community and thus, with the issues of identity and authenticity. More in-depth interviews would also have been useful, yet these were difficult to obtain due to a lack of willingness from some of the approached stakeholders. Yet, this research was conducted with the use of different methods of data collection from different sources, allowing the possibility of triangulating results, providing the research with validity and credibility.

*Language barriers.* Great deals of limitations emerge from the disadvantage of not speaking the native tongue while executing research. This was the case of this specific investigation and researcher. Nevertheless, an extensive background study as well as an extensive sampling during the field research was conducted, in order to provide solid bases to build upon. The language barriers definitely limited the amount of secondary data that was possible to analyze, not to mention the number of local inhabitants that were able to approach. Most of the data regarding the destination was not available in English, and although a lot of times translations were done, it was not possible with all that was found, obliging the researcher to be selective and not exhaustive.

*Limitations of a case study.* Causal conclusions are hard to draw upon case studies and are also limited by time factors, which were already discussed. Yet, generality is hard to obtain from case studies due to the context-specific nature of their findings. The results of this research are specific to Volendam as well as to the moment in which the research was conducted. Resuming the analogy mentioned in the literature review, the findings and conclusions of this research can be seen as a snapshot of Volendam's identity and authenticity.

Furthermore, based on what became evident through the results and what was not possible to achieve with this research, the following suggestions are directed for further research:

- Analysis of the Dutch population, whose perceptions on the identity of Volendam were identified to be influenced by the image that is currently being transmitted through the TV soaps and reality shows.
- The level in which tourism has affected the local identity.

## LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

- Further insight on the different tourist segments that visit Volendam and their expectations and experiences should be dealt with in the future.
- Inauthenticity and how this is perceived in Volendam could also complement the findings of this research.
- Comparing the benefits of Volendam's tourism activity between local and non-local stakeholders.
- In-depth analysis on the role of the tourism operators as well as relevant non-local tourism-related organizations (e.g. VVV-Amsterdam)

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1: In-depth interviews

Name of interviewee	Organization/position	Date
Olga Veerman	VVV volunteer	9/26/2010
Cor Kwakman	Chief spokesperson Edam-Volendam Municipality	9/26/2010
Marcella Wiffrie	Policy Officer Economical Affairs Edam-Volendam Municipality	10/9/2010
Hans Duin	Director STP/owner of	10/10/2010
Marcel Rutter	Director Hotel Spaander	10/10/2010
Lotte Thissen	Anthropologist	10/11/2010
Hannie Weber	Volendam Museum volunteer	10/13/2010
Richard Bakker	Manager Lindbergh Excursions	10/14/2010
Sergio Segars	Director Tours&Tickets Excursions	10/14/2010
Crelis Kes	Local freelance tour guide	11/16/2010

Appendix 2 Souvenirs sold in Volendam



Appendix 3: Excerpt from different texts referring to Volendam

about preserving... 2003, p. 33). Anti-globalists argue that globalization has "de-constructed" both the nation-state and the old metaphysics of presence, thereby creating an altogether new apparatus of (in)security (Featherstone, Lash, & Robertson, 1995). Furthermore, that it leads to cultural homogenization and the prevalence of a global—in practice Western—consumer culture in which 'everything (good, service, image, idea and experience) is evaluated in terms of its market value' (Arnould et al., 2003, p. 102) and ultimately the disintegration of the local culture (Go, Lee, & Russo, 2003).


The development of tourism is not necessarily accompanied by the aforementioned negative consequences. Exactly the confrontation with tourists and awareness of the farmer's visitation motives, may enhance both the cultural identity and the well-being of members of a local culture (cf., van den Berghe, 1995). Even more so, it can be doubted whether, for instance, the small Dutch town of Volendam would have maintained its own identity so clearly without the tourists streams which remind the inhabitants continuously of their special character. The crucial question, addressed in this paper, is under what conditions the local identity tends to either disintegrate under the pressure of globalization or be sustained by intercultural tourism.

**Introduction**

Non-ordinary experiences form the essence of tourism (afari & Gardner, 1991). For Western tourists, non-ordinary settings by excellence are provided by cultures, which are markedly different from their own. Traditional Maya farmers in their colourful dresses form an important attraction for visitors to the southern Mexico city of San Cristobal de las Casas (van den Berghe, 1995). The hill tribes in Northern Thailand attract many foreign tourists to that area (Cohen, 1989). During the 1890s, the traditional dresses of Volendam and Hindelopen, both located in the Netherlands, were successfully exploited by local entrepreneurs (Benjamin, 1992; Koning & Koning, 2002). The effects of these entrepreneurial actions are evident in several other geographical contexts.

On the other hand, streams of tourists, and of foreign entrepreneurs coming with them, do not leave the local culture untouched (Salazar, 2005). More specifically, Western culture, with its urge for efficiency and emphasis on material consumption may influence, humiliate or even absorb the local culture. Social processes can affect the well-being of the locality (Stonich, Sorensen, & Hundt, 1995), and if local identity disappears, the very raison d'être of the tourist stream may vanish in the end. It raises the issue, what responses are available to potentially destructive and unsustainable consumption of peoples, histories and cultures. Whether globalization will succeed and consequently lead to the disintegration of the local community assesses itself.

This old fishing village on the IJsselmeer is world-famous, attracting a huge number of tourists. The village is built along a dyke at its small harbour, you can still buy all sorts of fish.



Commune: Edam-Volendam

The village of Volendam, part of the commune of Edam, lies on the IJsselmeer. As with other ports on the IJsselmeer, the local fisheries have suffered from the dyking of the Zuiderzee.

Volendam is a well-known tourist attraction featuring traditional clothing and old fishing boats. The women's clothing include a pointed bonnet, a noted piece of attire that is even included on Dutch postcards.

**VOLEDAM & MARKEN**  
☎ 0299 / pop 20,700

Some 22km northeast of Amsterdam lies Volendam, a former fishing port turned tourist trap. It's quaint all right, with its rows of wooden houses and locals who don traditional dress for church and festive events, but the harbour is awash with souvenirs shops and cafés, and on weekends it's even hard to think with all the people swarming about. Best escape the hordes and explore some of the pretty streets behind the harbour for a glimpse of what the old Volendam was really like.

'After visiting Marken, you could take the summer ferry to Volendam and back-track along the sea dyke to Monnickendam.'