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Picturing landscape : contemporary photography, collective visual memory and the making of place in the Netherlands

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Propositions belonging to the PhD dissertation

Picturing Landscape:

Contemporary Photography, Collective Visual Memory and the Making of Place in the Netherlands

Maartje van den Heuvel, Leiden University, defence scheduled for 18 September 2018

- 1) Georeferencing is essential to understand landscape images well. Only when we understand what physical circumstances, functions, and spatial ordonnance the photographer has selected from the physical environment to be in and certainly to be left out of the photographic frame, we can grasp how the images relates to the location they represent.
- 2) A landscape photograph makes place not only with the elements and characteristics of the physical landscape; it does so with the collective visual memory of that place as well. This is also the case if the photographer was not aware of this while making the photograph.
- 3) The choices the photographer makes for camera position, perspective, framing and timing, are to be considered as meaning making action, comparable to a performance. It is the same type of activity as geographers refer to as the kind of human activity that gives meaning to landscape.
- 4) Through the indexical relation and the substitute function of the photograph, place making in landscape images works much the same as place making in the physical landscape.
- 5) The Haarlemmermeer starts to get its identity now it is first being photographed elaborately and comprehensibly. This is much in the exploratory way as the drawings by Jan van Goyen were. The two-dimensionality of the landscape pictures by Baart enhance discussion on the landscape image of the polder.
- 6) The aerial photograph by Gerco de Ruijter encloses the industrial horticulture in the collective view of the Betuwe and discloses the cultural value of geometry in landscape.
- 7) Together with the status of nature reserve of the Zuiderheide, the art photograph by Kim Boske affirms and strengthens the cultural-historical value of the Zuiderheide
- 8) To create meaning in their images, photographers consciously or unconsciously still make use of compositions and motives known from historical painting.
- 9) Landscape identity links up with people's cultural identity; not with their national and certainly not their racial identity.
- 10) Landscape painters are lazy landscape photographers