

Preparing for Victory. The U.S. Office of War  
Information Overseas Branch's illustrated  
magazines in the Netherlands and the foundations  
for the American Century, 1944-1945

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# Preparing for Victory. The U.S. Office of War Information Overseas Branch's illustrated magazines in the Netherlands and the foundations for the American Century, 1944-1945

Marja Roholl

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- 1 Winning the war against the Axis countries was not the only goal the American government had in mind during the Second World War. It also worked towards creating a new world order in which the United States, as the new world leader, would play a major role. To make its performance more credible, the Roosevelt administration felt it necessary to inform the rest of the world of America's ideas and ideals, and to explain the successes of the American way of life. Although the Americans were confident that the role they played in the Second World War was highly appreciated, they were wary of the effects of German and Japanese propaganda, and aware of some general 'misunderstandings' regarding the nation dating back to the pre-war era. Therefore the Overseas Branch of the US Office of War Information (OWI) was instructed to develop propaganda programs for their allies, for instance England and Australia, as well as for countries to be liberated by the Americans, such as France and the Netherlands. By telling the story of 'how America lives,' the OWI Overseas Branch aimed to persuade people in these nations of "both the attractiveness of American principles and the weight of American power, [so that they] will, accordingly, be prepared for a strong American influence on the future peace."<sup>1</sup>

Most studies of US post-war cultural diplomacy (mine included) start their story after WWII, with the official beginning of peacetime programs. This essay, however, shows that especially during the last phase of the war, the content and approach of the activities undertaken by the OWI Overseas Branch anticipated the programs produced

by the State Department and the United States Information Agency (USIA), this despite very different political and international circumstances. Incorporating this story more fully into the history of cultural diplomacy may help to illustrate that there is more continuity than previously assumed, whether through asserting America's leadership of the post-war world, explaining the essence of the American way of life, promoting democracy, exporting the ideology of economic growth, or simply through promising abundance in people's personal lives, especially in and around the kitchen. I'll make the case for this continuity by discussing the OWI's program for the Netherlands, focusing on the illustrated magazines it produced - *KIJK*, (LOOK), *De Amerikaansche Vrouw* (American Women) and *Victory* - which would play an important role in informing the general Dutch public about America.<sup>2</sup> Although these publications were to a certain extent tailored to this specific audience, they also reveal the messages the US government tried to get across in post-war Europe more generally.

- 2 In the Dutch context, the only official goal of the Office of War Information was to inform the people of the Netherlands about "the world news in word and image" until such time as the Dutch media could perform the task themselves.<sup>3</sup> But the content of these magazines suggests that the Americans had different functions in mind as well. Positioned at the transition between war and peace, these publications raise interesting questions regarding policy and politics, production and distribution, audiences and the preferred self-image of America.
- 3 In the following pages, I will locate the illustrated magazines *KIJK*, *De Amerikaansche Vrouw* and *Victory* within the broader context and goals of the OWI, and the circumstances of the Netherlands more generally, before turning to some of their dominant themes. Next to short-term war-related goals, they reveal a longer-term strategy that can be read as paving the way for what Henry Luce famously called the 'American Century' in a *Life* magazine editorial (February 17, 1941), addressing the expansion of the nation's political, economic, moral and cultural influence in the midst of a world at war. The aftermath of World War II was carefully planned even as battles were still being fought; and some of those plans were 'communicated' with the Dutch through these OWI magazines.

## 1. The Office of War Information

- 4 In June 1942, as one of the responses to 'Pearl Harbor' and America's subsequent total involvement in the war, President Roosevelt created the US Office of War Information, consolidating a number of earlier created organizations charged with propaganda and information activities at home and overseas.<sup>4</sup> The OWI consisted of two branches, the Domestic branch and the Overseas Branch.
- 5 The goals of the Domestic Branch were short-term and war-related. Although the necessity of informing the American people about war-related rules and regulations, mobilizing women for the defense industry, etc., was generally acknowledged, many Republicans, but also many Southern Democrats, were suspicious of putting this kind of power into the hands of the Roosevelt administration; it would, they feared, be 'more New Deal propaganda.'<sup>5</sup> And they had a point. Many of the people working for the OWI and its predecessors were active supporters of the New Deal. For instance Archibald MacLeish, Pulitzer prize winning poet, head of the Library of Congress and staunch supporter (and close friend) of Roosevelt, became assistant director of the OWI, and

Milton Eisenhower, who used to work for one of the New Deal agencies became OWI's associate director. Robert Sherwood, playwright, film critic for *Life* and one of Roosevelt's confidants, became the director of the Overseas Branch. However, Elmer Davis, director of the OWI, although a Democrat, was not part of the clique. His appointment was based in the first place on his reputation as a journalist for the *New York Times* and *CBS*, and Democrats and Republicans alike considered him a non-partisan, trusted and trustworthy voice.<sup>6</sup> The Office of Strategic Services (OSS), in charge of 'black propaganda' abroad, by contrast, was seen as a stronghold of the Republicans.<sup>7</sup>

- 6 The short-term goals for the Overseas Branch included stimulating a bond among the Allies, counteracting Axis characterizations of America, and helping to prevent frictions between American armies and the liberated countries' civilian populations, whether these were enemies or allies. The long-term strategy was to create a new and robust image of America, and to prepare audiences abroad for America's role as the new world leader.<sup>8</sup> In the words of the OWI: "As the long-range directive implies, one of our chief duties is to convince people of the world of the 'overwhelming power and good faith of this country'. By informing peoples of other countries fully concerning the nature of this country and of its people, sympathy, trust and friendliness will grow". America had a mission. Carson summarizes the goals of the OWI Overseas Branch as not only to help to win the war, but also to lay the foundations of a new order, led by Americans.<sup>9</sup>
- 7 The structure of the Office of War Information was complicated. The director's office and the Domestic Branch were located in Washington, while the communication and news center, together with the offices of the Overseas Branch, were mainly located in New York. Congressional discussions, differences of opinion over strategy, and some personal rivalries led to shifts in budgets and personnel in the spring of 1943. Congress especially was very critical of the Domestic Branch. This branch lost most of its funding, whereas the Overseas Branch was cut by only 10%. Regarding personnel employed by the Overseas Branch, Edward Barrett replaced Sherwood as the head of the US based Overseas Branch; and Sherwood, in turn, became the head of the London post. Sherwood had a background in illustrated magazines, and was interested in human-interest stories and photo-essays; Barrett had a background in news magazines, and favored more text and a more impersonal social science approach.<sup>10</sup> These changes were to have an impact on the magazines.
- 8 From spring 1944, work by the Overseas Branch was increasingly done by the outposts, of which London was the most important. In 1944 a total of approximately 5,000 people worked for the Overseas Branch, of whom roughly 1,200 (about 500 Americans and 700 locals) worked at the London Outpost.<sup>11</sup> The Americans in London came from all 48 states and were "thus fitted to express a composite of American attitudes."<sup>12</sup> The Netherlands - and partly its colony, the Dutch East Indies - were served by London. London was closer to the actual theater of war, and home to many governments in exile. The London Outpost was thus in a better position to address the needs of different countries, including propaganda clearance requirements.<sup>13</sup> It could also serve as the 'ears and eyes' for the US based offices.<sup>14</sup>

## 2. The liberation of the Netherlands

- 9 The Americans braced themselves for the liberation of Axis-dominated countries and the occupation of Axis countries, preparing anthropological reports on their inhabitants and developing information program guidelines. For the Netherlands, apart from the usual military preparations, the Office of War Information instructed its Bureau of Overseas Intelligence on 10 January 1944 to create a portrait of the Dutch. The well-known anthropologist Ruth Benedict, working for this office, was of the opinion that information on 'national character' was essential for accomplishing a lasting peace.<sup>15</sup> According to Van Ginkel, the OWI wanted to avoid friction between American soldiers and Dutch civilians and felt the troops should have an idea of what kind of people the Dutch were. By January 26 1944, Ruth Benedict had completed her work. Based on her and other reports, the army was to provide the troops with cultural insights and a list of "Do's and Don'ts".<sup>16</sup> Her reports – due to war circumstances based on secondary literature, proverbs, resistance newspapers, and interviews with Dutch-Americans rather than direct fieldwork – make an interesting read, and I will come to it shortly.
- 10 It took the American, British, Canadian and Polish armies longer than anticipated to liberate the Netherlands. Combat lasted from September 1944 until May 1945, with the liberation of the Dutch East Indies following in August 1945. Soldiers were the first line of contact with the population, leaving the important first impression. And of all the liberating armies, the American - and Canadian - soldiers to this day remain fresh in the public memory because they were 'good looking' liberators and in a position to provide people with 'goodies', products of America's popular culture and consumer society, such as food, cigarettes, chocolate, jazz and more – embodying the promises of an American led future. The Americans and Canadians were, moreover, around much longer than the British and Polish soldiers. After the end of the hostilities, some Dutch cities functioned as leave centers for American soldiers stationed in Germany; the Canadian soldiers spent time in the Netherlands itself. Benedict offered American soldiers tips on how to get invited into people's homes. She described Dutch culture as very home-oriented, and the women as devoted and protective mothers. She advised the soldiers to present themselves as temporarily 'home-sick boys,' a nice example of applied anthropology indeed. We see this advice reflected in the War Department's *Pocket Guide to the Cities in the Netherlands*: "Since Amsterdam people entertain at home more than they go out, your best bet for a pleasant evening with a girl is to get yourself an invitation from a Dutch family; as Amsterdammers are very hospitable, this should not be too difficult."<sup>17</sup> And the soldiers indeed spent time in people's homes, enjoying nice evenings with the family, and with their daughters, sometimes without the 'protective mothers' being present. Some of these and other encounters led to weddings with war brides, others to 'bevrijdertjes' (babies with American fathers), and still more to VD. For instance in Maastricht, which for a year served as a rest center for American soldiers, approximately 250 Dutch-American babies were born. (The same story can be told of the Canadian soldiers, and since they played a more important part in the liberation and stayed longer in the Netherlands, there were even more Canadian war brides, babies etc.) These intimate relationships generally caused great resentment among the Dutch, especially Dutch men, just as Ruth Benedict predicted.<sup>18</sup>

### 3. The OWI program

- 11 The Office of War Information's program for the liberated Netherlands, just as for other countries, was remarkably large-scale and diverse, and drew upon multiple media. Radio was the most important short-term medium, with broadcasts in Dutch from Luxemburg and London. Over sixty cinemas, some still in rubble, were provided with the *Free World Newsreel* in Dutch, covering the war, as well as with documentaries on America's contribution to the war (including the *Why We Fight* series by Capra, and *Autobiography of a Jeep*), on specific immigrant groups (for instance Italian-Americans, in *Toscanini: Hymn of the Nations*), and on the American way of life (*The American Dream*). Moreover, the Americans offered the cinemas an OWI-approved selection of Hollywood films designed to create 'the right impression' of America.<sup>19</sup> According to an OWI report, the Hollywood studios and other commercial media were not governed by the consideration of what Europeans should learn about America, but by profit maximization. In OWI's own expressive language:
- 12 *Sensationalism* often displaced good sense; so that the American backbone of idealism and solid achievement was scarcely visible beneath the flashy outer fabric of penthouse civilization, spectacular divorces, murders, zoot suits and other racy but unrepresentative items in the era stretching from flag-pole sitters and marathon dancers to collegiate goldfish swallowers and jitterbugs.<sup>20</sup>
- 13 The studios allowed the OWI to choose forty movies for free distribution in the newly liberated countries. OWI's aim was to eliminate films dealing with political corruption and lawlessness in the US; films that might imply American acceptance of the racial inferiority of non-whites, or any politically and commercially imperialistic designs on the part of the US; or films boasting of American opulence. Among the selected forty films were Frank Capra's 1936 *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town* (small town values), Hitchcock's 1940 *Foreign Correspondent* (taking sides in the crisis in Europe in the late 1930s), and Disney's *Dumbo* and *Bambi*.<sup>21</sup> The films most asked for in liberated areas were Charlie Chaplin's *The Great Dictator*, and *Gone with the Wind*. The studios, however, did not make these available to the OWI Overseas Branch. At the same time, "but by no means directly in recompense to this," the OWI took care of shipping and distribution for 257 feature films from fourteen different studios, opening the market for Hollywood films; these films had been, as it were, left on the shelf during the war.<sup>22</sup> Thus in the post-war era movies were supposed to fulfill a double function: as important commercial products; but also, according to a State Department's memo from February 1944, of equal or greater importance was "the value of the screen as an international builder of public opinion."<sup>23</sup>
- 14 The publication program, however, was OWI Overseas Branch's most elaborate endeavor. Part of it was specifically directed towards elites, demonstrating that "America does not only fight or work or eat or amuse itself, but America thinks."<sup>24</sup> The key magazine for this mission was *U.S.A. Beknopt Beeld van Amerika en Amerikanen* (a translation of *USA: An American Review*), containing articles from other American magazines, and speeches by president Roosevelt, general Marshall and others.<sup>25</sup> Moreover, books on American accomplishments and literature were translated into Dutch. The OWI considered books an important long-term instrument in its propaganda efforts, especially in translated form.<sup>26</sup> In neutral and allied non-occupied countries, the OWI Overseas Branch opened libraries and documentation centers

during the war.<sup>27</sup> After the war, it would do that as well in the Netherlands, in Amsterdam and The Hague.

- 15 For the Dutch market, the OWI produced 15,000 copies of each selected title; these were produced during the war and stockpiled so that they would be available the moment hostilities ceased. The Dutch government in exile had to give permission for distribution. The books were sold via local booksellers, with prices controlled.<sup>28</sup> The selected titles would serve various goals: to provide news and information on America's role in the war, for instance Edward Stettinius Jr.'s *Lend-Lease: Weapon for Victory* and Joseph C. Grew's *Report from Tokyo*; and to explain America's foreign policy, Walter Lipmann's *U.S. Foreign Policy: Shield of the Republic*. The OWI also thought it important to introduce people to books on American history – an example would be the 1939 Pulitzer prize winning biography *Benjamin Franklin* by Carl Van Doren.<sup>29</sup> For a very specialized audience, the OWI provided books in English on the latest developments in the sciences, especially the medical. The choice of Julian Huxley's *TVA: Adventure in Planning* is an interesting one. On the one hand the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) is a New Deal/Roosevelt identified project, a project that caused a lot of controversy in the US itself. From that perspective it might have been a political risk to include it on the OWI bookshelf. Yet, from another perspective, the choice made sense. In Europe, many people were critical of America's social and economic system. However, the Tennessee Valley project was admired by many as a model example of planning, because it provided a better life for millions of people. For instance the Dutch planner J. M. de Casseres describes the TVA very positively in his study *Het andere Amerika* (The other America, 1939).<sup>30</sup> Moreover, Huxley was an internationally famous evolutionary biologist, humanist and internationalist – and, not unimportantly, British, so not one of Roosevelt's New Dealers. For a more general public, OWI produced J. C. Furnas' *How America Lives*, based on portraits of American families previously published in *Lady's Home Journal*. Unfortunately, the Dutch version was not illustrated. Aside from fulfilling a long-term propaganda purpose, the book program also played a post-war commercial role. Just as with the film industry, the OWI helped American publishers to open up the European market, and helped them secure rights. This confirmed the suspicion held by some that the US could (mis)use its strong post-war position.

## 4. Illustrated magazines

- 16 Illustrated magazines catering to a general public formed the core of the publication program. The OWI stressed the importance of photographs and illustrated magazines in its long-range strategy. Accordingly, it drew its journalists and editors from magazines such as *Life*, *Look* and *Parade*, and its photographers from these outlets and the photo section of the New Deal's Farm Security Administration and other government agencies.<sup>31</sup> The OWI's core magazine was *Victory*, created as early as 1942 by the Foreign Information Service (FIS), one of the predecessors of the OWI Overseas Branch, to counter Nazi Germany's leading propaganda magazine, *Signal*. The latter was published bi-monthly in twenty-five languages and had at its peak a circulation of 2.5 million copies. *Signal* was patterned after *Life* magazine, with attractive photo-essays and an appealing lay-out; most issues had some color photographs. Just like *Life*, *Signal*'s covers were composed of a page-size photograph with the title in red. *Signal*, however, came out on newsprint instead of glossy paper; moreover, it did not carry advertisements.



*Signal*, while focusing on the war, also carried human-interest stories. Its most explicit propaganda was directed against Jews, the Soviet Union and the United States.<sup>32</sup> OWI's *Victory* was modeled after *Life* magazine as well: the title in bold red letters, a page size photo on the cover, and some pages in full color. In contrast with *Signal*, *Victory* was printed on higher quality coated paper. OWI Overseas Branch in the US was responsible for the content, but *Victory* was published by a commercial publisher, the Crowell-Collier Publishing Company. The OWI assumed that the magazine would be more effective and trusted as a commercial, rather than governmental, publication; the OWI however took care of the costs involved. Despite this nod towards the commercial market, the magazine lacked advertisements until the end of the war. It was produced six times a year, and at its peak in 1945, it was translated into nine languages with a circulation of over one million copies. The tone of the magazine was factual, in accordance with OWI's preference for 'a strategy of truth'. Due to its lengthy production schedule, *Victory* carried general articles on America's war effort and 'evergreen' pieces focusing on showing 'how America lives', both OWI's propaganda goals for a broad audience. It was sold via vendors and was very popular. But the magazine was not always favorably received, with criticism reaching the OWI through the Outposts. People, especially in the U.K., reacted unfavorably to the glossiness of the magazine; they also thought it showed American opulence in an offensive way particularly at a moment when so many nations and peoples were suffering from the war. In the United States, some members of congress questioned the costs involved and the efficacy of the 'strategy of truth' in fighting *Signal*.<sup>33</sup>

- 17 Neither *Signaal* (Dutch version of the German *Signal*) nor *Victory* catered to specific audience groups but to the Dutch public in general. And that was new in the Netherlands. In the pre-war period, illustrated magazines were very popular, and each denominational group had its own magazines: Catholics, socialists, Protestants, and 'neutrals'. Some of the Dutch pre-war magazines complied with the guidelines set by the Germans, while others were discontinued. *Signaal*, consistent with *Signal*, published many anti-American stories.<sup>34</sup> Yet, during the occupation, Americans had no access to the Dutch market to counter this. The OWI produced only one issue of *Victory* for the Dutch market before the end of the magazine's run, and distributed it after hostilities ceased. Thus, *Victory* played only a marginal role in OWI Overseas Branch's strategy for the Netherlands. But, as I will show later, it best symbolized the transition within the OWI Overseas Branch, from a focus on the war to a focus on America's promise for the post-war world.
- 18 The core magazine for the Netherlands was *KIJK*. Together with *De Amerikaansche Vrouw* and *Victory*, these magazines represent different stages and strategies within the OWI, with the emphasis shifting ever more to the post-war world. *KIJK* was produced and printed at the OWI Outpost in London by the Photo Review Section. Bishop mentions that *KIJK*- and other national versions - were translations of *Photo Review. A Picture Parade of the United Nations*.<sup>35</sup> This turned out to be incorrect, though. *Photo Review* was produced in New York and sent to outposts around the world, including London. It contained sheets of photos with captions; sometimes these more or less form 'a picture story', more often they don't. This visual approach resembles the layout of the magazine *Parade*, after which it was modeled. *KIJK*, by contrast, along with versions such as *Fotorevy* (its Norwegian counterpart) were 'normal' illustrated magazines, with photo-essays, single photographs, maps etc. and with more text than *Photo Review*.



Moreover, parts of the magazines were tailored to fit specific national audiences, taking into account local stories and circumstances. *KIJK*, of course, used *Photo Review* as one of its sources, especially for its current affairs section, its biographies of generals and war related stories, and in this sense it served as a kind of 'newsreel'.<sup>36</sup> But for stories on the Netherlands and on 'the way America lives', London relied on other sources. It may be the case that the earlier versions of the French *VOIR* resembled *Photo Review* more closely. We don't know much about the reception of these magazines, but from an evaluation in France we learn that the magazine was very popular, yet also that people had some complaints: the French preferred a larger-size magazine, with more text and fewer photos.<sup>37</sup> It may be that these French preferences were taken into account with the production of *KIJK*. The impact of local circumstances on size and format can be seen with the Norwegian version, *Fotorevy*. The text was prepared in English, in London, and sent to the OWI Outpost in neutral Stockholm, and there translated and printed as a small-size illustrated magazine. The reason for this small size was that the OWI wanted it to be smuggled into German-occupied Norway.<sup>38</sup>

19 London produced a new 32-page issue of *KIJK* every fourteen days for over a year, between September 1944 and December 1945, as well as a special sixty page souvenir number, bringing it to a total of thirty-one issues. The circulation was 100,000; extra copies of *KIJK* were produced for Flanders, the Flemish speaking part of Belgium.<sup>39</sup> The Dutch government in exile granted permission for distributing this material, and Dutch journalists in exile probably advised the magazine's production. Approximately two-thirds of each issue was made up of photographs with the remaining third being text. Each issue contained on average ten articles and sixty photos, and another three or four illustrations of other kinds: maps, drawings, and paintings. The magazine was published in black and white, sometimes with a touch of red or blue in the maps.

20 *KIJK* was one of the products that entered the country in the soldiers' wake, and was extremely popular with the Dutch public. After years of German occupation, there was a pent-up hunger for real news. And due to a shortage of paper, the Dutch press was not yet functioning properly. People queued up to get copies, and the hundred thousand copies sold through regular vendors were far too few to satisfy the public's appetite.<sup>40</sup> In the words of an OWI officer involved:

I must tell you how *KIJK* was sold in a forward area on the Maas [in the South of Holland]. To begin with, this town is three or four miles from the battle-line. When I arrived in our lorry with a load of *KIJK*, it took me several hours to find our chief distributor there. The reason was that the town has been leveled almost completely and that the business was being carried on nevertheless in the heart of shambles. We finally located our man behind several ruined buildings. He was endeavoring to repair his small printing plant in half his shed. When we started to unload, the word got around the town that *KIJK* had arrived. Then, before we had a chance to tally everything properly, a queue began to form. Soon *KIJK* was being sold over a packing case, with people standing in line over heaps of rubble.<sup>41</sup>

21 And stories from other parts of the country and letters sent to the editor give the same impression.<sup>42</sup>

22 *De Amerikaansche Vrouw* was a very different case. It was a one-issue magazine, produced in the New York office of the OWI Overseas Branch. It contained eighty pages of much higher quality paper than *KIJK*, but it was less glossy than *Victory*. Although it had many photographs, it had more text and charts than *KIJK* and *Victory*, reflecting Barrett's preference for a more text-based and social-scientific approach. The magazine

consisted of three parts: *women at home*, *women at work*, and *women and the war*. It was produced for four countries, Spain, Portugal, Italy and the Netherlands, countries that shared, according to the OWI, a conservative attitude towards women. (Perhaps Benedict's report played a role in this assessment.) The magazine is exactly the same for each of the four countries without any local modulations (aside from language). *De Amerikaansche Vrouw* was shipped to Europe in March 1945 with a circulation of about 40,000 for the Dutch market, and was distributed at the end of the war.<sup>43</sup>

- 23 Let's now take a closer look at the magazines. There are differences between *KIJK*, *De Amerikaansche Vrouw* and *Victory*, in tone, function and content, yet, there were significant overlaps as well.

## 5. Dutch and Russian contributions to the war

- 24 *KIJK* covered many more topics than can be discussed here, and the main focus will be on the representation of 'the American Way of Life' – a long-term issue. However, one of OWI's short-term goals with *KIJK* was to inform the Dutch on current developments in the war in Europe, the Pacific and the rest of the world, functioning as a 'newsreel' of sorts. Readers were very eager for this kind of 'hard news', having been deprived of reliable information during the German occupation. The focus was on the American role in the war, but Dutch contributions to the war were more than generously acknowledged.<sup>44</sup> The many stories on this topic can be seen as part of the strategy of building a positive relationship with the Dutch population that would last into the post-war period. This is consistent with the approach that Ruth Benedict suggested.<sup>45</sup> It also reflects OWI's policy of tailoring *KIJK* – and its national counterparts – to local circumstances. Moreover, even as the first issues were distributed in the newly liberated parts of the Netherlands in September 1944, the war continued in the rest of the country, and in the Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia). *KIJK* provided the Dutch with stories and photographs of the ongoing war in all parts of the world, the battles fought, and the joys of victory, region by region. It acknowledged the difficulties and hardships facing the population: the many who died and were wounded in the war; the shortage of food; the many homes in rubble; the heavily damaged infrastructure, industry and agriculture. *KIJK*, however, maintained a silence regarding the fate of (Dutch) Jews, a silence consistent with other American publications and documentaries from the period.<sup>46</sup>
- 25 Another short-term goal was 'selling' the Soviet Union as a crucial new and friendly ally, a task that posed quite a challenge to the OWI at home and in the Netherlands. The Netherlands shared with the US a long history of anti-communism and anti-Soviet Union policy. The Roosevelt administration and the military had urged the OWI to present the Soviet society and its contributions in a positive light, both at home and abroad, to counter old hostilities recently reactivated by the Nazi-magazine *Signal*, that covered the Soviet Union extensively and in a very negative way.<sup>47</sup> OWI director Davis agreed and instructed the Overseas Branch accordingly. The military contributions and the Russian war industry were praised in many photo essays in *KIJK*; *De Amerikaansche Vrouw* highlighted the contributions by Russian women. Stalin and Molotov were presented in photos and texts as brilliant war planners, as good 'regular' people, with the former watching movies, the latter skating with his children. *KIJK* described collective agriculture and the state-run schools and orphanages positively, presenting

them as just another way of organizing a society; the kolkhoz was presented as the Russian equivalent of the highly cherished American town hall democracy, and so on.<sup>48</sup> Yet, consistent with the growing tensions between the US and the Soviet Union, from May 1945 onwards, the OWI New York no longer presented positive stories on the USSR – we see this reflected in the Dutch one-issue of *Victory*; *KIJK* however continued its positive coverage of Russia's role in the war. This may reflect different choices made at the Outpost in London and in the US based offices.

- 26 Building a legacy and preparing the way for the conditions Henry Luce had described as “the American Century” were important motivations for the production of the magazines, and as the war progressed, the representation of America took an ever-more central position. The United States was ready to lead the world and the OWI Overseas Branch wanted to show the nation's commitments and potentials to her allies, and to the world. In the following I will sketch the approaches taken by these OWI publications to a number of US - centered topics, in particular the American way of life, with its promise of mass production, consumption and democracy; and the role of women and African Americans in American society.

## 6. Arsenal of Democracy

- 27 In his fireside chat of 29 December 1940, Roosevelt referred to America's war industry as ‘the Arsenal of Democracy’, a phrase that would regularly be invoked by the OWI.<sup>49</sup> Only a strong America would be able to defend democracy at home and abroad. The power and success of America's military forces reflected the industrial might behind it. No other country was able to produce so many jeeps, tanks, airplanes, bombs and ships. The very first issue of *KIJK* stated: “In the triumphs of the American armies in France, Italy and the Atlantic Ocean, the wonder of America's production reveals itself: mass production.”<sup>50</sup> The article provides some impressive numbers, but the impression is above all created by the photos: only about 10% of the four page spread is text; the rest is made up of page-filling photographs – it's a photo story close to the tradition of *Parade*, with a lay-out that resembled the contact sheet lay-out of *Photo Review*. The photos were taken from a low angle perspective, probably by photographers working for Alfred Palmer's Domestic Photo Section, which produced this kind of ‘inspirational’ modernist imagery: the machine is the main actor and it holds center stage. Bombs roll down the assembly line, dominating the much smaller appearance of humans in the photos. In other articles we see ‘Victory’ and ‘Liberty’ ships being built in rows – thanks to pre-fabrication techniques. And we see rows of landings barges and super fortresses in action as well – an impressive sight.<sup>51</sup> The Jeep, an American invention and a World War II icon, gets special attention, complete with drawings.<sup>52</sup>
- 28 The OWI always emphasized the hardship of the people in the occupied countries, but also presented many stories about how the war affected the American Home Front as well. We see a soldier leaving his family and fiancée; cars standing idle because of gasoline rationing; a broken vacuum cleaner that cannot be replaced because of the factory's conversion to war industry. We see women taking jobs in the war industry, leaving their children with parents or in government care (I'll return to the coverage of women in greater detail later). And we see soldiers in rehab, illustrating the high human costs of the war, also on the American side.<sup>53</sup> (Due to censorship rules we don't see bodies of dead Americans.) These and other examples were designed to show that

the US did its very best, on all fronts, to help its allies. The stories are often personalized in the photos and captions, rather than in the main text. In the series 'America Accommodates to the War', we see portraits of a soldier, a machine worker, a nurse and a farmer – they represent the four sectors: American forces, war industry & transport, industry & services, and agriculture, – and the effects the war had on them and their families.<sup>54</sup> An interesting article, it takes a hybrid approach combining Barrett's preference for charts with Sherwood's preference for personal stories.

- 29 The OWI also stressed that Americans used their superior technology and production not only to fight wars, but also 'for the betterment of mankind', the latter, an American tradition. The Tennessee Valley Authority, a typical New Deal topic and popular with OWI's Overseas Branch, is presented as such, as are other technological and medical inventions that the US was willing to share with the world, such as for instance penicillin.<sup>55</sup> We see Russian dams being restored with American help. And there was a promise: after the war, the assembly line production of fighter planes, tanks and munitions will go back to the production of refrigerators, cars, vacuum cleaners and consumption goods; planes will be used for civilians; pre-fab methods will be applied to building homes. Where production was once used to save democracy, now it will again serve the democracy of consumption. A photo in one of *KIJK*'s last issues refers to this transition: technology and the machine no longer dominate; rather, the consumer takes central stage.<sup>56</sup> And as we'll see, this is even more clearly reflected in *Victory*.
- 30 *KIJK* stressed that the 'Arsenal of Democracy' would not have been possible without a firm political democracy in place. The small town personified American democracy – evident in the centrality of the family, small town architecture, the church, town hall meetings; the photos resembled Norman Rockwell's *Four Freedoms* posters. Town hall meetings and Congress were discussed in detail, and used to illustrate democracy at work.<sup>57</sup> A lot of attention was also paid to the more rural and remote areas, with stories on the county fair, the 4-H groups, the county nurse and agent, emphasizing the strong sense of community. (*KIJK* and *Victory* carried some of the same stories, with the difference that *Victory* used also color photos.<sup>58</sup>) This strategy was also used to stave off the idea, present in German propaganda, that America was a 'dollar democracy', where money reigned instead of 'the people'.

## 7. America's democratic culture

- 31 One of OWI's goals was to counter the Nazi representation of America as an uncultured nation.<sup>59</sup> As we have seen, the OWI Overseas Branch also blamed Hollywood films for creating this poor impression and therefore claimed a decisive voice in the selection of Hollywood films exported to the newly liberated countries.<sup>60</sup> Yet, this prejudice regarding America's cultural status had a long history in Europe, and preceded the film industry's existence. Yet the OWI wanted to do more; it wanted to show that America had a democratic culture. Roosevelt's New Deal program for artists, that effectively provided the benchmark for public and democratic American art. Unconstrained by European art conventions, it was to connect all aspects of American life, functioning as a social and educational force.<sup>61</sup> Roosevelt pointedly described the results of the New Deal's federal art projects: an American middle-brow culture, which combined with other 1930s media expressions such as *Life* and *Look*, formed America's new national vernacular culture.<sup>62</sup> As Roosevelt put it:

32 There was a time when the people of this country would not have thought that the inheritance of art belonged to them or that they had responsibilities to guard it. A few generations ago, the people of this country were taught by their writers and by their critics and by their teachers to believe that art was something foreign to America and to themselves - something imported from another continent and from an age which was not theirs - something they had no part in, save to go to see it in a guarded room on holidays or Sundays.

But recently, within the last few years, - yes, in our lifetime - they have discovered that they have a part. They have seen in their own towns, in their own villages, in schoolhouses, in post offices, in the back rooms of shops and stores, pictures painted by their sons, their neighbors - people they have known and lived beside and talked to. They have seen, across these last few years, rooms full of paintings by Americans, walls covered with the paintings of Americans - some of it good, some of it not good, but all of it native, human, eager and alive - all of it painted by their own kind in their own country, and painted about things that they know and look at often and have touched and loved.<sup>63</sup>

33 The idea that America had its own genuine culture, something to be proud of, appeared in OWI's instructions to the Overseas Branch. Many of the OWI workers were part of a cultural elite that preferred European over American art. In a move that echoed Germany's promotion of a *Volkskultur*, they were urged to shed this view and to present America's - popular - culture "in a positive and non-apologetic manner." And that's exactly what *KIJK*, *De Amerikaansche Vrouw* and *Victory* did. Musicals fit this description of a genuine American popular culture quite well. Rogers and Hammerstein's musical *Oklahoma* (1943) received a lot of attention. Moreover, it counteracted images of Oklahoma's 'dust bowl' and extolled the theme of good life in small town America, a theme very popular with people like Robert Sherwood, the director of the Overseas Branch. In addition, the musical generated attractive photos, showing the chorus dancing and other dramatic scenes. *KIJK* also carried a spread on folk dancing, complete with accompanying texts.<sup>64</sup>

34 Another topic that illustrated the theme of democratic art and the United States as a cultured country was art education. The pages of *KIJK*, but also of *Victory*, are generously illustrated with contributions on children taking painting and sculpture classes in a museum - something that would have struck Dutch readers as rather unusual at the time. *De Amerikaansche Vrouw* carried articles on women enjoying art exhibits. Music was presented in this context as well, with domestically situated pianos making a frequent appearance in the magazines, as people listened to and above all played the instrument.<sup>65</sup> In addition, *KIJK* paid attention to American performances of Shakespeare, and European and American classical music, asserting America's rightful place on that platform as well.

## 8. African Americans

35 African Americans (and other minorities for that matter) were largely absent in all three magazines, with *KIJK* paying most, and *Victory* least attention to this group. One place where they appeared most was in the cultural section, which served to give their accomplishments in jazz, opera and theater some attention. Despite this, the more general invisibility of African Americans reflects the political reality that the American

government was unwilling to work towards a Double Victory - "Wait until V-Day to reform the world."<sup>66</sup> Even the military, fighting that war, was almost totally segregated.

- 36 The OWI Overseas Branch's employees would have preferred a different scenario: some on principle, others because they considered the position of African Americans to be a liability overseas. The position of African American as second class citizens was an easy target for Axis propaganda, but allies also questioned this practice, since they witnessed a segregated army fighting to secure democracy for all. The OWI therefore agreed with Gunnar Myrdal's analysis in *An American Dilemma. The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy* (1944) that the civil rights issue would be a litmus test of America's leadership and democracy in the post-war world: "America for its international prestige, power, and future security, needs to demonstrate to the world that American Negroes can be satisfactorily integrated into its democracy."<sup>67</sup> The pages of the illustrated magazines stood as bleak testimony that the integration project had not advanced much. The decision to include Paul Robeson, Lena Horn and Marian Anderson in the cultural section is therefore interesting. They were certainly famous for their artistic endeavors, but they were also well known as civil rights activists.
- 37 *KIJK*'s two-page spread on Paul Robeson makes a curious read in this context. He was the son of a slave who had escaped to the North, and had risen to be one of the most talented and successful singers and actors of his time, implying that in the U.S. even an African American, one generation removed from slavery could make it to the top.<sup>68</sup> It may also imply that discrimination was a Southern problem, not an American problem, an approach the United States Information Agency would take after the war. *KIJK* showed Paul Robeson's successful career in photos and text. The magazine also gave Robeson and his wife the opportunity to express their dissatisfaction with the civil rights situation: "it's time to claim our political, economic and social equality;" "freedom for all" and: "only when America allows all its inhabitants to contribute to the fullest, can America be strongest." Was this perhaps the way for the OWI Overseas Branch to get its own ideas across on this sensitive topic?
- 38 Curiously, in another article, *KIJK* depicted Robeson in a full-page photo as Othello, standing over the body of his dead (white) wife - an image that might be read in terms of his achievements in high culture, and of integration, or an image that in the U.S. might speak to underlying fears of Black masculinity. The focus on Paul Robeson is also ironic, knowing that during the Cold War he would be *persona non grata* due to his sympathy for the Soviet Union and his ongoing criticism of racial injustice in the U.S. During the Cold War, the civil rights situation would continue to be America's Achilles heel. The State Department considered desegregation 'a Cold War imperative,' very much in line with the OWI Overseas Branch's and Myrdal's analyses during WWII.<sup>69</sup>

## 9. American women

- 39 The representation of women made the transition from *Rosie the Riveter* to *Rosie the Housewife*, reflecting the transition from a war industry to the promise of a consumer society, both at home and abroad. *KIJK* (re)presented the war efforts overseas, and at home in the defense industry, in the first place as a male world, under-representing women's contributions to both. Yet, in the fifth issue there is a series on women and the war, cut from the fabric of *Rosie the Riveter*. We see for example, a woman working behind an enormous hydraulic press, dwarfed by the machine. We see her from behind,



while she confidently handles the machine. There are also other photographs of women in jobs usually associated with men: riveting in an aircraft factory, felling trees in the lumber business, cleaning locomotives, and welding. These photographs of hardworking, capable women, are not composed in a particularly inspirational way, as had been the Home Front norm at the time, but closer to the style deployed by Roy Stryker's New Deal-era Farm Security Administration photo unit, the style, that is, of engaged social documentation. The text emphasized the importance of their contributions, and the capacity of women to do 'a man's job.' The text also stressed the patriotism of these women, implying that these were temporary jobs.<sup>70</sup> Most women at work, however, were portrayed in traditional female professions such as working in the garment industry, or as secretaries and nurses. Pains were often taken to explain that these women were not (yet) married. In that sense, their jobs were presented as temporary as well.

- 40 This is where *De Amerikaansche Vrouw*, with its stronger post-war focus took over. The magazine presented women working in the war industry in a significantly different way than *KIJK*. On the first page we see a full-page photograph of two women, facing the reader, busy behind a workbench. The main figure looks well cared for, with manicured nails, lipstick and depilated eyebrows. Whereas in *KIJK*, women worked with large machines, these women work with machines more comparable to appliances at home.<sup>71</sup> The photo resembled the photographs and propaganda shorts used in some campaigns at the Home Front to mobilize – white – women for the war industry. The message is that working in the war industry does not affect women's femininity, and that the work is temporary. This is reflected in subsequent stories focusing on the world of white middle class women in small town and suburban America, where the war was no longer present in the photographs. At the heart of the magazine are stories about women and their 'natural' roles: being a wife and mother is presented as every woman's calling. In a page and a third spread, we see a photo of a woman reading to her son: she wears a dress, with a necklace and matching bracelet, as she curls up on the bed.<sup>72</sup> Moreover, *De Amerikaansche Vrouw* portrays a very desirable lifestyle, particularly a nice house (which surely spoke to Dutch women in the immediate post-war period). We see her buying groceries, making breakfast, helping the kids to school, taking pictures of the family, doing laundry with the washing machine, making clothing on the electric sewing machine. The time saved by using these household appliances was not, as Dutch pre-war illustrated magazines suggested, spent in idleness on herself. American women took courses in childrearing and in art, played the piano and sang with the whole family, and fulfilled services for the local community, the church and the children's school.<sup>73</sup> *De Amerikaansche Vrouw* showed working women, but these were usually, as in *KIJK*, identified as unmarried. The professions presented as best suited for women appear, from today's perspective, as stereotypically female: a nurse, librarian, teacher, radio- announcer and analyst. The magazine, however, also occasionally portrays women positively in 'other professions', such as politics and art. The kind of jobs women performed during the war in industry, in agriculture and the army are not covered in the section 'women at work'. Instead, working on the farm now appears as part of the section 'women at home' where she is presented as helping her husband. The magazine was produced for France, Spain, Portugal and the Netherlands, countries, according to the OWI, that held conservative values when it came to the position of women. In her report on the Netherlands, Ruth Benedict came to the same conclusion. *De Amerikaansche Vrouw* shows that living an 'American' lifestyle did not negatively



affect the role of women as wife, mother and homemaker -- something many feared. In *De Amerikaansche Vrouw*, the 'natural order', challenged by the circumstances of war, has been restored.

- 41 *Victory* did not carry stories on the role of women in the war and society; instead, it carried Dutch language advertisements for household appliances, showing (American) women as consumers, and inviting the Dutch to join in as well. The text reads: "we are still working for the war, but when that's over, all these appliances will be available again...." In the ad we see a woman and her young daughter in the kitchen behind the stove, with a large refrigerator and a washing machine against the wall. In the next image, the two are sitting in the living room, listening to the radio together, implying that these time- saving devices lead to a better quality of family-life. These ads literally sell the Dutch the same American lifestyle as earlier portrayed in *De Amerikaansche Vrouw*. *Victory* made clear that the USA was the one country capable - and willing - to provide Dutch women and their families in the post-war years with this 'American' life-style. All they had to do was follow the American example.... Other stories in *KIJK* and *Victory* share the same perspective: some explain the use of pre-fabricated building methods in making homes instead of military ships and planes; others present plans for the conversion from military to civilian aviation. In the latter case, the story appears in *Victory* and was accompanied by an ad for Beech Aircraft, offering its services. America - and particularly the fruits of its industry -- is now for sale. For years, the Dutch would not be able to afford the life-style depicted in these magazines, yet these publications, together with Hollywood films, helped to pave the way for a society of mass production and consumption, with the U.S. functioning as the primary role model.

## 10. Conclusions

- 42 Before the German Occupation, Dutch illustrated magazines showed an America of skyscrapers, violence, inventions, and Hollywood stars, and thus did not provide much detail regarding US foreign policy or the inner values and logics of the American way of life. America was still a far away country.<sup>74</sup> World War II changed all that. While America was still fighting, the OWI Overseas Branch was involved in preparing the post-war world for the "American Century", a modern world led in all of its aspects by the US. Its approach was systematic. American soldiers, as first-line ambassadors, were briefed on the countries they were about to liberate. For the Netherlands, the anthropological reports by Ruth Benedict speak to this endeavor. The US government charged the OWI Overseas Branch with developing the next step in the process: a large-scale propaganda program. In this context, films and photos were seen as very effective carriers of propaganda messages. This essay focused on one aspect of this larger whole: illustrated magazines. In the Netherlands, as in other liberated countries, OWI's publications were able to fill the vacuum between the just-ousted Nazi press, and the not yet functioning national press. OWI's illustrated magazines *KIJK*, *De Amerikaansche Vrouw* and *Victory* proved to be very popular. For the Netherlands, the core magazine was *KIJK*, with thirty-one issues covering the current affairs of the war and 'the American Way of Life', in photos and text. With respect to the war, *KIJK* emphasized America's preparedness and ability to make a critical contribution to the war, all over the globe, including the Netherlands. Its readers must have gotten a very good impression of 'the Arsenal of Democracy', that large-scale mass producing war industry

that made possible the efforts not just of the American military, but also of the allies. Interestingly enough, that help was downplayed in *KIJK* and the other magazines, while the efforts by the allies were stressed, whether by Russia, Great Britain, China, or the Netherlands. The OWI hoped to secure positive bonds among its allies, but perhaps it was also wary of public reactions to so much military and economic power concentrated in the hands of the US, anticipating fears regarding what the Americans would do with it after WWII.

- 43 Yet, the American government unabashedly saw the US as providing a high moral example for others countries: “The things we stand for and believe in constitute the one ideology that men of freedom and goodwill can turn to,” and it was the OWI Overseas Branch’s responsibility to inform people about ‘the American Way of Life’.<sup>75</sup> The Overseas Branch explained and visualized America’s values as embodied in the *Four Freedoms*, in (small town) democracy and in public art. To be sure, the OWI composed a picture of America that systematically underrepresented city life and boomtowns, minorities and more, while over representing small-town America and all it stands for.
- 44 But above all, the US “offered the world the keys to a consumer’s society” based on mass production, mass marketing, and labor saving devices.<sup>76</sup> But even here, the OWI acted cautiously, or perhaps better, strategically. The Office of War Information assessed Dutch society as essentially conservative in character. *De Amerikaansche Vrouw*, published specifically for the conservative countries in Europe, showed that the desirable and commodity-rich American lifestyle would not undermine the ‘natural order’; quite the contrary. From that perspective, *Victory* was the last step in this process, promoting American products to the Dutch market. Yet, OWI was not merely creating a desire for the American way of life, the OWI actively used the instruments at its disposal to open up markets for publishers and Hollywood studios.
- 45 This study of the OWI Overseas Branch has been primarily concerned with its illustrated magazines. As stated earlier, OWI Overseas Branch’s campaign played out across media forms, with magazines, books, radio programs and films, all being considered as international builders of public opinion. But across these media, the effect was the same: the Overseas Branch foreshadowed America’s postwar cultural diplomatic agenda. In content and approach, the OWI Overseas Branch anticipated the State Department’s information programs and the United States Information Agency (USIA), emphasizing the same values and using many of the same tools, and encountering some of the same problems (e.g., the civil rights situation).
- 46 Of course, there were differences as well -- a new old enemy: the Soviet Union and communism, and a new international role for the Dutch. Yet, the forging of a bond between allies under the umbrella of the US, the promise of ‘people’s capitalism,’ of satisfying consumers’ desires, and of promoting American culture and commerce, remained. After the war, the Marshall Plan, too, would take up the good work and play an important role in propagating the American way of life and preparing people for an ideology of economic growth for the benefit of the common man. The broad contours of the narrative established during the war years by the OWI would linger on in the Brussels’ World’s Fair of 1958, and would even brave the lion in his den in Moscow, in 1959, with the USIA in both cases presenting the American kitchen as a shortcut to ‘the American way of life’. The end of the war meant the beginning of ‘an irresistible empire’.

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## NOTES

1. Cited in Jeanie Cooper Carson, *Interpreting National Identity in Time of War: Competing Views in United States Office of War Information (OWI) photography, 1940-1945* (unpublished dissertation, Boston University, 1995), 216.
2. *De Amerikaansche Vrouw* (The American Woman in the singular) was the translated version of the magazine *American Women*. The title *Victory* was not translated into Dutch, rightly assuming that everyone would know that word; it's very close to the Dutch 'victorie'.
3. See colophon of all issues of *KIJK*. Of the other liberating forces, only the British produced this kind of publication, viz. the nine issues of *Big Ben*, with the official goal of giving the Dutch some idea of life "as this really was." The Dutch had been given a distorted picture due to "lying Nazi propaganda", and *Big Ben* would help to 'correct' that: see *Big Ben*, published by His Majesty's Stationary Office, London, s.a. [1944-1945], in particular no. 9, 2.
4. The administration deliberately used the word information instead of propaganda, to differentiate itself from Axis propaganda, and its own heavily criticized propaganda during WWI. For a full institutional history see A. M. Winkler, *The Politics of Propaganda. The Office of War Information, 1942-1945* (New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 1978).
5. Kathleen E. R. Smith, *God Bless America: Tin Pan Alley Goes to War* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky, 2003).
6. Robert Lee Bishop, *The Overseas Branch of the Office of War Information* (unpublished dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1966), 1-25.
7. Bishop, *The Overseas Branch*, 184.
8. For Nazi propaganda in occupied Europe, and more specifically the illustrated magazine *Signal* see: Rainer Rutz, *Signal: Eine deutsche Auslandsillustrierte als Propagandainstrument im Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Essen: Klartext Verlag, 2007). See also: L. Zweers and T. Luijendijk, *Foute foto's. De geïllustreerde pers tijdens de Tweede Wereldoorlog* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 1993). At its peak, *Signal* was translated into twenty languages, with a circulation of 2.5 million.
9. Cited in Carson, *Interpreting National Identity*, 1-2.
10. *Idem*, 18-21.
11. C. D. Laurie, *The Propaganda Warriors: America's Crusade against Nazi Germany* (Lawrence: University of Kansas, 1996), 186; U.S. O.W.I., *OWI in the ETO. A Report on the Activities of the Office of War Information in the European Theatre of Operations, January 1944 - January 1945* [London, 1945], 37.
12. *OWI in the ETO*, 5.
13. *Idem*, 15.
14. Bishop, *The Overseas Branch*, 182-184. The situation in France was complicated because no recognized government in exile existed, due to rival organizations claiming the exclusive right to speak for France.
15. Judith Schachter - Modell, *Ruth Benedict, Patterns of Life* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983), 268. Other prominent anthropologists, including Margaret Mead, were involved as well.
16. R. van Ginkel, "Typically Dutch.... Ruth Benedict on the 'National Character' of the Netherlanders," *Netherlands' Journal of Social Sciences* 28(1)(1992), 50-71. *Idem*, "Typisch Nederlands.... Ruth Benedict over het 'nationaal karakter' van Nederlanders," *Amsterdams Sociologisch Tijdschrift*, vol. 18, no. 2 (October 1991), 37-66, see 46-47. Ruth Benedict's best known study, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture* (1946), focuses on Japan. See also Rudolf V. A. Janssens, *What Future for Japan? U.S. Wartime Planning for the Postwar Era, 1942-1945* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1995).
17. War Department, *Pocket Guide to the Cities of the Netherlands* (Washington, D.C., s.a.[1944]), 8.

18. Martin Bossenbroek, *Oranje Bitter, Nederland Bevrijd!* (Zwolle: Waanders, 2010); Herman de Liagre Böhl, *De bevrijding van Amsterdam: Een strijd om macht en moraal* (Amsterdam: Gemeentearchief, 1989); Van Ginkel, *Typically Dutch*, 55
19. OWI in ETO, 42; Ian Scott, "From Toscanini to Tennessee: Robert Riskin, the OWI and the Construction of American Propaganda in World War II," *Journal of American Studies*, 40 (2006), 2, 347-366.
20. OWI in ETO, 35-36, 42; citation, see 36.
21. Bishop, *Overseas Branch*, 91-93; Charles A. H. Thomson, *Overseas Information Service of the United States Government* [Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institution] (Menasha, Wis.: George Banta Publishing, 1948), 66-67; Kerry Segrave, *American Films Abroad: Hollywood's Domination of the World's Movie Screens from the 1890s to the Present* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1995), 131-133. See also: Ian Jarvie, *Hollywood's Overseas Campaign. The North Atlantic Movie Trade, 1920 -1950* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).
22. Bishop, *The Overseas Branch*, 93 - 94; 269; OWI in ETO, 12.
23. Cited in Segrave, *American Films Abroad*, 131.
24. Mildred Allen, *Long Range Operational Plan for Holland*, March 13, 1945. NARA, RG 208: OWI, Records of the Historian. Area File: 1943-1945, box 2: file Holland.
25. Amerikaansche Bureau voor Oorlogsinlichtingen, *U.S.A. Beknopt beeld van Amerika en de Amerikanen*. (s.l., s.a. [London, 1944-1945]). Translation of *USA: An American Review*.
26. OWI in ETO, 44.
27. Bishop, *The Overseas Branch*, 210-211; 323-324; 360-361; Pamela Spence Richards, "Information for the Allies: Office of War Information Libraries in Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa," *The Library Quarterly*, vol. 52 (1982), 4, 325-347.
28. Bishop, *The Overseas Branch*, 44-45; 265-266.
29. OWI in ETO, 18, 47.
30. C.J.M. Schuyt and Ed Taverne, *1950. Welvaart in zwart-wit* (Den Haag: Sdu uitgevers, 2000), 64-65.
31. Carson, *Interpreting National Identity*, 15 and Chapter 3.
32. For Nazi propaganda in occupied Europe, and specifically the illustrated magazine *Signal* see: Rutz, *Signal*.
33. Bishop, *The Overseas Branch*, 84; *Life*, March 22, 1943, 11-15.
34. Zweers and Luijendijk, *Foute foto's*, 6-7, 11, 34, 104-107.
35. Bishop, *The Overseas Branch*, 86.
36. Carson, *Interpreting National Identity*, 25.
37. Bishop, *Overseas Branch*, 54 and 407.
38. OWI in ETO, 16.
39. *Idem*, 4.
40. OWI in the ETO, 2 and 16; Bishop, *The Overseas Branch*, 265; Thomson, *Overseas Information Service*, 62 - 63.
41. Cited in OWI in the ETO, 2.
42. See *KIJK* for excerpts from letters; R. Nieman, "Capo da Capo," *Elseviers Weekblad*, April 17, 1962. Here, Nieman, photography editor of this weekly reminisces about *KIJK* in The Hague in June 1945. See also *Het Parool*, April 1974, on the occasion of the reprint of a selection of *KIJK* articles.
43. Allen, *Long Range Operational Plan for Holland*.
44. For instance, *KIJK*, no.1, "Nederlandse troepen naar huis toe;" *KIJK*, no. 2, "Hollandia en de N.I.C.A.;" *KIJK*, no.3, "De K.L.M. 25 jaar;" *KIJK*, no.4, "De Nederlandsche Koopvaardij;" *KIJK*, no.6, "Een vernieuwd korps mariniers;" *KIJK*, no.7, "Een wakker vrouwelijk hulpkorps;" *KIJK*, no 29/30, "Nederland streed overall mee." When in 1974/1979 a selection from *KIJK* was reprinted by a

Dutch publisher the emphasis was on these Dutch contributions to the war. I'm not sure whether that was what the OWI had in mind.....

45. Van Ginkel, *Typisch Nederlands*, 44.
46. An example would be the American documentary *Todesmühlen*.
47. Zweers and Luijendijk, *Foute foto's*, 29, 30, 72, 80-89.
48. See for instance: *KIJK*, no.1, "Twee maanden Russisch offensief;" *KIJK*, no.5, "Hoe de Russische legers vochten;" *KIJK*, no. 8, "Industriele kracht van Rusland;" *KIJK*, no.16, "Boeren in Rusland;" *KIJK*, no.23, "Russisch staatsman;" "kinderzorg in Soviet-Rusland;" *KIJK*, no.24, "Rusland's hartland;" *KIJK*, no.27, "De Vrouwen herstellen Leningrad;" *KIJK*, no.29/30, "Rusland aan den opbouw nu het weer vrede is."
49. The expression was originally used by playwright Robert Sherwood, in May 1940, but Roosevelt is credited for it, with Sherwood's permission.
50. *KIJK*, no.1, "De Amerikaansche productie."
51. See for instance: *KIJK*, no. 7, "Zuidzee-landing;" *KIJK*, no.11, "De 'Liberty' schepen voeden de fronten;" idem, "Een industrieel van groot formaat" (on Henry J.Kaiser).
52. *KIJK*, no.2, "De Jeep – Manusje van alles."
53. *KIJK*, 29/30, 'Zorg voor invaliden in Amerika;' 'De hond voor den blinde.'
54. *KIJK*, no. 18, "Amerika stelt zich in op den oorlog."
55. *KIJK*, no.3, "T.V.A. doet dood land herleven;" *KIJK*, no.24, "Wat is penicilline?"
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## ABSTRACTS

Winning the war against the Axis countries was not the only goal the US government had in mind; it was also working towards a new US led world order. Analysis of three illustrated magazines produced by the Office of War Information Overseas Branch for the Netherlands shows that in addition to short-term war-related goals, long-term goals sought to pave the way for the American Century. This essay also shows that, more than previously assumed, the content and approach of the activities undertaken by the OWI Overseas Branch during the last phase of the war anticipated the State Department's and United States Information Agency's post-war programs.

## INDEX

**Keywords:** American propaganda (WWII, *De Amerikaanse Vrouw*, President F.D Roosevelt, Robert Sherwood., Ruth Benedict, the Netherlands); U.S. Office of War Information Overseas Branch; U.S. Office of War Overseas Branch's illustrated magazines: *Kijk*, *Victory* ; Edward Barrett

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