

BETWEEN LOSING CULTURAL IDENTITY AND EXPRESSING CURRENT CULTURE

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Abstract

For centuries the Netherlands had struggled against water. After years of struggle the Netherlands had turned from a swampy and unstable river delta into an orderly country with a strong agricultural image. Since 1990, however, the Netherlands are no longer primarily known as the country that reclaimed land from water, but as a country that allows water to come in once again for nature development reasons. Tiengemeten is one of the largest nature development projects in the Netherlands. Influenced by European and national governmental policy, this former agricultural island has been transformed into a nature island. This development can only be understood if we consider the current culture of authenticity. In this article I will argue that Tiengemeten is an expression of this culture of authenticity and that this affects the communication about Tiengemeten. Based on the case of Tiengemeten I assume that communication is culturally bound or embedded.

Introduction

In 1993 the New York Times published an intriguing article with the impressive title ‘Dutch Do the Unthinkable’¹. For more than thousand years, the Dutch had been reclaiming land from the sea. The Netherlands had been well-known for this till the midst of the 20th century and we, the Dutch were proud of it! However, this cultural historical tradition stopped at the end of the 20th century as a result of an upcoming interest in wilderness areas. The cited article of the New York Times shows the amazement of the Americans when they hear about the new nature policy in the Netherlands: punching holes in several dikes to give the sea free play and allowing a river to spill into its flood plains. For more than thousand years the Netherlands had struggled against the water, turning the country from a swampy and unstable river delta into an orderly country with a strong agricultural image and a nation with the world’s highest yields per acre of flowers, vegetables, meat, etc. And now, according to the article of the New York Times, the Netherlands are rolling back in history, flooding a large expanse of farmland, reclaimed a century ago, into marshland and lakes once again.

“In some regions, a tradition of centuries will be reversed. (...) People have been building dikes along the sea since the 14th century. Whenever the land silted up behind the dike, the settlers reached out farther and set up a new dike. The medieval dikes now stand useless, deep inland, relics of an ancient battle.”
(Simons, 1993)

Yet what happened, are the Dutch losing their cultural identity as a farming country? “Cattle instead sheep have been Dutch rural icons since van Ruysdael’s 17th century paintings²: a dappled hide against a green landscape is more a logo of the Netherlands than the tulip”, Lowenthal (2007, 646) said. In this article, using the case of Tiengemeten, I will show that

due to the influence of the European and the Dutch Governmental policy, the cultural identity of Tiengemeten has indeed changed and how this has affected the communication about Tiengemeten. In this article I would like to answer the question ‘How can the communication about Tiengemeten be explained within the wider cultural context?’

To do that, first of all I will describe the major themes in the current European and Dutch Governmental policy with regard to Tiengemeten. Secondly, I will show that the current policies and their effects on Tiengemeten fit within the thinking of the Western society and that there is a link between bigger cultural processes and local cultural identities. Finally, I will share some thoughts about the relation between culture and communication and make some closing remarks regarding Tiengemeten and the main question of this article.

European and National Policy regarding Tiengemeten

Tiengemeten is a small island of 5 acres in the south-western part of the Netherlands which arose as sedimentation of a sandbar between 1750 and 1804 in the Haringvliet³. According to De Boo - Spaargaren (2008) the area was diked and has become a domain of farmers, fishermen, reed cutters and hunters since 1750. After the Second World War (1940 - 1945) Rotterdam started its restoration and claimed Tiengemeten as a perfect destination for industrial expansion or a suitable location for a marina, an airport or a sludge depot (The Boo - Spaargaren, 2008). In 1990, however, the Dutch Government came with an ambitious plan. After having functioned as an agricultural area for many years, the island became a part of the National Ecological Network (NEN), a network of existing and future nature reserves in the Netherlands. From that moment on, Tiengemeten has been regarded as a new major nature reserve by the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries.



Tiengemeten is a small island in the south-western part of the Netherlands accessible by boat.

In 1994 the Provincial Authority of South-Holland designated Tiengemeten as a nature development area with the intention to become, together with the Ventjagerplaten and Spuimondingen, a natural area of approximately 3000 hectares. In 1997 one of the Dutch Nature Conservation organizations, called ‘Natuurmonumenten’, became the owner of Tiengemeten. After a thorough study and plan development the transformation of Tiengemeten into a natural island started in September 2005. Influenced by the new nature policy, the dikes around Tiengemeten were broken to give the sea and the nature free play. The realization of the nature island Tiengemeten is considered as a mark in the history of the Dutch nature policy. It represents a next step, that of preference for nature over agriculture⁴.

In 2006 the last farmer left the island and the refurbishment was completed in 2007. On May 27th 2007, at the official opening, Gerda Verburg, the former Minister of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, qualified Tiengemeten as the largest nature development area in the Netherlands.

“Under an ambitious "master plan for nature," the Government is buying up tens of thousands of acres to stop "the overall deterioration and decline of the Dutch landscape." The plan, approved in 1990, is now in its initial stages and eventually aims to return some 600,000 acres, almost one-tenth of the present farmland, to forest, wetlands and lakes.(...) In a nation where historically nothing could stand in the way of creating more arable land, the Dutch turnabout strikes many experts as remarkable. The plan has wide support in the cities, but stirs concern across the countryside where farming families have worked the land for generations. (...) Part of the Government master plan is to create "ecological cores and corridors" across the country. It argues that development has become so pervasive that the few relatively pristine spots that remain are often too disturbed and small for natural ecosystems to survive.”
(Simons, 1993)

During the realization the history and the patterns of the island are strived to be kept. Keeping in mind that the quality of nature and the quality of enjoying nature comes first - Tiengemeten became an island for a wide audience of nature and countryside lovers. According to the website of Tiengemeten⁵, experiencing nature and landscape is the main motive for visiting the island⁶ which is intended to consist of three spheres or zones⁷. To the east of the island there is a relatively small area that is interpreted as 'melancholy'. Here, the starting point is the memory of the (cultural) landscape in the past. In the realm of what is interpreted as "wealth" should be barely visible human influence. According to the plan makers, wealth implies a wealth of plants and animals. This part of the island is characterized by limited control of natural processes and the main aim is to show and conserve the different types of nature. The last and largest part is referred to as 'wilderness'. The influence of the tide of the Haringvliet is dominant there. This area without any management is defined as an area of the wild, exciting and vast experience, a natural area for wanderers, naturalists, for those who seek peace and tranquility.



Tiengemeten is situated in the Haringvliet and defined as an area for those who seek peace and tranquility

Tiengemeten is regarded as an extraordinary piece of tidal nature of Europe and is supported by the LIFE programme: an European Union grant that works towards the realization of Natura 2000, the European network of nature areas⁸. Haringvliet, the place where

Tiengemeten is located, is regarded as a Natura 2000 area with unique species and habitats at European level (Ouweneel, 2008)⁹.

Kuindersma et. al. (2004) writes: "Natura 2000 is the main concept of the European nature policy. Natura 2000 will become a network of nature areas on European scale. It consists of areas designated by the national governments, based on Bird- and Habitats Guidelines. (...) The central instruments to achieve the Natura 2000 areas are the Birds Guideline (1979) and the Habitats Guideline (1992). (...) Guidelines are binding for all member states. The national authorities themselves are free to choose their own forms and methods. State should convert the obligations in the directives into domestic law. Basically the state is free to choose the way of legislation or regulation and literal translation of the text of the directives is not always necessary.

Figure 1: Context of the Natura 2000 areas

Kuindersma et. al. (2004) argues that there is no direct influence of the European nature policy on the Dutch nature policy¹⁰. However, according to Kuindersma et. al. (2004), the guidelines influence the content. In the Netherlands the protection of species is governed by the Flora- and Fauna Law¹¹ and the protection of areas is governed by a Nature Conservation Law¹². Furthermore Kuindersma et. al. (2004) notes that "the main effect of the European directives may be that the emphasis in the early nineties on nature development and the realization of a National Ecological Network (NEN) was supplemented by a much stronger policy for protection areas and species "(49). In other words, the implementation of the Birds and Habitats Guidelines has contributed to a renewed and stronger focus on species- and area protection in the nature policy. It is by these guidelines that the nature policy has his actual juridical legalization.

"My father came here in 1927 when the land was just dry and he worked hard to level it. He is 93 now. I wouldn't want him to see it flooded"

(Farmer Gijs Tysseling in Simons, 1993)

With reference to the previous we can conclude that the European policy, but especially the policy of the Dutch government, contributed to losing the 'original' cultural identity of Tiengemeten. The quote above is an intriguing illustration. Tiengemeten is no longer what and how it used to be. Since 2007 it has become a nature island and now it is no longer an agricultural island. Using the words of De Boo - Spaargaren (2008), this change has "not happened without fight" (23). When 'Natuurmonumenten', one of the biggest Dutch nature conservation organization, bought the island in 1997, there were six active farmers, who have lived and worked with their families on the island for generations. Some permanent residents and about fifteen holiday villas were found scattered over the island. The transformation of the agricultural island into an island of nature would take place without expropriation. However, that was not easy to do:

"It was not easy. The plans gave a lot of agitation on the island. We were confronted with six successful companies, which did not want to leave. Moreover, the farmers were told by Fortis Amey that the island would not be sold in leased condition, but 'Natuurmonumenten' didn't know about this agreement. It was not an easy negotiation. Much consultation was needed to find alternative ideas of businesses, in consultation with the Dienst Landelijke Gebied. As people were only willing to leave if they made a profit, a good compensation for unamortized investments and relocation costs had to be provided for."

(Employee Bert Verver of 'Natuurmonumenten' in De Boo – Spaargaren, 2008)

Maintaining the agriculture, however, was not an option for 'Natuurmonumenten':

"Millions of public money were involved in purchasing of the island for nature. (...) Here were unique opportunities to return natural tidal freshwater. After the transformation a large part of the island was flooded. That cannot be combined with intensive, large-scale agriculture."

(Employee Roel Posthoorn of 'Natuurmonumenten' in De Boo – Spaargaren, 2008)

"Neither was regarded a switch to a system in which farmers take care for the nature as a serious alternative. As you can do it elsewhere in the Netherlands, you do not need to buy an island. This was exactly the place to work on a freshwater tidal nature. But these farmers didn't feel for a future as an agricultural nature administrator."

(Employee Bert Verver of 'Natuurmonumenten' in De Boo – Spaargaren, 2008)

The transformation of Tiengemeten was only possible to be continued if the leaseholders left the island voluntarily. Four of the six farmers were soon to agree. In 1998 they collect their last harvest. The fifth farmer left a year later. However, the negotiation with the last farmer and the largest company took more time; finally in early 2006 he left the island and moved to his new business on the mainland. It was hard for him to say farewell to his successful business his family had had for generations on the island¹³.

"Leaving voluntarily sounds good, but the farmers wonder of course what future they have on the island now the destination of the island has been changed and the transformation plan is in progress. Then you wonder what will happen to the infrastructure and the ferry and how much troubles you will get from the weeds, the birds and so on. Amenities have also lapsed. The farmers on Tiengemeten used to help each other and shared the use of some machines. When colleagues leave, however, you think twice."

(Employee Bert Verver of 'Natuurmonumenten' in De Boo – Spaargaren, 2008)

Some agreements were made with the other (holiday) residents: remaining is possible, but only within the three small settlements with dikes. The rest of the island would be given to the dynamics of nature and might be flooded from time to time.

Discussions about the transformation of Tiengemeten were also held in the scientific discourse. A continuous question was - and still is - what exactly is the definition of nature (Neefjes, 2007; Van Tooren & Lucas, 2010). Neefjes (2007) gives an impression of how Tiengemeten is received internationally. Below some citations of scholars from her article:

"You can see that the Dutch are accustomed to do something. Here in Spain doing nothing is often a good option, but probably for you it's impossible."

(Emilio Diaz-Varela of the Universidade de Santiago de Compostela, Spain)

“The Netherlands are still basically a large garden, completely man made. But here you have a very interesting reservoir of biodiversity in an ecosystem with unique conditions.”

(Olivier Chabrierie of the Université de Picardie Jules Verne, France)

“This is one of the most interesting days of my life! I've often been to China, I was expecting a different culture there, but that the Netherlands are so different, comes to me as a shock. All the reclaimed land and full control about the water, that is so completely different from ours. But I think it's very pretty, and it illustrates very clearly the different visions on nature. In the Anglo-Saxon concept nature is wilderness and a place where is nobody; you have National Parks which you protect, elsewhere you can go ahead unchecked. The Eastern view of nature, with an emphasis on virginity and purity, has little space for humans. Today I heard that this cannot be named nature through all the artificiality aspects. But I definitely think this is nature! It's silly to say that man is not part of nature. This area shows a definite understanding of the laws of nature. Nature seems to me if you have a variety of natural processes. You can describe nature in terms of species, but you focus only on what you have. If you describe nature by means of processes, you give the nature space and that's what is happening here.”

(André Bouchard of the Université de Montréal, Canada)

As we have seen Tiengemetten is a good example of how European and national policy works at the regional level. On the one hand, the result is a loss of the local cultural identity of Tiengemetten, but on the other hand, in this article I want to argue that the development of Tiengemetten can only be understood in terms of our thinking in Western society. Therefore I prefer to talk about changing one's cultural identity instead of losing one's cultural identity. In my opinion, Tiengemetten is an expression of our Western society i.e. culture of authenticity and the communication about Tiengemetten confirms this. In the following part of this article I would like to describe this in more detail.

Expression of our culture of authenticity

For centuries it was unthinkable in the Netherlands to look at hares and deer for our pleasure without killing them (Van der Meulen, 2009). But according to the observation of Schouten (2005) images of nature change with time and with human needs. In this sense images of nature are cultural phenomena. Within a certain culture they can change over time. There are also big differences in view on nature between different cultural areas. The plurality of images of nature reflects the diversity of visions on life and lifestyles. This has obviously also passed through in the current debate and the (government) policy. The policy reflects the dominant view in a culture. Van der Windt et. al. (2007) comes to the conclusion that romanticized images of nature prevail in the Dutch nature policy. In this section of our article I want to argue that this has to do with the culture we live in.

Several authors argue that in the Dutch nature policy a strong emphasis is on ecologically-oriented images of nature and that the romantic wilderness image of nature becomes more and more popular (Keulartz, 2000, Schouten, 2001). That desire for wilderness expresses the idea that "the wild uncultivated nature represents an important value that is to be protected from cultivation and from appropriation by man" (Drenthen, 2003, 200). However, our attitude

towards wildlife has changed. In the past there was the ideal of an unspoiled wilderness projected on or identified in existing nature reserves - and thus these areas were protected from human influences -, but now the desire for the unspoiled and wild nature functions as a legitimization of human interventions in the context of constructing "new nature" (Schouten, 2001; Drenthen, 2003). According to Keulartz (2009) authenticity is always leading in the world of nature conservation¹⁴. But there has been a shift from a defensive to an offensive strategy, from conservation and protection of existing nature areas to the development of 'new nature' areas. In this context Keulartz (2009) talks about a shift from the restoration metaphor to the re-creation metaphor of which Tiengemeten is a good example. This re-creation metaphor is well quoted on the wall of the visitor- and information centre at Tiengemeten: 'scheppingsdaad met voorbedachte rade', an intentional act of creation.

The strong emphasis on authenticity, purity, originality and so on puts us right in our Western society which appears as an authentic culture, Taylor (1991) says¹⁵. In this Western society there is a quest for authenticity and for real and unmediated experiences (Aupers et. al, 2010). "True and false", Aupers et. al (2010) says, "are like Siamese twins: they presuppose and define each other", where authenticity is formulated as "a morally superior and desirable ideal - an escape or alternative for an as "unreal" experienced system (4). We often refer to the romanticism of the eighteenth century as source of "resisting the as unnatural and alienated perceived modern social order" - the urban, industrial environment and mass production - and as roots of "the desire for 'naturalness' and (...) authenticity" (Aupers et. al, 2010, 4). The intriguing point of our current Western authenticity is that the quest for authenticity is rhetorically placed against the social order, but meanwhile it is an essential feature of the culture in Western society. In other words, while originally authenticity had to do with a counter-culture, now it is a special characteristic of the mainstream thinking in our Western society. Aupers et. al (2010) therefore argues that authenticity is no longer a free ideal, but more and more a cultural imperative and a social regime. It is something we really want, but also something that forces us.

The more nature is perceived as authentic, the greater the preference for nature to go its own way and preserve without any human influence (Vreke et al, 2007). In the desire for 'real' i.e. 'genuine' nature we recognize nostalgia for the pre-industrial and agrarian societies where life was simple, easy and 'natural' (Aupers et. al, 2010, 4). Elands (2002) and Vreke et. al (2007) therefore suggest that the contemporary man seeks the illusory and genuine in nature to find lost values and to put flesh on his alienation of modern society. That puts the current debate of nature and the nature policy in the Netherlands in a postmodern perspective¹⁶. Van der Woud (2007) suggests this in similar terms when he describes the new nature such as Tiengemeten, as a "post-modern type of artificial landscape with ancient evocations, with remarkable similarities to the English garden" (13). Now we are back to the previous paragraph saying that authenticity has something to do with opposition. Writing about the English garden, Van der Woud (2007) says that it was a revolutionary concept "because it rejected everything in the French Baroque garden and realized a beauty that was based on opposing principles. (...) Contrary to the baroque concept of nature as a subject of a rationalistic idea, the English garden contains nature that could develop freely. Although both concepts were artificial, the romantic English landscape style conquered Europe because it denied the artificiality and seemed 'natural' "(5). Applied to the theme of this article one could say that the development of new nature is a reaction against the functional and rational thinking in the modern age. Tiengemeten may seem constructed, but as Van der Port (2010) writes, in the artificial lies the desire for real. In that sense Tiengemeten is an expression of the culture of authenticity and a manifestation of our postmodern age¹⁷.

Some thoughts about culture and communication

Those who open the leaflet of 'Natuurmonumenten' about Tiengemeten, can read that Tiengemeten is the wilderness we have missed. In this context the words in the leaflet of Deltanatuur are interesting¹⁸:

“There is something grand and wonderful on the island Tiengemeten. The whole island, one thousand acres, is just pure nature. True wilderness, with flowing creeks and gullies where you can walk endlessly through paved and trackless terrain, while the mighty sea eagle is circling over your head. On the way you rest a while at the eastern tip of the island, where the atmosphere of the countryside of 1850 comes back to life.” (Flyer Tiengemeten, Delta Natuur)¹⁹

Speaking in terms of real, pure and authentic is reflected in the communication about Tiengemeten. It breathes our authentic culture, as described in the previous part of this article. In that sense communication conveys a particular culture: tell me what your communication is and I will tell you which culture you belong to.

The definition of culture by Geertz (1973) clearly indicates a link between culture and communication. Culture, Geertz (1973) said, is "a historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic form by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes towards life" (89).

Figure 2: Link between culture and communication

Words are not only words. Our words and other expressions, but also our normative criteria, are taken from a certain tradition. With regard to culture and tradition Taylor (2003) writes: "For a large part [our] vocabulary is inevitably passed down in our society, and despite of variation we apply it later on" (40). There has always been a point of departure, a biography, a life story, whom we connect with. As a person you inherit a culture that is formed in a specific historical situation. That is in terms of Van der Stoep (in press) your point of departure, where you are coming from. It sets not only limits to what you may reach, but it is also a necessary condition for entering the social field and giving shape to reality. According to Taylor (1991) we do not exist autonomously, but are rather integrated into a cultural tradition, which gives our life orientation and direction. We are 'dialogical beings' and with others we stand in a certain tradition: we grew up in a certain socio-cultural environment and share our history with others. As humans we need this kind of evaluating or moral horizons i.e. 'frameworks of understanding'. We need it for getting good understanding of ourselves, but also for a good interpretation of a situation and to see it in a wider perspective (Taylor, 1991, Van der Stoep, in press). These frameworks or (moral) horizons connect past, present and future together.

“You cannot choose between a variety of options without having a sense of yourself as part of a larger cultural project that gives meaning to what you are doing. Cultures are integral wholes, historical patterns that connect past, present and future. They represent a continuity that preserves its uniqueness by adapting to new situations time and again.” (Van der Stoep, in press)

It is important to note that in this article I not only argue that communication forms contain and convey culture, but also that a culture is not to be considered by itself and that a culture also is internalized into a person. Van der Stoep (in press) shows that a lot of current authors

argue that cultural identities seem to become fluid, fragmentary, heterogeneous and partial. However culture is more than a single i.c. separate entity that is subject to development or decay. Culture is something that is internalized in the life histories of people (Taylor, 1994). That explains why there was so much resistance by some farmers in the case of Tiengemeten. There is something at stake when people lose their culture. Ignoring one's culture, Van der Stoep (in press) writes, is ignoring one's reason to exist. And this brings serious damage, distortion and psychic harm in people's lives who carry it with them their whole lifetime (Taylor 1994). So I want to conclude that communication is not available separately and it is not to be considered on its own. Communication is socio-culturally bound, or better, contextually determined and embedded in a certain tradition.

Conclusion

In this article I showed that the European and especially the Dutch nature policy has influenced the cultural identity of Tiengemeten. A former island Tiengemeten has recently changed into a nature island. I have argued that this development can only be understood if we consider the current culture of authenticity. Tiengemeten is not only a masterpiece of the current nature policy, but also an expression of this culture of authenticity. The communication about Tiengemeten breathes this culture of authenticity - communication conveys a particular culture. Communication is not separately available and it should not be considered on its own. Communication is socio-culturally bound i.c. contextually determined and embedded in a certain tradition. From this point I argued that in case of Tiengemeten it is better to speak of changing cultural identity rather than losing cultural identity. In this way Tiengemeten is a good example of explaining communication within the wider cultural context only.

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Endnotes

¹ This article is available on <http://www.nytimes.com/1993/03/07/world/dutch-do-the-unthinkable-sea-is-let-in.html> (May 2011).

² Van Ruysdael (1600/1603 – 1670) was one of the famous Dutch landscape painters.

³ A 'gemet' is an old land measure of a half acre (= 5.000 m²).

⁴ According the chief editor in his editor comments of "De Levende Natuur" in July 2007 (jaargang 108, nr. 4).

⁵ For the website of Tiengemeten visit <http://www.tiengemeten.com/html/English> (May 2011).

⁶ Research by De Boer & De Vries (2009) shows numbers of visitors rating from 30,000 up to 40,000 a year. On average visitors to the island are 52 years old and are mainly from a radius of 30 km around the area. The average group size is five people, although half of the visitors come in pairs. Most people come without children for either relaxing or walking.

⁷ From the perspective of communication in relation to culture it is intriguing to see that the three spheres or zones in the Dutch language fit within the symbol of 'world wide web': melancholy is 'weemoed', wealth is 'weelde' and wilderness is 'wildernis'.

⁸ According to De Boo - Spaargaren (2008) the acquisition and establishment of Tiengemeten cost seven million Euros in total.. The European Union contributed 1.6 million Euros for the establishment of the island (total cost are 6.8 million Euros); 900,000 Euros of the 1.6 million Euros comes from the LIFE programme. Tiengemeten has received 700,000 Euros from the European Fund ISLA. In the ISLA fund Dutch, French, Scottish and Irish partners share insights and experiences about Western European islands issues.

⁹ For more information about the Natura 2000 visit <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/> (May 2011). In the Netherlands 162 natural areas are protected by Natura 2000. Natura 2000 is primarily focused on maintaining the current (natural) values, but development is in contrast to the EHS limited (Van Toornen & Lucas, 2010).

¹⁰ According to Kuindersma (2004) the Dutch policy of the National Ecological Network has been model for Natura 2000.

¹¹ This law from 1998 is implemented in 2002. In Dutch available on http://www.st-ab.nl/wetten/0087_Flora-en_faunawet.htm (May 2011).

¹² This law from 1998 is implemented in 2005. In Dutch available on <http://www.st-ab.nl/1-98403.htm> (May 2011).

¹³ Digna Sinke has made a movie about the whole process of leaving the island. For more information about this film visit <http://www.tiengemeten.com> and click on the 'film' button (May 2011).

¹⁴ Authenticity is often perceived as authenticity of people, but in relation to nature it has the connotation of 'genuine or pure nature', 'original or spontaneous nature' or 'historical fidelity'.

¹⁵ According to Taylor (1991) authenticity has foremost to do with relationship between humans and that is a different perspective on authenticity from the one I have explained in the previous endnote. In this article, however, I want to show that thinking in terms of authenticity is typical for our current Western society.

¹⁶ Tiengemeten is as masterpiece of the current Dutch nature policy an illustration of a change from a functionally ordered society into a society of meaning and experiences.

¹⁷ Taylor (1991) argued that the public life becomes more and more rationalized – he calls it one of the illnesses of our society. I suppose that we compensate this in the postmodern time by means of a strong emphasis on authenticity, self fulfillment, etc. in our spare time and private life.

¹⁸ Delta Natuur is a cooperation between Provincie Zuid-Holland, Provincie Noord-Brabant, Vereniging Natuurmonumenten, Staatsbosbeheer, Stichting Het Zuid-Hollands Landschap, waterschap Hollandse Delta, Rijkswaterstaat, Dienst Landelijk Gebied, LTO-Noord and several involved municipalities. For the website of Delta Natuur visit www.deltanatuur.nl (May 2011).

¹⁹ This flyer is available in Dutch on http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/project/Projects/index.cfm?fuseaction=home.showFile&rep=file&fil=Tiengemeten_Brochure_NL.pdf (May 2011).