

The Value(s) of Civil Leaders

*A Study into the Influence of Governance Context on Public Value
Orientation*

Appendix 2

Portraits of Civil Leaders (13 leaders)

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Portraits of Civil Leaders (13 leaders)

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Paul Baan

A. Introduction

Who is Paul Baan?

Paul Baan was born in 1951. After finishing his bachelor of engineering, he started his career in the construction industry and later finished his master in Economics at the University of Groningen. In 1981, he joined his brother Jan at the Baan Company, a highly successful software company, as president and vice-chairman. Jan and Paul Baan were successful and became very wealthy when the company was floated. Paul Baan left the company in 1996, a year after it went public and before it got into financial difficulties. His brother did the same sometime later. Through the Vanenburg Group, a venture capital company investing in IT companies, also founded by the Baan brothers, Jan and Paul Baan kept a stake in the Baan Company until the company was sold in 2000.

According to Paul Baan, his passion for business and innovation stems from his time with Baan Group. In 2000, Baan started the Stichting Noaber Foundation (henceforth: Noaber Foundation). A 'noaber' (etymologically linked to the English 'neighbor') is a word in an eastern Dutch dialect denoting a fellow supportive citizen. It is comparable with the normal use of the word 'neighbor', but stresses that these neighbors feel obliged and actually help each other on an informal social basis. Through this foundation, Baan invests in and funds companies and initiatives worldwide aimed at finding and creating new forms of 'noaberschap' (neighborship). His brother took a somewhat different path, which throws the choices Paul Baan made into relief. He chose to stay in business and invest his money and energy again there, next to his own, smaller and less prominent philanthropic initiative.

The Public Case

Baan points out that the involvement of shareholders at the Baan Company forced the company to work towards short-term profit objectives. This short-term focus left no space for innovation. Paul Baan decided to sell his stock and start a foundation focused on innovation and technology. Innovation was originally Paul Baan's focus at the Baan Company. He knew that there were many foundations working on these themes in the United States, but none in Holland. With the Noaber Foundation he is trying to fulfill this role.

The Noaber Foundation's stated vision is 'to assist its "noabers" and work together with them in a society in which the citizen holds a central position'. The Noaber Foundation tries to develop new forms of services for fellow citizens, usually in the context of new technology. The foundation tries to make organizations and people more confident and independent by giving financial support or making investments. When it gives support, the Noaber Foundation expects a social, not a financial return. It also makes investments of two different kinds; at the time of the interview this was structured in two separate funds, but this has now changed. One fund was the George Avenue C.V. for social venturing. The fund invested in organizations or companies with activities that have a social effect. This social effect was the only return on investment expected, i.e. no financial return; that's why it was called 'impact first' social entrepreneurship. The other fund, Höchst Investments BV, was a traditional investment fund with a profit objective.

At that time, the policy of the foundation was based on three themes: 1. technology, 2. education, culture and society, and 3. health and care and healthcare, with a focus on healthy aging and independent living, which later shifted to health and care. The foundation was involved in a wide range of projects, for example: it invested in the development of a telephone for deaf people, the company was in Israel (later this project was abandoned), in a Dutch program to help ex-convicts train and find a job (also later abandoned), and at present the foundation has invested funds and expertise in a project to improve communication access in poor areas around the world. The Noaber Foundation endeavors to improve health care systems in the Netherlands, Europe and USA. In the Netherlands the Noaber Foundation developed the ZIN projects (Dutch for Healthcare Innovation New) which support the development of collaborations to improve health care, bringing together companies like the pensionfund for health care workers, Achmea, an insurance company, universities and health care organizations. Currently, these projects are concentrated

in the VitaValley Foundation (a Noaber Foundation initiative) to advance innovations through links between health care and new ICT technology.

Personal Impression

We meet Paul Baan in his favorite restaurant close to his home and office. This area - Veluwe, a nature conservation area, is known for its religious conservatism. It is part of a 'Bible belt' which stretches across the Netherlands from the south-west to the north-east. In many interviews and in their choice of locations, even for the head office of their ICT company, both brothers wore their local roots and their Christian background, upbringing and unwavering faith on their sleeve. Paul Baan has freed up plenty of time in his agenda for the interview. His personal secretary is sitting in and all kinds of material will be sent to us later. Occasionally he goes back to fill in gaps in his explanation. He insists on checking the report of our interview; clearly they take publications very seriously and have a great deal of experience with critical media, gained in the rise and fall of the Baan Company. It is also part of the professional work that fits his purpose: creating one of the biggest social venture funds in the Netherlands in terms of capital and impact. He also invests nationally in areas that are very much managed, controlled and regulated by Dutch central government. Because this is new and a typically private approach it attracts moral and value-driven criticism of his motives, methods, his genuine focus on public value, etc. Baan appears sincere, calm and genuinely concerned about new initiatives in health care. His international experience shines through in several initiatives he has launched abroad. He also explains how he encourages and brings up his own children in a world disfigured by societal problems in which they will in the future be responsible for a lot of private money. Much of what he says on this point echoes the philosophy of wealthy Americans, as exemplified by Warren Buffett. Baan explains that he is strongly influenced by the way Christian Americans look at private wealth and charity and he tries to apply this in his own land new activities.

B. His Personal View

Account of Achievements

Paul Baan is the chairman of the Noaber Foundation. He is personally deeply involved in the search for and realization of new investment projects. Sometimes the foundation invests in projects that Paul Baan initiated; at other times the foundation spots good initiatives in society and decides to support them. After the original Baan company was sold, his career saw a dramatic change towards personal philanthropy and social

venturing,. His main objective is to make the world a better place to live in, especially by introducing and supporting active citizenship in helping each other. In this he is strongly inspired by American views on personal wealth and venture philanthropy.

Vision and Ambition

During his time at the Baan Company, the Baan brothers already had a foundation that was later divided in two foundations for each family. Paul Baan positioned his Noaber Foundation for reasons he wanted to bridge the gap between people and technology in a socially responsible way and link public and private responsibilities. With his commercial experience gained at the Baan Company, Baan runs the Noaber Foundation the way he does: entrepreneurially and decisively.

The Noaber Foundation 'wishes to assist its "noabers" and work together with them in a society in which the citizen holds a central position'. Through the Noaber Foundation Baan aims to forge alliances with private parties to serve public goals. Baan defines most of the activities of the foundation as social or impact venturing with a priority for reaching societal goals: the projects are entrepreneurial in nature, but social results matter most; financial return is not the first goal, although a sustainable financial structure can certainly be part of what is societally relevant here. An important aspect in the policy of the foundation is pursuing vital coalitions and organizations that are solid in the long term.

Paul Baan acknowledges that he has made a lot of money and wants to use it responsibly. He sometimes enjoys to 'just give money knowing it is well spent'. The Noaber Foundation is almost a fulltime job for Baan. He is personally involved in actively supervising its investments. Some of the social investments of the Noaber Foundation have proved so successful that they yield a profit, which is part of the philosophy for sustainable organizations. Baan points out that this effect by itself is not a problem, as the main reason of many ventures is to keep up with technology and new applications. But it can give the impression that the foundation has a profit objective and can cause it to drift away from its societal targets and original mission.

Although he is motivated by his explicit and vivid Christian faith, the foundation doesn't restrict itself to working only with Christian organizations. It follows a kind of threshold: the Noaber Foundation does not work with organizations that have explicit anti-Christian values and/or practices. As some of his projects are in Israel and Palestine, these rules are sometimes challenged very explicitly.

C. Resistance Encountered

Because of the charitable character of the activities of the Noaber Foundation, Paul Baan has few critics. The Noaber Foundation invests mostly in health care and ICT development, so it is not involved in political or ethical debates, although strict ethical procedures are applied, as in some forms of bioresearch. Most projects get no media attention; if there is any media coverage, it is mainly positive.

Unlike in the United States, in the Netherlands private investment in public services has long been frowned on. Politicians and the public were afraid that private investors would gain too much influence in the public domain and that mixing with the dominant public funding could produce a lack of transparency and accountability. Sometimes this means that the private development of specific public goods first has to start in other countries.

D. Motives

Paul Baan is a committed Christian. Paul Baan felt at the time of his leaving the Baan Company that he had been very lucky and he wanted to give something back to society. He views his current activities as a duty, a mission. He sees greed and materialism as sinful, and giving as a virtue. Yet, since every euro he has he has worked hard for, he doesn't want to waste it or donate it with little control over how it is spent. Baan feels he continues a tradition of Christian leadership, inspired by biblical values and views. He shows me a special issue of a magazine on that topic, for which he was interviewed. Paul Baan is a typical example of a venture philanthropist: entrepreneurial and goal-oriented. Baan feels he is in the heart of society now. During his time at the Baan Company he mainly worked in the ICT world, but now he is meeting new worlds and helping people to improve their quality of life. He reads widely about philosophy and political ideologies, like socialism and liberalism and has followed courses on health care ethics at the Free University in Amsterdam. For Paul Baan the values respect and togetherness are paramount.

Remarkable is the Eleven Flowers Foundation. Baan and his wife try to help their eleven children to be upstanding citizens and make a positive contribution to solving societal problems. They do not want to 'just give them his money', because they might get spoiled and not learn to earn their own living. That is why they founded the Eleven Flowers Foundation, through which their children learn the value of money

and become familiar with the concept of social enterprise in foundations. The main goal of the foundation is to improve the care for and the lives of disabled children. Paul does much of this work together with his wife, so this truly is a social and family foundation.

E. Tactical Observations and Leadership Style

In Paul Baan's career his entrepreneurial spirit stands out. It is what drove the success of the Baan Company and now drives the Noaber Foundation. Sometimes so successfully that projects and investments become profitable. Baan feels the problem with many foundations is failing to cooperate with companies or other organizations, or that they are working so hard to satisfy their employees and supervisors, that they forget or neglect their mission.

There is also a world of difference in terms of mentality and management practice between 'giving' and 'realizing social impact'. For his part, Paul strives for continuity and coalition building in projects and investments. This makes for bigger and more lasting results than just giving. In summary, he distinguishes the following differences between classic philanthropy and his own social ventures:

- more hands-on involvement and commitment;
- pursuing goals, targets and results defined in terms of social impact;
- working with (societal) business cases and sound financial and societal impact projections and management;
- long-term investment, commitment and support for social initiatives.

His experience at the Baan Company has taught Baan the importance of knowing the people you work for and with. Rather than just investing money, the Noaber Foundation wants to cooperate with other impact investors, companies and organizations.

F. First Comments

- In terms of values, methods and philosophy we encounter in Baan a very Anglo-Saxon type of social entrepreneur: he combines his personal skills and business mentality with his knowledge and close contacts with his American colleagues

and their views on life and charity, using the same phrases, explanations and work style.

- His views are explicitly and deeply rooted in his Christian faith, which is uncommon in secularized Netherlands. He states his values and virtues in biblical concepts, which underpin his world view.
- He does not provide much financial information at project level beyond the normal transparency in the holding company's basic financial structures. He explains that this is partly because you cannot predict which project will ultimately perform well, in whatever terms you apply. So what on first impressions may look like a purely social project can generate substantial financial income and vice versa. That is also a reason to be involved in several projects at the same time – a kind of portfolio strategy.
- A comparison with his brother, with whom he shared a large part of his previous career path, gives us a very clear view of his personal values and the reasons behind his strong involvement in philanthropy.
- We can only speculate about the impact the turbulence around the public listing and later the takeover of the Baan Company had on his own career, but again because his brother went through the same experience, we still see the difference in values and their impact behind their life choices.



I have changed the core business from 'cure and care' to 'human happiness'.

Hans Becker

A. Introduction

Who is Hans Becker?

Professor Hans Marcel Becker (1942) is a typical Rotterdammer. His attitude and choice of words are clear and firm. In the past, Becker lectured in Economics at the Erasmus University Rotterdam. In 1992, he became chairman of the board of directors of Humanitas Rotterdam, a chain of homes for the elderly. Initially, he combined this position with his teaching job, but soon committed himself fully to revitalizing Humanitas Rotterdam. His innovative philosophy of bringing 'happiness' into the homes for the elderly caused a major culture shock in the care sector. He obtained his PhD in Humanism in 2003 with a thesis outlining the 'good practice' of the Humanitas foundation. At the time of the interview, Hans Becker also held several other positions such as ambassador of the State Lottery and treasurer of the local broadcasting foundation in Rotterdam. Becker gets right to the point and is not afraid to call a spade a spade. He definitely is one of the most flamboyant managers in the Dutch health care industry. In 1999/2000 Hans Becker was named care manager of the year.

He retired in 2010, but stayed on as an ambassador for the Humanitas' new elderly care concept he invented. He also holds a chair in 'Humanization of Healthcare' at the University for Humanistic Studies.

The Public Case

Humanitas Rotterdam, founded in 1959, provides high-quality care and services primarily for the elderly in the Rotterdam area. Its main activities are in housing, welfare, health care, nursery and medical treatments. In 2007 it had 28 locations, 6,000 clients and 2,300 employees, of which approximately a thousand were volunteers.

Characteristic for the philosophy of Humanitas is the aspiration for a high quality of life for the people in its care, based on the pursuit of human happiness. In its philosophy, happiness may mean different things to different people and Humanitas doesn't discriminate on grounds of religion or lifestyle. Humanitas has a long history of innovative private initiatives in care, housing and welfare.

Building on this Humanitas philosophy, Becker's main goal in the care for the elderly is to provide an environment that allows them to feel happy according to their own ideas.

This ambition comprises four elements:

1. *Autonomy*; people should be in control of their own life.
2. *A yes-culture*; the conviction that money should not be an issue when there is a good plan on the table; (almost) everything that is put forward by clients and their families should in principle be possible and answered affirmatively. The culture is based on listening very carefully to people to discern their real needs, the needs you ought to take care of.
3. *'Use it or lose it'*; people must use their own abilities as long as possible or risk losing them; so people are better off taking care of themselves.
4. *The 'extended family approach'*; the care should be embedded in a lively community that is almost like a family; being a member of a community contributes to both collective happiness and the individual's happiness.

Becker clarifies the result of his work by describing the starting situation he encountered at Humanitas. When he came on board, Humanitas was 'in big trouble' with a 3 million euro deficit and was on the brink of bankruptcy. This situation allowed Becker to make some drastic changes that the board would otherwise never have approved. After rescuing the organization from its acute financial problems, Becker took the first opportunity to invest and refocus the organization on renewal. He made sure his investments were visible for everyone in the organization and that he was publicly recognized as not scared to take chances. Because of this, the organization was able to blossom.

Becker has since created a chain of homes focused on the elderly. Part of the new concept of the care in these homes, were special inhouse restaurants that served good food, also to visiting families, so as to get them to stay longer, as part of the community concept. He is also developing what he calls 'activating museums' in the homes where residents can see and touch old items and objects, like furniture, and

remember old household habits like hanging laundry above the stove to dry, etc. It's really a trip down memory lane to stir the memories of elderly people. As these kinds of innovations show, his philosophy goes far beyond just financial or management issues.

Even though it does not have a profit objective, Humanitas Rotterdam under his management in some years turned a profit, which confirms its current financial soundness.

There is not a trace of the dull and drowsy mood you usually find in retirement homes. Becker shook up the traditional policy of the elderly homes and turned them into thriving and lively places.

Personal Impression

We meet Hans Becker in his office in one of the homes. Strikingly, the lobby is full of activity, with a row of computers which can be seen from outside through a big glass window, which the residents, but also neighborhood kids can use free of charge. The idea is to get local people to come in, to make the atmosphere livelier and the people in the building younger. Becker told me later that this experiment had to be stopped because some of the kids abused the computers and some computers were stolen. We pass an open space with a bar and a restaurant, which are also open to the general public. This open space is lined on three sides by 4 floors of apartments that look out onto this entrance area on the ground floor. The corridors are wide; at regular intervals they open up into spaces with tables and chairs, decorated with statues, mainly Buddhist and Catholic, and there are even real live birds in cages. It is a very active, busy and colorful scene. All this is part of Hans Becker's grand plan to create a natural living environment for the residents and their families, helping to distract them from their illness, recent injuries, and medical treatments. When they dwell on them, they only get sicker. So he calls the statues and the birds 'conversation pieces'. The birds are a very visible testimony to the philosophy in these homes: most Dutch retirement homes don't allow pets; in exceptional cases they are allowed in the rooms of the residents, but certainly not in the corridors and halls. It's an unusual experience to walk through these areas.

Becker's office matches the homes he runs: it is packed with images, statues, stacks of paper, chairs and somewhere in the middle is a big table with a telephone that serves as his desk where guests can sit down and talk with him. But for all the clutter there is also a light and sensitive touch, created by the many Buddhist and Catholic statues

and the religious pictures on the walls. Becker apologizes, explaining that most of the strange tools and instruments littering the room are for his 'memory museums': rooms packed with old objects and even smells, like the smell of clothes drying on a clothesline, to help stimulate the memories of the elderly residents.

Becker comes across as very actively and hands-on involved in the innovations he pursues. But it is also clear that the changes he makes are close to his own character and temperament: it is as if his personality and lifestyle (active, chaotic, interest in religion and philosophy, collecting period objects) extend into his workplace and his homes. He is literally surrounded by his work, but at the same time the work surrounds him. You can't imagine him ever retiring: this is his life, his project, his way of life.

B. His Personal View

Account of Achievements

Hans Becker first came into contact with Humanitas Home Care as professor of Economics. When the general manager of the organization had to take medical leave, Becker gradually took over his position and accomplished significant progress for the home care and social work department of the foundation. In 1992, Becker was formally appointed as chairman of the board of directors of Humanitas Rotterdam. He has developed into an expert on elderly care and housing and succeeded in shifting attention from traditional care and cure principles and routines to his own theory of pursuing happiness for each individual resident, and a more human-oriented care and housing philosophy. Thus, he has created the fastest growing housing corporation in Rotterdam and a restaurant chain within the retirement homes with more outlets in this region than McDonald's. He is now working on a chain of activating museums for the elderly residents of the homes. Even though he is no longer an academic, he is still occupied with theory as well as practice: he set out and argued his theory of finding happiness in his PhD thesis which he completed in 2003, earning him a doctorate in Humanism.

Vision and Ambition

'Steering towards human happiness'

In 1992 Hans Becker introduced lifecycle-independent homes and care for the elderly, which means residents can be provided with individual care at different stages of their

lives in the same home, so they do not have to move at an older age, when they are frailer. He replaced the traditional institutions for the elderly with comfortable apartment complexes bringing all services together under one roof. He then built on his original idea with a chain of midprice luxury restaurants specially equipped for older people and started to develop activating museums to stimulate the minds and memories of the elderly residents by displaying objects, and even smells and sounds from their past. Part of his ideas and inspiration he took from the first hand experiences he encountered when his father entered these traditional elderly homes.

His ultimate objective is to convert the 'conservative islands of misery', as he describes the traditional homes for the elderly, into 'temples of culture and activity'.

Becker stresses that his upbringing in the city of Rotterdam has played an important role in his success. True Rotterdammers are men of action, not words. And that is a vital element in Becker's philosophy of happiness for the people who live in his homes.

Becker's philosophy is based on two key planks. First, that staying in control of one's life is important to stay independent. Second, that everybody wants to be part of a community. To unite both these aspects, Hans Becker conveys to his elderly residents they should try hard to stay in control of their lives, and mingle and meet with other people. In his words, Humanitas should become their 'extended family'.

Humanitas' four principles mentioned earlier all contribute to the main objective of finding happiness. Becker's insistence on autonomy was inspired by his father, who used to say: 'use it or lose it': when you get older, once you stop doing things, you are on a downhill slope. So the residents should fend for themselves for as long as they can.

The second key factor is a yes culture, meaning a positive answer of the organization and staff to any question his clients ask. The idea behind this to instill into staff members that they can provide almost anything if they have an open mind and use their creativity.

Becker is convinced that the environment and atmosphere of the homes affect not only the well-being of the residents, but also their quality of life and health. As a former Economics professor, he is acutely aware of the balance of costs and benefits of whatever he does. He stresses the considerable costs of hiring health care

specialists and compares them to the costs of the elements he adds to traditional elderly care that may seem redundant to others. He believes it is more profitable for the organization to secure happiness and well-being for the residents by fulfilling most of their personal wishes, than to spend all his funds on medical costs on elderly people who have nothing else to do than dwell on their aches and pains. Becker gives people conversation pieces, something else to talk about than their rash or hip replacement. You must actively distract them, because complaining is contagious and causes residents to focus on their illnesses instead of on trying to be active and enjoy their lives. His motto is: 'Happiness is far cheaper than care.' And he stresses that many chronic diseases are incurable, no matter how many doctors you throw at them.

To make sure the homes stay vibrant and dynamic, Becker has created a structure 'on the verge of chaos'. Every wish that implies a once-only expenditure can never be a problem. 'Money is never a problem for Humanitas' is one of Becker's oneliners. He has created numerous stories and one-liners in his work so everyone can understand the meaning of his policy. By truly creating and realizing things instead of just preaching them, he generates change and ideas that are visible to all.

C. Resistance Encountered

Becker has been an intruder and innovator in the traditional care sector. Unlike his colleagues, he presents himself as an entrepreneur in the market for elderly care. At first, the conservative board members were unhappy with his radical changes and off-the-wall ideas. Becker's straight approach and implementation of his ideas were unorthodox in the elderly care sector.

Becker does not think that a supervisory board that visits the organization only four times a year can have much of an idea of what should be done in elderly care, let alone how to provide it. Hans Becker does not believe their insights can be of much value. He tries to keep them at a distance, because he finds it distasteful that these board members have more to say than people who work in the organization 40 hours a week. He just wants them to let him and his staff get on with their job.

At some point they attempted to put a more traditional professional manager alongside him. Becker felt he was only interested in control, finance and systems and not in the people who live and work in their residential homes. Another point of conflict was that although Becker's methods initially appeared financially unwise, he

proved in the longer term that making people happy could be cost effective. The manager left the organization.

Of course, when you try to change elderly care with very specific, new ideas that run counter to normal practice, you will also meet resistance from your own nursing and care staff. To persuade them, Becker used all his rhetorical skills, fundamentally questioning the status quo and trying to break through established routines and conceptions. 'You can't make an omelette without breaking eggs. We really had to put an end to bad attitudes and practices to make way for new ones.' And: 'Of course you have to give people trust, but don't be gentle with people and practices you really don't like and that don't fit your care philosophy.'

There was also resistance from health insurers and civil servants: they often steer towards minimal care and restricting the organization to just delivering care, not the hotchpotch of other services Hans Becker delivers in line with his philosophy to make the residents of his homes active, alive and happy.

D. Motives

Hans Becker has no particular attachment to elderly care; it is the practice of his philosophy that inspires him to go on. He could have been equally committed to developing a campsite, a school or a zoo, as long as he can give expression to his philosophy. One aspect of the care sector he does value is the appreciation he receives from his elderly residents, but, again, you work with people in any organization. Delivering happiness is his favorite product; it gives satisfaction in a way that selling nappies could never do. As long as he can keep following his heart and the methods he believes in, he will keep working to provide happiness and care to the aged.

He describes himself as a workaholic, totally committed to his work. He is there almost 24/7, he lives in one of the apartments for the elderly, paying a independently fixed rent.

E. Tactical Observations and Leadership Style

There can be no doubt that Becker's determination has been vital to his success. He stresses that contemplating certain steps too long ('analysis paralysis') can be your downfall. His management style may seem hectic and disorganized, but it is an essential part of Becker's philosophy. He needs to manage on the edge of chaos in order to achieve his main goal of providing happiness to people. In order to succeed, he has taken many risks that would have frightened others off.

He has always expressed his theories in simple terms - through one-liners, stories or mottos - that everybody can understand, regardless of their education or background.

Becker is never involved with just one project. Emulating his personal role models - his father and his former professor at university - he has developed the ability to work on several things at the same time.

He is very aware of the need for legitimization of what he is trying to achieve in the care for the elderly: elderly people are vulnerable, the care is partly publicly funded and overseen, any irregular step is scrutinized by the public. So he actively looks for opportunities to subject his way of delivering care to research, to inform the public, to commit to evidence-based programs. He has even invited researchers to study the concept of happiness, related care protocols and happiness measurement methods. In his words: 'Dare to be unorthodox, but make sure you have a good story.' Still, his approach is currently considered far ahead of its times; health care management discussions tend to favor steering on outcome instead of output, but that is exactly what Becker does and what his philosophy is all about.

F. First Comments

- In Hans Becker we find a leader who translates his own life experience, vision and management style into an innovative service concept for elderly care. His individual style creates a less disciplined and controlled, but also a less sterile environment. His personal vision and lifestyle underlie his new care concept. This gives his approach credibility, because he practices what he preaches and the examples he uses to explain what he is doing, are drawn from his own experience and very recognizable. When you enter a residential home run by Hans Becker you enter his world, his philosophy, his management practice. And his philosophy

is that Humanitas should be the 'extended family' of the residents. But what if you like parts of his philosophy and service methods, but don't want to be part of the family?

- He actively and successfully resisted the typical management control the non-executive board tried to impose by forcing Becker to accept a financial manager beside him on the executive board. There are three ways to look at this story and result. One: they were wrong: in fact Becker was not a bad manager or a chaotic missionary. He proved that his approach was a sound combination of a human *and* business-like approach to care and that it was financially healthy. So even though *not* steering explicitly on 'the bottom line', but convincing his staff to deliver human and respectful care, he still brought about efficient and cost-effective care. The supervisory board failed to see the real figures behind his chaotic style. Second: they were right; he needed help from a qualified and experienced manager to sort out the consequences on finance and productivity of his management style. But they picked the wrong type, the wrong man, for this charismatic, workaholic Becker; he failed to understand the philosophy or bond with Becker, so he had to go. Or three: they were right, but Becker was psychologically and temperamentally incapable of tolerating anyone with different views and different competences. This is often the case in charismatic leadership. I think all three assessments apply to some degree.

A fourth way to construe this 'traditional management' approach is that social innovation takes place in the public and media spotlight, so it is vulnerable, even more vulnerable than innovation in commercial settings already tends to be. The innovator is insecure, is feeling his way forward in the face of public resistance and challenges. The 'extra' manager might be thought of as the spokesman of all these 'reasonable people and forces' outside the organization that try to influence and control this new practice. But innovation must not be controlled too soon and the innovator needs real support against these conservative external forces, not a colleague as spokesman for these hesitant and conservative forces. So maybe the extra manager was brought in too soon, before Becker was able to convince the public of the values and positive effects of his approach to care.

- His ability to introduce care innovations owed much to the financial misery the Humanitas Foundation Rotterdam was in when he started there. He got a mandate for change, and put it to good use. His expertise as a professor of Economics also helped him to create an innovative vision on care, which was not more expensive, but more effective and focused on different aspects of people's lives. So he owned much of his effectiveness and the ability to invent his own

unique philosophy to his background in a university teaching post in economics, getting a mandate to 'save the place', and, thinking on his feet and inspired by his astonishment about the miserable prevailing care culture, creating a new, lean but effective way of delivering care.

- Surprisingly few organizations for elderly care have copied his philosophy and practice. This fact feeds the argument that non-profit management is less innovative and customer-oriented than that in commercial organizations. Hopefully, other managers will prove this wrong, as Becker did.



'Social housing associations can act as emancipation drivers by getting people on the property ladder.'

Leon Bobbe

A. Introduction

Who is Leon Bobbe?

An elegant and highly confident man, Leon Bobbe (1955) has a broad background. He started his working life with the Woonbond, a tenants' interest group. Before that he had been a community activist in the neighborhood he lived in, so he has civic roots in this field. He then worked for local government in the city of Almere, and a few years later became a consultant. Since 2002 he heads up Dudok Wonen, a housing association in Hilversum and surroundings. Social housing associations are non-profit organizations that build and manage affordable, mostly rented housing for people on lower incomes. In typical Dutch fashion this involves a lot of government regulation on rent levels, annual rent increases and allocation of these homes to lower income people. Since his appointment he has drastically changed the association's corporate philosophy. He wants to empower the people who live in Dudok Wonen's houses and enable them to become homeowners (within the limits of their personal financial situation) instead of being in a rented home all their lives and missing out on the opportunity to build up equity and give them access to the housing market. He calls this the 'property ladder plan'. Together with his wife, Bobbe wrote an essay on the empowerment of people in disadvantaged neighborhoods (see literature below), and he has made empowering people a spearhead of the social housing policy of Dudok Wonen.

The Public Case

Dudok Wonen is a private non-profit (social) housing association that mostly works for tenants and to some extent also for buyers. Dudok owns some 8000 houses in the Gooi and Vechtstreek region (in central Netherlands, in and around Hilversum). The famous Dutch architect Willem Marinus Dudok (1884-1978) plays an important role in its history: Dudok Wonen owns and maintains more than 1300 houses designed and built by Dudok.

Driven by this aim to empower poor people in the housing market, Bobbe devised (together with other social housing experts) a system in which the resident and the housing association finance a private home together. In doing so, the social housing association enables people to escape the negativity of social housing and gives them, even people on low incomes, an opportunity to get on the property ladder. This represented a radical change in the asset management philosophy of the social housing association and its civic mission. Implemented in full, it would mean the creative destruction of the social housing associations as we know them today.

It is now the official mission of Dudok Wonen to increase the self-reliance of people on the housing market. Special attention is given to people who cannot afford to buy a house independently. Dudok Wonen wishes to play a leading role and use their resources to cooperate with others. The association wishes to help create a vital social and cultural region and preserve cultural heritage. In the execution of its tasks, Dudok Wonen also focuses on sustainability.

In this dedication to empower people on lower incomes, Bobbe together with others in the same sector brought about several innovations in the relation between tenants and housing association, one of which was 'Sociale Koop' (Social Buy), a system that enables people to partly buy a house and partly rent it. When they sell the house they pay the the association back what they've loaned them. Since March 2007, 500 Dudok tenants have been approached to buy the house they were renting. In 2008, 64 houses were bought in this way. In this way, Bobbe says, poor people can break free from the social (rental) housing market and get on the property ladder. Other social housing associations in the Netherlands have copied the concept.

Dudok Wonen also started two other projects in the context of Bobbes ideal of empowering people. The first one is 'Koop Goedkoop' (Buy Cheap), which offers people the opportunity to buy only the house, and just rent the land it is built on. Because of the low rents Dudok charges, the costs will be low. The other project is Verzilverd Wonen (Cashed Out Housing) which enables senior citizens of over 55 to sell their private home to Dudok Wonen, and cash in on the current market value of their house, but continue to live in it, while Dudok Wonen maintains the house.

The underlying philosophy of these innovations is that homeowners who have an opportunity of netting capital gains will care more for their homes and neighborhood and will have a nest egg for their old age. They can benefit from (and invest in) house price rises without putting themselves at risk by borrowing large amounts of money.

There is always the guarantee the social housing association will buy back the house at the established selling price. The housing association no longer pockets the economic value resulting from rising house prices (which is not due to smart policy, but an automatic effect of market developments) but shares it fairly with its tenants.

Even though the tangible results of the Social Buy seem limited with just 64 houses sold in 2008, the plan reinvents the role of social housing associations and other large institutions. It represents the start of a new public process that makes poor citizens no longer completely reliant on large institutions. According to an objective report on the performance of Dudok Wonen by PricewaterhouseCoopers, the empowerment of people is not yet measurable. It will take some years before we can measure the empowerment from the success of Social Buy and other programs.

Bobbe refers in our interview to another important public task of Dudok Wonen, namely the preservation and renovation of the Dudok's architectural heritage, in which considerable amount of money is invested every year.

B. His Personal View

Account of Achievements

When he started as CEO of Dudok Wonen in 2006, Leon Bobbe was no stranger to the social housing sector. Having worked in the social housing sector for over 25 years, he is gradually getting more involved in the public aspects of his job. Helping people to get on the property ladder has always been a driving ambition in his professional life.

When he joined Dudok Wonen in 2006, the association had different values than today. The main values of Dudok were equality and honesty. These values were implemented by treating everybody the same, and there was no opportunity to deviate from the rules. Bobbe changed this classic, somewhat paternalistic attitude and character of the organization (see vision and ambition).

Vision and Ambition

Leon Bobbe says that his Social Buy project and the other innovations actually hark back to 'the roots' of the social housing associations. They were established to give citizens access to affordable housing. The financial aspect of this public task was that the associations financed the building of houses which no other institution was prepared to do because of the high risk of the investment. They recouped their

investment in the form of the rent paid by the tenants. The housing associations bore the full investment risk. What they in fact did, was to indirectly give poorer people access to banks and capital; at that time it was very unusual for banks to risk lending poorer people money directly, even in the form of mortgages.

Until the middle of last century, the associations did not have major financial resources, but they were able to build housing in great numbers. Since the 1990s the corporations have become very rich due to rising house prices, especially since their real estate is often located in town centers. When these neighborhoods are due for redevelopment, the accumulated economic value can be capitalized.

Bobbe considers this as anti-social behavior on the part of the housing associations. According to him, they have been holding on to a system in which people have no self-determination. Poor people are fully dependent on the corporations. The associations give people a house and keep putting up the rent. The effect of the Social Buy project, namely the empowering people, is to put an end to this culture. Bobbe feels the capital of the associations is too much tied up in bricks, and they should use their assets to help their tenants onto the property ladder. The new role of the associations constitutes a new strategy: the empowerment of people is the foundation of Dudok Wonen's mission statement. Houses, neighborhoods, bricks and capital are all means to that end. This shift affects the entire organization. One aspect of the change is positive: the corporation can help people to gain freedom. The other side may be negative: the corporation can turn into an ordinary commercial bank that gives out mortgages, which is risky and not its core business. Another positive is the fact that people can acquire equity. No longer do they 'waste' their rent payments, because they are investing in real estate. When they want to sell their house they get to keep the surplus value after paying off their debt to Dudok Wonen. The risk of falling house prices, which would be significant for lower income people, is underwritten by Dudok Wonen.

As mentioned before, Bobbe's ambition is to empower people. 'Social Buy' provides people a chance to gain some freedom in their housing choices. They can choose a house they like and become the owner of that house. In contrast to rented housing, people can alter their house to their personal taste. He instigated this new mission, which in his view goes back to the fundamental roots of social housing associations. He used creative destruction of established routines and behavior to push through this new vision and concept that updates the associations' core values to the contemporary context. Recently, house prices have fallen and there is currently less

appetite for buying, but also less economic value tied up in the associations: yet again a new situation that calls for other innovations based on specific value choices.

C. Resistance Encountered

Leon Bobbe's ideas offer a new perspective on the role of the social housing sector. No longer are people completely dependent on associations; they can now purchase their own house and build up equity. The housing association has become a buyers' association. On the way, Leon Bobbe has faced a lot of criticism, maybe because his ideas were so revolutionary.

A first point of criticism is that social housing associations may lose their involvement in neighborhoods. Dutch social housing associations have always been concerned with the development of neighborhoods. Critics feel that when housing associations sell off much of their housing stock, they will lose touch with neighborhoods, and become consumer driven instead of driven by civic and societal concerns. Bobbe acknowledges this criticism, but says that the associations will never abandon their tenants, since there will always be people who do not want or are unable to buy a house. Because their focus remains on building for the lower income category, housing associations will always have a dominant position in poor neighborhoods, where these kinds of homes tend to be concentrated. You don't have to have 100% of your housing stock within one neighborhood to be connected to it and willing to invest in it and its living conditions and quality. And let's not forget that when tenants buy a house, even if only partially, they will have even stronger ties to the neighborhood, but remain connected to the housing association because of the buyback guarantee agreement. Their ties to the neighborhood will become stronger instead of weaker.

A second point of criticism is what to do with the capital released when associations sell off assets. According to some, politicians, managers and other stakeholders are all impatient to spend this money. The longer this capital is not directly spent on affordable housing, the greater this desire becomes. Critics fear that national government will try to get its hands on this money either by raising taxes or, indirectly, by increasing rent prices or imposing new taxes, and spend it on a politically convenient issue. They are convinced it is ultimately better for poor people who are dependent on cheap housing to keep the capital of the social housing associations tied up in bricks, where it is safe from government haircuts. This doesn't

worry Bobbe. According to calculations, Dudok Wonen can help twice as many people with Social Buy as it is doing now. He thinks this is the perfect way to spend social housing capital. When the Social Buy idea succeeds, and every tenant has used it to the max for his own needs and purposes, the remaining money might not be needed in the social housing domain anymore, so then it could eventually benefit other general public causes.

Another sign of resistance is that, despite the fact that according to Dudok Wonen many independent parties recognize the value of Social Buy, only three other corporations have implemented it. Other associations still do not seem to believe the additional significance of selling houses through this scheme, or they do not accept the total reorientation of their mission that the Social Buy concept implies.

The lukewarm reactions of citizens on the Social Buy concept seem to suggest there is also some resistance or fear of risk in society and among the people living in Dudok Wonen homes. They are comfortable with the social housing association providing everything and taking all the risk on the value of the house, and don't like the idea of taking more risk.

There is also some formal resistance from government supervisors, because Bobbe's ideas are changing Dudok from a housing association into a bank. This requires complying with all kinds of new regulations and oversight and the current corporate governance is probably not adequate for this new task.

D. Motives

At some point in his career, Leon Bobbe decided that he wanted to offer people an affordable way to buy a house. Later he made the analysis that this was for him a way to help people to become more self-reliant, more confident and more involved in society. Based on these values he started to work it out. This was when he wrote the essay about empowerment of people, which is the most important motive for Leon Bobbe's work. He sees this as a significant phenomenon of the present time; other sectors are dealing with this sort of debate, too. Organizations need to help people to become independent; he calls the social housing association an emancipation machine.

Bobbe's three most important values are independence, affection/compassion and individual responsibility. After his appointment as director/manager of Dudok Wonen, he started to implement these values in its corporate culture. According to Bobbe, creating support for these new values was not difficult. The values turned out to fit the corporate values exactly. He is aware of the fact that 'he is treading a completely different path' compared to his predecessor and many of his colleagues, but because he tells good stories, people will follow him on this path.

Bobbe admits that the path is a difficult one. He keeps wondering what norms and values he represents: his own, the norms and values of 'the people' or the values of the corporation. He frequently asks himself whose interests he is serving.

His broad personal background, from an activist past to inside knowledge of local government and consultancy, makes him a very reliable spokesman on what tenants really want, on what is the role of a private non-profit organization and what innovations remain within its core values and what goes beyond them.

E. Tactical Observations and Leadership Style

An essential part of the work of Leon Bobbe is to create legitimacy for his plans like Social Buy. Civilians, politicians and other corporations need to accept the new role of social housing associations. Bobbe once said in an interview that he could describe Social Buy in different ways so that different political parties would be able to support it. Especially in the beginning of Social Buy, political and official support was important because Dudok needed the legal approval of the involved government department. As he puts it: society needs to trust you personally and as a leading official when you try to overhaul the public sector and your strategy. You have to actively build that trust through stories and by showing your real values. It is not only storytelling and transparency the public has to see, but also that you are personally and genuinely concerned and your behavior has integrity and your values, narrative and actual behavior are consistent.

The power of Bobbe's strategy is the telling of 'small stories', through which he can show what empowerment means in practice. Big 'success stories' do not work here: it is the very small, personal narratives that help to create enthusiasm for his ideas.

Bobbe seeks media attention whenever he can. He often takes part in debates about the social housing sector. He writes a weblog about his motives and his plans, but also about his personal life and things that strike him. It is plausible that this weblog also helps to give Bobbe a 'social side'. Some people accuse him of forgetting his social task; in his weblog, he shows his commitment to the public cause.

F. First Comments

- In Bobbe's behavior, his activist past is very distinct: he fights for the people at the lower end of the housing scale.
- Especially his new approach, based on a rewriting of old values and pointing out the wrong routines and organizational culture, the lack of change and holding on to well-intentioned behavior from the past, is very appealing and at the same time confronting in this world of non-profit organizations. It points to a potential negative side of many non-profit organizations: the fact that they feel their good intentions are sufficient legitimization for whatever they do in practice. If non-profit organizations are really into emancipation, uplifting and empowerment then there is still a lot to be done, even painful steps in terms of risk and safeguarding for the organization itself, with so many employees and tenants depending on it.
- This explains also the reluctance in the rest of the social housing sector. It is a controversial approach in terms of public ideological debate (home ownership is a typically right-wing issue; how come these left-wing non-profits are working towards the same goal?) and in terms of the associations themselves (what will our core business be and what will be left of us, if this product takes off?).
- He takes a typical public or even political position in his focus on and explicit work to explain what he is doing, with strong emphasis on his personal values and his passion for this theme. The latter is increasingly an issue in media-driven politics (the character issue), but also when operating from a private position in the public realm and doing something unprecedented or innovative.
- Part of his approach is linked to general change management and innovation practices. It uses exactly the same behavior and tactics that can be seen in disruptive innovation in commercial organizations: personal passion and values, small story narratives, links to deep-rooted values from the past, but now overwhelmed by old routines, drawing new conclusions from public trend reports and market information. Bobbe certainly in his organization and context follows

Schumpeter's vision of 'creative destruction', based on a fresh approach of old values.



Piet Boekhoud¹

A. Introduction

Who is Piet Boekhoud?

Born into a protestant family in 1950, Piet Boekhoud has lived in Rotterdam all his life. He comes from a family of poor dockworkers. His father was not a docker himself, but headmaster of a MULO school (a former higher elementary school). Boekhoud trained as a teacher, but became a truck driver after graduating. An acquaintance of his mother worked at a domestic science school. At that time, there was a serious shortage of teachers. The acquaintance asked Boekhoud to help out at the school for a few weeks, which he agreed to do as a favor to his mother. Boekhoud stayed at the school, took extra teaching courses (for example in Educational Theory) and never left the educational sector. After a number of years he first became assistant headmaster of the school, and in 1987 headmaster. When several school mergers in the 1990s resulted in the foundation of Albeda College in 1993, Boekhoud became member of the executive board of this new educational conglomerate. Albeda College is now a regional center for junior and secondary vocational education with 2,400 employees, 25,000 students and over 50 locations. At the time of the interview, Boekhoud had been chairman of the Executive Board (EB) of the college for many years.

He is also politically active for the Christian Democratic Party (CDA), being involved in developing policy at a national level. Locally, he helped to form a coalition for the new Municipal Executive of Rotterdam after the emotionally charged elections in 2006 in which the political party of the murdered Pim Fortuyn lost badly.

Boekhoud retired at the end of 2009. He will stay connected to the Albeda College in an advisory function. Presently, he fulfills managerial positions on several (mostly

¹ Additional interview with Els Lubbers.

confessional) non-executive boards in the sphere of education and youth work. He heads an initiative to improve the connections between (lower secondary) education and the labor market in Rotterdam.

He is a passionately driven headmaster type, a typical and genuine 'Rotterdammer' with a hands-on approach to problems. An uncomplicated man, inspired by Christian values, who talks straight and puts his ideas into action (seemingly) without much deliberation. He is highly respected among his peers in education and in the fields of politics and industry.

When he retired, there was a public outcry about the extra package he received to complement his pension, but it soon died down. However, financial and organizational problems also emerged. In 2007 the school had an operating deficit of approx. € 20 million and € 4 million in 2008, and many people were made redundant. This was to some extent due to his management by passion and mission, rather than focusing on financial and organizational soundness. Some commitments that were made were too expensive or too risky for the size and financial structure of the Albeda College.

One of the public issues he was involved in and that became public around the time of his retirement was the restoration of the steamer 'SS Rotterdam'. A social project with big losses on the side of the housing association that initiated and managed this big project. An investigation revealed that the Albeda College had never committed itself financially, but only contributed 'in kind', by volunteering and filling learning places for its students. The ship is now moored in the docks in the south of Rotterdam and provides dozens of trainee posts for the Albeda College.

The Public Case

In 1990 the school Boekhoud managed went through the first of a series of mergers. After this first merger, Boekhoud and the headmasters of the other school decided that the school should play a more active role in society. During a conversation with the alderman for youth and education, Boekhoud heard there were some 600 problem youngsters in Rotterdam. The alderman asked if Albeda College could try to help these young people. Boekhoud immediately took on the challenge.

After meetings with influential Rotterdam citizens, Boekhoud and his colleagues decided to give the newly formed school a new mission based on a social-Christian vision, to try to find a permanent balance between the demands of students,

business, society and the quality of education. Since then, Albeda College has taken pride in focusing on the problem youths of Rotterdam. It was an unusual mission for a publicly financed school because these pupils often need intensive and expensive guidance and the chance of success is low. So on two crucial financial criteria (educational effort per pupil and graduation percentage) the school put itself at risk. Most public funding is based on grade point averages and so is most management in this school system.

School employees and teachers went to the homes of youths skipped classes or caused problems and talked with them and their parents, trying to find ways to get the kids back to school. They approached local retailers and shopping malls for internships and training posts to get these youths off the streets. They learned that for these youngsters the barriers to school participation and results often had little to do with education: many didn't get any breakfast before school, no place to sleep, constant fights and violence at home, etc. The Albeda College tried to provide food and shelter or approached others to do the same which, again, is outside the normal remit of publicly financed educational institutions: they are expected to stay within their predefined bureaucratic boundaries.

Typical projects include *The Rebound Centre*, a place to educate and resocialize teenagers with a criminal record or a history of psychiatric problems and *Rooms with Opportunities*, giving youngsters in need a roof over their heads, education and an outlook on work, all with intensive supervision.

One project that took the school's role as an educational institution still further beyond its normal boundaries and got a great deal of public attention, was to provide intramural education with big employers, like malls and commercial businesses. Boekhoud's motto was: 'If the kids won't go to school, we will bring the school the kids'. The Ministry of Education grudgingly admitted that the law allowed for education to be provided in such unusual 'classrooms'.

Since then the school has grown hugely. More and more people, including parents, learned about the school's special projects, and before long youngsters, especially problematic youths, from all over Rotterdam came to the college.

Personal Impression

We meet Piet Boekhoud (and later also his policy adviser Els Lubbers) at College's central facility. It is a big, energetic building full of pupils milling around - carrying

books, rucksacks, coats on or off, talking with each other or just listening to earphones. At the back of the building we find the staff and management offices. The whole building looks cheap, straightforward, big, crowded and simple. A typical secondary educational facility in the Netherlands, but busier and noisier than elsewhere, and a very diverse population in terms of dress codes, background and skin color. It is located in the heart of Rotterdam South, the poorest part of Rotterdam, an area as big as Eindhoven with about 200,000 residents from a range of national and ethnic backgrounds, many of whom struggle to find work and earn a living. Piet Boekhoud is dressed in black, which makes him look a little like an anarchist. He volunteers that he drives a big American car (one of his few indulgences) with a chauffeur - a pupil from the school as part of a job teaching project - and it's easy to believe. He is very to the point, keeps the interview short, walks over to his secretary to arrange other projects and appointments, a busy man working where he belongs: in a school.

B. His Personal View

Account of Achievements

Since the mergers in the 1990s, Piet Boekhoud has been the face of the Albeda College. He has always been a great supporter of cooperation strategies and uses his broad social network to get his students the opportunities they need and to bring important parties together to create profitable coalitions.

Boekhoud tries to keep the school and all the employees on course and makes sure that people don't forget the mission of the Albeda College.

In recent years the college has started many new projects besides the 'traditional educational projects'. Some students of the college have serious problems (they are homeless, living in poverty, have a criminal record, etc.). The Albeda College wants to provide more than just education and is always looking for opportunities to provide more care for their students. The College started the project 'Kamers met Kansen' (Rooms with Opportunities) to give homeless students a roof over their head. The school started a Rebound center where mentally unbalanced and criminal students get therapy and support. Most of the projects are initiatives by Piet Boekhoud.

Vision and Ambition

'Always keep your eye on the real problem.'

Boekhoud wants the Albeda College to be a 'beacon in Rotterdam society'. He especially wants to help the residents of the three weakest neighborhoods in the south of Rotterdam where the Albeda College is located. When he was young he joined the local church youth club, where he learned things like debating, organizing meetings and writing articles, which he didn't learn at school. Those are the things he wants to teach the pupils at his college. But he knows that is difficult. He knows that he cannot expect too much at one time. So he tries to find satisfaction in 'one student successfully completing an assignment'. His religious background taught him to create chances when he has the opportunity. Boekhoud does not want to compete with other schools. He does not think that its Christian ethics make the Albeda College a better school than others. Like his father he feels it is wrong to judge schools on differences of religion.

Looking back on how he turned his school into a school catering for the problem youths in Rotterdam and surroundings, Boekhoud says that it 'just happened'. The school wanted to do something for society, and without really meaning to, the school created the profile it has nowadays.

C. Resistance Encountered

Although some projects get private funding or are based on volunteer work, most of the money Piet Boekhoud, and so the Albeda College, works with is government money, paid from taxes. Obviously, most of the conflicts and discussions he had were with the Department of Education.

As could be expected, his selection of 'difficult youth' as a prime focus and mission of the organization led to financial and legal problems.

Some of the teachers at the Albeda College were unhappy with the school's new focus on society: they felt that the college would turn into a glorified community center, a welfare organization rather than a school providing 'real education'. Boekhoud had little sympathy for these feelings and would ask what was wrong with a community center. When they weren't satisfied with his answers, he would send the teachers

with their complaint to the supervisory board. His personal drive made sure he never let the resistance get him down.

He believes finding a good successor will not be difficult; he doesn't consider himself a maverick. He also feels he has a fine staff around him to delegate tasks to. What he cannot delegate, however, is his philosophy. Every day he tries to instill this mission into the College's employees. Throughout his career, he only once had a conflict with a manager, who had been hired to provide more transparency and financial control. It was one of the few real threats he faced. This man was certainly highly capable, but the conflict was about his lack of passion and genuine commitment to the mission of the school. It was a clash between values and control. The new manager left the board. Boekhoud is no conventional manager who deals with numbers and facts, but a passionate worker.

D. Motives

'Management must be based on passion and values, and on indignation about the big social problems we face.'

Boekhoud's values in life are Christian. He strives, as the Bible commands, to love others like he loves himself. He wants to serve a higher goal and help disadvantaged people to rejoin society and take opportunities to better themselves.

The problems he sees when he walks through some Rotterdam neighborhoods deeply affect him. He discusses them with his wife, his colleagues, and people in the street to try and find ways to solve them.

E. Tactical Observations and Leadership Style

Boekhoud sees himself as a leader and wants to be an example to others. In everything he does he tries to promote his integrity and values. At some point he had so many meetings outside the College that he needed a driver. But in view of his position, Boekhoud did not find it appropriate to have a professional driver. He hired a drug addict as his chauffeur to show that he was serious about giving someone an opportunity in life.

Over the past decades Boekhoud has built up an impressive social network that has helped him realize many projects. Inside and outside the Albeda College Boekhoud has many staunch supporters who try to help him whenever they can. He has also built up a network in politics, and has used it to exert influence in the educational field and spread his ideas on educational reform.

F. First Comments

- A passionate leader, but badly suited to a bureaucratic, government funded school system with a strong emphasis on control and formal responsibilities. He is more about inspiration than about management and hierarchy. So he searches for the boundaries of the system by managing on values, rather than on professional management methods and finance.
- There is yet another anomaly: he is very much a Christian in a highly secular national culture, so his management by values is new, but also his religious inspiration. But maybe these things come in pairs?
- He takes the typical stand of the charismatic leader: management and financial control are not his thing; he tries to convince and lead people with good arguments, keeping his eye on the ball: the big societal problems, which he analyzes based on his mission and values.
- He has a way with words, he inspires by example and personal passion and with narratives about the many cases and pupils he has met in his long educational career. Also his image as a street-smart 'Rotterdammer' gives him influence in politics and boardrooms, where the current typically well-educated executive elite has populist critics breathing down their neck.
- He is a typical societal leader who can operate and communicate across classes, regions and cultures, from street to boardroom, linking and connecting these spheres in person and in his operational style. But he has his roots in and takes inspiration from the shop floor of his school and the typical pupils that come to receive an education.
- He was given plenty of room to maneuver by his supervisory board, but getting it took him several years and they remained doubtful about his attention for financial control, as can be imagined. But as with other networks, he persuaded them of the rightness and legitimacy of his strategy by his personal drive and values. They accepted his notion that this job was first about problem solving and values and next about legality, financial control and management techniques.



'Your own observations and values drive and anchor your entrepreneurship'

Yolanda Eijgenstein

A. Introduction

Who is Yolanda Eijgenstein?

Yolanda Eijgenstein is a highly successful business woman. She is the embodiment of talents that only a few business women (or their male counterparts, for that matter) possess: creative, intelligent, feminine with a touch of masculinity, business-like, socially aware and influential. Yolanda has set up a variety of businesses and was voted Dutch business woman of the year in 1997. She started in marketing, where she soon set up her own business, both in order to make money and to make the world a better place. Yolanda now has her own consultancy firm, the Why Company, which coaches senior management. Inspired by her children, she recently started a distribution company in gifts and magic stones to be distributed by toy stores.

Yolanda Eijgenstein was born in the United States in 1966. At an early age, she moved to The Hague. After finishing high school, she studied philosophy and literature in France for a year and then moved to Ghent in Belgium to study marketing and psychology. Later, Eijgenstein lived in Spain and the USA.

Just 24, Yolanda Eijgenstein started her first company, 'Wie Mailt Wat?' ('Who Mails What?'), analyzing and selling direct mail information to the advertising and marketing sectors. It became successful and gained national recognition. In the 1990s Eijgenstein started a second company, The Why Company, which coaches individual and groups to use psychological and group dynamics for personal growth and business success. Success starts inside.

In 1995, Eijgenstein became managing director and chair of the board of directors of ARA/BDDP Group, one of the top 15 international marketing and consultancy companies.

In 1991, she was voted 'businesswoman of the year'. In 1993 she twice received the highest international award for 'most innovative and creative marketing campaign of the year'. In 1994, she was 'marketeer of the year' and in 1997, she was voted 'businesswoman of the year' in the Netherlands.

Next to her job as consultant and coach at The Why Company, Eijgenstein chairs the 'Iederwijs' foundation,² a controversial chain of mainly primary schools in the Netherlands, which is analyzed in this study and is the main reason to interview her as a civic leader.

She is always working on business projects, one of which are the 'Magic Stones' that children can collect, each of which 'works its own magic'. a birthday present to her son grew into a business venture in collaboration with UNICEF. The 'Magic Stones' are sold in several countries.

The Public Case

In 2002, her sister (an education expert) started Iederwijs. Eijgenstein, whose children are the same age as her sister's, liked the concept and she offered her entrepreneurial skills to help them realize their ideas. The Iederwijs concept arose from discontent with the Dutch educational system among teachers and parents who had children in more traditional schools. In 2002, the first Iederwijs primary school was founded in Schoonhoven, a small city in the west of Holland. It built on the earlier Wonderwijs initiative, a comparable formula. In the Netherlands parents are entitled to start their own school with a particular religious denomination or educational philosophy. This special regulation, built on the typical public(non-profit)-private system of Dutch public services, has brought forth a vivid history of educational renewal, often outside the regular school system. This first school, with six pupils, received a great deal of media attention; over the next few years the number of Iederwijs schools grew to over ten.

Iederwijs education differs from the traditional teacher-pupil relation and typical classroom education in that pupils of different ages are in the same classroom. The main principle is that the pupils can learn what they want when they want to. The idea developed from the assumption that when you offer a supportive environment

² It is impossible to translate the term 'Iederwijs' literally because it is a Dutch play on words. 'Ieder' means 'every' (like in everybody) 'Wijs' means 'wise', but is also part of the Dutch word for 'education'. Maybe the best translation is: Everybody Wise Schools.

with possibilities, children will form their own study path. So the teacher no longer tells the pupil what to do; the pupil decides this for him or herself.

Initially, the lederwijs schools got a lot of bad publicity. The schools had grown so fast that the founders had lost oversight. More and more schools started where kids 'could do whatever they wanted', but they didn't have properly trained staff as lederwijs did. Nor did they get the educational results, because of the lack of the necessary educational climate and educational skills of the staff. Authorities and government were (and still are) critical, but the public criticism has largely died down, partly because lederwijs has adopted traditional quality control systems.

Personal Impression

For this study we met Yolanda Eijgenstein at her home annex office in Schoonhoven. She has already scaled back her involvement with lederwijs, but she has agreed to share her insights with me. She spoke spiritedly and passionately about her experience and the steps that were taken in building this new school system. She skipped none of the pitfalls and gave an honest analysis, also of her own role. In this, she showed her training as a senior management coach: the personal drives, motives and character that add up to business failures and successes. She is clearly used to making this kind of analysis. Looking back, she feels she underestimated the way the public sector works, with all its media attention, gossip and unsubstantiated rumors, and the authorities who have a say over what you do and how you operate. She went in as a marketeer, but she was not prepared for the backlash a new idea can generate in a government dominated and regulated educational system. She expected, as she was used to do, to use communication to counter bad press, but that proved much harder than she thought and than she had been used to in a market environment. During the interview she soon moved on to new ideas and ventures, rather than dwelling on the past. Ever the businesswoman, she explains her Magic Stones initiative, in which she again combined commercial goals with social goals, i.e. education (every stone has a story about environmental issues) and social issues (the gifts contain a story about values for the receiver).

B. Her Personal View

Account of Achievements

Yolanda Eijgenstein is the co-founder of the lederwijs social initiative. When her sister mooted the idea, Yolanda Eijgenstein supported the concept and made it possible as

an entrepreneur and marketer. She was the chairperson and the face of the Iederwijs foundation. With her experience as a business woman she helped the foundation to get funding, accommodation, media attention, and more.

Vision and Ambition

Eijgenstein feels that the Iederwijs ideas fitted with the times and that her entrepreneurial and commercial training give her a good perspective on the needs of people she meets. She uses herself, as it were, as a market researcher. When as a citizen you see pressing societal issues and problems around you, they are probably real and big enough for other people to see. Public awareness will yield public support. In her job as consultant and coach supporting CEOs or entrepreneurs to become stronger leaders she found that a key part of their learning process involved taking greater responsibility for themselves and the people around them. She feels that people should learn to take responsibility for themselves from an early age. Children should learn how to feel good, listen well, be able to make fine distinctions, show leadership and follow.

Because of the success of Iederwijs, the number of schools rose quickly over a number of years. Some schools could not provide the education Iederwijs wanted and gave the foundation bad publicity. Some schools have already closed down; there are just five Iederwijs schools at this time. Eijgenstein says that her ambition is to have seven perfect Iederwijs school of the highest possible quality.

C. Resistance Encountered

The Iederwijs concept is different from other educational concepts in Netherlands. When Eijgenstein and others started the first school, Eijgenstein invited the Dutch media in and put Iederwijs on the map. This generated some positive reactions, but also a great deal of criticism of the Iederwijs concept. The media coverage of the reality of these schools was highly selective, e.g. only showing children doing nothing or even sleeping. People described the Iederwijs schools as a playground, where children were not encouraged to study at all. School inspectors and civil servants were also critical. The inspectorate of education disapproved of the Iederwijs school purely on hearsay, without actually inspecting them. It was several years before the inspection was willing to inspect the schools properly. Eijgenstein now feels that maybe she was naïve in the beginning, especially in her relations with the media. When the concept caught on and many people wanted to open their own Iederwijs

school, she underestimated how hard it would be to guarantee educational excellence at so many schools and that this could lead to serious negative publicity.

Based on her own experience, Eijgenstein describes four stages of revolutionary societal initiatives like her own. In the beginning people tried to ignore lederwijs, then she started a campaign to gain media attention. Initially, lederwijs was still ignored by the government, the Department of Education and other schools. Then came a phase in which institutions accepted lederwijs, but did not take it very seriously. Finally, after surviving these phases and still providing good quality education, institutions like the Inspectorate for Education came round and even supported lederwijs. Eijgenstein points out that the inspectorate was quite enthusiastic about lederwijs, but hesitated to say so publicly in the negative political climate surrounding the school.

Some of the failing schools were closed, but lederwijs schools gradually got more positive assessments from the Inspectorate of Education; although many people remained skeptical on principle.

D. Motives

Although deep down she knows it's an illusion, Eijgenstein wants to improve the world. Idealism motivates her actions. She wants to invest some of the money she made in her career in helping to make the world a better place. With lederwijs, she tried to improve education and make the lederwijs schools accessible to as many people as possible. She says she is on a mission. She likes to speak publicly about her views, without imposing her ideas on anyone. This applies also to lederwijs; Eijgenstein wants people to know what lederwijs is, and then give them the opportunity to choose the right education for their children from the different options.

Eijgenstein describes this as her masculine side: she likes to start new things. She wants to shape her ideas. She is no visionary, but tries to find the limits in society and in herself and go beyond them.

E. Tactical Observations and Leadership Style

Entrepreneurship is more common in the world of business, where people have a great deal of freedom to start new ideas. But public services like (primary) education

are different. During the lederwijs project, Eijgenstein suddenly came up against intense criticism and media attention. People were watching and judging everything she did. Initially, Eijgenstein did not know how to deal with all this attention. She was used to the freedom of the private sector. Maybe she underestimated the media and the impact of government regulation and control at that time. She thought that if she could show that lederwijs was a proper school, there would be positive publicity. However, the media mostly focused on the negative aspects. At the same time, she had to balance educational quality with rapid growth and media attention. She feels with hindsight that she should have had fewer schools of higher quality, instead of many schools, which potentially compromised quality.

Nowadays the 'lederwijs' brand is tainted: schools that want to adopt parts of the original working methods and philosophies and stand in the same tradition hesitate to associate themselves with the brand. Eijgenstein herself, too, advises against it.

This is the typical learning curve of an entrepreneur from the private sector who embarks on public service. Good intentions and entrepreneurial skill are not enough in that other context. You have to get to grips with the power of the media, gossip and politics. The national inspectorate for education in a more objective, technical role actually approved many of lederwijs' methods., first for the lederwijs primary schools, and later, just when some of the schools stopped, its reports on the high schools were also positive. This illustrates a classical difference between market and government environments: in the latter you need to have a much longer term perspective and it takes far more time to get recognition and approval than in a market environment. Probably because of this difference in the 'tempo of sectors', the way this social initiative was communicated externally may have been somewhat premature and overconfident, but equally, maybe some schools with this new system were closed too soon.

F. First Comments

- The free governance environment of the individual market entrepreneur clearly is not a guarantee for success when it comes to innovation of a public service such as (primary) education. In a market environment success and failure become clear far more quickly, but it is also far more anonymous: few people ask you for your credentials, integrity, character, quality standards; all they are interested in are your new products and services. Marketing is about selling, and laws and

regulations or following public administration procedures and suchlike are at odds with that.

- On the other hand, this new schooling method was officially approved by educational authorities, so there can be no doubt that it fulfills normal quality standards. So why did it fail? The resistance against this particular change initiative was based on rules (and the perception of these rules through 'normal' routines), regulators, inspections and the public eye of the media, all with their own ideological reasons to be for or against this new approach. A social entrepreneur and civil leader must be aware of this and know how to handle it. It probably took an entrepreneur who is more tenacious and better at gaining public legitimization than Yolanda Eijgenstein. Her case shows that social entrepreneurship in public environments requires special skills, because the public value pursued takes many steps, involves many layers of parties and, last but not least, is hotly debated every step of the way.
- She explicitly states that a social entrepreneur should use his own gut feeling about the society he/she lives in, identify problems and then tackle them in his own way. They should be a combination of an entrepreneur and a citizen. This concept is often promoted, also in the Netherlands, in words and in print, but strongly resisted in actual practice. This due largely to psychological and institutional reactions like: 'Wasn't invented here', 'Why wasn't this invented before?', 'Is our school system now old fashioned?', 'Why don't we have a public sector manager who can do this?'.
- In terms of values, Yolanda Eijgenstein displays a normal, basic, liberal attitude: people should take their destiny into their own hands, we are free to educate of our own children in our own way. And: when we criticize current public practices we have the obligation to try to start and do something new ourselves.



'Survival of organizations should be linked to the core mission, not to the normal routines and formalities of the sector.'

Hans Nieukerke

A. Introduction

Who is Hans Nieukerke?

Nieukerke was born in Maarssen in 1942, the second child of a family with 3 children. His parents were committed socialists. To illustrate: when he was 17, his father told him to remove the Liberal Party campaign banners and hoardings from the gardens of neighbors. Nieukerke's childhood was relatively uneventful; he says that his civic involvement did not originate at his parental home.

Nieukerke was educated at the Tropical Agriculture School in Deventer. After graduating he joined AKZO, a Dutch multinational manufacturing corporation, where he handled organizational tasks. He later worked for similar companies, like Zwitsal. He studied business economics and followed courses in marketing techniques.

In 1977 Nieukerke became the managing director of the Hoenderloo Groep, an organization that provides care to children with complex behavioral problems. Nieukerke continued in this position until 2007. He is now retired.

Next to his work at the Hoenderloo Group, Nieukerke always fulfilled (and continues to fulfill) various other positions. For example, he was chairman of the national industry association for youth care, chairman of the Dutch Volleyball Association, a prominent member of the VVD (the Dutch Liberal Party), financial advisor of Rita Verdonk's new political party Trots op Nederland ('Proud of Holland'), briefly chaired her party's fundraising foundation, and was a deputy member of the SER (Dutch national Social and Economic Council).

The Public Case

Nieukerke headed the Hoenderloo Group for 30 years. His appointment marked a break in the regular state of affairs of the organization; he changed it from a conservative childcare organization into an organization that offers care in a more personal and more differentiated way.

The Hoenderloo Groep provides housing and care to over 400 juveniles who can no longer live at home. The organization owns properties throughout the Netherlands where care is given for all kinds of problem children.

He is celebrated in particular for his innovative and sometimes risky approach to youth care, one of which was the Glen Mills concept in which juvenile delinquents were offered an opportunity to participate in a strict rehabilitation program.

Personal Impression

He appears as a kind of mayor of a small countryside town. The Hoenderloo Group, his organization, named after a nearby village, has large grounds in the woods near Hoenderloo in the Veluwe nature reserve. On site we pass separate buildings for accommodation and schooling of the kids the Group has taken in, sometimes in semi-detention. His office is in a relatively small building in between other buildings, hidden by trees and shrubs. It is an office environment with hints of cheap or temporarily material. Not the most inspirational work environment you could imagine.

Nieukerke looks like a cross between a distinguished gentleman, a local dignitary and a fullblooded, slick marketeer. He thinks fast, reads the game and has no time for trivial details or timid people with negative attitudes; he loves to invent new projects to bring out hidden and new talents in his favorite marketing product: human beings, or in his case 'his children'.

He gives us a long and complex layered interview tinged with emotion, because he will retire before long. The emotions ranged from regret that his work will come to an end, which testifies to his deep personal involvement in his work, to pride in what he has achieved, and some resentment about the lack of recognition or reward. Still, he is so much 'his own man' that there can be no doubt he has done all he had to do and wanted to do, despite this perceived lack of direct incentives from the environment, which was not and would not have been the motivating drive for all he has done. He seems very much at home in this village, where he has worked and probably lived for almost 25 years. He recently added a large site nearby with buildings formerly used to

house Nazi officials of a World War II transit camp. Because of its past, the site is a listed historical monument, but it also needs a new use. The organization has acquired the site to use it for the intensive training and resocialization programs his organization is famous for. He speaks about this new project with pride and vision, but also again with some regret about not being able to personally take it to the next level.

B. His Personal View

Account of Achievements

Nieukerke has always had a very close relationship with the clients and employees of the Hoenderloo Groep. Throughout his time with the organization, he tried to break away from conventional youth care regulations. He never saw himself as a traditional youth care director. Nieukerke says that even after 30 years, he has retained his competences and insights from the business world.

Nieukerke never skipped an opportunity to start new (controversial) projects. In 2007, the Hoenderloo Groep started a project to help girls who were victims of 'loverboys' (young pimps who target adolescent girls to turn them into prostitutes). Every six months eight of these girls were sent to India for six months, where they received therapy and worked in an orphanage. This approach was part of the broader philosophy of the 'Intermezzo Projects', meant to give certain children a chance to escape from their home situation, and see how their lives can be changed by involving them in different cultures. These projects mostly comprised a short training at the Hoenderloo Group and then a stay abroad with an intensive, structured program.

The Hoenderloo Group was also involved with the notorious case of an Amsterdam gypsy who badly neglected his seven children. The Hoenderloo Group sent two of the children to a foster family in Germany, but after a few months the children disappeared, probably abducted by their father.

One of the best known, though now infamous, projects of Nieukerke and the Hoenderloo Group was the Glen Mills School in Wezep, an institution for boys from the age of 14 created on an American model. Some employees of Nieukerke came up with the idea; Nieukerke liked it and promoted it to politicians and other people of influence. The Glen Mills School is a correctional education facility for delinquent boys who operated in groups (gangs). The school ran a strict program with a strong

hierarchy. The school was heavily criticized, also by the original Glen Mills Schools organization in the United States. In November 2008 it was decided to end the most controversial parts of this program and change the name of the school.

Nieukerke's last project before his retirement was a shelter for 12 and 13-year-old boys addicted to drugs and alcohol. One of the last things he was responsible for was the acquisition of 'Kop van Deelen', a former military base decommissioned by the Ministry of Defense because of cutbacks. The Hoenderloo Groep acquired it for a nominal price and converted it into youth care facilities. It was something of an irony that the first phase of the military style youth care Glen Mills concept was tried here, on this former army base.

Vision and Ambition

Hans Nieukerke described his activities with the Hoenderloo Groep as 'just responding to the needs in the market', to what really interested clients and their families. He tried to help the most problematic youths that other institutions had given up on. The image of youth care in the Netherlands is quite negative. Nieukerke blames the managers for this, and calls for more participative managers.

In his time in the private sector he learned to focus on returns: 'What is the organization doing and what are the benefits?' At the Hoenderloo Groep he tried to focus on the personal strengths of the children. He did not want to 'pamper' them; instead he wanted to talk with them about their dreams. In trying to fulfill these dreams he tried to give his employees as much freedom as they needed.

He considers himself as 'a guru' when we talk about participation. In the Hoenderloo Groep, but also in his additional jobs he has tried to involve people to build a sound innovative concept.

C. Resistance Encountered

Nieukerke encountered very little resistance inside and outside the Hoenderloo Group until the Glen Mills project started in 1999. In March 2008 the Dutch Inspectorate for Youth Care issued a report which was highly critical of the functioning of the Glen Mills School, accusing it of using illegal methods to restrain disruptive youths, such as the 'holding' method in which a person is grabbed and forced to the floor until he

calms down. This method is only allowed in a closed facility, while Glen Mills was an open facility.

There were fierce debates in parliament about the Glen Mills School. Some political parties favored closing Glen Mills. At the same time the Department of Justice issued a report that questioned the effectiveness of the school. In November 2008 the Minister of Youth care decided to drop the name 'Glen Mills School' and start with a new name and a policy overhaul.

As chairman of the national association of youth care organizations he came up against one of the worst incidents in the field, when a child in care died as a result of abuse by its parents. A media storm erupted, in this public debate he tried to protect the professionals involved from prosecution and disciplinary measures.

D. Motives

Nieuwerkerke can be described as a private sector thinker, stemming from his background in business, which supported him in leading the Hoenderloo Groep. This has two aspects. First, he thinks in terms of markets, needs and catering for them, using innovative concepts and approaches to youth care. He is constantly aware of products and markets. As a manager, he tries to bring out the personal talents of his staff, to motivate them. The second aspect is that he has a very different perspective on the youths that his organization cares for. He is not about 'pampering', 'helping' or 'taking over', but he is looking to get them to use their own strength, to learn and do the things they can and want to, to work towards their dreams. So instead of taking charge with a well-intentioned, but paternalistic attitude, he aims to teach them discipline and focus so they will work to improve and rehabilitate themselves. This shows that this attitude and values are right-wing (as illustrated by his association with Rita Verdonk), emphasizing personal responsibility, drive and discipline to reach goals and societal success. The Glen Mills concept is certainly based on this value system, although it paradoxically starts with disciplining and controlling these kids.

As mentioned before, his civic commitment is not a product of his upbringing. In his own words: 'It originates in the fascinating product that is a human being'. His ability to inspire people - both the clients of the clinic and his employees) and get them to notice the freedom that he creates for them, helps them to fulfill their dreams. That is his main motive.

E. Tactical Observations and Leadership Style

Nieukerke admits that he wants to 'do everything'. He never turns anyone down. And he does all his side activities for free. The people around him know this, and know where to find him when they need a chairman, advice or help. Thus, Nieukerke has built an impressive social network. His work for the VVD aided his youth care lobbying, for example for the realization of the Glen Mills School.

Nieukerke is very much a plain speaker, which caused a change of culture at the Hoenderloo Groep. He dresses like a mayor or business executive, in strong contrast with the usual dress code in this 'soft', welfare-related sector. But his appearance belies the fact that he profoundly cares about these children and their real problems. So he combines formality with real commitment and knowledge. He explains this as follows: the way he dresses must teach the youths in his care to respect him, to recognize his position, and shows he knows how to operate in the real world of the bosses 'at the top'. His second argument is that it puts him in a better position to bridge the gap between the real, executive and administrative world on the one hand and the children in his care on the other.

F. First Comments

- Nieukerke's work once again highlights the strong impact of consistency between talks, walks and values. His ideas are right-wing, as are his actions. He believes in hierarchy, strictness and discipline. From this strong and consistent basis of values, ideas and behavior, however, spring all kinds of innovations in youth care by the Hoenderloo Group, which has the same ideology: discipline, rules, values, aiming at reintegration into society and work. Such a right-wing, strict attitude is exceptional in youth care, but so are these new services and methods he has invented, and indeed so is Nieukerke himself. Opposition from the rest of the sector only serves to fuel his innovative drive. In his view it is not about ideology, but about adding new elements overlooked or undervalued due to the prevailing ideological bias of the sector. The elements he adds into the youth care practice are based on different sets of values and human perspectives that inspire the Hoenderloo Groep.
- He clearly belongs to the old, directional school of leadership. He runs the organization with an inspirational, charismatic, hierarchical but also accessible style of leadership.

- Doubt may arise from the fact that he still seeks his legitimization in business and market philosophy and sector, while having being away from the big world of business for 30 years. Is it frustration? Is it a wish to gain recognition? To shake up a world that doesn't know (and doesn't care?) what is going on in youth care? Is he trying to convince his old private sector buddies that he is still market driven, that he is an innovator, that one can achieve success in youth care that is comparable to the private sector, and that this is important for society, youth and business? He certainly yearns for more recognition for 'all the things he has done' from his current employer, which he feels should raise his salary, improve his pension and even extend his term of office. Perhaps what we see here is a productive mix of personal motives (vanity, being a major business player, search for recognition) and strategic moves in social entrepreneurship, like the search for legitimization, accountability, storytelling, and the introduction of innovative practices. All this gives him a strong drive to be in the public eye, to inspire people, and to get recognition from politics and business leaders for what he is doing.
- Some doubt about his philosophy and values statements can also arise from his long tenure, although he also performed many other activities that had an indirect positive meaning for the Hoenderloo Group. The decision of the board not to extend his contract can be seen in this light: maybe they felt it was time for new leadership. And a fundamental question of course is how someone can continue to be innovative while staying in the same position for 30 years?
- The public value argument in his hands is very much economic and instrumental. Above all, he seems to be looking for innovations that improve the youths' social position, that help them better themselves, and get back into society. His tough approach, inspired by strict and right-wing values, do in some indirect way help these young people. He helps the kids get back to school or work, but the outside world is not very friendly, so you better get used to it. He is helping these kids, but by teaching them to help themselves.



Camille Oostwegel

A. Introduction

Who is Camille Oostwegel?

Camille L.J.M. Oostwegel was born in Houthem-Sint Gerlach, a small village in Limburg, the southernmost province of the Netherlands, on 10 February 1950. He grew up on a farm close to Castle 'Bethlehem'. From an early age, he has had a passion for history, culture and gastronomy. In 1969 he enrolled at the Maastricht Hotel Management School, graduating in 1972. Between 1972 and 1980 Camille Oostwegel worked for the Novotel group in France as its first foreign employee. Soon he became operations director and advisor to the Novotel branches outside France. After having worked abroad for several years, Oostwegel returned to Limburg around 1980 and set his first steps as an independent entrepreneur.

He conceived the idea to transform historical monuments into modern enterprises in the hospitality business. This goes a long way back with Oostwegel: 'I already had my own museum when I was in high school: one room completely stuffed with historical and archaeological treasures'. His first accomplishment was the restoration of castle Erenstein. He subsequently performed four more extraordinary transformations of monumental properties. By 2008 his enterprise operated five hotels and seven restaurants. In addition, Camille Oostwegel was appointed honorary French consul for the province of Limburg in 2003. In 2007 his biography entitled 'Alles moet bevochten worden' was published (translation: Everything must be fought for). Oostwegel is as much a restorer as a hotelier; he gives crumbling old buildings a new lease of life and lets everybody enjoy them.

The Public Case

The restored monumental buildings are marketed as 'Chateau hotels'. Camille Oostwegel has always cherished the landscape of Limburg and endeavors to rebuild historic monuments in this area and give them a new function. He has succeeded in restoring monumental buildings with major significance for the region that had fallen to ruin, while operating a chain of luxury hotels on a healthy financial basis. It helps to improve the region's image, attracts the rich and famous to the region, and once in a while the public can have a glimpse of the old restored chateaus full of life, as they used to be. The other chateau hotels next to Ehrenstein are the 'Winselerhof', 'Château Neercanne', 'Château Gerlach' and 'Kruisheeren' hotels. All hotels and restaurants are housed in monumental buildings with a rich cultural history and are open to the public, subject to certain restrictions. The chateaus have attracted a great variety of guests: former president George Bush Sr., Dutch royalty, cellist Miroslav Rostropovich and singer Nana Mouskouri, but they also offer cheap lodgings to pilgrims on their pilgrimages in separate hostels on the estate, continuing an age-old tradition.

Camille Oostwegel has always aimed for a personal ownership stake of 40 percent in his enterprises. He started with a personal investment of 100,000 guilders (some 45,000 euros), whereas the business is now worth over 100 million euros, which Oostwegel shares with several outside shareholders. The company is thriving and has a healthy cash flow. The Chateau Hotel Group currently owns 6 hotels and 7 restaurants and has a workforce of about 500 people. Oostwegel is a major employer and an important partner in regional employment and development projects. He is a prominent figure in the Dutch catering and hospitality business and he knows how to use his network for lobby and influence. But societal values abound also. They lie in the fact that all the hotels and restaurants are in monumental buildings with great historical and symbolic significance with, however, a history of financial and physical decay, providing these important structures with a new future, a solid financial base and a practical and fitting daily use. As a side effect, this has lifted the region in economic terms and as a tourist destination, but also mentally: instead of regret for the loss or the deplorable state of beautiful historic buildings, it has restored a sense of hope, of confidence its attractiveness to guests and pride in the region's heritage.

Personal Impression

We meet Mr Oostwegel in his office, which is also in the village of St. Gerlach, just outside the hotel grounds. It is in fact close to his where he was born; he could buy his parental home some years back. The place, which consists of two adjoining semi-

terraced houses, is called Casa Bianca, probably in reference to the fact that George Bush Sr. stayed there when he was president. Camille Oostwegel is every inch the southern gentleman. In this region, which is close to Belgium and France, people traditionally pay more attention to their appearance, food and hospitality than the rest of the Netherlands, and Camille Oostwegel is no exception. The office interior many ways looks like a perfect hotel room: paintings and other artworks, expensive furniture and carpeting, very neat and clean. He shows us some of the rocks that were in his childhood museum. He is quietly confident, and appears to be very much at home. In a literal sense of course he is, having grown up almost next door. But he developed and achieved success, initially outside his home region, rising from a poor background to owning the big mansions he had known from his childhood. He emanates both characteristics at the same time: he has come home, and given back a lot to his old region, in a totally different position.

B. His Personal View

Account of Achievements

After working abroad as the operations director and advisor to Novotel branches outside France, he decided to return to the south of Limburg around 1980 to start his own business. His drive to restore dilapidated monuments and transform them into luxurious hotels goes back to his youth when he became interested in history, culture and gastronomy. He graduated from the Maastricht Hotel Management School in 1972. His first business project kicked off in 1980. With the restoration of the Chateau Erenstein Oostwegel got his first taste of preserving monuments. He was determined to promote this 'forgotten' region, plagued by economic decline after the closure of the coalmines. He describes himself as not only a restaurateur and hotelkeeper, but also a creator and entrepreneur. By combining these qualities, he successfully completed his first project. Since then, Camille Oostwegel has restored six more decaying monuments. He has received high praise for his integrity and passion to inject new life into often badly neglected buildings.

Besides his established chain of 'Chateauhotels' in Limburg, Oostwegel has been active in numerous social ventures. He has won countless awards, especially for gastronomy and his eye for the preservation of the cultural and historical heritage. His appointment as honorary French consul for the province Limburg in 2003 bears witness to his unique bond with France. Oostwegel was made a Commander of the Order of Orange-Nassau by the Queen in 1997.

Vision and Ambition

'To be an entrepreneur with a feeling for beauty and history'

Mr. Oostwegel's main ambition was to restore monuments their former glory and return them to the public, by giving them an economic use. Many of today's monuments are still private property, but because of the huge costs of maintenance, this is often dependent on government subsidies. In such cases it is possible to raise public and private money for the restoration, especially when the building is in a state of disrepair. The financial means needed for financially sound exploitation are much more of a problem. Oostwegel's formula of restoration and establishing luxury hotels combines these two funding issues. He has often had to fight hard to get the owners to sell the property in a good cause. In the case of Chateau Gerlach, the church and diocese had to be persuaded to trust in Oostwegel's intentions. By showing great personal commitment to the historic value of the building he struck the right chord and clinched the deal. Aware of the close relationship between church and castle, he accepted most of their demands. He bought the property for the symbolic price of one euro, but with the obligation to invest some 2 million euros in the restoration. To make the monuments accessible to the public, formulas as tearooms and bistros were realized in the restoration, as well as more expensive restaurants and luxury hotels. In addition, guided tours are held for guests on the cultural history of the properties, WHICH Even the hotel executives are expected to lead. Oostwegel feels it is very important that his staff know the rich cultural history of the monuments.

In most cases, Camille Oostwegel started off managing the hotel himself. Today, every hotel or restaurant has its own manager, who is fully responsible for the property. Oostwegel stresses that one of his personal assets is knowing how to delegate and control at the same time. He has a strong bond with his employees and a close relationship with his supervisory board. One of the members is 75 and has been on the board for more than 25 years. Oostwegel emphasizes he also strongly relies on his international contacts, which are of great importance to him. He has built a broad network of contacts in the course of his working life and maintains them by staying active in a range of fields. Next to his work in the hotel and catering industry and gastronomy, he takes part in the local cultural and social life in Limburg, such as Catholic processions, and has warm relations with France, being honorary French consul for the province of Limburg.

Due to his success with the 'Chateauhôtels', Oostwegel is frequently asked to take on new projects. He explains that people sometimes seem to think of him as a magician

who can turn anything into gold. But however appealing the offers, Oostwegel has stayed true to his beloved Limburg. He has managed to combine his origins and interest in local cultural history with his aspirations as an entrepreneur. To some, this has made him the 'King of Limburg'.

C. Resistance Encountered

In leaving the Novotel concern in France and taking on the challenge of restoring dilapidated monuments as a business venture, Oostwegel took great risks, putting up his own capital without any guarantee of success. Acquiring listed monuments always brings several actors into the frame: authorities at different governmental levels are involved in the preservation of monuments, and monuments are often privately owned. Oostwegel often had to overcome major obstacles to accomplish his aims, as not everyone was easily persuaded, and initially giving a specific area a new use invariably led to protests from the local community, as people tend to be frightened of change, but eventually all of Oostwegel's projects have become highly appreciated by neighbors as well as local authorities.

D. Motives

Camille Oostwegel takes pleasure in spending time with his guests, extolling the beauty of gastronomy. As his own boss, Oostwegel is free to follow his own dreams, restoring monuments while cherishing their cultural history. He can combine his fondness for successfully running exclusive hotels and restaurants with preserving cultural and historical values. He feels a deep bond with the landscape and the preservation of the valuable historical properties and open them up to the public as much as possible. In spite of many external career opportunities, Oostwegel is determined to keep control over his business, and is not prepared to trade his position as a creator for one as a manager for another company. Since the business is thriving and the public is interested, he spends a lot of time on refining the settings, decorations and atmosphere. Although most public attention is generated by external press, the Chateau hotels organization also publishes a magazine about activities in the area, which every year brings in vast numbers of tourists to the chateaus. The monuments have also been visited by royalty and leading politicians. This raises the pressure on all employees to turn in top-notch performances. The service has to be

tight every single time; inaccuracy is out of the question. This keeps Oostwegel on his toes, and always ready to adjust his concept.

E. Tactical Observations and Leadership Style

Camille Oostwegel has never confined himself to only one professional group. His personal interests have led him to actively participate in many areas, and this has proved highly valuable. For example, his ideas for the 'Kruisheeren' hotel in Maastricht were conceived 20 years ago, but the government did not want to part with the project at that time. In 2000, the subject came up by chance in a board meeting of the Museum of Spanish Monuments, of which Oostwegel is a member. The government's plans for the hotel had failed and they urgently needed a new approach. Oostwegel sprung into action, presented his ideas for the hotel to the responsible alderman, and managed to persuade him. Ironically, it was through his social involvement in the museum that he learned of a new opportunity to put forward his proposal, which this time fell into place. To his mind, social involvement and actively building networks are key factors to create opportunities that would otherwise pass by.

Oostwegel's extensive network has played pivotal role in his success. There is no question that certain people in his life significantly contributed to what he accomplished. Oostwegel underlines the value of social and personal relationships with his extended workforce. This makes him very much a local man, not only in terms of the people in his network, but also because the networking culture is typical of this region. And both are needed, especially in the challenging hotel trade. The south of the Netherlands is known for its reliance on and use of personal networks, so in this sense he epitomizes the regional culture, in which he is also a key player. His network and networking skills give him an advantage in his ambition to exploit the highly sensitive monuments and expand his business. As he puts it: 'Use your network to understand society better than it understands itself.'

As a third asset, Oostwegel has always acted with great dedication, spurred on by his passion for the landscape of Limburg and its historical monuments. The satisfaction of his work can be deduced from the fact that he has never accepted any job offers from other companies. The restored monuments bear witness to his choice to be a creator rather than just a director.

Oostwegel has received numerous awards in acknowledgement of his work. They recognize not only his economic success, but equally his commitment to and active role in local society. His work has also been recognized abroad.

F. First Comments

- Camille Oostwegel is an outstanding example of a regional networker. His network provides him with a regional image and connections, presents opportunities, and helps him to gain legitimization and trust in expanding his empire of chateau hotels in the region, so it has a business side as well as a societal side. He is very aware of how much of an asset the network and his regional position are to him; they partly explain why he gets these opportunities, why people give him the credit and how he succeeds in rebuilding these old chateaus. This is how opportunities, societal problems and entrepreneurs come together, timely and purposefully, in this region, although from a purely economic perspective, this seems not always an open market with equality.
- He is an active and prominent member of the Catholic community, a church committee member, well connected to the church authorities in Rome, who also joins processions and regional activities linked to the Catholic Church, like the voluntary city guard.
- These local traditions are of course an essential aspect of the business Oostwegel is in: old chateaus and inner cities rooted to the land and you can only do business here if you respect local culture.
- This person and this case cannot easily be classified as either public and private: in terms of who benefits most? Is it a specialized private luxury hotel business that peddles a story of preservation and heritage to get its hands on these monuments and exploit them for maximum financial gain? Or is Oostwegel sincere in his values and his ambition to give these monuments back to the public and run a business that benefits society, taking big economic risks in the process - without government funding or guarantees? I classify him as a social entrepreneur, because he combines two values systems of the sound commercial entrepreneur and the restorer and inviting landowner who allows people to use the estate. This is known as 'stewardship' in the Christian tradition, and is a long established tradition in sound and societally beneficial estate ownership. This is the best value system and approach when you formally take ownership of properties that are in the public eye, which for many people are to some extent inalienably (informal) public property.

- Social entrepreneurship in this context involves testing the trust and integrity of the entrepreneur ('don't mess with our public heritage'). Oostwegel and the regional environment have a mutual interest in his strong networking skills: they are an essential factor in this local business that is of great symbolical value. In essence it gives the public and public authorities a sense of 'control' of these private ventures.
- In commercial terms, this gives him a great advantage. It also explains why Oostwegel succeeded where others failed. Of course, the disused buildings had attracted attention from other developers, construction companies and hoteliers, so why did Oostwegel succeed where they failed? It's not just a matter of networking and being first, it is also about credibility, trust, keeping promises, and faith in his genuine concern for these chateaus, maybe because he is 'one of us', a scion of the land, with *terroir* running through his veins.
- A catholic, a regional networker, a successful entrepreneur and local boy, but there is yet another element: family man. In interviews he often talks about his wife (who works closely with him in the company), his closeknit family, and the family business he wants to start by passing the leadership of the company to his son. If you're looking for a social entrepreneur with close links to civil society, Camille Oostwegel is second to none.



'Innovate strategy by doing good: I like the creative puzzle of the best combination of commercial strategy and society.'

Tom Rodrigues

A. Introduction

Who is Tom Rodrigues?

Tom Rodrigues (Amsterdam, 1954) grew up in a family of small businessmen. At that time, being an entrepreneur was a very uncertain existence. So on his father's advice, Rodrigues studied child development and he went on to gain a PhD in this field. At university he learned to observe people and find out what makes them tick. This is what he calls his passion: to discover what processes and incentives influence people. After graduating, his father helped him to get work in government so he would be more financially secure than his parents had been. Rodrigues worked in various positions at the department of Education, Culture and Science for ten years. As a result, he speaks the language of civil servants. Since 1991, Rodrigues has worked as a consultant responsible for the Public Administration division and later CEO of CMG, an ICT service provider. In this position, Rodrigues was involved in a range of organizational changes in the public domain. In 1997 Rodrigues joined the executive board of Ordina, an ICT 'knowledge supplier', mainly working for the public sector. At the same time, he was involved in several change projects relating to the civil service. At the time of the interview he was an advisory member on the board of Ordina. He recently left Ordina and now works as an independent consultant in areas linked to charitable causes.

In 2000, Tom Rodrigues became chairman of the 'Samenleving en Bedrijf' (Society and Enterprise) foundation, a Dutch national network of big companies that wants to develop the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and share knowledge between companies.

Rodrigues has published several articles about the modernization of public management and the role of human behavior and management in this process.

The Public Case

Rodrigues' chairmanship of Society and Enterprise is based on his executive position at Ordina. In both positions, Rodrigues promoted the principles of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). His main ambition with Society and Enterprise is to get companies and CEOs to consider CSR not as a PR issue, but as a business principle. He argues: 'If an enterprise does not open itself up to society, society will come back to haunt it at an inconvenient time'. Of course, that is a defensive stand on CSR; there is also a more proactive interpretation, which Rodrigues in fact subscribes to. Taking society's interests into account will ultimately bring commercial enterprises profit. One of the more competitive edges this brings is its effect on the employees. Due to the contact with society and societal needs employees will be able to have a more creative vision and be more connected to the job market.

Rodrigues understands that business leaders must take responsibility for this 'new CSR', while the 'old CSR' was just a job for the Public Relations division. This shifting perspective means that the people who really and strategically decide where an enterprise stands in society will also take decisions on CSR, as they realize the potential impact of the company's relationship with society on its profitability and continuity.

As chairman of 'Society and Enterprise', Rodrigues is working to implement CSR further at Ordina, a major listed company. Ultimately, further implementation of CSR will benefit society as well as companies and generate public value.

Personal Impression

Rodrigues receives us in his office on the top floor of Ordina's headquarters along the A12 motorway, one of the busiest in the country. It's an office building like any other: separate parking lots for employees and visitors, friendly faces in reception, and a visitor's badge from security. A high-ceilinged lobby dominated by glass, wood panelling and lots of polished marble. The executive board's office is spacious, though not as pristine as the lobby. This is a working *and* a visitor's space, not just the company's showcase for important visitors. He warmly greets the people we pass as we walk to his office. He is talkative, leaning back, sometimes almost lounging in his chair at the meeting table. He waves away our introduction of the interview and research program, immediately takes over and starts telling anecdotes and explaining concepts. It is a very lively interview; we have to be quick to pose our questions when Rodrigues briefly looks for words or takes a breath. We go way past the allotted time; his secretary will be struggling to reorganize his agenda for the rest of the day.

B. His Personal View

Account of Achievements

Rodrigues has implemented a new policy in companies, including 'his own' Ordina, that combines profit with good causes. To promote CSR activities and encourage companies to focus on CSR, Rodrigues pioneered and later chaired 'Society and Enterprise'. He considers it a challenge to execute his projects at Ordina and show that the projects really work. At Ordina, beside his CSR activities, Rodrigues is also responsible for various commercial projects. He wouldn't want it any other way, because he believes CSR and profitability can go hand in hand, and he doesn't want to lose credibility in commercial terms. The worst that could happen, in his view, is that CSR remains a niche subject, outside mainstream work - the domain of missionaries and believers.

One of the first activities Rodrigues organized was a 6-day trip with nine consultants to Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania, to help coffee farmers improve their use of ICT. The Ordina board couldn't see the point, but Rodrigues pushed his plan through. The nine consultants came back from Africa full of energy. There was a great deal of media attention for the trip; the Ordina media office calculated that the expedition brought Ordina 250,000 euros worth of media exposure. This made the board realize that CSR can also yield a profit. Beside the Kilimanjaro project, Rodrigues also initiated the 'Company in the Classroom' project, in which Ordina employees could sign up to teach economics, mathematics or computer science at schools. This project was also a success; the employees enjoyed the teaching, and the students liked being taught by young, successful Ordina employees.

Ordina is getting familiar with Rodrigues' CSR projects. A few years ago, the company had some problems with youths hanging around in the car park. Rodrigues tracked them down through local schools, and hired some of them as 'car park supervisors' and later gave them responsibility for the safety of the cars and checking tire pressure to ensure Ordina employees didn't drive with flat tires, causing significant fuel cost savings. At the same time, Ordina helped some young people into honest work. These kids went on to set up their own business, selling the same services to other companies.

In short: Rodrigues helps companies to take CSR to 'a new level' and recognize its potential for generating profit.

Vision and Ambition

Rodrigues wants enterprises to be creative in their CSR policies. They should offer charitable organizations something far more valuable than just money, namely their expertise. He adds that CSR has proved to benefit businesses enormously, not only in commercial terms, but also in terms of its reputation in society.

Rodrigues notes that organizations are beginning to take CSR on board. In fact, companies that have a CSR policy in place often demand the same from other companies. This process encourages companies to be more aware of the societal impact of their activities. Companies are increasingly interlinked; they closely follow each other in the public eye, striving - almost competing - to lay down strict standards for product quality and employment conditions. This means they become interdependent and drive forward each other's CSR strategy development and their transparency and responsibilities to the broader public.

He identifies three CSR policy levels. The first level is interaction with society: companies need to tell society what they are doing. The second level is establishing connections with society, without making it a core activity of the company. The third level is weaving CSR into all aspects of the company: the production process, HR policy, etc. Rodrigues' ambition is to get companies implement a level three CSR policy. He feels that 'just giving money to good causes is the most boring thing one can do'. Sponsoring in his eyes is just marketing, nothing else.

C. Resistance Encountered

Rodrigues faced two different types of resistance. By taking CSR out of the charitable sphere, he collided with Dutch morality. In Holland people make a very clear distinction between solidarity and market, between being socially involved and earning money, between society-driven and profit-driven. So they tend to think that it is not allowed to amass wealth with socially involved behavior. Rodrigues faced these criticisms mainly with the Society and Enterprise foundation. In the beginning the foundation was isolated, as society did not understand its motivation and mission. Some resistance also came from government. The government liked the basic ideas of the foundation, but did not trust the self-reflection and professionalism of these boards of companies, so it felt it had to steer their socially responsible behavior more with law and regulation. Later on government abandoned this position and just started some initiatives to stimulate CSR.

Rodrigues also came up against internal resistance at Ordina. His colleagues on the board did not believe CSR could benefit the company financially. They disapproved of his CSR work because they felt it distracted him from his commercial work. The board tried to sidetrack him by overloading his personal agenda with normal business work and contacts, but over time he managed to persuade his colleagues of the benefits CSR can bring.

D. Motives

Rodrigues is fascinated by the innovative and creative aspects of his job. He does not see himself as a holier-than-thou, judgmental environmental activist. Rodrigues' goals are pragmatic and down-to-earth. He tackles social or environmental problems as puzzles that need solutions. He works to turn CSR issues from an ideology into challenging questions. Resistance only strengthens Rodrigues' resolve and challenges his creativity. He is not just pushing or promoting CSR, but tries to encourage employees to join in these projects with their own motives and agenda. He is not explaining all kinds of good intentions of the company; people can and will fill in their own justifications.

Rodrigues takes inspiration from C.K. Prahalad's 'Bottom of the Pyramid' (BOP) theory, which holds that to make a difference, companies must start focusing on the 'bottom' of a society, where you can still make a profit, but at smaller margins across a much bigger group of consumers. Tapping this market will need creativity and social responsibility. Only then, changes can reach the whole of society. After reading about this theory, Rodrigues set up his own BOP projects, like with the youths in the parking lot. Rodrigues does not help people out of compassion or sympathy, but because he believes he can help people help themselves and that people can help him. He is strongly opposed to approaching people for victims calling for help. He wants to combine profit and doing good. So he does not choose the traditional path of making money first, and then spend some on a philanthropic or sponsoring project. He wants the company to do business and good at the same time in a financially and strategically healthy way.

E. Tactical Observations and Leadership Style

The main argument Rodrigues puts forward in his campaign is that companies can profit financially from implementing CSR principles if you make it a business case. This is what CEOs pick up on. He advises enterprises to be profitable and use CSR on the profit side of the policy. If a project does not bring long-term benefit to a company, the company should not support it. Rodrigues emphasizes the importance of storytelling: he is often invited to tell the CSR story to CEOs and other influential people in organizations. When he explains to them how CSR can be profitable and that CSR need not be an ideological matter, people get excited. But, as he says: 'You need a story society understands.'

He tried from the beginning not just to be a figurehead of the process. He never wanted to be the 'face' of CSR in Holland. He is just trying to start a movement to drive home the message of 'CSR as a business case'.

Rodrigues has used the network he built up with Society and Enterprise to further embed CSR in Ordina policy. An example of this method is the fact that Rodrigues always takes CEOs with him to meetings with the Dutch government. By inviting CEOs along, sometimes even Ordina's, they get the chance to speak to other CEOs and politicians and learn how important CSR projects and underlying values are in these communications. He says that just talking about some CSR project would not do the trick for him or the outside world. But it also helps to strengthen his own position on the board of the business he works for. It is also important for his position on the board that his work remains commercially successful. People close to Rodrigues say that it is his positive attitude and exceptional energy that have allowed him to lead Society and Enterprise for ten years and make the foundation a success.

F. First Comments

Rodrigues is a good example of the entrepreneur 'going social', but keeping his business orientation and mixing it with strategic thinking and innovativeness. Unlike many of his peers he pursues social goals while on the job and not just afterwards, like after retirement or after earning so much wealth that it would be unjust to keep everything for yourself.

For me, the following characteristics of Rodrigues and his position stand out:

- He seems almost anti-value driven. His main motives and drive come from an analytical, rational approach about what's best for his company, a desire to create win-win-strategies with society, almost from an analytical-esthetical viewpoint. His position is: Why doesn't everybody see, as I do, the optimal strategy for the common good? So his arguments for what he is doing are not about values - which he even dislikes as an approach - but from rationality, effectiveness and such. He uses rational argumentation for good social behavior.
- In his storytelling and argumentation, he tends to understate his personal drive. It all seems to be a natural and spontaneous part of his job, as long as you see the job the way he does. But at the same time this is amazing, because he is an exception among his industry colleagues. So his rhetoric, the way he normally argues his case for social responsible behavior, prevents us from seeing his most personal motives. There are some clues: his study of pedagogy, his entrepreneurial genes as he calls them and his desire to combine these two backgrounds going back to his family roots in small business and his own start of his career as a civil servant in a more societal approach. The rise of the CSR concepts has been an opportunity for him to do that on the board level where he operates.
- He uses this personal mixed background and the strategic insights that result from it, to influence and convince his more traditional commercial governance context. This is where his real leadership shows. His first reflex is not about obedience to the commonalities of a public listed for-profit company, but the other way around: his strategic insights are used to influence the perceptions of the people in his direct corporate governance context, including his own colleagues on the board. In doing this he takes of course a demanding and even dangerous path. What he thinks is an objective and creative approach to the company's and societal needs, may be seen by his fellow board members as misguided, loss-making or even 'loose cannon' behavior.
- He overcame this resistance through his tactical knowledge about how to operate in a company arena and in change processes, creating support, not being threatening etc. Rodrigues is a smooth operator and shows that in everything he says and does to try to convince others of his views.
- All in all you could say that the public value he creates is a spontaneous, not really planned or targeted result. He finds opportunities because he has an eye for the combination of public problems and company assets: the nuisance of idle youths, school children yearning for more challenging examples, farmers in need of new ICT solutions. He is mostly strategically and analytically driven, not explicitly by

morality, altruism or compassion with the needy. On the contrary: he feels that the 'help industry' has reached its limits and really can't achieve what big entrepreneurial companies can. In this kind of reasoning he really is a pupil of Pralahad, which he indeed considers himself to be.

- Some years after this interview Ordina found himself in trouble due the effects of the financial crisis and the cuts on spending in the public sector. In that period Rodrigues left the company – although probably not entirely of his own free will - as part of a cost cutting operation, which also reduced the size and cost of the executive board. One wonders if this kind of CSR approach can survive in times of financial crisis in a company. When push comes to shove, CSR is often abandoned, as the company's main responsibility is limited to its shareholders.



The citizen as an informal mayor of the neighborhood: mobilization and civic action

Arie Schagen (& Esseline Schieven)

A. Introduction

Who is Arie Schagen?

Arie Schagen was born in Amsterdam into a protestant family. At the age of 13, he left his parental home. Psychologists characterized him at this time as ‘an out of control genius’. He followed education aimed at work for the mercantile navy, because he wanted to go to Indonesia. At 14 Schagen signed on on a ship and so at a very young age saw much of the world, both good and bad. Every time Schagen sailed, he would find a bible in his kit bag, put there by his parents. He never read it.

After Schagen left the mercantile navy he met the poet Jacq Vogelaar in a pub, who told young Schagen to back to school, and gave him books to read. Schagen recognizes Vogelaar has been a strong influence in his life. Schagen went to night school and got a Higher Vocational Education diploma. He then worked as a teacher until 1991, when he was declared medically unfit for work. Since then he has lived on social security. For many years, Schagen was an active member of the Communist Party in the Netherlands.

For over a decade, Schagen was the chairman of BOM ReVa, a Neighborhood Development Community (BOM for short in Dutch) in the Regentesse-Valkenbos (ReVa) district in The Hague. In 2002 Schagen left BOM ReVa and was succeeded by Esseliene Schieven. I have interviewed her for this study too. Schieven’s background was totally different from Schagen’s. With her in charge, BOM ReVa became more professional, less based on civic action and more dependent on local government subsidies. For example, Schagen always worked for a symbolic wage on top of his social security income), but under Schieven the volunteers within the organization were paid more compensation. This formalization of the BOM ReVa meant a complete change in the organization. Over time the activities started to decline, as did media and political attention, and eventually BOM ReVa ceased.

In a farewell letter to the neighborhood, Schieven summarized the results: (in translation) 'For almost 15 years the BOM ReVa model worked. In that time we cleaned and swept Weimarstreet, developed the tennis courts on Teijlerstraat, converted the school on Van Merlestreet into residential housing and business space for small companies, cleaned the sidewalk of De Verademing, made a plan for a new community building on Newtonstreet to be built by the municipality housing branch, housed Eskalibur and Den Haag Direct (both experimental theatre companies) and converted the public swimming baths De Regentes into a theatre. Shortly Vestia will start building a primary health care centre and homes for youths on Karel Roosstraat.'

She explained the end of the initiative as follows (my translation): 'Over this period BOM ReVa slowly but surely became more dependent on government subsidies. All neighborhood organizations in The Hague are preoccupied with a dance with local government about subsidies and organization. This took almost all our management committee's energy. So we decided not to apply for structural subsidies anymore and to go back to our roots of working to improve the living conditions of this neighborhood on a purely voluntarily basis.'

The Public Case

In the seventies of last century, Schagen moved from Amsterdam to the Regentesse-Valkenbos district in The Hague, a characteristic 19th century neighborhood. Historically, The Hague's districts are divided by the soil they are built on, either sand or peat, sand being more expensive. Because of this dual nature of the neighborhood, Regentesse-Valkenbos never got much serious attention from city innovators and was overlooked in plans and policies.

In 1992, Schagen and other committed citizens founded a Neighborhood Development Community, BOM ReVa, as a community initiative to improve the district. The community had a strong relationship with the local authority, but did not want its work to be dependent on the authorities and subject to formal approval.

Early on, BOM ReVa focused on street maintenance work in the neighborhood. But in the years the community started several projects: an empty swimming pool was converted to a theatre, an old school became tennis courts and a boxing school and another school were converted into apartments and small offices.

Personal Impression

We meet Arie Schagen right in the middle of the neighborhood, Regentesse-Valkenbos, on the first floor above a shop selling materials for home care, home adaptation and kitchen tools and appliances. He is an impressive man, both physically and in personality. He wears a leather jacket, and turns out to be a fervent motorcycle rider. Once he toured The Hague on his motorcycle wearing a T-shirt with a text to thank the departing mayor he had worked with closely. He talks quickly, jumping from memories from way back when to current problems in the neighborhood that need to be addressed. When he describes how he once rallied the neighborhood into action by walking out on a Saturday morning with 5 brooms and a megaphone in his hands, it's easy to believe he did. He certainly looks the part of the communist activist, working with poor people and the working class.

B. His Personal View

Account of Achievements

Schagen became the face of the BOM ReVa and a warrior for the Regentesse-Valkenbos tenants.

One of the first of Schagen's neighborhood initiatives was a community street cleaning hour every Saturday. Shopkeepers and residents were dissatisfied with the public cleaning service run by local government. Due to new work methods and changing work hours parts of the district started to become very untidy. The trigger for the action was the announcement of this city cleaning service that they would further reduce the cleaning frequency. This came on top of growing dissatisfaction about cleanliness of the neighborhood that was blamed on the influx of people from outside Europe many of whom had a different attitude to cleaning and using public services and sometimes polluted their own neighborhood. Also, the municipal cleaning service was expensive due to additional charges. By initiating a cleaning service that of shopkeepers and tenants Schagen lowered the costs, brought people together, introduced social guardianship, and gave the neighborhood a better appearance. Every Saturday, Schagen would go out with a megaphone and some brooms, getting the people to help him with the cleaning. Schagen did this for more than two years. To get the attention of the local government for the problems with the trash Schagen decided to dump a huge amount of trash in the garden of the alderman. This action is typical for his penchant for controversial actions. Schagen started leading BOM ReVa as a volunteer, but after a number of years he became the

official coordinator and got paid for three hours a day, although he his work for BOM ReVa took him over 50 hours per week.

Vision and Ambition

By setting up the street cleaning campaigns Schagen wanted to show that citizens did not need the government to achieve things. Schagen was closely involved with his neighborhood and wanted to improve its living conditions. He found it dispiriting to wait for the local authorities to take action, so he encouraged people to join hands and take charge of problems themselves. His motto is: 'Deal with the problems first, don't appeal to official institutions because, obviously, so far they have done nothing. There is no need to be afraid of the public reaction: if you can see a bad situation, you can expect everybody can see it.' And: 'The official road is often long, the solution on the ground is often a shortcut.'

With BOM ReVa he tried to find solutions for many problems on the streets. Schagen had heard about (and had first-hand experience of) trouble with young Moroccan-Dutch criminals. By giving them internships and places to work, he tried to give them a better job perspective and keep them on the straight and narrow.

C. Resistance Encountered

The dual character of the Regentesse-Valkenbos district enabled Arie Schagen to organize a strong community with much mutual support. The tenants in the less financially strong part of the area really could use some support in improving their circumstances. The residents in the wealthier part of the area, many of them highly educated, were willing to work for BOM ReVa out of solidarity. Schagen was in close contact with the local authorities and the relevant councilors.

With Schagen's powers of persuasion and the level of support he enjoyed he always got the main financier of the BOM ReVa projects, the municipality, on board.

BOM ReVa thrived in the second half of the nineties. Schagen was managing director and Peter Noordanus was council member involved and alderman in The Hague. After Noordanus changed jobs, BOM ReVa faced more opposition from the local authority. In the following years the local authorities largely stopped financing BOM ReVa projects; the community wanted to be independent. Similar neighborhood organizations were set up in other cities in the Netherlands, but they never matched

the success of BOM ReVa. The council tried to extend this model of cooperation between civic organizations and local government to the rest of The Hague, but it got mired in bureaucracy and in scandal over improper declarations and so lost social support and became ineffective. Local governments find it difficult to give money directly to citizens or citizen organizations. Schagen's unconventional methods protected BOM ReVa from the bureaucratic influence of local government, but at the same time made the initiative very much dependent on him. Under his successor it became much more 'professionalized', which increased bureaucracy, lost citizen support and drive, and its revolutionary and activist inspiration.

There were the usual internal problems with issues about volunteers getting paid and payment of the people running the organization. Schagen always worked from a position of trust, but wherever he found corruption he rooted it out.

D. Motives

Schagen started out as chairman of the tenants' association of the Regentesse-Valkenbos district. In that capacity he found that just talking with civil servants and authorities won't get you very far. You have to take charge. That's why he founded BOM ReVa. His main motive was to get the tenants involved to create a livable neighborhood. He feels that the ambitions and motives of BOM ReVa are in some way comparable to those of the Communist Party he was a longstanding member of. Both are concerned with improving livability in order to improve solidarity and tolerance on the street, and use civic action to achieve their goals.

E. Tactical Observations and Leadership Style

A key issue was the relationship between Schagen and councilor/alderman Peter Noordanus. In the nineties Noordanus was a heavyweight in The Hague city politics. All BOM ReVa projects passed through Noordanus, who helped to bring many of the plans to fruition with his reputation and position. Schagen was well-known for his charisma and communication skills. Everybody seemed to know Schagen, and he seemed to know everybody. Schagen did not create all BOM ReVa projects, but he was always the driving force, making them possible through his network and negotiation skills.

People describe Schagen as very persuasive. In his own words: 'If you follow your heart, people will follow you'. Schieven explains: 'There is a big difference between working towards a dream through action or through procedures and funding. That was essential to what we were doing. If you become too professional, you are in danger of losing people's support.' For example, Schagen knew how to deal with the mayor never losing heart. When mayor Havermans, who he worked with for years, retired, Schagen printed T-shirts reading 'Thank you, mayor!' and rode through town with his biker friends wearing these T-shirts.

In spite of this, he insists: 'Don't get too close or too friendly with local government, because people mistrust politicians, and you will be tainted.' And: 'Don't overly respect local government, just deal with them squarely.'

His activism goes back to his communist background, but he knew he had to rephrase his message and ideology. The association with communist work and ideology could be counterproductive. He found a new ideological ground from a 'street level' or 'citizen' perspective: 'Money should never be a problem when the issue is big enough.'

F. First Comments

- Schagen epitomizes grass roots activism in his appearance, his lack of academic training, his streetwise style, and his background as a sailor. That is enough to make him an oddity in the Dutch public domain, dominated as it is by highly educated professionals in all areas of policy. Although he trained as a social worker, he hung on to his personal drive, style and goals, which go back to his work experience as a sailor.
- In terms of values he seems to have changed from a communist to citizen activist, but in cultural and behavioral terms this is not that big a step. It does explain his reluctance to believe authorities at face value, his willingness to mobilize citizens, and his preference for action. It does not fully explain his willingness and ability to effectively deal with these authorities and to link the street level with officialdom. To illustrate this: every year he organized a get together of all people who volunteered, worked, and cooperated as official partners with BOM. So what is more decisive: values or trained behavior, to explain what he did and why?
- He lived on social security throughout. Did this increase or diminish his drive? Did it color his values? We should perhaps see this in its historical context: at that

time social security benefits didn't come with many restrictions and obligations. In the modern approach, being able to work 50 hours a week like this obviously made him fit for paid employment and the employment office would nowadays have been keen to get him back on that track. That would have made it very difficult for him to do this neighborhood work.

- On the other hand, he partly invented partly cooperated in the modernization of this social security system through his work for his 'neighborhood company' with many more unemployed people on social security and giving them jobs inside this BOM. Perhaps BOM wasn't government funded, but the labor it used (and trained, and coached, and taught discipline) was. As such, BOM had a very new and social goal: to give jobs to the unemployed and help them to get back into 'normal' work. At some point there were no less than 30 unemployed people working for BOM in all kinds of activities.
- The previous two points raise the question about what factors made Arie Schagen so contrary and self-willed. Probably a combination of an activist attitude, a communist background and enough time to devote to neighborhood issues. His societal analysis and worldview are clear, probably going back to his time as a communist and the student protest movement, which also aimed to empower people. This commitment, combined with his skills and initiative to organize action when he saw big problems that needed solving, created his drive to make a difference and act on these problems.
- So his value system is about taking civic action and the need for it, about not trusting authorities, about taking on the high and mighty and getting what you want from them. And about taking personal responsibility, doing and contributing what you're good at, which in his case is abundantly clear. Maybe that is a 'virtue' instilled by his protestant upbringing and his mother putting a bible in his rucksack, which is at odds with communist values, in which all actions are always conceived and planned as collective action?
- You could also say that he was trained in such neighborhood action, both by the communist party and by the School of Social Work, but that when he became unemployed his civic commitment gave him the drive and legitimization to use these skills as an informal civil leader. For the neighborhood he was a person who combined two very valuable assets: believable as an activist citizen on the one hand and gifted with the skills and values to do the right thing for their societal problems in connection to the official institutions and not afraid to mobilize civic action on the other. The last 'tool' is almost never used by official welfare and social work organizations which are heavily subsidized by local government. So

the answer to the perpetual question: 'Whose side are you on?' was never in doubt with Schagen.



'Everyone thought it was impossible, until people who did not know this just got up and did it anyway.'

CLARA AND SJAAK SIES



A. Introduction

Who are the Sies?

Over 20 years ago, Clara and Sjaak Sies found themselves seriously in debt. Owing to circumstances beyond their control they had to close down their clothes shop in Rotterdam, and they have been living on social security ever since. When their business failed, they found it very difficult to obtain social security. Consequently, they know what it is like to be treated callously by public bodies and to be reduced to poverty.

The Sies have a background in voluntarily interreligious work. Helping disadvantaged people appears to be in their blood. In 1999 they first started the MinusPlus Foundation collecting surplus goods from stores and rich people (the 'plus') for poor families (the 'minus'), helping the less fortunate with goods the middle and upper class no longer need. It proved so successful that the Sies decided to tackle the poverty problem in their hometown head on, founding the first Voedselbank (food bank) in the Netherlands in 2002.

MinusPlus, which in March 2003 changed its name to Stichting Voedselbank Nederland (Food Bank Foundation Netherlands), has grown into an large-scale national organization which provides food aid to thousands of individuals and families, by using food that is left over, discarded, past its sell-by date but still good, by a range of shops and companies in the food industry.

The Public Case

Stichting Voedselbank Nederland is a 100% non-profit organization fully run by volunteers providing assistance to roughly ten thousand families of which some 2,300 in the Rotterdam area. Over the past five years, Stichting Voedselbank Nederland has

developed into a national network with 80 branches. In 2006 the organization started restructuring its national operations. . The Rotterdam branch is run by 140 volunteers.

Clara and Sjaak Sies felt strongly that the Dutch government ignored the undeniable poverty in the Netherlands, and that vital changes were needed to help people below the poverty line. Their organization has a strict selection procedure: only people who have less than € 150 per month to spend on food and clothing qualify for help from the food bank, which is limited to three years, during which clients are encouraged to sort out their debts. The annual value of the donated products, mostly bread and vegetables, approaches 9,300,000 euros.

The aim of the food bank is twofold: making valuable use of products that would otherwise be wasted and providing food to people in need (poverty relief).

Since the foundation of the Stichting Voedselbank Nederland in 2002, the number of food parcels donated has risen steadily, just as the number of volunteers. At the time of the interview some 13,000 people every year turned to the food bank for support; presently 45,000 people all over the country get a weekly food parcel from the Food Banks, 2,800 of them in Rotterdam. To ensure local professionalization, the food bank in collaboration with the Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority of the Netherlands has drawn up national guidelines for shelf life and storing of donated food products. In addition, the name and logo of the food bank have been filed with the Benelux Trademarks Office.

Appreciation for the food bank from political parties has been ambivalent. While politicians appreciate the food bank's work, providing relief to thousands of families, the existence of this foundation riles them, because it highlights that government and bureaucracy have failed to prevent such poverty. There is a social security system in place, but it is not lack of money or social rights that has put people in this position, but lack of attention, flexibility, and vigilance on the part of the bureaucracy. Most left-wing parties feel that the growth of food banks bears out the shortcomings of the current government's policies and practice, and they call for close collaboration between politics and the food bank organization.

Not only political parties would like a closer relationship. The Netherlands Food Banks Federation has also appealed to the Food Bank Foundation of the Sies to give up some of its autonomy to create an improved association on a national level. This is a hotly debated issue. Sjaak and Clara Sies pressed for guarantees concerning the quality of

the total operation, the selection of volunteers, food handling and the qualifying criteria for joining their organization with other similar initiatives around the country. The initiatives have now been merged into Food Banks Netherlands, a national organization of which Clara Sies is the vice-chair and Sjaak Sies honorary chairman. The organization coordinates some 120 food banks in the Netherlands, who give out food once a week to some 20,000 households. The organization is divided into eight regions, each with its own distribution center. Recently, there have been media reports of an imminent shortage in the food supply due to stricter cost management in many shops and retail organizations. The Food Banks still have a great deal of goodwill in society and national politics, as shown by recent visits of members of the Royal Family.

Personal Impression

We meet the couple hard at work in the Rotterdam docks where they have a large warehouse with food stores and food packaging machines. Inside they have created offices and various areas with cheap and used building materials. Clara Sies shows us round; Sjaak Sies joins us a bit later. There are stacks of surplus food which they get from many sides, including major food producers and retailers like Unilever and Albert Heijn. It's amazing to see how much good quality food and these firms throw out just because of packaging faults or because it is close to, but not past, its sell-by date. They have offices across from each other. It is a hectic place, partly because there is hardly any noise insulation and the sound of opening doors, footsteps and ringing phones echoes through the building, but also because of the intensity of the operation. How much food is needed where? Is there a truck to move it? Are there enough crates? How do we get them back? It's a huge operation that requires precise coordination. We move into a small conference room to talk but we keep getting interrupted by phone calls and people asking questions. The door can't be opened from the inside, and twice we have to call someone to let us out. Amidst this passionate intensity, the couple answer our questions, calm and matter-of-fact. It would seem as if this tumult is the normal state of affairs that they take it in their stride. The interview seems to give them a rare opportunity for reflection in their frenetic work. Although they are used to media attention, they seem flattered by our interest, and they especially like the academic background of our study. During the interview they often complement each other's answers, adding to or qualifying earlier remarks and looking back on the exact motives and drives they had in building this organization. They reveal that they will shortly be able to go on their first vacation in many, many years because of the increased managerial and coordination skills of some of the volunteers they now have in the organization, and taking a break will allow them to think about succession and

the future of the organization, with some regret, but also relief. And with the explicit condition that the organization and the continuity of the operations must always come first, because so many people are dependent on them for food every day.

Clara Sies is the talker, the voice of the couple. She is open and a little fussy, sometimes strict but always with a motherly tenderness for people with problems. Her husband Sjaak is more contemplative, thoughtful, weighing his words with care, but very friendly and just as kind-hearted as his wife: someone you trust at first sight. Both speak about their food bank project passionately, almost as if it were their child.

B. Their Personal View

Account of Achievements

Clara (55) and Sjaak (68) have five children. Between 1995 and 1999 both were unemployed and the family was desperately short of food and other necessities. Sjaak was 50 years old with little education and Clara, in her forties, had health problems, so they were dependent on social security. They hit a brick wall at the employment center, the Center for Work and Income (CWI) because they didn't fit any of its categories and strict standards, so they didn't get suitable job offerings.

Having first-hand experience of these bureaucratic procedures of the social services, Sjaak and Clara Sies became concerned about the fate of other people in need who were less assertive than the Sies family. That is why they set up the MinusPlus foundation to provide food and other necessities to people who were not getting proper help from social services. Before long, they were providing food supplied by the local community to 30 deprived families. An encounter in 2002 with an established food bank in Belgium convinced Clara and Sjaak that they needed to take their own organization to a new level. They asked and got approval from social security to get on with their initiative.

The foundation started out on a small scale. Clara Sies built a website on a simple telephone modem, while Sjaak focused on making flyers to inform companies about their plans. Initially, only local companies responded, sending them products that couldn't be sold anymore, either because it was close to its sell-by date, had the wrong barcode or was incorrectly labeled, and would otherwise be discarded and wasted. It took some time for bigger companies to come aboard. An article in the local newspaper in 2002 proved a watershed.

Sjaak and Clara Sies have gained a wealth of experience in their work domain and as they know the operation inside and out, they continue to oversee the bulk of the organizational efforts. They insist on remaining a private, autonomous organization so they can stay true to their norms and values and remain in charge of how the business is run. For instance, if a family in need calls on Friday that they are out of food, there is no red tape preventing immediate assistance. If the organization were run by the government, it would be Monday before anything was done.

Because of the increasing scale the organization's operations, it was obvious that internal changes would have to be made. Providing food for thousands of families throughout the country has forced Stichting Voedselbank Nederland into an inevitable process of professionalization. The fact that priorities are shifting from providing those in need with exclusive, personal attention to the necessity of professionally managing the food bank organization has led to internal contradictions and has created numerous organizational dilemmas for the Sies. But they have weathered worse storms, and they are strongly motivated to carry on.

Vision and Ambition

Sjaak and Clara Sies regard their efforts as an expression of their Christian morality. Unlike other social workers, they take inspiration from their faith instead of secular altruism or social ideals. They fear that the majority of the volunteers are motivated by social status. The Sies still live on social security and have no financial aspirations whatsoever. As they put it: 'The poor are better at sharing than the rich'. Mother Theresa once observed that she was disturbed less by rich people than by 'the reckless waste of goods'.

The food bank provides help to all, regardless of culture, faith or nationality. The couple consider their monthly welfare check as payment for their work. On a personal level though, their work is deeply fulfilling in a way that the luxury goods market they used to work in could never be. The personal relations with the recipients of the food parcels are of great value to Clara and Sjaak Sies.

The Sies are proud that the organization has remained independent. The foundation is not reliant on the government or a church, nor is it a protest movement. The government is in no position to take over their activities since it is partly guilty of creating the poverty problem. Jan Marijnissen, the former leader of the Dutch Socialist Party, once proposed to symbolically present a food parcel to Prime Minister Balkenende, but the Sies politely declined, as they insist on staying politically neutral.

They are critical of the Catholic Church as too conventional and internally divided. Assistance should be accessible to all disadvantaged people, and not just to practising Christians. The Sies feel that the approach of many officials and priests of the local Catholic Church seems to be: We preach, then you pray, then you receive food, a kind of manipulation they strongly disagree with.

Flexibility is one of the key targets of the foundation. For example, one wheelchair-bound mental patient has received food parcels for over seven years, way beyond the set maximum term of three years. Enforcing rules seems misguided when lives are at stake.

The Sies feel it is vital to stay focused on the real social need and then be as creative, unorthodox and persistent as possible to find a solution. These activities are all means to a higher end, while much of the public attention focuses on these means and organizational practices. They really needed their Christian faith and their entrepreneurial mindset to overcome their own and other people's doubts about their skills, competences, resources, etc. In fact, their lack of skills was even officially established by social services!

C. Resistance Encountered

The first hurdle they overcame was of personal nature. After losing their clothes and accessories store, Sjaak and Clara Sies struggled to get by, and the experience of poverty never left them. They felt that people less assertive than they could easily get lost in the welfare system. So that's why they started the MinusPlus foundation in 1999 to give hope and support to people falling through the cracks of the system.

The organization grew and soon required more space. In 2003 they persuaded major companies to participate in the project. Sjaak and Clara admit that since then, it has been 'hard to stay humble', as their success has gone through the roof. All this seems far removed from bearing the stigma of being penniless set by social services. 'Being able to talk with the mayor, the minister and CEOs of large companies certainly gets to you. After all, we were classified as "unfit" to work at this level of management and coordination.' The feat of running the foundation has brought them a certain social status which they enjoy, but also mixed feelings, since they wish to express their Christian morality in the best way they can. And for them, modesty is an essential Christian value.

As they began to need more space to run their daily operation, Sjaak and Clara Sies started to lobby local government. Strangely, support came mostly from right-wing political parties. The left kept quiet, because it felt it was a disgrace food banks were needed at all. It even considered trying to outlaw food banks. The national election program of the Labor Party stated the existence of the food banks was 'regrettable'. The Sies were deeply puzzled by this attitude, as they expected left-wing parties to rally to their cause. Later on, it changed its policy and called for policies to fix the underlying causes for the existence of the food banks, like red tape, social security authorities dragging their feet, contradictory rules that hindered fast-tracking poor people into welfare, etc. Initially it was the confessional political parties who, after initial hesitations and persuasion from the Sies, stood up for the food banks and their right to exist. Over time, the division between the right and left-wing political parties on this issue has faded. Clearly, all political parties are bewildered by the extent of the poverty problem, which the food banks brought to the surface. The Labor state secretary for social security, Aboutaleb, now mayor of Rotterdam, even appealed to the welfare organizations to cooperate with the food banks in solving the real problems of the poor.

A recent development has been the remarkable rise of commercial competition in this field. Cheap stores buy up the same surplus food as the food banks and sell this food at low prices to the people, who can just about afford this. Of course, this reduces the food supply for the food banks and worsen the financial problems of many poor people.

The entry of new players in the field has caused disagreements and conflicts. The Sies pioneered the food banks and ran the biggest food bank in the Netherlands successfully, but their model was widely copied. As a result, the Federatie Voedselbanken Nederland (FVN), (Federation of Food Banks Netherlands) was founded. The Sies were not amused by this development. Ever since the FVN was founded, there have been tensions between the Food Bank Foundation Netherlands and the FVN. One of the main bones of contention was the composition of the new federation's executive committee. The Sies stress that although they opposed the establishment of the new federation, they were open-minded about organizational innovation. But they wanted to keep a grip on the quality of service and the performance of the individual branches, which are often run by volunteers and churches. The FVN wanted the Sies to give up some of their executive powers in order to be able to merge various local branches. They overcame their reluctance because their legitimate demands for quality guarantees were met, and now they are part of

this federation. One recent success has been that food banks now also endeavor to provide expensive drugs to the poor for free, partly from batches that would otherwise be discarded.

D. Motives

Sjaak and Clara Sies are still fully committed to their work for the food bank. The couple see their efforts as an expression of their Christian moral principles. As Christians, they seek to be the 'salt of the earth'. If the salt loses its saltiness, it is no longer good for anything. And so, in order to be a worthy Christian, you must live according to the precepts of the faith: your life must be humble and humane. For Clara and Sjaak this means you should not seek fame for yourself, but to dedicate yourself fully to those in need. The salt parable also implies that it is important to stay focused on one area, and not to be sidetracked.

So, as the number of people relying on their help keeps rising, Sjaak and Clara Sies will keep doing all they can to provide vital supplies to those in need. Their Christian ethic has always been, and will remain, their inspiration in all their work.

To ensure that the stated norms and values of the organization are observed, the Sies are still in charge of selecting new volunteers. From among the astonishing number of applicants, they distinguish between naïve idealists and hands-on people with commercial insight. Both are needed, although the Sies prefer leadership skills coupled with idealism. They have built up the food bank's reputation from scratch and they know how important it is to maintain its relationship with large companies and the Food & Health Inspectorate. The couple sets great store by these external relationships and therefore highly values fairness and mutual respect. These will always be core values in the management of the food bank.

E. Tactical Observations and Leadership Style

Mr and Mrs Sies have been very skillful at generating media coverage for the food bank. A leading article in the local newspaper 'Rotterdams Dagblad' in November 2002 put the food bank initiative on the map. In February 2003, Clara Sies heard Rotterdam alderman Sjaak van der Tak on local radio criticizing their initiative and distancing himself from it. She had been eager to talk to Van der Tak for over a year,

so she called the radio station at once and came live on the air. During this broadcast Van der Tak and Mrs Sies agreed to meet face to face. Since that time, the alderman has always been supportive of the food bank. In their approach to public institutions they display a unique combination of a modest and industrious attitude with stubbornness and tenacity in their fight for the people they support and help. This legitimizes their public approach and their proactive relation with official institutions.

Next to obtaining media attention and lobbying local government, the Sies have always made it clear that the food bank should stay politically neutral. The foundation's principles still remain the same. Obviously, there have been changes as the organization was professionalized, but core values were upheld. The final say in what goes on in the organization of the food bank still lies with the Sies, and has not been surrendered to any external company or institution. And this is vital as it ensures that the food bank's unique format stays in place.

The image of the modern food bank created by Clara and Sjaak Sies has had major impact on private companies and other key players. Nowadays, an organization's reputation is critical for its accomplishments. Trends like corporate social responsibility in the private sector on the one hand and professionalization of non-profit organizations on the other are gaining ground. This gives the Sies a wide range of potential partners, but it is up to them to safeguard their quality control and their reputation. Starting the professionalization of the foundation at an early stage seems to have been a wise choice. By keeping the image safe and sound, established relationships with external players are more likely to survive in the foreseeable future.

F. First Comments

- There can be no doubt that these social pioneers are inspired by their Christian faith and values; they figure prominently in their minds, in their reflections, in why they did what they did; indeed, they hold these values so dear that they even criticize churches for straying from these values and putting their own institutional interests first.
- They created something based on their own experience with welfare organizations, not for themselves, but for other people who did not have the skills or determination to cope with bureaucracy. And in doing so, they disproved the official assessment by social security that they were unfit to run a business. Social services did help them, because they allowed them to build this social enterprise,

but it had earlier undermined their self-confidence and mental strength by labeling them 'unfit for management'. In Chapter 3 on leadership I discuss the problem with psychological thinking that focuses too much on measurable characteristics and external qualities, instead of character and values, as seems to be the case here too. This probably also has a link to the debate about the difference between management and leadership.

- Governance is certainly a big issue in this initiative. On the one hand the organization is successfully run like a family enterprise, which are usually focused on values, volunteers, and work floor details. But it has grown big, gaining the attention of national media and politics and working with national retailers, but operating in a field strongly affected by economic cycles. So professionalization and scaling up to a national level were needed to protect the initiative and legitimize it. It is a classic case of pioneers having to let go in order to let things grow.
- The Sies embody the classical entrepreneurial spirit: they saw a niche in public services, a need that was not being addressed, and persevered to answer it in the face of criticism and resistance. As real entrepreneurs, being told they were wrong only served to strengthen their resolve.



Hans Visser

A. Introduction

Who is Hans Visser?

Visser was born in The Hague in 1942 and grew up in an orthodox Protestant family. Visser's parents were very traditional: dancing and sexual behavior were sinful, and taboo subjects. As he grew older, Visser began to question his parents' views. As a child, Visser wanted to become a priest. He studied theology at Utrecht University, and after graduation he worked as a preacher in a steel factory and as a youth worker. In the seventies Visser did missionary work in Indonesia. In 1979, he returned to the Netherlands and became managing director of the Stichting Kerkelijke Sociale Arbeid (Religious Social Work Foundation) in Rotterdam. In this capacity, Hans Visser became a priest at the St. Paul's Church in Rotterdam. In the following 30 years, this church played a leading role in the care for homeless people and drug addicts in Rotterdam.

In 2000, Visser received a PhD from Utrecht University with a thesis on urban development. He retired in 2007, wrote a book about his life (see literature below) and started several new aid projects, both in the Netherlands and Africa.

The Public Case

In 1979, Visser became priest at the St. Paul's church in Rotterdam. Under the management and religious leadership of Visser, it was decided that the St. Paul's church should have a special role in civic projects, rather than just perform religious services. Since then, it has annually launched several projects for people in great need, regardless of their religion, means and background, like refugees, homeless people, and drug addicts. At the time there was hardly any organized help for such people. Since then, there has been more and more support for these groups from other services and special public service organizations, but St. Paul's always remained the center: the church became their shelter, and they practically lived there. For

them, the church expanded the building with housing facilities. It became a professional organization, mainly run by volunteers. It is located in the heart of Rotterdam. Many people and politicians didn't like this, because of the constant exposure of human misery of the city in the middle of this prestigious (and expensive) office and retail district.

In 2007, the St. Paul's church was torn down by the council, but with a commitment, gained after many years of hard lobbying and protesting, that a new church and other new buildings would be constructed. Hans Visser has since retired.

Personal Impression

We meet Hans Visser on site: the St. Paul's church in Rotterdam. The entrance is busy and crowded, very unlike the serene silence of most church buildings nowadays. In fact, it takes a while to notice this is a church. We first enter a big room full of people and some collapsible tables with coffee, water and cheap food. People are coming and going, and by the look of them most are homeless and poor. The actual church space is at the back, and to the side is a room where the priest has his 'office' and this interview takes place. It is sparsely furnished with faded and worn chairs. Reverend Visser is a tall, heavy-set man with a bad leg, so he walks with a stick. He sits strategically at the head of a table so through the door, that stays open during our conversation, he can keep an eye on the work and people in the next room. Throughout the interview he is very alert and accessible for all kinds of questions and meetings; for example for a few people who came in during the interview to thank him for his help or intervention. He answers them briefly but politely. It is very clear that these are the people he works and devotes himself to; politicians and the media are a means to an end: helping these people with financial, health, child support and housing issues. He paints a dominant and impressive picture, while sitting in another room, far away at a table with his walking stick at hand. This clearly is his place and his mission. When he quotes from the bible or refers to how Christ lived and the purpose of churches as meeting places and help for the poor and weak, one look into the other room shows he practices what he preaches. He is at home here.

B. His Personal View

Account of Achievements

Since Visser became priest at the St. Paul's church and the decision was made to give the church a more social function, Visser has played a leading role in caring for the

helpless, homeless and poor people in Rotterdam for almost 30 years. Between 1987 and 1994, Visser ran Perron Nul (Platform Zero), a place near Rotterdam Central Station where heroin addicts could get methadone and use it. Visser started Platform Zero to give drug addicts a safe and free place where they could take their drugs. However, it attracted so many addicts (and their dealers) that Visser, social workers and police lost control of it: it got overcrowded, unsafe and crime-ridden. In 1994, Platform Zero was closed on the recommendations of the mayor of Rotterdam.

Hans Visser is an exceptional priest in an exceptional church. Since the seventies Visser has dedicated himself to those who needed help. His work was controversial and badly received by some politicians and media, but Visser could always count on support from many people. His daily activities consisted mostly of visiting addicted or homeless people and drink coffee with them, smoke a cigar or cigarette and just talk. By engaging with the marginalized people in society, Visser gave them a voice. Instead of treating them like helpless, stupid people, he took them seriously and treated them as equals.

Vision and Ambition

'Defiance of authorities is a force for good: you must stand up for your people.'

The people who financially supported the St. Paul's church initiatives did so because of Hans Visser's work. He explains that when they started with the special projects, no other organization was taking care of vulnerable people. In the following decades, several institutions were created to provide care to marginalized people. Visser has always criticized these organizations because he felt what they were doing did not help people in need at all. He argued they strayed from their real purpose, had a middle-class, somewhat condescending attitude, were not actually supportive but just did what the government told them to do, and were plagued by bureaucracy, absenteeism and understaffing at night and on weekends. Visser doesn't pull his punches. Of course, the ambitions of Visser and the St. Paul's church are religiously inspired, although they are also rationally connected to the relentless everyday misery around the church. The main idea is that a church is 'the body of Christ', since Christ always cared for the weak in society; this is what a church must do. With consistent a policy and actions, Visser is an exception among churches of any denomination in the Netherlands. Few can be seen to have such a big societal and political impact and service level. Most churches confine themselves to performing religious services, although some do do charitable work.

Every five years Visser and his colleagues review the policy of the St. Paul's church, and every time they find that there is a need for its work, especially for drug addicts. For this reason, the tearing down of the old St. Paul's church will not mean the end of the activities, but a new start in a new building.

C. Resistance Encountered

When the activities in the St. Paul's church started, there was some resistance from conservative church members. They could not understand why a church had to give shelter to drug addicts and they thought it would be at the expense of the 'pure' religious function. This resistance generally subsided over time. People connected to the church saw that Visser really helped people, and that the help was biblically inspired.

In 2002, a new political party was elected in the local elections in Rotterdam: Leefbaar Rotterdam (Livable Rotterdam, LR). One of the main issues of this party's political program was safety. Many Rotterdam citizens felt unsafe at the time and LR's policy catered to that. LR wanted to concentrate care for the homeless and for addicts in one place, and get it off the street. This plan was in direct contrast with the ideas of Visser, who wanted to set up care shelters all over town, so every neighborhood would bear its share of the burden and be aware of the problems of a big city. During LR's term of office, Visser had many conflicts with it. For example, members of this party suggested Visser made money from drug deals taking place on his premises and that this was the reason why he was reluctant to fight it (untrue of course; he cooperated intensively with the police). Looking back on his career in 2007, Visser argued that some of what he had achieved had been destroyed by LR, for instance interdisciplinary care for marginalized groups in society in the nineties. According to Visser and many other people, LR scuppered this care by focusing on safety and blaming the wrong people for the unsafe situation in Rotterdam.

Visser was never afraid to court controversy, for example on pedophilia. His criticism of other organizations in the social sphere often initiated public debates. In strong statements and articles, he always presented a deviating view on Dutch society, which often led to intense discussions and strong resistance, but also earned him the respect of many.

Of course there was resistance from the state-run public care services. One of the reasons why they wanted to end this shelter project was that it didn't comply with the many rules on quality, staff ratios and educational levels, accountability, etc.

D. Motives

Visser feels that the activities of the St. Paul's church are what people should expect from a church. He offers help to anyone who needs it, and calls his fight a struggle for truth. Since other organizations do not perform this work properly, the St. Paul's church is needed. Visser does not want to be a missionary. If people want to come to the St. Paul's church for religious services, then, of course, that is possible. But if people just want to come in for a chat, that is fine too. The main rule is: 'respect and get along with one another'.

In his recent autobiography, he also confesses to some mild character flaws like vanity (he obviously likes to be in the spotlight) and obstinacy, and a tendency to challenge authority - peccadilloes that explain his actions. He also 'struggles' with these traits, as good Christians do.

E. Tactical Observations and Leadership Style

'Don't respect "normal" routines.'

Being financially dependent on city government for some of his activities, Visser has always tried to keep up good relations with city councilors. Occasionally this was difficult, for example when LR ran the council. Visser never supported any political party, because he feels that church and politics ought to be separate; they should work together, even though they are not the same. Visser sometimes riled the government in his attempts to get things done, but his allies in local and national government ensured his defiant behavior was accepted. He harassed public institutions with his tenacity and criticism, but showed enough respect to convince people his only concern was the interests of the poor and homeless.

The St. Paul's church is overseen by a board to which Visser has always been accountable. The chairman of this board, who has fulfilled this voluntary position for

24 years, also worked for the Ministry of the Interior. Visser never had serious problems with the board; he could almost always rally them behind his plans.

His unusual actions tended to trigger lots of media attention, which Visser eagerly and unashamedly used to further his public cause. Despite (political) resistance a new St. Paul's church will be built. Some political parties had pushed for years for the church to be closed or at least removed from this central spot in the city, but Visser managed to protect it and succeeded in getting a new church built on the same spot in the center of town.

He says: 'You should build on your trust in society, especially when you do strange and new things in the open', and: 'You need public support when you go against routines and established public policies, so you have to actively galvanize and organize that support'.

He connects and works as easily with the poor or homeless people in society as with corporate and government elites, switching effortlessly between these realms. Although he certainly is not a diplomat or silent mediator, he has a way of connecting these people and levels of society by the sheer force of his personality and the weight of his message.

F. First Comments

- Visser clearly has an authoritative, proactive style, using his personality and rhetoric to influence and even impress his partners and networks. He is not afraid of resistance, in fact he provokes it, and appears to feed off it; this style makes him ideal opponent of right-wing populist parties like Leefbaar Rotterdam. His interviews and speeches bear witness to how personal, sometimes simplistic and conflict-prone his views and positions were - no holds barred. He publicly named and shamed politicians and executives who thwarted him. He felt he literally had to fight rigid politicians, contrary and lazy civil servants and disinterested citizens on behalf of the meek. As he once put it: 'The church should hit the streets with a clenched fist'.
- He is aware of the need for public support and uses his media network strategically to generate such support and build on the trust factor. Although he denies it, he is like a politician in the way he uses his media power and exposure to get things done; this of course exposes him to suspicions of 'personal interest'

and 'vanity'. He is very much an informal leader in the public domain, which explains his cooperative attitude to research and interviews, and is borne out in his own writings and studies: everything he does serves to legitimize what he is doing.

- There is some doubt whether the St. Paul's church's special services for the poor, homeless and drug addicts are still needed. When Visser started, the situation was urgent, but policies and public services ignored it. So he corrected a public service failure. With his entrepreneurial skills and his insistence on a modern Christian perspective he changed the focus of the church from religious services to social work. But later on these public services got in on the act and focused much more attention and money on the problems. Is his continued criticism on the functioning of these institutions still valid, or is it just that he can't let go of his own role and the work he does for these people? A complicating factor in this respect is that this development towards better public services (which could have obviated the work of the St. Paul's church) coincided, locally, with the growing success and political dominance of the right wing political party Leefbaar Rotterdam. In this harsher political climate he became a natural and trenchant spokesman for these people and their interests, and put them on the map politically. In the process, his role changed from giving shelter to the poor to being their informal and private political leader. Flexibility and strategic insight allowed him to make that switch successfully.
- A mark of his approach is his view on the role of the church in society. As a theologian, he can argue his view and approach with authority and good arguments. Perhaps surprisingly, few modern churches in the Netherlands share this approach and his views on Christianity. Many of them prefer to stay safely away from politics and from public support for vulnerable groups. It is not that they do the same work in silence; in that case the only difference would be Visser's public, conspicuous role. No, they do far less for the local community than Visser in the St. Paul's church. There may be some theological debate about whether Visser was right in his view on the role of modern church in big city or that he just used religion to allow him to continue helping these vulnerable people. Religion has probably helped him in his public role: who would question the intentions of a man of God?



'If you had told me two years ago that I would become a member, even a founder of a trade union, I would have laughed.'

Mei Li Vos

A. Introduction

Who is Mei Li Vos?

Mei Li Vos is a political scientist. From 2000 to 2002 she was a researcher with Infodrome, a government think tank. In 2001 Vos received her PhD from the University of Amsterdam with a thesis on international cooperation. She then worked as a researcher and advisor for several government ministries. Whilst working as a freelance publicist for *Vrij Nederland* and *Volkskrant*, she co-founded AVV, a new trade union. In 2007 she became a Member of Parliament for the PvdA (Labor Party). Because of this career change, Vos could no longer be an active AVV member anymore. On the other hand, as an MP she could fight for the cause of the AVV at a higher or more influential level.

Recently her first parliamentary term ended. The party committee did not place her high enough on the list of candidates for the next election to stand a chance of being re-elected. When despite a vigorous campaign the party conference did not put her higher on the list, she resigned as a candidate. She would have loved to go on as an MP, but her party decided otherwise.

She has recently published a book about her experiences and insights as a MP. In it, she tries to explain to the general public in everyday language how parliament works and what role politics can play in our society. The book is part textbook (how politics and parliament work) and part anthropological study (through her trained, detached eye).

Her personal background is well known due to her media exposure at the time of the foundation of AVV and later as an MP. Mei Li Vos was born in Eindhoven in 1970 to a Dutch father and Chinese-Indonesian mother. Mei Li means 'beautiful eyes' in Chinese. In one of her interviews she said that her mother's Indonesian background

had little influence on her upbringing, values or perspective. What did, was being raised as the only girl in a big family of 6 in the south of the Netherlands.

The Public Case

The 'Alternative Trade Union' (AVV) is a Dutch trade union founded in September 2005 by a group of nine people who were disaffected with the existing trade unions. AVV represents workers who are currently hardly or not at all represented in consultative bodies. These 'outsiders' include independent workers like freelancers, flexible workers and the self-employed. Young workers, elderly people and teachers also come in this category, because their employment situation is insecure. AVV was founded to cater for people who were not comfortable with the existing trade unions, but did need trade union support. AVV wants to democratize collective bargaining agreements, so that all workers, and not just members of labor unions, can vote on collective labor agreements and pension schemes. According to the founders of the AVV, existing trade unions do not represent the interests and positions of 'outsiders' (workers on temporary contracts). The strong position of 'insiders' (employees on full contract) causes less certainty for the 'outsiders'.

At first, the founders of the AVV only intended to publish a manifesto. On reflection, they wanted to do more for the 'outsiders'. In order to organize themselves, they needed a real trade union with all its trappings: a civil-notary, regulations, plenary meetings, the works. It would have to be flexible enough to fit the needs of today's generation. Of course, as the workers they were trying to support were mostly young people, it used the Internet as its main channel to inform and communicate with members.

The formation of the AVV was published in the national broadsheet *Volkscrant* on 1 October 2005. Its main points were:

1. AVV wants to democratize collective bargaining agreements, so that every worker can vote on the agreements and pension schemes, not just members of trade unions.
2. AVV wants better and smarter measures to fight discrimination of immigrants, older and younger people in the labor market.
3. AVV wants more investment in permanent education, as an alternative for protecting jobs for people on permanent contract. A flexible workforce is the best way to ensure a stronger economy, but only if employers, government and trade unions invest in people at the same time.
4. AVV wants a place on the Social and Economic Council that advises the

government, so the interests of young workers and freelancers are represented.

The AVV blames the established trade unions for being primarily concerned with pay rises, whereas the workers currently prioritize other issues, such as flexible working hours. These trade unions offer their members a traditional service, mostly in the shape of formal influence and a helpdesk giving advice on conflicts with employers. The AVV wants to offer the new generation 'service memberships' comparable to Greenpeace and the Dutch road assistance. The failings and shortcomings of the established trade unions created a need for a new kind of trade union: AVV.

Personal Impression

We meet Mei Li Vos in her apartment in Amsterdam in a busy street near the centre of town. This is where she lives and works. It was her workplace as a self-employed writer and journalist; and it was here that the founding meetings were held for the new trade union for freelancers and the self-employed, like herself. It is full of stacks of paper and a big laptop, but also feminine and comfortable. It's the place of a working woman, but it retains a hint of student digs. Mei Li Vos is intense: she talks with a lot of gestures. She is comfortable talking about political issues, but less so about personal drives and motives. She is an attractive young woman and she shows it in her dress and general appearance. She is not very tall, but compensates this with a fierce gaze, outgoing manners and a very fashionable look. Her pretty looks are often cited to explain her popularity with the media and her easy access to them. She is certainly used to being interviewed, but not so much on our topic, personal leadership and personal drives. She is still quite young and it seems as if she is still a little overwhelmed by the success of AVV and her own media success. She is very modest about founding AVV and also about the impact of the new union, because initially it was not taken very seriously. She talks openly about the resistance she met in founding AVV and people concerned. Maybe that is also because it is part of the rhetoric when you found an activist organization: its success and impact are partly due to the resistance from official institutions. It all seems to tie together: her home, just graduated, self-employed, founding a new trade union for such workers and her general lifestyle and fierceness in conversation and debate, and on top of that her training in political science. Her motto might be: 'If the institutional order has a gap, use your initiative to plug it'. Her training in political analysis taught her how trade unions and representation works in the Netherlands. It's clear why any political party would like her on its side.

B. Her Personal View

Account of Achievements

Vos founded the AVV because she wanted to bring about rapid change. She stresses that the real changes, of course, have to be made by the FNV and CNV (the two established Dutch trade unions); however, it was AVV that exposed the need for a new type of worker representation, and put the established trade unions on the path of change.

The group of 'pioneers' to which she belonged wanted to show that real changes were needed. Given that big institutions move slowly, the change had to come from the outside. Working just one day a week, Vos earned enough to get by. The rest of week she worked for the AVV. During this time, Mei Li Vos became a media personality. It was pretty intimidating initially, but it also was the most exciting period of her career.

Vos stresses that although it was the busiest time of her life, it was also one of the most satisfying. Also on a personal level, which she didn't expect. 'It felt like a real rush,' she says.

After she formally left the union, Martin Pikaart, mathematician and co-founder of the AVV, became chairman. Because of its short history and its relatively small membership of only three thousand, the AVV has not yet been accepted as a partner in collective bargaining negotiations. According to Pikaart, the AVV is currently appealing for financial support from the government so it will be possible to hold a membership drive. One of AVV's initiatives was to sue the Dutch General Pension Fund for Public Employees ABP. On 23 January 2008, the district court ruled that age discrimination in the pension fund was permissible, a ruling the AVV intends to appeal. One of the successes achieved so far is a partnership with insurance company Cordaris, which provides many services to the AVV, that gives freelancers the option to choose between several pension funds, something she is very pleased with. In addition, a procedure has been devised that should allow not only members of the trade unions to take part in collective bargaining, but everyone who is affected by a collective labor agreement.

Employers nowadays see their young employees changing jobs very quickly. One of the reasons is often that they are not willing to pay for collective early retirement schemes from which they do not expect to personally benefit in the future. In the

harbor and construction sector in particular, trade unions are explicitly losing touch with their rank and file due to various new types of employment contracts job security in the traditional sense no longer exists. For the elderly this is a much bigger problem than for youngsters. The dominant model of collective pension schemes is failing; people are taking care of themselves nowadays. 'Teachers in Action', a teacher pressure group, wanted the AVV to support it. The AVV has pledged to represent 'Teachers in Action' in collective bargaining, but before the AVV can be accepted as a bargaining partner, more teachers must become members of this trade union. The more members AVV has, the fewer reasons for the employers to ignore the AVV in collective bargaining.

The influence of Mei Li Vos in Parliament on these labor market issues was limited. The PvdA seemed to be worried it might lose the support of the FNV (one of the biggest Dutch trade unions) to the SP (Socialist Party) and therefore still tries to accommodate it.

Under the influence of the AVV, other trade unions have made some changes to their organizations. By drawing attention to the case and putting the facts out in the open, it has boosted the more progressive elements in the FNV and CNV. The FNV has set up a trade union for younger people and another trade union has been created on the Internet. Mei Li Vos also notes changes in the way the FNV caters for the needs of the 'outsiders' by making changes in collective labor agreements.

Vision and Ambition

Founding the AVV was partly an expression of frustration, whereas Mei Li Vos herself had experienced bad staff policies in the employment contract procedures at the University of Amsterdam and the Ministry of General Affairs. She had found that young people, part-time and freelance workers were treated as second-class workers with fewer rights and benefits than the older workers on full contracts. She felt she had to act and do something about this. As a child, she was taught to show initiative to achieve the things you can and really want. Mei Li Vos was ready to 'go the extra mile' and decided to quit her job to work on the foundation of the AVV and to look for work on a self-employed basis.

Of the nine pioneers, Mei Li Vos and two others worked hard to create the AVV. She was fortunate to have work as a columnist on the side during that time, because that allowed her to work on establishing the trade union. Vos wonders whether she would have made the same choices if she had had a mortgage or children. As things stand,

Vos could not care less about not having a fixed income or life insurance. As a Member of Parliament, she could no longer speak as freely as before or be an active member of the AVV.

Because many people supported her, she could not resist when she was asked to stand for Parliament for the PvdA. This was a very challenging and promising career change for Vos; she knew exactly which laws she wanted to change and what battles she wanted to fight. As a Member of Parliament, she hoped to be able to do more for the trade union movement. She wanted the PvdA to become the party of all workers, not just older workers on fixed contracts with pension rights. The institutions that negotiate and make employment laws and regulations should adjust to the way people work nowadays. They have not fully realized how much of the labor market is made up of flexible labor. For this group, which consists primarily of freelancers, there are no collective benefits in place. Vos emphasizes that there is no need to change the entire employment law and regulations on forced or voluntarily retirement; all she wants is a few specific adjustments for this particular, growing group of workers.

C. Resistance Encountered

AVV has often been portrayed as a 'liberal high-society club' in negative campaigning by the existing trade unions and the Socialist Party (SP), which is strongly linked to these traditional trade unions. They claimed AVV was a trade union for highly educated and rich people only and that the motivation of the 'pioneers' was dishonest. These critics described Vos as a liberal, which clashed with a desire to set up a labor union.

The SER (the national Social and Economic Council which acts as a negotiating platform between employer and employee organizations and has a statutory right to advise national government) even offered Vos a special advisory position to get her to drop her campaign to get the AVV officially recognized as a social partner. If she had accepted it, she would have been forced to give up her fight for the cause and leave the AVV. Vos turned down the offer; she was not even tempted.

Using its institutionalized political power in the PvdA, the FNV had Mei Li Vos dropped to 36th place on the list of election candidates. She holds the former chairman of the FNV, Lodewijk de Waal, responsible for this. Ton Heerts, a member of the FNV executive committee, was placed 5th on the list by the party election committee, so

above her. Vos explains she had no idea how much power the FNV still wielded in the party. In her view the PvdA remains too focused on protecting traditional full-time employess, instead of the growing number of outsiders or young people starting out in the labor market. During her time in Parliament she was given little opportunity to change the laws and regulations needed to really influence the labor market and protect vulnerable new workers.

D. Motives

Her main drive of course goes back to her own work experience and the indignation she felt about unequal rights in the workplace, first as a young employee on a temporary part-time contract, and then as a self-employed worker. Add to that her knowledge gained at university of political processes, of how the Netherlands is run and how its public administration and politics work, and it will come as no surprise that she wanted to use this knowledge to fill a need she identified. Mei Li Vos is aware of the negative forces exercised by the established trade unions and is willing to fight them. She is not going to sit back and take it, and she knows exactly what she wants to change. She intends to represent the AVV's aims in Parliament.

E. Tactical Observations and Leadership Style

Mei Li Vos feels that sharp and fundamental change can only be brought about through external intervention. This is illustrated by how the nine AVV pioneers had to fight entrenched positions.

Clearly, the media also play a pivotal role. The foundation of the AVV emerged from a massive demonstration in Amsterdam by workers unhappy with their employment conditions. The media were instrumental in focusing attention to the subject. Current AVV chairman Martin Pikaart points out that the media have lost interest since Vos' departure. With her appearance and her strong personality she had generated a lot of attention for the AVV. Pikaart still regrets Vos left: 'It is a pity. Mei Li attracted a lot of media interest. She still does good work for the AVV, but the exposure is nothing like before. It's very unfortunate: I am not an attractive, charming young girl in an elegant summer dress. But there is hope for the future: plenty of young and talented women are moving up through the ranks.'

F. First Comments

- Mei Li Vos has certainly tried to change the workings of Dutch society and the standard ways of labor regulations and central negotiations. She has had some success in establishing a new trade union, although it is still struggling to be heard. But as the problems with the new entrants in the labor market are being debated more and more (Can they get a mortgage? Why must young people pay for pension rights they will personally not benefit from, etc.), the AVV is increasingly invited to participate in this debate, especially by the media. Institutional change is slow, but if they persevere, they will help to establish the rights of the workers they represent. So although her actions and her public intentions aimed at the public good have been positive, at the time I interviewed her, her actual success had been minimal. But even the evaluation of the societal meaning of her actions, typical for this public and political setting, has its detractors. The traditional trade unions found the AVV undercut their base and position. The core value of a trade union is just what it says: to unionize, overcoming the different values, perspectives and positions of workers all over the world and unite them against the interests of capital and employers. Although the style, rhetoric, culture and methods of the established Dutch trade unions were becoming obsolete and they were losing touch with youths and a changing labor market (which does not necessarily benefit workers, but is a result of the dynamics of the labor market), nobody was allowed to say that publicly, let alone start a competing trade union. The second observation is obvious: she started collective action from her own perspective and interest with a public aim and impact. But is this actually unselfish? Maybe she's just another lobbyist trying to influence rules and regulations to make the market work in her interest? Wasn't this founding of AVV a means to a personal end: to introduce new laws to get a better income, more rights and better access to insurance? Perhaps, but two arguments work against this analysis, which seems to conclude that this is not a public action for the public good. The first is that the AVV has so far never got into the position to even try to formulate and lobby for this kind of agenda, so we don't know, thanks to the resistance of the trade union establishment. The second point is that this definition of personal interest in the public arena also is very much applicable to the trade unions, so that can be no reason to resist their public, official position, why then should it be so for this new initiative? Maybe institutional innovation and action in the public interest first starts and is propelled forward by a private action for a private interest, for which current institutional practice is becoming a hindrance?

- One might say that Mei Li Vos was both helped and hindered by having studied political science: helped because it taught her the workings of national political systems and how to operate in them, speak their language, and wield influence. It hindered her because she came in too soon, she kind of jumped from her small but real personal experience to a big, national, confrontation and institutional renewal.
- In her case there is a question about one of the classic vices, vanity. Her good looks attract much media attention, but is that her aim or did it just happen in spite of herself? I think she never tried to use her looks; this is just the way the media works these days, but it gave her a media position which she used to cause more stirring and public impact, than any other starting initiative would create.
- Her personal case is also very interesting because of the switch she made from private, societal action to politics. She even gave up her position for that as an independent columnist and commentator of the public cause. All we can conclude in her case that for her, for the unions and for the Labor Party this was just a continuation of her struggle with different means and in a, partially, different arena. In this new position she encountered the same resistance, but now from within the Labor Party.

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Sister Witlox

A. Introduction

Who is sister Giuseppa Witlox?

Sister Witlox is a nun of the St. Augustine Congregation of St. Monica. Little is known about her, due to the modesty and secrecy the nuns cherish and observe. Not their person or personal gain and vanity are important, but the good works they do in society in the eyes of God. Her role during my study was leading a care and support project for homeless people in the inner city of Amsterdam. Shortly after the interview she became member of the executive board of the convent located in the woods near Hilversum.

The order was established by Father van Nuenen and lives by the precepts and rules of St. Augustine, who preached giving love to people as a way to love God, and that building a community was necessary to help the world. They try to provide help and shelter where possible. First of all this means giving them food, a bath and a bed, but also lending homeless people their ear and offering them encouragement. The congregation was from the beginning destined to be an active order, with of course also attention to contemplation. The nun's motto is: 'We do from our hearts what has to be done.'

Sister Witlox, now in her eighties, has been a member of this congregation for her entire adult life.

General background of the order

Lacking deeper personal information about Sister Witlox herself, I present here the official background of her congregation as part of her personal vision and background. In most of these social activities the Sister was actively involved as part of her vocation. The St. Augustine religious community was founded in Utrecht in 1934. Ten

young women started living in the convent under the spiritual leadership of an Augustinian friar, Sebastianus van Nuenen.

Next to their religious duties, the nuns spent much of their time helping the poor in their neighborhood. The convent set up social and educational clubs for children, provided the fathers a place to get together and play games (to keep them from drinking) and taught the mothers to cook proper and healthy meals.

In October 1939, the order opened Meisjesstad (Girls' Town), a shelter for (temporarily) homeless women, often still girls, and their children. To this day, Girls' Town remains the most important activity of the community. Soon the shelter in Utrecht became too small for the numbers of women needing help. In 1946, a new home was opened in Hilversum, near Utrecht, for mothers who needed some rest and a break from their daily lives. There were also some holiday cabins in the grounds for families who could not afford to go on holiday.

In the 1950s and 1960s four other homes were opened in the Netherlands, and one in France. Girls' Town is still an important place of shelter and care for many women and girls.

The nuns are also active in the care for homeless people in Amsterdam, mostly men. Recently, this part of their activities was legally split off from the rest of the order and placed under a normal regime of local government subsidies and regulations and is now being handled by a regular local welfare organization.

Over the past decade the convent's population has fallen heavily. Since 2001 the sisters of St. Augustine's are searching for new ways to keep the convents going, e.g. by forming communities with women who do not want to enter the convent permanently, but want to support their good works. In March 2009, 78 nuns celebrated the 75th anniversary of the order.

The Public Case

The specific case we look at is the project of the nuns operating from a location in the Warmoesstraat, in the heart of Amsterdam. It started modestly, with house visits in the neighborhood, asking if help was needed and if there were any hidden problems. Soon the inner city pastor asked them to visit schools too, with the same intention. They started a crisis support centre for people in all sorts of urgent need. First mainly for (young) women, as in Utrecht, who were struggling with domestic violence,

homelessness, unwanted pregnancies, etc. Later, they also set up urgent care for men, in particular homeless people and drug addicts, in their convent on Warmoesstraat, which also became their food and support delivery place, and a refuge for all people in distress in the inner city of Amsterdam.

They initially prepared ten beds for overnight stays. By giving up their beautiful refectory and other living quarters they created even more, although it took a lot of refurbishment. The nuns aimed to forgo government subsidies, so they would have more freedom in the refitting and running of their hostel, but also to be able to give immediate help to all kinds of men and women in distress from any background without official regulations or other local government red tape.

Because of its policy of independence from government subsidies, the order depends entirely on volunteers, food donations and philanthropy. And this is where the innovation we investigated comes in: the 'streetvertising' project. In this project sister Witlox secured sponsorship from ice cream company Ben and Jerry's and other companies, for warm coats to be given for free to the homeless in the inner city of Amsterdam, which had the logo of the sponsors on the back. This is why the case of sister Witlox is called 'Streetvertising', advertising on the street benefiting the people living on the streets. She used her commercial and networking skills ('going the extra mile', as these are far from typical skills for a nun) to create this public value: providing the homeless with free sponsored coats to keep warm in winter, raising money for the convent and also raising the social status of the homeless, giving them a sense of doing a job for the nuns in return for their help. They handed out leaflets that read: 'I am an ambassador for the nuns of St. Augustine. My work consists of streetvertising', and: 'You just noticed me. That means that I - just briefly - became visible. That is one of the benefits of streetvertising: giving me a job.'

In 2001 and 2005 the congregation established new communities, which welcomed lay sisters. The St. Augustine Congregation, like most orders, is faced with the problem of its members getting older and few new recruits joining. However, plenty younger people are eager to support the sisters' good works, even though they don't want to take holy orders. In 2006, the charitable work of the nuns in Amsterdam was taken over by a professional welfare organization and the nuns, many of them in their seventies and eighties, retired to their convent in Hilversum and a rebuild convent in the middle of Utrecht city to a calmer life of contemplation.

For Ben & Jerry's, this sponsorship was a perfect means to communicate its involvement in corporate social responsibility projects. At the time of the project, the company's website explained the three dimensions of this strategy.

Use of Fair Trade ingredients. Procurement of Fair Trade raw materials has been adopted by various socially responsible businesses who exemplify corporate citizenship. This is part of the wider framework for Corporate Social Responsibility. Fair Trade products (or Fairtrade as it is known in many countries) such as coffee, clothes and chocolate, address some of the problems associated with regulating factory and workplace conditions of companies that procure goods and services in foreign countries and import their products into their home countries. Fair Trade standards ensure that employees have safe working conditions, work reasonable hours and are paid fairly for their work.

Engaging the community through community-based projects. One approach to engaging in corporate social responsibility is through community-based development projects. Community-based and community-driven development projects have become an important form of development assistance among global socially responsible companies. An economic relationship implies a strategy of engaging the wider community into the core business activity of the company so that communities become embedded in corporate supply chain strategy to create a sustainable business.

Corporate philanthropy. Ben & Jerry's also donates a portion of its pre-tax profits to corporate philanthropy as part of its efforts to be more socially responsible. Corporate philanthropy is employee-led through the Ben & Jerry's Foundation and Community Action Teams (CATS) at each site.

It is clear that participation in this streetvertising project fits the second and third part of the company's CSR philosophy, especially because the initiative to cooperate with sister Witlox was born in a meeting with the national CEO, but that it is much more innovative in the way it was carried out, due to the ideas of sister Witlox.

Personal Impression

We meet sister Witlox in the convent in Hilversum. It's a big estate with a lot of greenery and various outbuildings. It's like driving into the grounds of a manor. From the road you can only see trees. You go through the gate, along a long, winding road lined by trees and lawns. Sister Witlox explains the estate was bought and donated by some wealthy benefactors from Amsterdam and Hilversum to allow the nuns to do

their good work, especially for the poor and for unmarried mothers. Later, they moved their operations to the cities where these women lived, because the convent was too remote. In the middle is a main building where the sisters work and eat.

Organizing this interview was a long process. I first met her when I chaired a seminar on philanthropy in health care, where she was invited to talk about her sponsored project of warm clothing for the homeless in the centre of Amsterdam. So she knew me and knew of my interest in the case. But sister Witlox hesitated, because of the modesty she and her order observe: 'This is not about me' and 'We are a contemplative order', and 'When the work is done, we move on'. Finally we meet in her own new environment, in Hilversum. She has left the project in Amsterdam to join the executive board of the order. She reluctantly accepted this post, which others might see as a step forward, but she did not. She had fulfilled this post before, so it seemed to be a step back. But, now in her 80s, she hardly is in the mood to reflect on career moves. She feels that directly helping the homeless of Amsterdam is more appropriate to the purpose and mission of the order than management. Also, it made it important to find a good successor. When she found one in a trained welfare professional, she left the project and moved back to Hilversum, no longer able to delay the decision. She did so not without regrets and with mixed feelings, unconvinced by the argument that at her age being on the streets at night could be dangerous. We sit in a room that is somewhere between a sitting room and a reception room, with old-fashioned polished furniture, a ticking clock, and a view of the woods around us through the window. It truly is a place of contemplation and inspiration. The interview is quiet and open and, despite her earlier reluctance, she takes all the time in the world to answer my questions. She is calm and unassuming, speaks ironically about herself and the way society works and how she convinced the CEOs of companies like Ben and Jerry's to take part in the project. Her face lights up when she talks about 'her men', the homeless men she knew and cared for individually.

B. Her Personal View

Account of Achievements

In Amsterdam, she was famous for her work and ideas to help the homeless. Every day the nuns prepared hundreds of sandwiches to give to the poor and the homeless. One day at a dinner with the Rotary club, Witlox had a conversation with the manager of an advertising agency. He had been touched by her story and gave her his business

card. When money was needed to expand the convent to create more rooms, Witlox approached the manager, and together with the advertising agency she came up with the 'streetvertising' project. Homeless people were given a free winter coat with advertising space on the back. Witlox approached companies, offering them an opportunity to advertise in a appealing but controversial way, but also got the homeless people actually involved in a project. They did not just get food handouts, but played an 'active role in an advertisement and fundraising project' and 'made a contribution'.

For sister Witlox, this project was part and parcel of her active involvement with 'her men' on the streets. She also tried to arrange fun trips for them, like a visit to a pancake restaurant or a soccer match. She also approached Adidas to donate shoes and in the end obtained 65 pairs for free.

Vision and Ambition

Witlox says the nuns live a contemplative and at the same time active life, following the rules of St. Augustine. This means that they live 'with God in prayer', but also have an active task in society. Witlox has always worked hard to get support from companies. She says that it is important to engage companies to show solidarity with the needy and help solve problems in society. She wants the order to be in close contact with society, and not build a proverbial wall around the convent.

Witlox tries to help people in need by keeping them active while searching for solutions together with organizations. For her, abandoning people is just not on. When donations fall away, you search for new sources of money, overcoming your own worries and uncertainties. You look for new contacts and new resources, and stay focused on helping the homeless. At such difficult times she needed her faith and values most, so as to surmount her own sense of inferiority, e.g. when meeting 'big shots', like the CEOs of big companies.

C. Resistance Encountered

The strongest resistance Witlox faced in her career was probably on this 'streetvertising project'. She hoped that many companies would be enthusiastic about her ideas, but only ice cream producer Ben & Jerry's came on board. Many companies, especially with head offices abroad, balked at the idea of letting homeless people walk around with their company logo on their backs. Sister Witlox

was completely baffled by this reaction. Dutch companies tended to respond positively to this innovative way of sponsoring homeless people. This is surprising; private funding or sponsoring of welfare projects is often frowned upon in the Netherlands, as also illustrated in the case of the food banks (see the portrait of the Sies). There are some special factors that might explain this relative favorable response. There was a great deal of sympathy for the nuns and their good work, which they did on their own initiative and with their own resources. The citizens of Amsterdam were sympathetic and supportive of their work. Nobody doubted their good intentions. The homeless men were also positive about the project and their role in it, which further convinced the broader public of the philosophy to get behind streetvertising. The men were very grateful for the support and expressed their gratitude by taking their work seriously. They felt appreciated and taken seriously as human beings. And, finally, in this case Dutch public accepted the consequences of the explicit philosophy of the nuns of staying independent from government regulation, which would be the inevitable result of subsidies. Many people understood that some of these homeless people had sad and maybe even dodgy backgrounds that would stand in the way of official government help. In other countries - especially the USA, where private donations and cooperation in charitable projects are far more common - there were major debates about the ethics of 'using' poor, helpless people as walking advertisements; some people found this exploitative.

There was also some opposition to the streetvertising project from within the order; many nuns found this new way of generating funding and helping the homeless people questionable and controversial. They could not understand why the convent should raise money in this way. And they disapproved of all the media attention, which was inevitable in this specific project: after all, it was about advertising so business was always going to be part of it. It ran counter to their traditional attitude of modesty and doing good work behind the scenes. Over time they realized that these new methods were needed and put aside their doubts, because the convent could no longer get by on donations alone.

Sister Witlox mentions that the convent never encountered much resistance from local government, but neither did it support them. The same applied to other charity organizations that were initially critical, but came to realize that the work of the nuns really helped.

D. Motives

Sister Witlox lives by the precepts of St. Augustine, one of which is a duty to help and serve others. Christian morality is sister Witlox' main motive in her work. The nuns consider it their duty to help those in need. They want to be close to the people, teach people how to pray and how to be connected with each other and thus confer on them some of their own religious inspiration. The rules of St. Augustine they live by include values like helpfulness, modesty, sobriety, sacrificing your own health and forsaking comfort.

E. Tactical Observations and Leadership Style

Although sister Witlox' motives and lifestyle would seem to be 'traditional' and Christian, she used 'worldly' skills to make her plans bear fruit. She 'sold' her ideas and need for funding to companies in an almost commercial way. She knew how to approach top management of companies to get them on board and support the nuns and their work for homeless people. Over the past decades, she has built up an impressive high-level network in this way. For example, during the Rotary dinner, she sold her story to the director of the advertising agency, and approached him when she needed someone to help her with a new campaign.

Clearly, sister Witlox is not a shrinking violet, hiding behind the walls of a convent. She is worldly wise, and not afraid to engage with modern, profit-driven companies in her search for help for those in need.

In her analysis of the search and selection of her successor we see a glimpse of her style and beliefs. The candidate was certainly more professional and qualified for the work than she was, but she doubted his social entrepreneurial style: would he be able to find new innovative ways, as she had done, to keep the project going, or would he lean too much towards looking for government support instead of private donations? This bears out how difficult the transition is from volunteer work to professionalization, but also from a private realm to a more public realm, that requires special leadership on the part of this pioneer. Her doubts were probably justified: a few years later the project applied for local government subsidy because, it was claimed, it could no longer be sustained due the diminishing volunteer workers (the sisters, who got ever older and frailer and eventually left their location in the city

centre) and financial support. Who knows what solutions sister Witlox might have come up with?

Sister Witlox also takes a new approach to the legitimization issue: she feels it is best for society and for the people for whom the help is meant, when they can tell their own stories. All she does is give them a platform (like for example in the streetvertising project) and a support framework, but they must be the ambassadors in their own words with stories fitting their personal backgrounds, that will work best for public opinion. Again this is illustrative of her modest and value-based leadership approach.

F. First Comments

- This case presents a unique governance issue: how much help, support and knowhow does the governance context of a convent give someone who wants to be innovative to ensure the continuity of her project and help for 'her men'? A convent is certainly value-driven, and aimed at contributing to public value, but probably rather conservative in its approach, not used to working with commercial businesses, and unaccustomed to, maybe even opposed to, media attention. The informal leadership position and authority attached to her background within the management of the convent must certainly have increased sister Witlox' room for maneuver and helped to get this project off the ground.
- In her style of leadership we see a struggle to combine the values and views of the congregation with her work with and appeal to the outside world: modesty, respect, letting the homeless people speak for themselves, no coercion. These values lead to her approach that, while she acknowledges the importance of legitimization, she prefers to leave the public storytelling and the rhetoric that is necessary for this to others. This sets her apart from many other civil leaders in this research, some of whom are master storytellers about themselves and use this to legitimize their actions.
- In the value domain it is striking how Christianity is combined with a very worldly task and approach. The nuns' twofold mission - contemplation and social work - appear to be permanently in friction. The nuns could have backed out as soon as they were faced with financial and volunteering problems. But they persevered, not afraid to search for new ways. Their values sustained their resolve, but they could also have worked in the opposite direction: 'We have done enough here, continuing this social work is hopeless, let's retreat to contemplation.' It probably

was her genuine commitment in combination with a new interpretation of the original mission of the congregation that put sister Witlox in a leadership role within the congregation to search for other, innovative, ways to continue the project. So values can give direction and drive, but they also can confuse, and we need leadership to provide a steady course, based on the leader's interpretation of the values involved in confrontation to the task and the wider world.

- The fact that she calls her charges 'my men' illustrates her combination of support and respect. Her modesty does not prevent her from being courageous and outspoken and not afraid of public opinion.