



Heritage as a source of inspiration: changing identities in Arnemuiden

**“Remarkable Identity”
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Geography of Inshore Fishing and Sustainability <http://www.gifsproject.eu/nl/>

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Literature

1. The construction of identity: a theoretical framework

1.1 Problem definition and contributions to solutions

In the project description of GIFS (Geography of Inshore Fishing and Sustainability) it is written in the problem definition that the fisheries sector is facing significant changes. The fishing quotas and subsidies are being reduced, or are being distributed in different ways. Many fishing communities find themselves in different stages of a transformation whereby to remain viable they must find new sources of income. Also, increased efforts are required to better position and profile the fishing communities and their harbours.

The developments for a viable and sustainable future economy should be based on the old core qualities and values of the fishing communities, and make maximum use of the available social, cultural and economic capital within these communities. By doing so, there are possibilities to reinforce the cohesion of these communities, their economic position and their competitiveness.

The value of the product 'FISH' and its natural environment, the North Sea and the Channel, can be enhanced by providing insights into the value of the product. This can be done in three ways:

1. through the organisation of activities in the community with fish as a focal point, resulting in new and sustainable 'added value' for the economic activities;
2. the creation and organisation of fish-related activities in the community that, in turn, may lead to new activities. Specific consideration should be given to a region's own culture heritage, which may be an enormous source of inspiration for the design of items such as fashion/clothing, household objects, style and design of architecture, art and culture.

Both of the above activities contribute to the re-evaluation of the product 'FISH', the original characteristics and the authentic identities of the communities and the pride of the native inhabitants. These go on to build a platform for the third target:

3. The positioning and profiling of the locality by means of new hardware (e.g. investments in infrastructure or facilities), software (e.g. events, branding), orgware (e.g. education, cooperation) and virtual ware (e.g. internet sites, storytelling), creating economic and social-cultural reinforcements and spin-offs. This will contribute greatly towards the attractiveness of localities in the mind of visitors, investors and existing businesses employing local inhabitants. Locality branding and marketing play prominent roles in the positioning and profiling of a location by focusing on its own individual distinguishing 'capital' and identity.

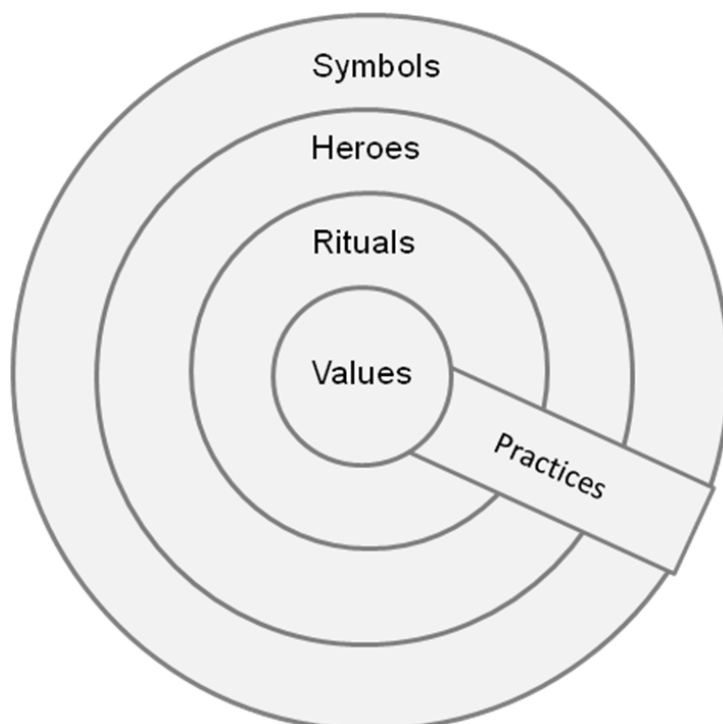
1.2 Identity and distinctiveness

Important questions are: 'How may we discover or assess this identity, distinctiveness and capital for fishing communities?', 'How can old core qualities and values of the fishing communities be assessed?' and 'How can (economic) activities be created and organised so that it creates income and added value?'.

On an abstract level, identity and culture are under pressure in a lot of places. On the one hand, globalisation, with its typical standardisation and uniformity, often leads to non-places: places with no recognisable identity, history or atmosphere. In the world of fisheries, global

competition is enormous, fish farming is on the increase world-wide, fish quotas and subsidies for fish catches are facing a downward trend. On the other hand, regionalisation is making people search for their own identity, origin and distinctiveness. This results in questions such as: 'Who and what are we?', 'How and from what can we make a living?', 'How do we get a grip on our lives?', 'What distinguishes one place from another place and destination?', 'What is the 'genius loci' - the heart and soul of a place?', 'What is the 'sense of place'; the feel of a place?', 'What image does the outside world have (van Keken, 2011)?' Questions that can be asked of fishing communities as well, together with questions such as: 'How do we position and profile ourselves today and in the future?', and 'How are we to find new sources of income to stay viable?'

Culture within (regional) identity is an important starting point, because cultural differences differentiate places from one another. According to Anholt (2002), culture, like geography (including landscape) is an unquestionable USP – it is a direct reflection of the country's imperative uniqueness, which product-style marketing often erases; it is truly a unique quality of the country in question (p. 235). And where Anholt writes 'countries', one can also read 'regions' or 'towns'. Culture can be seen as a manifestation of differences. Hofstede's description of culture can be considered and used because he sees that as mental program, the 'software of the mind' (Hofstede, 2001, p. 15). Hofstede distinguishes four elements of a culture that also could be related to Hall's (1996) and Anderson's (1991) definitions: heroes (as part of the narrative of the nation), rituals (which maintain the origins, continuity, traditions and emphasise timelessness), symbols (which often provide a reference to foundational myths) and values (instilled in the people of 'folk'). Symbols are the more superficial elements of a culture. Heroes are models of behaviour; persons that have a high symbolic value, high esteem and can function as an example. Rituals are codes of behaviour, ways in which we deal with every day or annual events, to celebrate something or to express our mourning. Values are the collective inclination to choose one course over the other; values are feelings with a direction (Hofstede, 2001, p.20).



Hofstede's onion diagram of culture

Culture in Hofstede's onion diagram can be compared to changing signifiers and colouring elements in Noordman's model (adapted by Govers & Go). They consider these elements to

be the elements that can change identities. Another important dimension and starting point should be the history of a place, which, according to Noordman (2004), is one of the two structural elements in identities, together with the location. History can give insights in the strengths and weaknesses of the place. History tells about the culture, the economic activities, if the focus is on the economy and research is done. What was dominant in the economy in a certain period in a certain place? And with the fisheries, questions can be asked when and how fishing as an economy started. The appearance of a fishing industry as an economy has to do with what happened in the past, geographical location, and/or changes in these, the rise and fall of other industries, other neighbouring cities. The focus on economic, social and/or cultural history, events that happened can tell a lot about the place's identity. Culture, cultural heritage and the history of places are a never ending inspirational source for new product development and/or activities.

Structural	Semi-static	Changing signifiers	Colouring elements
Location	Size	Great events/great heroes	Past symbolism
History	Physical appearance	Food/architecture/arts/literature	Past behaviour
		Popular culture	
	Inner mentality	Language /traditions/rituals/folk	Communication

Composing elements of identity (Noordman, 2004) adapted by Govers & Go, 2009

To the fishing communities it is rather stating the obvious to say that fish(ing) is distinctive, as long as the opportunities are there. It is an important economic activity, and part of culture in many ways. The challenge, however, is how these economic en cultural activities can be transformed, reorganised, reshaped, strengthened and redesigned in a contemporary way, respecting its heritage, and creating new possibilities of income and employment. Cross-cultural, cross-sectoral pollination might create opportunities.

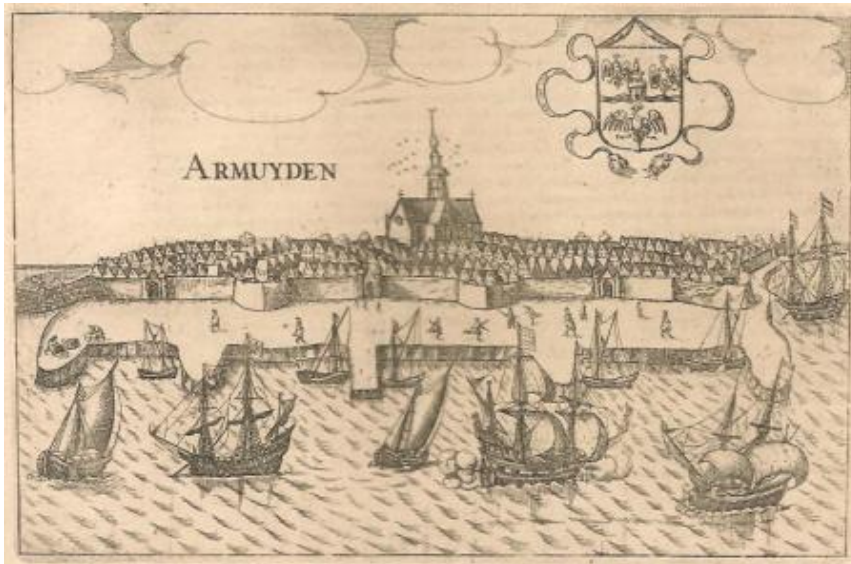
Identities are inherently social constructions, which allows the connectedness with the environment to (re)establish itself and which allows creating a characterisation that will distinguish and identify. Regions and communities may serve as a structure that give purpose, and have value to allocate meaning to a place. Meetings, contact, the human scale, authenticity, differentiation and history are the opposite of placelessness, standardisation, homogenisation and alienation, as is becoming more and more visible in our society. 'Genius loci', the spirit of a place, and 'sense of place', the feel of a place, are important starting points to differentiate and give substance and meaning to places from the perspective from the consumer. The challenge is how the sense, feel of place, the spirit of fish(ing) can be kept alive or be re-established.

Place branding and place making, where the essence of the place gets established, marketed and designed, are strategies that use identity and culture as a starting point.

Place branding is a way to position and profile a place as a brand, based on identity. This concerns more than just a logo and a slogan that will serve as promotional communications. Place branding requires a long-term strategy that needs to be commenced with regards to both content and process. The content regards values that form the core of the brand, the specific and distinctive that is based on the place's identity. Place making is described as coming up with, creating, developing and realising ideas and concepts for places' identities, their defining traits, 'genius loci' and the following sense of place, by efforts and investments in hardware, software, orgware and virtual ware; which centralises the possibility of distinctiveness, defining traits and the uniqueness of place and also connects with the environment, and where the perspective of the users is leading.

2. Arnemuiden's early days

Until 1572, Arnemuiden went through a period of growth and prosperity. The Italian trade merchant, historian and writer Guicciardini even described Arnemuiden as the centre of Europe because of the activities in the port of Arnemuiden. With its harbour as the centre, he had calculated the distances to the most important European ports. An interesting question is: "What happened in 1572, and what caused the decline of Arnemuiden?" And how became Arnemuiden a fishing community?

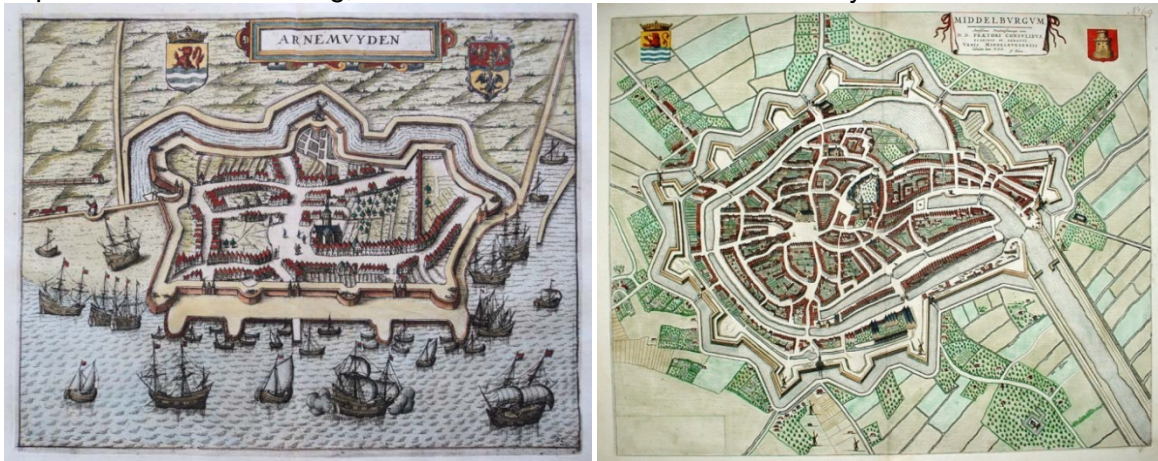


Armuyden, the ancient name for Arnemuiden in a period of growth and prosperity

If nothing had happened in 1572, Arnemuiden and Amsterdam could have been the most important cities in those days. Amsterdam still is. But what happened to Arnemuiden?

It is not known when and where Arnemuiden was founded exactly because there are no written sources from that period. It is assumed that Arnemuiden was founded around the year 1200. Arnemuiden was named after the River Arne, which ended in the open sea. The Arnemuiden of today was probably founded around the year 1462.

Looking closely at the maps of the cities of Arnemuiden and Middelburg, the question arises how it was possible that Arnemuiden, that directly bordered the sea and used to be more important than Middelburg, still faced its decline in the 16th century?



Arnemuiden, directly bordering the open sea, and Middelburg, connected to the sea by way of a channel

The river Arne used to be twisted and got silted. This happened also to the harbour of Arnemuiden. Because of this, the city of Middelburg decided to dig the Channel of Welzinge in 1532. It connected Middelburg directly to the open sea and made the town more powerful. All together there are three main reasons that have caused the decline:

1. The silting of the Arne and its harbour
2. The growing power of Middelburg
3. The destruction of Arnemuiden by the Spanish army in 1572

So although Arnemuiden was situated close to the open sea, it lost its favoured position to Middelburg.

3. The economic history of Arnemuiden

How did the people of Arnemuiden earn their money over the centuries? In this chapter the focus is on the economic history of Arnemuiden. At the same time, it tells a lot about the identity of Arnemuiden.

In the 12th and 13th century, long after the Vikings had afflicted Walcheren with their raids, there were three Hanseatic cities in Zeeland: Middelburg, Zierikzee and Arnemuiden. Hanseatic cities had important trade relations, especially with the countries around the Baltic Sea. The chronicler professor Marcus Zueris van Boxhorn (1612-1653) wrote in the 17th century that in the year 1368 trade and shipping between the people of Zeeland – and particularly Middelburg, Zierikzee and Arnemuiden – and Denmark and Norway were increasing considerably. According to Boxhorn, Arnemuiden was in those days ‘a clean, busy and prosperous town, more flourishing in merchant shipping and trade, in fact, than Middelburg’.

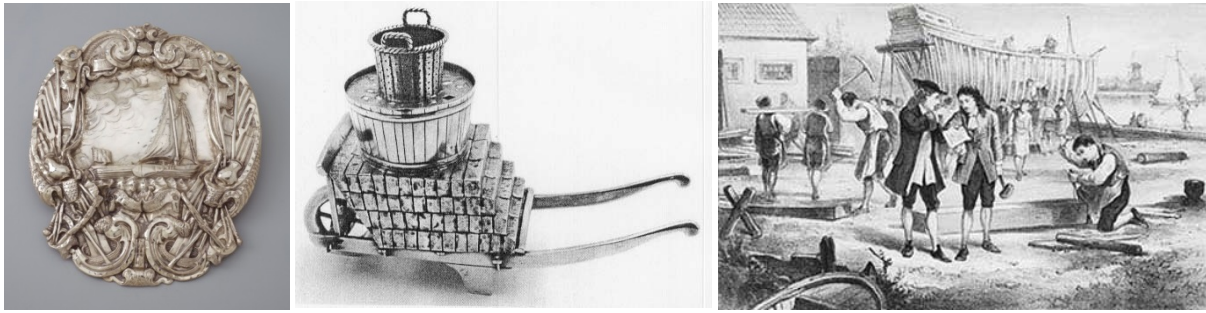
Until the year 1572 Arnemuiden was an important outpost for the merchant cities of Antwerp and Middelburg. In those days, Arnemuiden numbered 1,500 residents, while Middelburg had around 5,000. Arnemuiden was well known for its trade of salt, while Middelburg was known for the wine trade.

An important symbol of Arnemuiden is its bells. Everybody in the Netherlands knows the song ‘When the bells of Arnemuiden...’. The bells date back to the 16th century, around 1550. They form the second oldest carillon in the Netherlands. Less famous, but no less striking, is the unique astronomical clock which gives information about the tides of the sea.



The second oldest carillon in the Netherlands (left) and the astronomical clock in Arnemuiden (right)

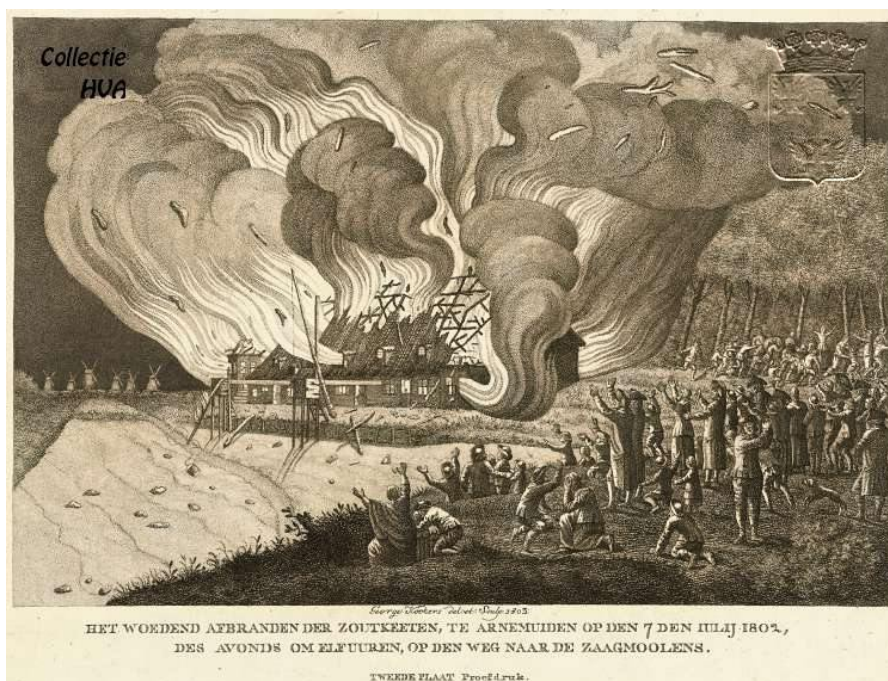
With what kind of work and activities did the people of Arnemuiden earn their money in the Middle Ages? Everybody is familiar with the concept of guilds, similar to the modern trade unions. These were interest organisations of people with the same profession. Some guilds of old in Arnemuiden include: the guild of skippers, masons, carpenters, bakers, travelling merchants.



Guild of skippers (www.geheugenvannederland.nl), masons (www.canonvanvlissingen.nl) and carpenters (<http://www.genealogie-info.nl/website-Beroepen-van-vroeger/Oude-beroepen-S.html>)

Earlier, it has been stated that Arnemuiden was known for its salt. Throughout the centuries, salt has been an important product in Arnemuiden. Salt meant money. The fisheries were an important customer of salt. Salt was imported from countries such as Portugal, Spain and France. In the 16th century the Netherlands had more than 450 salt barns. Half of these were located in Zeeland. In Zierikzee, one of the Hanseatic cities, there were 75 salt barns. Arnemuiden numbered 31.

At the turn of the 18th century the winning of salt suddenly came to an end. In 1802, eight of ten salt barns were destroyed by fires.



In 1802 fires destroyed 8 out of the 10 salt barns in Arnemuiden.

Another important product in the history of Arnemuiden are calico and the fabric's weaving mills. In the beginning of the 19th century there was a lot of poverty in Arnemuiden. In the search for new jobs and income at Walcheren, calico weaving mills were opened in Westkapelle and Arnemuiden. But their success was rather short-lived. In 1870 the weaving mills were closed down.

4. FISH(eries): cornerstone of Arnemuiden's identity

From prehistoric times, fish has been caught by people on river banks and sea sides and later from their boats. Fishing was meant at first for feeding the stomachs. Later, men started trading in fish. From the 15th century, fishing became an increasingly serious business. Vessels were built to set out fishing. Well known became the so-called 'Arnemuidse hoogaars', which has turned into a symbol of Arnemuiden. The first known image of this open, flat-bottomed fishing boat dates from the 17th century painting by Jan Porcellis (1584-1632).



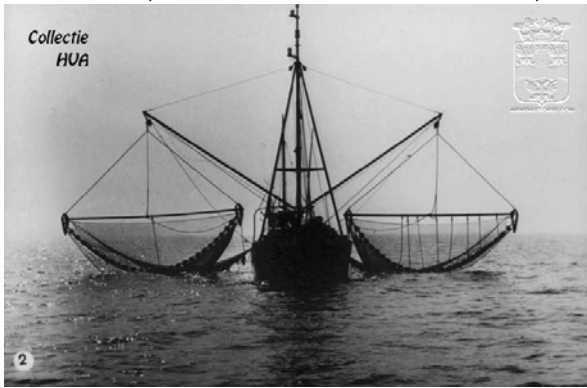
The first painting of a 'hoogaars' from Arnemuiden, 17th century, by Jan Porcellis



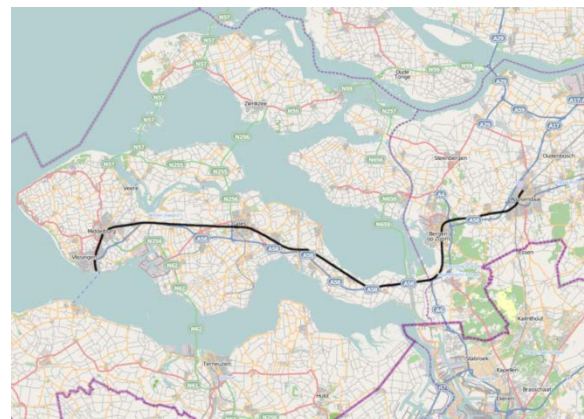
The symbol of Arnemuiden: 'Arnemuidse Hoogaars'

Arnemuiden has been the place where many ships like the 'hoogaars' have been built since 1763. In 2013 the shipyard named after the family 'Meerman' (since 1768) celebrated its 250th birthday. Around 1800 the fleet in Arnemuiden counted around 45 boats. In the

beginning of the 19th century, the shipyard was still rather successful, but later that century poverty became more and more an issue. From 1864, fishing, and especially on shrimps, was one of the answers to poverty. And successfully so. Fisheries became an important industry to Arnemuiden. Since 1869, more than 205 hoogaarzen were built in the shipyard. Building a hoogaars took between 3 and 5 months. Figures from 1870 indicate that two thirds of the 1,675 inhabitants of Arnemuiden earned their living in the fishing industry. Fishermen were both inshore fishermen as sea fishermen. The labour force consisted of skippers and their crews, male and female fish traders, and men and women working at the fish dryer.



In the 19th century, fishing was the most important source of employment and income.



The situation of Walcheren in 1696 (on the left) and today with the railway, built in 1872, connecting Walcheren to the mainland (city Bergen op Zoom)

Walcheren used to be an island until 1872 when the railway was built between Bergen op Zoom and Vlissingen. The consequences of connecting the island to the mainland by the Sloedam were enormous for Arnemuiden and its fishing community. From then on there was no longer a connection to the open sea. Fishermen had to move to neighbouring cities such as Veere and Vlissingen. But in 1901 Arnemuiden's fishing fleet still numbered 65 boats. In the twentieth century (around 1930), motorisation was introduced, the 'hoogaarzen' disappeared, to be replaced by motorised fishing vessels. Before the war there were still around 40 boats, but after the war, not more than ten. The Germans had confiscated some boats. The motorized boats were bigger and more powerful. Arnemuiden, well known from fishing shrimps, focused more and more on flatfish fisheries.



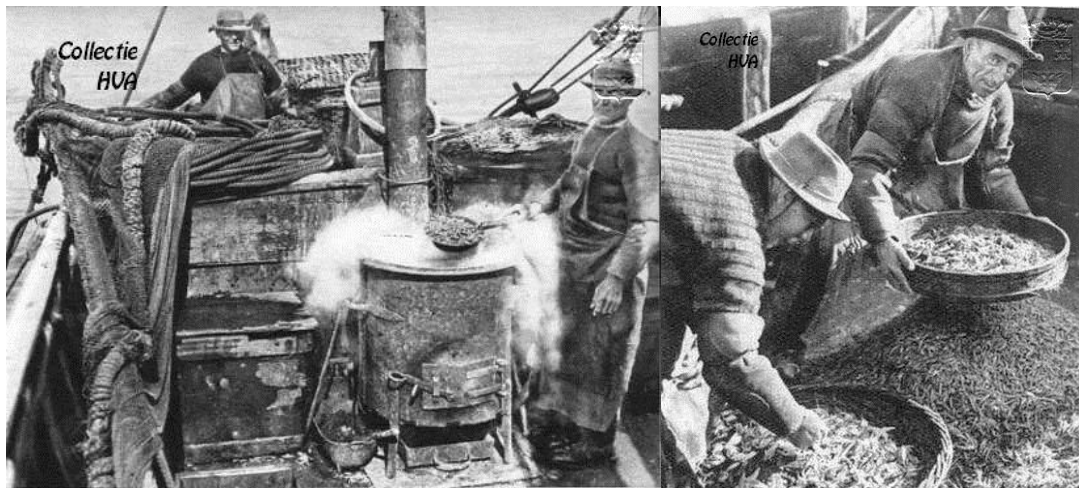
Fishing boats at the new Sloedam in 1871

In 1961 the 'Veerse Dam' was built, which made it impossible for the fishermen to go from Veere towards the open sea. They had to move to Colijnsplaat or Vlissingen.

In the seventies with the more powerful and bigger boats the catching capacity increased. Scaling up was the word. Individual fisher families/companies turned into shipping companies. Also in these years a quota system was introduced, fish was sold by the fish auction and sometimes sold without the auction, creating conflicts. Later the fishing fleet had to be reorganized. And fish quota kept on being decreased. A lot of fish companies didn't survive or sold fishing boats. This sometimes lead to the trade of fish quotas. The import of (cheap) imported foreign fish put pressure on the prices. Farm fishing started to be developed. But fishermen and their boats still survived. With technological improvements they tried to look for other fishing methods. But in this new decade the raising petrol prices put again a lot of pressure on the fisher men.

Today, a lot of people still work in the fisheries sector. Later in this booklet, some figures will be presented.

Besides the 'hoogaars' and the bells from Arnemuiden, the city has another important symbol that is related to the fishing industry: the shrimp. As stated before, fishing shrimps was an important part of the fishing scene in the 19th and 20th century. Which leads to another symbol: the shrimp peelers. Also symbolic and characteristic for Arnemuiden are the women (and sometimes men) that used to sell fish in the streets in surrounding cities such as Middelburg and Vlissingen, and other cities reachable by train, bicycle, or on foot.



Shrimps on a vessel



Shrimp peelers and fish sellers are a part of the Arнемuiden heritage

If we look back at the fisheries' past of Arнемuiden and look at Arнемuiden today, it is clear that the last 150 years of fish and fisheries were extremely important to the identity of Arнемuiden and still are. Arнемuiden was almost synonymous with fish, although it has suffered a lot under the described circumstances.

And although the majority of the inhabitants of Arnemuiden do not work in the fishing industry anymore, an important part still does. Often they live in Arnemuiden but work in other places like Vlissingen. Arnemuiden still considers themselves a fishing community. There is a very strong social cohesion. Arnemuiden is a very authentic village, ecclesiastic, religious and there is a strong working ethic.

5. Re“FISH”ited: heritage as a source of inspiration

One of the challenging questions on which this report is based, is ‘how heritage can be used as a source of inspiration’.

The starting question for the project in Arnemuiden is: ‘To make new and innovative product-market combinations based on old fisheries traditions’.



Fishnets



Similarly, almost ten years ago, the foundation ‘the Taste of Zeeland’ used the cultural heritage of folkloristic costumes, an important part of the cultural heritage in Zeeland, in a design contest and fashion shows in 2004. A very well-known symbol in Zeeland was and still is ‘Zeeuws meisje’ (‘girl from Zeeland’) dressed in a traditional costume, staged in commercials of the seventies and eighties by the Dutch margarine brand of Unilever ‘Zeeuws meisje’.

The assignment for the students of the Amsterdam Fashion Institute was: “To design a new consume for ‘Zeeuws meisje’ – as if developments regarding folkloristic costumes, which stopped at the beginning of the 20th century, would have continued – and use the traditional costumes as a source of inspiration”.



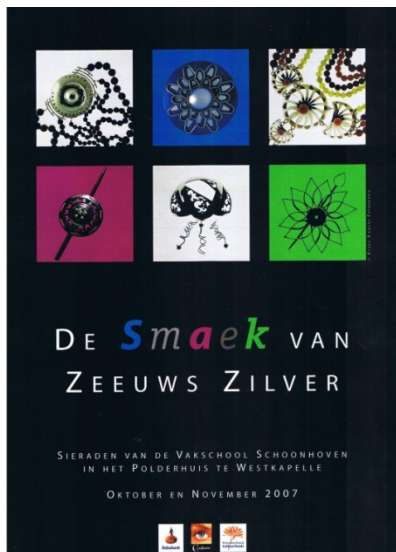
Old traditional costumes as a source of inspirati

In 2005 a comparable project was done with Zeeuws Museum in Middelburg. Students from the School of Arts in Ghent (Flanders, Belgium) were asked to design 'a kitchen apron and use the folkloristic costumes from Zeeland as a source of inspiration'. The designs were presented at a fashion show in the Zeeuws Museum, during a dinner.



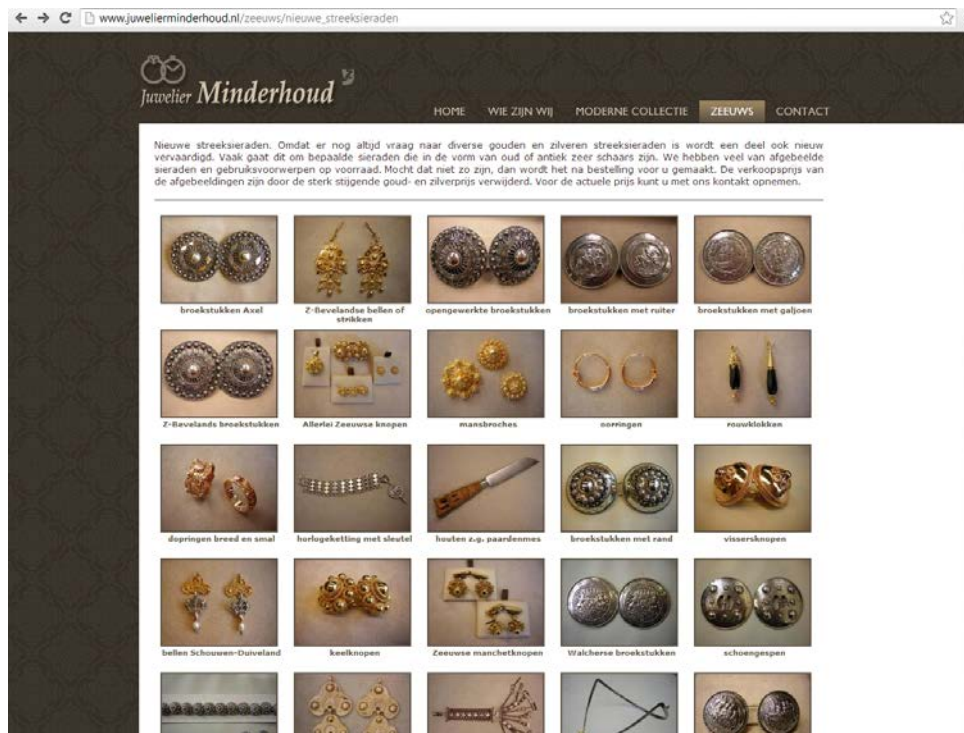
Newly designed aprons by students from Ghent

In 2007, students from the Silver trade school in Dutch city Schoonhoven were given the assignment to design jewellery from Zeeland, again with traditional jewellery as a source of inspiration.



The taste of Zeeland's silver

Somebody who has been creating new jewellery for many years is jeweller Piet Minderhoud. He has jewellery shops in traditional towns Arnemuiden en Westkapelle. From old jewellery of Zeeland, which used to be a part of the traditional regional dress, he turns them in contemporary jewellery pieces.



The website by jeweller Piet Minderhoud in Arnhemuiden

Heritage from Zeeland is rather fashionable today, which is visible in the use of the button of Zeeland. It is used today in many items like a baking pan, cheese in the form of a button, and Dutch candy, such as liquorice and chocolates.



Jewellery of Zeeland as source of inspiration

These developments can also be put into a broader perspective. At the opening of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam (April 2013) paintings from the museum were used as a source

of inspiration for contemporary fashion. It is a cooperation between Rijksmuseum and the Dutch department store 'Bijenkorf'.



The Rijksmuseum and fashion from department store Bijenkorf inspired by Rijksmuseum

In Arnemuiden, the challenge was to design contemporary fashion that was inspired by the old fisheries traditions. And this time, they did not focus on women's fashion, but men's fashion; the subject was the fishermen's sweater. In the past every fishing village or community had their own pattern. This was for identification purposes in case fishermen fell overboard and were washed ashore afterwards.



Fishermen's sweaters in the old days

The patterns of these fishermen's sweaters were reused for this design, but with contemporary colours.



Erremuus Fishermen's sweater in contemporary colours



The sweater worn by young and older men

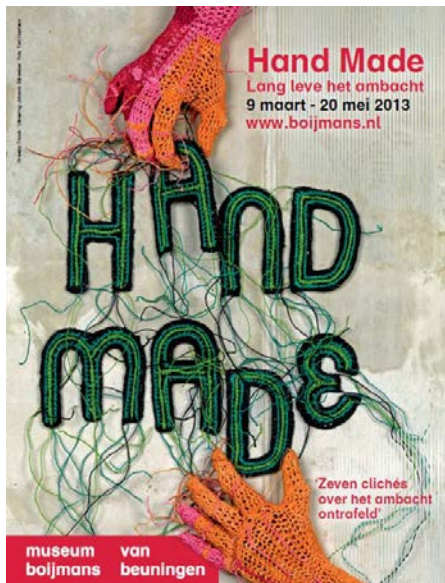
A fotoshoot was organized to support the positioning and profiling of Arnhemuiden as a place where they choose to renew maritime fashion knitwear. A fashion show on the Meerman wharf was organised to show the first knitted sweaters to the national and regional press and the local community.



A fashion show at the wharf

Besides the patterns and sweaters then and now, there are other remarkable parallels between ancient times and today. The calico weaving mills of old can be compared with contemporary companies today in Arnemuiden who have a focus on fabrics, upholstery and clothing (design) which is present in the Arnemuiden of today. And there is more.

If we put the above into a broader perspective, we can see trends and developments in Western Europe that focus again on crafts and handicrafts, handmade products, technique and design. This is visible in several regions, cities and places, e.g. in the city of Bruges in Belgium where they have two interesting projects that have a focus on crafts: 'Handmade in Bruges' and 'Bruges letter city'. In the Netherlands, in 2013 an interesting exhibition could be seen in the museum Boijmans in Rotterdam, titled 'Hand-Made'. A conclusion is that the crafts economy is making a come-back.



Handmade is 'hot' and the craft economy is making a comeback

Remarkable is also that if we look locally and compare the nature of the work/guilds regarding enterprises in Arnhem and employed persons with the Middle Ages, not so much has changed. Construction was important then, the masons and carpenters, and it still is today. In those days the merchants were important as well, analogous to the wholesale and retail trade today. And modern fisheries are comparable with the skippers of old.

Employment Arnhem 2012 & guilds in the Middle Ages

	Companies	People employed	Guilds in the Middle Ages
Construction	58	94	masons & carpenters guild
Wholesale & retail	47	184	merchants guild
Business services	43	64	
Agriculture & fisheries	39	132	skippers guild
Other services	26	53	
Education	14	98	
Transport/communication	16	47	
Food and beverage	13	50	

Table: Companies en employed people today, compared to the guilds in the Middle Ages

The table above shows that the craft economy, which is making a comeback in the Netherlands, has always been present in Arnhem. From the Middle Ages until today, craftful jobs and handmade products, including fishing, are a part of Arnhem's DNA.

If we take fisheries in Arnhem out of 'Agriculture and fisheries', fisheries has 18 companies and 103 jobs. But that are the official figures. Insiders say that the real figures are higher, maybe even four or five times. Four to five hundred people in Arnhem might be working in the fisheries sector, but their enterprises might be registered in Vlissingen or Middelburg.



Craft economy in Arnhem

Also important in Arnhem's DNA is mercantilism: the people's trading mentality. This spirit has been around since they were a Hanseatic town, was important in the 15th and 16th centuries, the Golden Age, and was and still is a part of their (fishing) heritage. We have seen fish sellers going to larger cities such as Vlissingen and Middelburg, but also travelling by train to western Noord-Brabant to sell their fish.

And not only did the people of Arnhem go out to sell products, they also tried, especially recently, to draw people to its place. They created reasons for people to visit Arnhem. Perhaps its attraction had been denied for too long or not given enough attention. Slowly but surely, a shift in popularity is taking place over the past few years.



Selling fish



Reasons to visit Arnhem

A few years ago, the shipyard, which had been in decay, was opened to the public. In 2013 Meerman's shipyard celebrated its 250 years of existence, since 1763. In May of 2013 the museum was partly redesigned and *'t Uusje van Eine* offers the opportunity to experience how people lived one hundred years ago.



250 years Meerman's shipyard and 't Uusje van Eine, life one hundred years ago

But more could and should be done. The question is how Arnemuiden's identity as a fishing community can be used in the positioning and profiling of Arnemuiden. Although it doesn't have a harbour anymore, how would it be possible to strengthen the relation between Arnemuiden and water? Another challenge: how is it possible that a city like Arnemuiden, with its long fishing history, doesn't have a fish shop or fish restaurant? Fish is a very important part of Arnemuiden and Arnemuiden's history.



To strengthen the relation with water and fish

Earlier in this report shrimps and shrimp peelers were mentioned as important symbols of Arnemuiden.



Symbols of Arnhemuiden

Over the past decades in the catering and tourism industries, we have been observing the trend of theme restaurants that could reinforce tourist experiences. Some examples are a tree restaurant, a floating restaurant, an under-water restaurant, and the jellyfish restaurant.



Tree restaurant, floating restaurant, under-water restaurant, and jellyfish restaurant

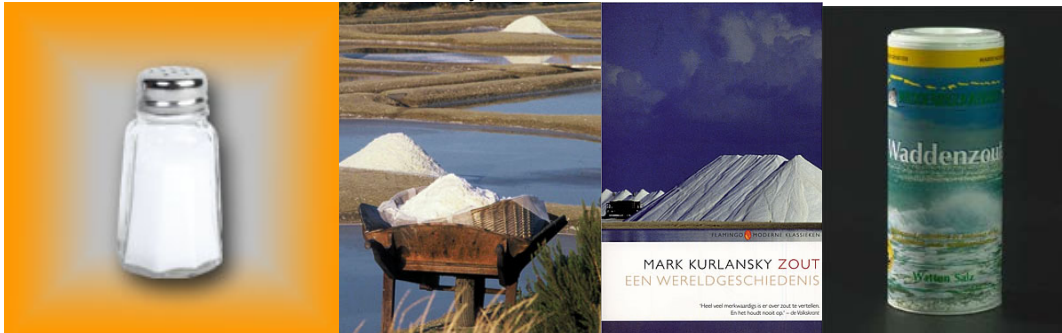
If you take the identity of a place as a starting point, maybe you can imagine for Arnhemuiden something like a 'garnalerie' or in dialect 'gornaellerie'. In plain English, a shrimp restaurant. Serving, of course, mainly shrimp dishes.





'Garnalerie' or 'Shrimp restaurant'

Or if we look at Arнемuiden's history, what can it do with salt?



This year, Arнемuiden has also invested in its history and art. Graphic designer and artist Kris van der Werve was invited to create symbolic artistic impressions of Arнемuiden for public spots, such as streets and squares. Inhabitants stood model for these street art figures. The strong involvement and participation of the inhabitants is crucial for the support of the community



Kris van der Werve's symbolic figures of Arнемuiden



Fish boxes in Arnemuiden, referring to the fish auction

7. Concluding thoughts

Arnemuiden, a small town, close to the Province of Zeeland's capital Middelburg, has an interesting and rich history. If things would have happened differently, perhaps Amsterdam and Arnemuiden may have been central players in the Golden Age of the Netherlands instead of Amsterdam and Middelburg. Geographical circumstances, power struggles and the war with Spain affected the development and possibilities of Arnemuiden. Arnemuiden has known flourishing periods in its history. In the 12th and 13th century it was one of the trading cities in Zeeland. Trade continued to be important in the centuries that followed. Arnemuiden's port was a central place in Europe and salt was an important (imported) product. In 1572 Arnemuiden was destroyed by the Spanish and after that it never really recovered. The Golden Age, the 17th century, was a prosperous era for the Netherlands, but not for Arnemuiden.

In the beginning of the last 150 years of Arnemuiden's past, fisheries became the main employer and source of income. Two thirds of the people in Arnemuiden earned their money in the fishing industry. But some (political and safety) decisions have changed the connections to the open sea, which had severe consequences to the Arnemuiden fishing industry and its fleet. But the population of Arnemuiden stayed working in the fishing industry in other places like Colijnsplaat, Veere and Vlissingen. Arnemuiden's identity stayed very much intertwined with fish and fisheries. This period and its heritage are interesting sources for possible product development which could create employment and income opportunities. Maybe a re'FISH'ited period is coming to Arnemuiden. Perhaps never left the place.

The culture of Arnemuiden is very much related to fishing and the fishing history. Looking at Hofstede's culture, symbols, heroes, rituals and values can be distinguished. The shrimp, the street sellers, 'Zeeuws meisje' ('a girl from Zeeland), the vessel 'Hoogaars' and the bells of Arnemuiden are important symbols of Arnemuiden. Fishing and all its related activities are more or less rituals and fishermen are heroes.. Core values of Arnemuiden's culture are at the first place fish, and being and feeling a fish community, the working ethics, the trading mentality, strong social cohesion, religiousness and authentic. Although the geographical situation has changed not in favour of the fishing possibilities, Arnemuiden still is very much a fishing community.

Remarkable is that Arnhemuiden seems not to have changed too much in these hundreds of years. The guilds of the Middle Ages are still present in today's Arnhemuiden. That's a part of Arnhemuiden's DNA.

If the data and concluding thoughts are transferred to Noordman's (adapted by Govers& Go) model, the model looks like:

Structural	Semi-static	Changing signifiers	Colouring elements
Location	Growth (till 16 th century), decline (till 19 th century), growth and stabilisation (20 + 21 st century)	Yearly fishing day, the catch, fishermen	Street sellers, shrimps, traditional costumes
History	Trading port → peripheral and silted port with open sea connection → inland port with no open sea connection	Shrimp, church, harbour, waterfront, stories/books/exhibitions on fishing, the museum, (public) art work	Past behaviour (in this case limited to fishing)
		Popular culture	
	Trading mentality, being and feeling a fishing community, strong social cohesion, religious, strong working ethic, craft economy	Dialect, peeling shrimps, the catch, selling fish, song 'the clocks of Arnhemuiden' Language /traditions/rituals/folk	Communication: Websites f.i. www.arnemuiden.org www.arnehistorie.com daily/weekly papers Middelburg, Arnhemuiden magazine

Composing elements of Arnhemuiden's identity

This model in combination with Arnhemuiden's culture can be used to position and profile Arnhemuiden as a fishing community and to create a place brand.

After the knowledge economy, which has been developing over the last twenty years, we see a growing attention for the craft economy. Perhaps our education system has been giving rather too much attention to this knowledge economy, neglecting the craft economy. Crafts, handicrafts, and other occupations that require manual techniques are underestimated. Like in the Middle Ages, we had masters and apprentices, these titles – and, in fact, the system – could come back in one way or the other. Young people could learn a craft, taught by the masters, marking the return of the craft economy.



Master and apprentice in the craft economy

Craft economy can also help with the transition towards a more sustainable economy and nation. The challenge is how the craft economy of Arnemuiden can help to transform the fishing industry also in a sustainable direction.



A plea for craft economy



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