

Pedagogy of the encounter? Philosophical notes on the idea of ‘meeting places’ as forms of parent support.

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0. Introduction/Summary

Recently, the idea of meeting places for parents and their children has increasingly gained importance in the context of parent support in Belgium. Meeting places for parents and their childrenⁱ have existed for a long time already in other countries (e.g. the “Maison Vertes” in France, and the “spazio insieme” in Italy) and these have been an important source of inspiration for the Belgian cases (see e.g. Vandebroek et al., 2007, 2009a). Meeting places usually are houses – frequently called “open houses” – that are reorganized in such a way as to allow a number of parents and their children to come by and spend some time there.ⁱⁱ The interest in meeting places is to be understood as a reaction to formal kinds of support for parents (c.q. mostly professional advice in institutionalized settings) and, connected to this, in response to what parents themselves have expressed as being in need of in a number of surveys (see e.g. the research rapport by Buysse, 2008, which is frequently being referred to in Flanders in this context). Parents themselves have indicated a lack of informal networks, and wish to have the opportunity to share their concerns and worries with likeminded people (i.e. other parents, more or less sharing the same experiences) instead of talking about (bringing up) their children with professionals. Meeting places for parents and their children are said to offer this opportunity for informal social contacts; places where parents can find emotional and social support for what can sometimes be the very tough task of bringing up their children. In the literature, this idea of meeting places is connected to the idea of a pedagogy of the encounter.

This paper is a first attempt at critically discussing what is entailed in these ideas of meeting places and encounterⁱⁱⁱ. It is important to keep in mind that I will only focus here on the Flemish cases, c.q. on how the idea of meeting places for parents and their children has been conceptualized here until now. To provide some background, I will first go into how parent support is most commonly understood in Flanders (1.). In the second section I will highlight some characteristic features of meeting places. I will not go into detail, but only focus on those aspects which are most relevant for this paper, c.q. the relation to socialization, to the idea of encounter, and to the idea of relational citizenship (2.). Third, I will discuss some difficulties which I think are connected to the current understanding of meeting places. My purpose is to try to show the “conceptual struggles”, so to speak, related to the development of what is undeniably, at least in my opinion, an interesting and promising social

practice seeking to support parents in bringing up their children in a societal context that is markedly different from that of a few decades ago. In the concluding section (4.), I will, in a very preliminary way, try to sketch the outlines of an alternative conceptualization of what can be entailed in the idea of meeting places for parents and their children, in order to open this up for further discussion and investigation.

1. Parent support

In the context of a broader policy of welfare in Belgium (and more specifically in Flanders) meeting places for parents and their children are considered to be a form of what is called “opvoedingsondersteuning”. Though there does not really seem to be a consistent use of the term, I will use “parent support” as a translation of this concept since it seems to capture most accurately the idea of what is meant by this concept, c.q. various kinds of support given to families, and more particularly to parents, to ‘help’ them in their daily task of bringing up their children.^{iv}

Parent support is an element of a broader policy of welfare. This policy can be understood as “the policy and the practice, aimed at addressing and improving (enriching) the context of child-rearing, at rebalancing risk factors and preserving protective ones, and at receiving, referring and orienting [parents or families] toward intensive, specialized guidance.” (Nys & Wouters, 2001; my translation). Within this framework, parent support can be taken to mean different things. Hermanns, for example, defines parent support as “all those activities which aim at improving children’s pedagogical situation, in other words, helping parents in their upbringing^v.” (Hermanns, quoted in Vandemeulebroecke & Nys, 2002, p. 12; my translation). Vandemeulebroecke gives a more elaborate definition: parent support is “the set of measures, services, structures and activities which are aimed at addressing the possibilities of the (primary) pedagogical context, enriching and/or optimizing it, for the purpose of offering children and youngsters optimal pedagogical and developmental opportunities” (Vandemeulebroecke & Nys, 2002, p. 13). Some of the particular activities she mentions are providing advice, instrumental support, skill training, and emotional support; helping to make social contacts; and stimulating informal self-help by attempting early detection of severe pedagogical and developmental problems and referring parents to specialized assistance when necessary. In accordance with this view, Burggraaf-Huiskens stresses that prevention of severe educational problems – for instance, those that result in the institutionalization of children – is also an explicit policy goal of parent support (Cf. Burggraaf-Huiskens, 1999, p. 167). It should be added, however, that Vandemeulebroecke

and Nys choose not to use the term “prevention” any longer because of its “potentially traditionally negative and problematic connotations” (Vandemeulebroecke & Nys, 2002, p. 18).

Parent support should be distinguished (if not always in practice, clearly so conceptually) from professional help in case of problems (behavioural problems e.g.) (Cf. e.g. Vandemeulebroeck & De Munter, 2004, for a conceptual clarification.). Parent support is open to all parents who have questions about bringing up their children, or are having doubts about the way they are trying to raise their children. So it is addressed not only to parents and families experiencing difficulties in relation to child-rearing. As Vandemeulebroecke and Nys put it:

All parents should have the opportunity, if they consider it necessary (and hence voluntarily), to make an appeal to parent support to try to find an answer to their daily questions concerning the bringing up of their children or to meet their interest in one or another pedagogical issue, and this before their questions, worries, etc., potentially turn into serious problems (2002, pp. 18-19; my translation).

Professional help, on the other hand, is explicitly targeted at parents who have questions that require a specific and more intensive approach. This kind of help can be offered in a diversity of centres for parenting advice or in specialized provisions (sometimes resulting in institutionalization of children).

2. Meeting places for parents and their children: some characteristic features

According to Vandebroek et. al. (2007) creating meeting places for parents and their children is considered to be a form of parent support in the sense described above. Clearly, meeting places are forms of social support or, as Vandebroek et. al. call this, “informal parental networks” (2007, p. 71, my translation) – the kinds of support or networks parents themselves have indicated they are lacking these days. Furthermore, “they offer space and time for parents to interact with their children”, “help parents to cope with parental stress”, and “give substance to the idea of child-rearing as a shared responsibility” (Ibid.). Next to this, these meeting places are also “places where children’s development can be stimulated”, so they should offer a diverse range of possibilities to play e.g. (Ibid., p. 72). They are places, according to Vandebroek et. al., where children, e.g., can “experience autonomy as well as mutual connectedness”, and “can meet other children and hence develop essential social skills” (Ibid.). Vandebroek et. al. also stress that these meeting places are “places where social cohesion can be enhanced” (Ibid.).

What is explicitly excluded from the picture is the idea that meeting places, as forms of parent support, should be in one way or another problem-oriented (as in formal approaches to parent support). Next to this, the language of “prevention” is used in a very particular way. Meeting places should not be conceived as forms of prevention of problems in a later stage of children’s development. The language of prevention entails the risk that aims/ends are being determined for (instead of by) parents from the point of view of professionals in the field. Instead of “prevention” as such, one prefers talking in terms of the “preventive intentions” of meetings places. And their preventive function should then also be seen as “prevention from societal exclusion, rather than as clinical prevention” (Cf. *ibid.*, p. 79, my translation). Connected to this, it should also be clear that professionals or experts (in the traditional sense of the word) have no place in meeting places.

Drawing on the work of (among others) Dahlberg & Moss, Vandebroek et. al. (2007, 2009a, 2009b) explicitly connect the idea of meeting places with the idea of a pedagogy of the encounter – which in turn is inspired by Levinas’ “ethics of the encounter, i.e. the attempt not to ‘grasp’ the ‘other’ by making him/her into the same” (Vandebroek et. al., 2009a, p. 74)^{vi}. Meeting places are places which make it possible for parents to meet with one another, and which also enable the encounter between children and parents. A number of aspects are identified by these authors as being part of this pedagogy of the encounter. I will only focus on three aspects of this pedagogy of the encounter, which are relevant in the context of this paper.

First of all, this pedagogy is connected (for reasons which are, at this point, not entirely clear for me) with a conceptualization of child-rearing as intervening in the socialization of children. Socialization here is not to be understood, as Vandebroek et. al. argue, in the narrow sense of conforming to society’s values and norms, but as “the reciprocal process in which an individual becomes a member of society and at the same time gives shape to that society” (Vandebroek et. al., 2007, p. 74, my translation), or as they put this elsewhere, a “a reciprocal process where the individual and the community both shape each other” (2009a, p. 69). In this respect, “both children and parents are considered as potentially powerful social agents” (*Ibid.*). Notwithstanding the emphasis on the reciprocal nature of socialization meeting places are clearly considered as offering “opportunities for socialization” (Vandebroek et. al., 2007, p. 74, my translation) – opportunities, that is, which some children would otherwise not have. These opportunities for socialization are: having to opportunity to meet with other children (cf. above, social skills), to learn to stand on

one's own feet (cf. above, autonomy), and to learn how to belong to a group, that is, how to deal with the rules of a group (Cf. *ibid.*).

Second, what is of importance in the pedagogy of meeting places for parents and children is what is called "free confrontation" (Cf. Vandebroek et. al. 2007, 2009a). Here the focus is on the encounter between parents. Meeting places are places of free confrontation for parents:

Parents are involuntarily confronted with other ways [styles] of bringing up children. This confrontation is "free" since it is not being directed in a particular way; parents are not being evaluated and have to make up their own mind about what to do with this confrontation. On the other hand it is clearly not entirely noncommittal (without engagement, "not free") because parents are made to think about their own ways of bringing up their children anyhow. (Vandebroek et. al., 2007, p. 75, my translation)

What is connected to this free confrontation, is the idea that, according to Vandebroek et. al. (2007, 2009b), meeting places should be conceived as being situated somewhere between the private and the public domain, as transitional places between the private and the public domain:

... the meeting place is not a private place. Every parent who comes by with his or her child is acting there under the gaze of others. This is not a panoptic, disciplining gaze, because it is reciprocal, open and non-hierarchical. But it is nonetheless a place in which parents expose themselves, leading to supplemental reflection on one's own actions. However, the meeting place is not a public place either, like a school for instance: there is no curriculum that is being imposed from outside and each parent is absolutely free to come by and go, and to participate or not in whatever activity. (Vandebroek et. al., 2007, p. 75, my translation)

Conceived in this way, meeting places are places where parents can, in involuntary ways, 'learn' from one another, e.g. by coming across other ways of dealing with particular kinds of behaviour, or by being made to reflect on the usual ways in which they interact with their children, etc.

A third (and final) aspect of this pedagogy of the encounter that I wish to mention here is its connection to the idea of relational citizenship. This concept of citizenship is explicitly contrasted to the neo-liberal concept of citizenship, in which the emphasis lies on the individual as an "autonomous, entrepreneurial, self-sufficient citizen" (Vandebroek et. al., 2009a, pp. 73-74). This concept of citizenship is, as Vandebroek et. al. further argue, a narrow understanding of citizenship since it does not give sufficient room for the concepts of interconnectedness and interdependence, and for the idea that individual development is something that only takes place in relation to others (Cf. Vandebroek et. al. 2007, p. 76).

Furthermore in contrast to the neo-liberal concept of citizenship, relational citizenship is not to be conceived as a predefined outcome (in terms of a quality an individual needs to develop), but rather it is to be understood as “a way to look at unexpected events in a Deleuzian sense: as elements in an ‘open system’” (Vandenbroeck, 2009a, p. 74). I am not exactly clear about what is meant here, but it takes this to mean that meeting places, as examples of open places, can be places where such a kind of citizenship (in which interconnectedness, interdependence and open-endedness are prominent features) can be developed. Or perhaps: meeting places can (should) be conceived of as places for (and hence can be organized in such a way as to enable) relational citizenship. Bringing this back to parent support, this implies:

... that one does not look for programmes that enhance autonomy or empowerment, but rather at how empowerment as well as interdependency, relations and encounters may be enacted or ‘performed’ between people. (Ibid.)

In a way, what this comes down to is the recognition that “parenting”, or better perhaps: the domain of child-rearing, should be given back to parents themselves. Meeting places are, so to speak, ways in which parents are liberated to be more fully parents (again).

3. Meeting places “versus” existing kinds of parent support? Some difficulties.

The most difficult issue (and at the same time most challenging, I think) is the question of how to conceive of meeting places in a way which makes it clear that it constitutes a different approach to existing forms of parent support, or a different way of supporting parent in the process of child-rearing. For despite the intention to conceive of meeting places as a response to formal kinds of support for parents (cf. supra), in an important sense the difference with existing kinds of parent support is only a difference on the outset, since on closer inspection the idea of meeting places does not seem to escape the same logic underlying formal kinds of parent support. This is simply, the logic of parent support as a means to an external end. To be sure, this logic is not as straightforwardly present as in the existing, formal kinds of parent support (which are conceived along the lines of e.g. prevention, balancing risks, etc.). Nevertheless, it can hardly be missed, for by defining child-rearing so clearly in terms of socialization, and by making socialization a central feature of the pedagogy of the encounter, meeting places are inevitably conceived in function of this socialization. This is not to say that socialization has nothing to do with the process of child-rearing. This is simply to say that, though promising concepts, it is not clear what it is in the “encounter” that makes “meeting places”, at least as conceptualized above, so different from existing forms of parent support.

Meeting places are, for one thing, not conceived from the very idea of the encounter itself (or from whatever it is that constitutes the event of the encounter). Instead they are already conceived from a particular conception of what constitutes child-rearing. So this is also to say that when defining the process of child-rearing (or education, in a broad sense of the word) differently, meeting places could perhaps be conceived of differently.^{vii}

What is closely connected to this is that the discourse of meeting places is pervaded with the language of a particular way of looking at children, parents and their relations that is undeniably dominant today, i.e. the language of developmental psychology. In relation to meeting places, one speaks of offering emotional support, enhancing well-being (of parents and children), accommodating for children's needs, creating stimulating contexts, enabling interactions between parents and their children, experimenting with taking distance from parents etc. What seems to present itself here as a neutral and fairly unproblematic understanding of the relation between parents and children, is in fact not so neutral at all. These notions reflect values, normative judgements and assumptions about human being and action and while all of them, e.g. attachment theory, have a respectable body of research behind them, none are uncontroversial. For one thing, there is no straightforward neutral view of the child's needs or the good of the child that can be conceptually or empirically cut off from the realm of values (as expressed in the ethical and political aspects of the choices parents make for their children). Or to put this differently, what the language of developmental psychology, or more generally the invasion of the discipline of developmental psychology, effectively does is to cover up the inherently normative aspects of the parent-child relationship. One may even go so far as to say that developmental psychology itself becomes normative for what constitutes a "good" parent-child relationship, for what constitutes "good parenting". For what underlies this language is a particular conception of the "aim" of the process of child-rearing – this aim being something like the "psychologically balanced person".

The "free confrontation", which is seen as a central feature of the pedagogy of the encounter, turns out to be, then, not so "free" after all, in yet another sense of the word than the one already indicated above by Vandebroek et. al. It is not just "not free" (not without engagement) because parents are made to reflect upon their own actions, but "not free" because a normative conception of child-rearing is operating in the background, under the disguise of the scientific language of developmental psychology. So, in a sense, even meeting places could then be seen as a form of "risk management", that is as exactly the type of parent support meeting places are said to constitute an alternative to, since what is implicated in the

language used is that there is a “good”, or if one prefers the more morally neutral concept, “correct” way of dealing (or in this language’s idiom: interacting) with one’s children (for: scientifically backed-up).

To be sure, I am not straightforwardly arguing against expertise in bringing up one’s children. I am not arguing that research about child development, e.g., should not inform parents’ decisions about what to do in a particular case or local governments’ decisions about how to (re)organize public spaces. The point is that one of the reasons of the very idea of realizing meeting places for parents and their children is paradoxically being undermined: the domain of child-rearing is, despite good intentions, not given back to the parents, but still in one way or another in the hands of experts. Put differently: though meeting places are seen as the arena where the public and the private come together, or cross borders, bringing up one’s children is still “privatized” (where privatized is taken to mean: in the hands of this or that institution claiming authority over the issue at hand, in this case: professionals in parenting claiming authority over how meeting places should be organised, conceived, ...).

4. Concluding notes: rethinking meeting places

In the remainder of this paper I will (very preliminary) try to sketch an understanding of meeting places for parents and their children which puts centre-stage the idea of parents being moral agents, that is: that whatever it is that parents do in the process of child-rearing (e.g. enabling her child to experiment with taking safe distance from her), this always involves judgments and values, and that decisions made by parents always (or at least always potentially) involve tensions because of competing frameworks of judgments and values. Meeting places – leaving aside for the moment the issue of how to give shape to them in practice – could then appear as places where parents have space and time to articulate the aspects of the choices they make and the tensions they involve. I will do this not by focussing on a reconceptualization of the concept of encounter (which, granted, would seem to be the obvious way to go here)^{viii}, but by taking up the issue, briefly mentioned above by Vandebroek et. al., that meeting places are transitional places between the private and the public domain.

Another way of putting the difficulties I tried to spell out in the previous section is by making use of Hannah Arendt’s understanding of children as “newcomers”, in her well-known article *The crisis of education* (in Arendt, 1968). Here Arendt makes a distinction between the child as “a new human being” and as “a becoming human being” (Arendt, 1968, p. 182). As a becoming human being the child maintains a relationship to life, as a new

human being he maintains a relationship to the world. This means that “in respect to life and its development, the child is a human being in process of becoming”, whereas he “is new only in relation to the world that was there before him, that will continue after his death, and in which he is to spend his life” (Ibid.). In relation to this Arendt understands parents as having to assume a double responsibility: “for the life and development of the child and for the continuance of the world” (Ibid.). Now the crucial passage I wish to draw attention to here (in relation to the difficulties I tried to spell out earlier) is the following:

If the child were not a newcomer in this human world but simply a not yet finished living creature, education would be just a function of life and would need to consist in nothing save that concern for the sustenance of life and that training and practice in living that all animals assume in respect to their young. (Ibid.)

The real danger is that meeting places are becoming exactly what Arendt is cautioning against here, c.q. they are, as forms of parent support, being confined to “just a function of life”. The reason for this is, I take it, clear – given the pervasion of the discipline of developmental psychology into the current conceptualization of meeting places and given the understanding of child-rearing in terms socialization (or at least for a significant part).

An important effect of this is that meeting places, paradoxically, seem to be engendering the segregation of the children’s world from the adult world. Arendt argues against the intrusion of the public world into the private world – meaning that children need to be protected from the concerns of the outside world in order to thrive, or “the security of concealment in order to mature undisturbed” (1968, p. 185). This does not imply, however, the strict segregation of the child’s and the adult’s worlds. The line drawn between the private and the public world does not coincide with (what Arendt calls) “the line [that is] drawn between children and adults” (1968, p. 192). However, given the (hidden) normativity due to the pervasion of the discipline of developmental psychology, and given the emphasis on socialization in the process of child-rearing, the understanding of meeting places as a transitional place between the private and the public seems to embody exactly this: the segregation between the child’s world and the adult world. The line between child and adult has become “a wall separating children from the adult community as though they were not living in the same world” (Ibid.). Or put differently, such a meeting place is not a “real living space” (Ibid., p. 183), understanding this as referring to the acknowledgment of “the fact that people of all ages are always simultaneously together in the world” (Ibid., p. 178).

The only responsibility that seems to be assumed in meeting places is, then, the responsibility for the child’s life and his development. What does not seem to figure in

meeting places is what Arendt means by the responsibility for the continuance of the world. To be sure, continuance here does not mean a simple conservative passing on of the old world, but also entails the possibility of (radical) renewal – and in this sense it is clearly distinguished from the concept of responsibility for the world which follows from an understanding of child-rearing in terms of socialization. If education is to be “conservative”, as Arendt argues, this pertains to the important task to “preserve this newness [which is given by the coming of each new-born] and introduce it as a new thing into an old world” (Ibid., p. 189).

But how should this be done? How, that is, can meeting places be places where child-rearing can be the “messy”, value-laden human activity it normally is? where the complexities of having to assume both the responsibilities Arendt distinguishes come to full light? Perhaps a way of starting to conceptualize this is by taking seriously the idea of what it means to *articulate* the tensions and complexities involved in child-rearing. Meeting places can then perhaps be understood as places where parents – and I am drawing on Cavell here (1979) – can be seen as having a voice. Having a voice here is not to be understood as merely expressing one’s personal opinions, but as the active revelation of the conditions of intelligibility that the individual who is speaking takes to be authoritative. Meeting places can then be understood not as an occasion for parents to “learn” from other parents, but as places where parents are trying to find out who is willing to share their voice, and also, importantly, to find out which voice is theirs. In this sense, meeting places, are not to be seen as (already existing) communities (semi-public spaces) into which parents enter. Rather, it is in the very encounter itself that a community takes shape. Having a voice is not to be taken as something that happens in an already existing community, but rather is to be understood as the very attempt of seeking a community. This also implies, I think, that when having “found” a community (having heard one’s voice), an answer is expected to the question whether or not one wants to assume responsibility for this community (or for this voice), that is: for the claims to the world that are being voiced by this community. What happens in this kind of encounter is not “learning” in order to be able to “interact” in ways “better” than before (though this need not be excluded). Rather, in this encounter the full weight of the complexities of the responsibilities Arendt talks about in relation to education is realized. The challenge now is, among other things, how to try to accommodate for this kind of encounter, that is to investigate whether or not it is even possible to “organize” or “enable” such meeting places.

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ⁱ For convenience sake, I will henceforth sometimes just speak of “meeting places”. In all instances this is meant to refer to “meeting places for parents and their children”.

ⁱⁱ For examples in Flanders see: <http://www.despeelbrug.be/> and <http://www.speelodroom.org/>. For Brussels see: <http://www.baboes.be/>.

ⁱⁱⁱ This investigation is part of a larger research project which I am currently doing in collaboration with Judith Suissa (Institute of Education, University of London), provisionally titled “Parenting and philosophy”.

^{iv} Literally translated “child-rearing support” would seem to be the most fitting translation (or at least so from the point of view of a non-native speaker). In an earlier article (Ramaekers, 2005) I translated this as “educational support”. The point I tried to make in that article still holds, I think, but I would now suggest not using that translation any more. The relevant distinction to be made here is the one between education (as a formal practice, most notably exemplified in schooling) and child-rearing (as something that goes on within the family, in the course of parents’ endeavours to make the best of bringing up their children) – a distinction that is conceptually quite clearly captured in the German *Unterricht* versus *Erziehung*, or the Dutch *onderwijs* versus *opvoeding*. Keeping this distinction in mind, the expression “educational support” can be misleading since it does not

“naturally” seem to capture the domain of the family and more specifically of the “messy” business usually associated to bringing up one’s children.

I would also like to stress that I am not using the expression “parenting support” in this context. The very concept of “parenting” already presupposes a particular conception of what parents are supposed to do when it comes to bringing up their children. In the concept “parenting” what it means to be a parent nowadays is already construed as an activity of a particular kind, something that parents “do” during the course of their daily activities, in a way comparable to how the concept of teaching is understood. Compare, e.g., “teaching a class” and “teaching someone to ride a bike” with “I am parenting my sons” and “tomorrow I’m going to parent my youngest one”. Our recognition of the oddness of such constructions should alert us to the fact that something has gone wrong when the term “parenting” is used – as it commonly is in popular and policy literature – to describe what it is that parents do, and should be doing, with and for their children. (Cf. e.g. Suissa, 2006 and Lambeir & Ramaekers, 2007)

^v I am aware of the fact that “pedagogical situation” is perhaps not the best of translations. Being a translation of “opvoedingssituatie” it refers to the daily situation at home, that is in the family, in which parents do all those things they consider to be necessary in order to bring up their children. Whenever I will use “pedagogical” in the remainder of this paper, this should be taken in this broad sense of upbringing in the context of the family.

^{vi} I will not go into the Levinasian ethics of encounter here, since that would go beyond the scope of this paper. I will limit myself here to how the idea of pedagogy of encounter is understood by Vandenbroeck et. al. in relation to meeting places in Flanders and Brussels.

^{vii} For a clear example of a “functional” use of meeting places, see the advisory report (titled “Investing in children”) by the “Council for Societal Development” and the “Council for Public Health and Care”. Here meeting places are understood as a better means to achieve the same ends, thus replacing other forms of parent support (that, apparently, did not achieve the ends that were foreseen). Starting from the observation that earlier attempts by the government to compensate for the lack of support in people’s social settings (resulting in a number of interventions that came too close to people’s private sphere), one now has come to the conclusion that it is much better to “activate” the social setting itself. That is, instead of focusing on risk management and prevention of problems (and developing all kinds of forms of parent support modelled on those presumptions), one now shifts the focus to the strengths already present in the social setting itself (c.q. the family). The government can thus offer support “from a distance” by trying to activate the forces and strengths, forms of support and wisdom, that are already available in the family and its surrounding social settings. It hardly needs to be spelled out that “better” here means better in terms of cost-effectiveness. (See <http://www.adviesorgaan-rmo.nl/publicaties/adviezen/2009/1075/1078/> for the advisory report (in Dutch).)

^{viii} This will have to wait for another time, at a later stage in the larger project mentioned above in footnote iii.