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DUTCH FAMILY NAMES

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This essay is concerned mainly with surnames created in the Netherlands and Flemish Belgium in the Dutch language, and with surnames that are considered to be hybrids of Dutch and Frisian. It will also deal briefly with names imported there from other countries, drawing on their own languages, and will conclude by looking at the onomastic impact of Dutch colonialization, especially in North America, and of later migration by Dutch speakers to the US. The first and last sections are based on the essay written by Charles Gehring for the first edition, with some small modifications, including some refinements of the linguistic description, for which thanks are due to Nicoline van der Sijs, Professor of Historical Dutch Linguistics at Radboud University, Nijmegen. The remaining sections of the essay are by Leendert Brouwer in collaboration with Peter McClure.

The Dutch and Frisian Languages

Dutch and Frisian are members of the Germanic family of languages, which itself is a member of a larger family called Indo-European. The Germanic languages are divided into three groups according to their linguistic characteristics: North Germanic includes Icelandic, Faeroese, Norwegian, Danish, and Swedish; East Germanic included the extinct languages of Gothic, Vandalic, and Burgundian; and West Germanic now includes English, German, Dutch, Frisian, and Afrikaans. Most people in the region we call the Low Countries speak Standard Dutch and/or a Dutch dialect, except for those speakers in the Dutch province of Friesland and in a few villages in the adjacent province of Groningen, where Frisian *(Frysk)* is the official second language. Frisian is a distinct language, much influenced by Dutch and closely related to it (but historically even more so to Old English).

Dutch developed from Franconian and Saxon dialects, diverging from High German dialects that were developing below the so-called Benrath Line (running just south of Düsseldorf, Kassel, Magdeburg, and Frankfurt an der Oder) into a distinct language through a series of vowel and consonant shifts. Compare Dutch *tijd* and English *tide* with German *Zeit* 'time', or English *plow* and Dutch *ploeg* with German *Pflug*, among other regular patterns. This restructuring of consonants through the effects of the High German sound shift phonetically separated English, Frisian, and Dutch from German. These sound shifts are reflected in linguistically related names, such as Dutch **Timmerman** and German **Zimmermann** 'carpenter'. (Underlined names appear as entries in this dictionary.) Dutch is closely related to Low German, and names in the two languages are often closely related or even indistinguishable. (For a discussion of the relationship between Low German and High German, see the essay on German surnames by Edda Gentry.) The English word *Dutch* is cognate with German *Deutsch*, and until the 17th century the word meant both 'Dutch' and

'German'. This is why a variety of German spoken in the eastern United States is generally called "Pennsylvania Dutch".

Several closely related Germanic languages are mentioned in the entries in DAFN:

Old Low German or *Old Saxon*: spoken in a region extending from the Elbe River to the North Sea from Roman times until around 1200; it is the language from which both the Saxon dialects in the Netherlands and Modern Low German are derived.

Middle Low German: the language of Saxony and other parts of northern Germany from about 1200 to 1500, also related to the Dutch Saxon dialects.

Modern Low German: the vernacular language still spoken in various dialects throughout northern Germany, especially in rural areas.

Middle Dutch: spoken from about 1200 to 1500, linguistically divided into five different dialects, while Frisian was spoken along the North Sea coast.

Early Modern Dutch: used from about 1500 to 1800. After the proclamation of the Dutch Republic in 1588, striving for independence from Catholic Spain, Standard Dutch was developed as a written language in the seventeenth century.

Modern Dutch: used from 1800 until now. Around 1800, the first official spelling guides and an official grammar were published. The Standard language became widely distributed, through schools and printed media.

Flemish: spoken in the northwestern part of Belgium—in the provinces of Brabant, Antwerpen, East Flanders and West Flanders—in contrast to Walloon, a dialect of French, which was spoken in the southeastern areas. Characteristic of Flemish family names is their archaic spelling compared with the modern spelling of Dutch names. This is due to the fact that the Belgians had been incorporated into Napoleonic France in 1795, and were therefore subject to the Civil Registration proclaimed by French law before the modern Dutch standard spelling was implemented. Moreover, Flemish names were actually much older than many family names in the Netherlands, as will be discussed later.

Frisian: the language once spoken in the northwestern Netherlands, on offshore islands, and on adjacent parts of the North Sea coast of Germany. Only recently has it been given official written status with regard to the spelling of names. It survives principally in the dialect of Westlauwers Frisian, which is now concentrated in the province of Friesland in the Netherlands. It is the source of quite a few American family names, characteristic markers of which are the suffixes *-ma* and *-stra*, usually added to standard Dutch forms or spellings of words or names. Westlauwers Frisian is a descendant of an older dialect of Frisian generally known as West Frisian to distinguish it from North Frisian and East Frisian. North Frisian is still spoken in parts of Schleswig-Holstein (North Germany) but East Frisian (spoken still in Saterland, Lower Saxony) is now almost extinct. Note that in modern Dutch linguistics "West Frisian" is more narrowly used of the dialect formerly spoken in West Frisia in the province of North Holland, not of the dialect of Friesland, which is known as "Westlauwers Frisian". In DAFN surname entries, however, the broader label "West Frisian" will be used for all Frisian names originating in Friesland.

The Dutch Naming System

From the High Middle Ages up to the present day, population growth and an increasing need for civil and ecclesiastical authorities to regulate and record people's obligations and transactions have encouraged ever more accurate recording of who-is-who by magistrates, parish clerks, and civil servants. The usual custom for much of this period was to set down the person's given name followed by a description of the parentage (a patronymic or metronymic identifying the father's or mother's given name) and perhaps also the occupation, place of residence, or nickname by which the person was locally known. From this developed the modern practice of adopting fixed family names. Those who were recorded in charters, contracts, deeds and other documents, and therefore appeared in archival files were, in first instance, of course, the well-to-do civilians and landlords, followed by their employees and tenants. Hereditary surnaming was first adopted by families of higher social status, and it gradually spread down the social scale.

However, its geographical development was far from uniform. The history of surnames in the Netherlands and Belgium varies from region to region, reflecting the kinds of political, economic, and cultural power structures that operated there at different times. In the early Middle Ages the northwestern region in particular was a thinly populated and barely cultivated region, continually threatened by the sea. Inland regions were similarly threatened by the powerfully westward-flowing rivers, which caused dangerous delta zones, and they were also rather neglected and poorly developed, partly because of their location at the outer boundaries of the Holy Roman Empire. Agricultural conditions improved in later times, especially through land reclamation, and a thriving fishing and mercantile economy developed in and around the sea ports, but the rural character of much of the Netherlands remained into the modern period. The surname usage in the countryside was principally patronymic (though other types were also used) and non-hereditary, changing with each generation. This practice continued in much of rural Netherlands into the 18th and 19th centuries, especially in the most northerly provinces of Friesland, Groningen, and Drenthe. Some country folk did not acquire a fixed family name until 1811, when (under Napoleonic rule) it became a legal requirement to have a fixed family name.

Flanders, by contrast, was economically far more highly developed and culturally more influential in medieval Europe than the Netherlands, with several powerful cities such as Bruges, Ghent, Mechlin, Antwerp, Ypres, and Kortrijk (Courtrai). Here the practice of hereditary surnaming became well established during the 13th and 14th centuries, spreading to rural communities by 1400 or so. It was also common in Brabant, spreading out from cities such as Brussels and Leuven (Louvain), and we find it, too, in the major trading towns of Holland, such as Delft, Dordrecht, Haarlem and Leiden, where hereditary naming also took hold at an early date. For Dordrecht, for instance, we have a good overview of the population from the city records of 1283-1287 and here we are able to match dozens of medieval surnames with contemporary family names.

However, Amsterdam and Rotterdam, situated as they were in the wetlands of Holland, expanded only later and it was not until the 16th and 17th centuries that hereditary surnames became usual there. This began in a major way during the Eighty Years War, when the fall of Antwerp (in Flanders) in 1585 to Catholic Spanish forces prompted many of its Protestant inhabitants and merchants to migrate northward to Amsterdam. It led to the

formation of a new Dutch Republic (the United Provinces) and the beginning of a "Golden Age" of Dutch commercial and military success. The inhabitants of the Low Counties also learned to control their low location and to take advantage of the abundant water and the strong winds. The mills that once provided so much industrial prosperity have an iconic presence in Dutch landscape paintings.

To summarise: hereditary naming in the Dutch-speaking countries spread from higher to lower social levels, from city to countryside, and from south to north. We shall now describe in more detail the different categories of surname.

Patronymics and Metronymics: surnames derived from parental given names

In rural Netherlands patronymics, and occasionally metronymics, were always the basic means of surnaming individuals, whether or not other descriptive names were added. A typical documentary entry might read *Gielys Janszone van der Eyken* (in English "Giles John's son, from the Oak"). In the predominantly rural northern Netherlands it was not until the 17th or 18th century, or even later, that *Janszone* or *Jansen* would become a hereditary name. Only when Civil Registration was introduced in the Netherlands in 1811-12 did a fixed family name of any type became obligatory by law, rendering unnecessary the use of the traditional patronymic system. From then on, patronymics and metronymics were registered only if they were to be used as fixed family names. Nowadays Mr Jansen has the patronymic of his great-great-grandfather whose father was named *Jan*.

Although daughters had patronymics ending in *dogter* (e.g. *Willemsdogter*, abbreviated in writing to *Willemsdr.*), the rigorous patriarchal system did not produce any family names with (even traces of) this name suffix. However, there are some metronymics, i.e. surnames derived from a female first name. **Betten** might be one. This surname appears in 13th-century Dordrecht in the same source as *Heyne ver Lisebetten sone* ('Henry, Mistress Elisabeth's son'), where *ver* is a short form of *vrouwe* 'woman, wife, mistress of a house'). But Betten may also be a patronymic from the first name *Bet*, a pet form of **Berthold**.

Patronymics took several forms over time before they were fixed as family names. The simplest form is that of the father's given name in the nominative case and in simple apposition after the forename:

> **Braam** (short for *Abraham*), **Claes** (short for *Nicolaes* (Nicholas*)*, one of the most frequent Belgian family names), **Clement**, **Faas** (short for *Servaes*, the saint's name *Servatius*), **Hein** (short for Middle Dutch *Heinric*, i.e. Henry), **Kee** (short for *Cornelis*), **Kool** (short for *Nicolaes*), **Lambert**, **Lucas**, **Maas** and (Flemish) **Maes** (short for *Thomas*), **Mak** (short for *Macco*), **Markus**, **Melis** (short for *Amelis*, the saint's name *Aemelius*), **Nell** (short for *Cornelis*), **Otto**, **Rem** (short for *Remmert*), **Ripp** and **Repp** (short for *Rippert*), and so on.

It will be noticed that many of these are monosyllabic, mostly by hypocoristic abbreviation of a longer name, a usage that is particularly common in the province of North Holland. This

and other types of patronymics often became hereditary family names when they were moved by the next generation into the third position of the name string. Admiral and national hero Piet Hein, for instance, was born as *Pieter Pietersz. Heyn*.

More generally patronymics were composed by adding *-sone*, *-zoon'* ('son') to the genitival form of the given name. Thus the son of William was *Willem-s-sone or Willem-s-zoon* and the son of Gerard was *Gerrit-s-zoon*. The suffix was often reduced in pronunciation because it lacked emphasis or stress, giving rise to a variety of surname forms such as **Willems**, **Willems(s)en** (or **Willemszoon**, shortened to **Willemsz.**), **Gerrits**, **Gerritsen**, **Gerritzen**, and **Gerritse**. Patronymics and metronymics were formed either with a masculine or strong *-s* inflection or with a female or weak *-en* inflection, as already seen in **Betten**.

An older kind of patronymic suffix was Middle Dutch *-ing* or *-ink*, which has survived in Flemish names such as **Heyninck** ('one of Heyn's'), and in Frisian names in *-inga* and Saxon names in *-ink*. However, the northeastern Dutch names in *-ing* or *-ink* are not considered as patronymics but as habitational names, because as family names all these names in Overijssel and Gelderland have been taken from farm names, named after the clans who founded those settlements in the (Early) Middle Ages. We pay further attention to them in a paragraph below. A difficulty in analyzing the Flemish names ending in *-en*, and possibly also those names in *-inck*, is that they are confusable with variants ending in the (originally French) hypocoristic suffix *-in*. Compare the Walloon name **Henin** (i.e. 'young Henry') with **Heynen** and **Heyninck** in the Flemish part of Belgium. The extraordinary diversity of forms often derived from one single personal name, placename, or noun will be further discussed in a later section dealing with surname variation.

Habitational and Topographic Names

As noted above, in former times surnaming by a patronymic was often supplemented by reference to where the person lived or worked. Thus an innkeeper might be recorded as *Joris Willemsz. inden Roscam*. In English this would be "George William's s(on) 'in the Horsecomb'", the name of an inn where horses could be groomed (see **Roskam**). Eventually this practice of naming a person from his current or sometimes former place of residence produced the vast category of inherited habitational or "address" names, a great many of which refer to house names in towns. These house names were frequently indicated by a pictorial sign above the entrance door. One that appeals to everyone's imagination everywhere and has even induced a fairy tale, is that of the (little) man in the moon, often depicted with a bunch of branches on his back. Several houses are known with a signboard of this "Mannetje van de Maan" from which derive the surnames **'t Mannetje** (i.e. 'the little man') and **Maan** (i.e. 'moon'). The name **Halvemaan** also exists, referring to a signboard with a picture of the half-moon.

Habitational names also originated in the names of the farms where their original bearers resided. It is usually supposed that **Roosevelt**, the name of two (blood-related) American presidents, comes from the name of a farm in Tholen, Zeeland, although this is not proven. Such farms were often named from a defining feature of the landscape. At first sight *Rozenveld* (the modern form of *Ro(o)sevelt*) can be interpreted as a 'field or area of open land growing with (wild) roses or perhaps with poppies (in Dutch: *klaprozen*)'. But *roos-* in

fieldnames often goes back to ancient Germanic *rausa-*, Middle Dutch *rusch-* 'rush, reed'. **Roosevelt** might therefore be a variant of the Flemish name **Van Ruys(s)evelt**, from a farm name in Brabant denoting a 'field growing with rushes'. The surname was taken to New Amsterdam (now New York), by Claes Maertensz. van 't Rosevelt in 1649.

It is in principle difficult to distinguish this type of surname from topographic surnames, where the reference is to the feature rather than to a place named from it. The name **Dijk** or **Van Dijk** (from Middle Dutch *van den Dike*) is a classic instance. It could theoretically be a topographic name for someone who lived by any one of the thousands of dikes in the Netherlands, but all the evidence suggests that it is usually a habitational name for someone who lived at one of the farms or villages in the Netherlands and Flanders named with *dijk*, either in simplex form or as part of a compound place-name. *Jacob Egbers van Dijk*, for example, took his name from the Hasselterdijk, but *van Dijk* was sufficient to be used as his habitational or "address" name. The diphthong *-ij-* is characteristically Dutch, with the same pronunciation as *-ei-*, that is [ɛi]. It is one of the most common surnames in the Low Countries, and was borne by many migrants to the US, where it is mostly spelled **Van Dyke** and pronounced in the American English way as /daɪk/. Jan Thomassen van Dijk, the first mayor of New Utrecht, Long Island (now part of Brooklyn, NY), came from Amsterdam to North America in 1652.

Surnames with *Van* are particularly common in North Brabant and Gelderland, often in combination with the article *de* ('the'), which is usually in the declined form *den* or *der*. There are many families with these names in North America, for example **Van Meter** (= Dutch Van Meeteren), **Vandenberg** (= Van den Berg), **Van Over** (= Van den Oever), **Van Pelt**, **Vandiver** (= Van de Veer), **Vanderpool** (= Van der Poel), **Van Sickle**, **Van Buren**, **Van Buskirk** (referring to Buiskerke in Zeeland; this family name no longer exists in the Netherlands), **Van Houten**, **Van Ness**, **Vannoy** (= Van Ooijen), **Van Cleave** (= Van Kleef), **Van Hoose** (= Van Huis), **Van Dusen** (= Van der Dussen), **Van Zandt** and **Van Zant**, **Van Landingham** (= Van Landeghem, referring to Landeghem near Ghent), **Van Deventer**, and so on. Three of the most frequent *Van* names in America refer to a dwelling place in an angle of land or bend of a river: **Van Horn**, **Van Winkle**, and **Van Hook**. In many instances *van der* has been contracted to *ver-*, for instance in **Vermolen** and the phonetic variant **Vermeulen**, which is the most common Dutch *Ver-* name in America. They are variants of **Van der Molen** and **Van der Meulen** and denoted someone who lived at a mill, presumably the miller himself. Almost as common in the US and the Netherlands are **Vermeer**, **Verhagen**, **Verburg**, and **Versteeg**.

Van is by no means the only preposition to be found in Dutch habitational and topographic names. The family name **Updike** can be traced to the Dutch name **Opdijk** ('on (the) dike'; compare **Opdycke**). A particularly significant one is *te* 'at'. It is widely found in names from the provinces of Overijssel and Gelderland, where it is often fused with *den* or *der* into *ten* and *ter*. **Ten Eyck** ('at the oak') is a noteworthy family name in America from the 17th century, although it is now unknown in the Netherlands and Belgium, where its equivalent is **Van Eijck** or **Van Eijk**. However, **Ten Brink**, is a common Dutch name, denoting one who lives at the village square. **Ten Pas** derives from the Dutch noun *pas*, from Latin *pascuum* 'pasture'. **Ter Haar** refers to a farm on a ridge with a sandy soil, and **Ter Horst** to a farm on a hill with shrubbery. **Terhune** is probably an Americanized form of **Ter**

Huurne, containing a variant of *hoorn* 'horn, angle, corner'. These are some of the most frequent *Te*, *Ten* and *Ter* names in America.

Some habitational names reflect not where its original bearer currently lived but from where he migrated. These are mostly found in the cities, which drew their populations of laborers, craftsmen, and merchants from nearby villages and towns and from more distant cities and countries in Europe and across the sea. In Kortrijk in Flanders, for example, are recorded Jhan *van Ghend* in 1366 and Pietre *van Anstredamme*, a town workman there in 1392, early examples of the surnames **Ghent** and **Amsterdam**.

Merchants from Lübeck in north Germany can be found in the Dutch and Flemish cities of Bruges, Tienen (Brabant), and Borgloon (Limburg) in the late 13th and 14th centuries, and some of their same-named descendants may bear the name **Lubeck** in the US. Lübeck was then the major center of the Hanseatic League, a commercial cartel of over 200 cities and market towns stretching from the Baltic Sea across northern Germany to Flanders and beyond. As with Lübeck, we find Hamburg, Bruges, Bremen, Cologne, and many other Hanseatic city names well represented in Dutch surnames such as **Van Hamburg, Van Brugge**, and **Bremer**, and in Flemish **Keulenaer**. However, the families bearing these names in the US (Hamburg, Bruge, Bremer, Koellner) may have migrated to America from anywhere in the Hanseatic sphere of influence, not only (or even) from the Netherlands and Flanders. This is true also of surnames that denote a country or region of origin, such as **Duitsman** (either 'Dutch(man)' or more generally 'German'), **Englisch** (see English), and **De Vries** (also **Fries** 'the Frisian'). The last name is one of the commonest in the Low Countries but it can also be found in medieval Germany and England.

Occupational and Status Names

Many persons were distinguished by their craft or trade, by their status, or just by something they used to do for a living. Typical village names are **De Boer** ('the farmer'), **Molenaar**, **Muller**, or **Mulder** ('miller'), **Ackerman** ('farmer, plowman'), **Ploeger** ('plowman'), **Scheper** ('shepherd'), and **Smit** ('smith', very common in urban communities as well). A much greater quantity and variety of occupational names arose in cities and market towns. The food, drinks, and hospitality trade produced many a fisherman or fishmonger (**Visser**), baker (**Bakker**), brewer (**Brouwer**), grower and trader of barley and other ingredients (**Gorter**), butcher (Flemish **Vleeschouwer**), cook (**Kok**), and innkeeper (**De Waard**), and some of these would also be found in villages. The *waghenare* 'carter' (see **Wagenaar**) and the **Rademaker** ('wheelwright') were essential for transportation of goods and people, as was many a boatman and ship-master, giving rise to **Schipper** and **Schipman** (perhaps Americanized in the US as Shipman).

Some of the pre-eminent industries of Flanders and the Netherlands were the wool, weaving, and garment trades, represented, for example, in **Voller** ('fuller'), **Spinder** ('spinner'), **Wever** ('weaver'), **Verwer** ('dyer'), **Bleeker** 'bleacher', **De Schepper** ('tailor') and **Snyder** (also 'tailor'). **Dhuyvetter** ('the tanner') provided treated hide for the leather trade which in turn produced shoes (from the **Schoenmaker**) and all sorts of equipment such as saddles from the **Zadelaar** (Sadler) and horse-collars and harnesses (from the **Hamaker**). The **Timmerman** ('carpenter'), the **Dekker** ('roofer') and the **Metselaar** ('mason') would

have been some of the key workers in urban house-building, while the **Glaser** ('glass-maker') would have provided windows for higher-class houses and churches. Men named **Potter** ('maker of vessels in clay or metal') and **Messer** ('knife-maker, cutler') supplied essential articles for cooking and eating. **Koopman** ('merchant') was inevitably a relatively common surname in the main towns, relating to the import and export of many kinds of merchandise, especially wool, cloth, spices, and wine, along with **Kramer** ('trader'), **Manger** ('market trader)' and **Marsman** ('traveling salesman'). At the luxury end of the market was also the **Goldsmit** (see Goldsmith). These represent only a small glimpse of the hundreds of specialized occupations that flourished in the main towns, where we also find the status names **Burger** ('citizen, freeman of a borough') and **Baas** ('master, overseer', the source of the American English word *boss*).

From the halls and entourage of the nobility, gentry, and burgers come a number of surnames such as **Drost** ('head of court'), **Schenk** ('wine server, butler'), **Jonker** ('young nobleman, squire'), **De Jager** ('the hunter'), and a bevy of entertainers, some of whom may have been itinerant, while others were permanent employees of a court or town: **Pyper**, **Sanger** ('singer'), **Trompeter** ('trumpeter'), **Tamboer** ('drummer'), **Speelman** ('musician, jester, juggler'), **Guichelaar, Keukelaar**, or **Kockler** ('juggler, magician'), and **Springer** ('jumper, vaulter, acrobat'). It is fitting to conclude this brief survey of Dutch occupations with the clerk (whence **De Klerk**, Flemish **De Clerck**), without whom we would have no written records from which to learn the history of Dutch family names.

From the examples given it will be evident that most occupational surnames are formed either from a noun or verb denoting the product or activity plus the agent suffix *-er/-aar* or from a compound of two nouns, the second being an agent noun such as *-man*, *-maker, -smit(h)*, *-houwere* 'hewer, cutter', and so on. The definite article belonging to the older forms of these surnames sometimes survives in the modern name but is often dropped.

It is a moot point to what extent surnames derived from the word for a product or object (with no agentive affix) were always metonyms for the occupation. It must often have been so, perhaps arising from clipped forms of fully formed agent nouns: thus **Mes** ('knife') for **Mesmaker** or **Messer** ('cutler'), and **Wiel** ('wheel') for **Wielemaker** or **Wieldraaijer** ('wheelwright'), as well as the synonymous Frisian name **Wielenga** (when it is not a habitational name comparable to **Van der Wiel(en)**, a topographical name from *wiel* 'pool'). On the other hand, it is seldom that one finds evidence to confirm these occupational senses, and it is likely that the metonymy could have developed from a range of possible associations between the product and the name-bearer (that he habitually wore or brandished a knife, or used to turn around like a wheel, for example), not only (or even) that he made and sold these items. A good example of this ambiguity is the name **Tulp** ('tulip'). The tulip is symbolic of the refined culture that developed in the Dutch Golden Age. To proclaim his devotion to the flower, the famous doctor Nicolas Tulp marked his canal house in Amsterdam with a tulip and chose *Tulp* for his family name. To others, however, the surname may have been given metonymically because they were growers of tulips or were fine gardeners. More will be said on this matter in the following section.

Nicknames

Most nicknames characterize a physical, mental, or moral attribute or an association with an event or habit that was peculiar to a particular person in his or her community. This in itself makes them semantically highly diverse in comparison with other categories of surname. They are also formally exceptionally varied. Straightforwardly literal descriptions rub shoulders with a host of more colorful and sometimes perplexing names derived from metaphors, metonyms, and words and expressions plucked from conversational speech.

Literal descriptions are typified in a name such as **De Groot** ('the great'), for a man of large stature. It is a widespread family name in both Flanders and the Netherlands (where there were over 36,000 bearers of the name in 2007). The reduced forms **Groot** and **Grote** (without the article) are the usual spellings in the US but in the Netherlands they are more characteristic of the province of North Holland. Its antonym **(De) Kort(e)**, for someone of short stature, is surprisingly far less common in its homeland but is well attested as **Kort** and **Korte** in the US, where a branch of the family **Korthals** ('short neck') can also be traced. **De Roo** ('the red') and **Rood** denoted someone with red hair. **Berrevoets** and **Bervoets** ('bare-foot') may lie behind some American examples of **Barefoot**. Quick-footed persons were named in Dutch as **Ligtvoet**, which in America would have been translated into English **Lightfoot**. **Doeve** (see Dove) denoted a deaf person, **Blind** a blind man. **Dutcher** is sometimes an Americanized form of Dutch **Duyster** or **Duijster**, a nickname from Middle Dutch *duuster*, *duister* 'gloomy', also 'stupid', while **Klock** is from Middle Dutch *cloec*, *clo(o)c* 'deft, skillful, clever', and **Quant** is sometimes from Middle Dutch *quant* 'companion, joker'. A name such as **Regtop** ('upright') could refer to a manner of deportment or to moral rectitude. Nevertheless, since we do not know the circumstances in which these names were originally given, we cannot always be sure that no irony was intended when the name was apparently complimentary or (even) uncomplimentary.

Metaphoric names alluding to the real or supposed characteristics of animals, birds, and other creatures are plentiful, for example **Vos** or **Devos** ('fox'), for a red-haired or cunning man, **Crane** or **Krane** ('crane, heron'), for a long-legged man, and **De Kever** ('the beetle'), perhaps for a short, stubby person. Metonymic names (based on contiguity rather than similarity) are even more common, but it is often difficult to be sure what the original bearers' associations were with the objects or incidents from which their name derived. **Poot** ('paw, leg') no doubt referred to something physically remarkable but there is no way of knowing exactly what this was. Did the bearer have long legs or a crippled leg?

Nicknames invite questions that we are rarely able to answer. Were names such as **Pannekoek** (Americanized in the US as **Pancake**), **Brood** ('bread'), **Schoonbrood** ('fine bread'), **Wittebrood** ('white bread'), and **Koek** ('cake' or 'biscuit') given to lovers of these foods or to makers and sellers of them? Was **Den Hoed** ('the hat', compare **Hood**) a nickname for someone who wore a hat in a distinctive way or who made and sold hats? For **Klomp**, however, we may be pretty sure that it is an occupational nickname synonymous with, or a shortening of, **Klompenmaker** 'clog maker'. All country folk once wore these 'typical Dutch' wooden shoes, so *klomp* would not be distinctive for nicknaming someone who wore them.

Lack of motivational context is a pervasive problem in interpreting the original meaning of surnames, and this is exacerbated by formal ambiguities that blur the distinctions between types of name. **(De) Koning** looks like a metaphorical nickname for someone who

gave himself royal airs, but it could also have been a status name for the head of a craftmen's guild or for the 'king' elected to preside at a folk festival. Alternatively, it might have been a habitational surname, referring to a house or inn named "The King". Likewise, **den Hoed, Krane**, and **Pannekoek** could all derive from house or inn names, perhaps with a hat, crane, or pancake depicted on a signboard. Not only were some inns called "In de Pannekoek" but some farms were nicknamed "Pancake" from fields or meadows that were round and "flat as a pancake", so this is another possible origin of the family name.

A striking group of nicknames derive from phrases that seem to have been plucked from a spoken sentence. Some consist of adjective- or noun-based expressions used as greetings, farewells, or conversational clichés such as **Blijleven** ('[may you have a] happy life'), **Mooiweer** ('nice weather'), and endearments such as **Alderliesten** ('very dearest'), **Melieste** ('my dearest'), and **Mijnlieff** ('my love'). Others contain a verb in an unmarked form followed by a noun or a complementary adjective or adverb. **Schuddebeurs** ('shake the purse', for someone who was broke or stingy?) is one of several of these names, dating mostly from the 17th century, in the region around Rotterdam. In the province of North Holland families still exist with the names **Schuddeboom** ('shake the tree'; in order to bring down fruit, or symbolically for a money grubber?), while **Schuddemat** ('shake the doormat' for someone who was very tidy?) is current in Den Haag and Amsterdam. Similar structures occur in **Koopal** ('buy all'), **Stavast** ('stand solid'), and **Zeldenrust** ('rarely rest', i.e. 'one who rarely rests').

However, **Leeflang** ('live long') probably uses a subjunctive form ('may you live long'), while **Treurniet** ('don't grieve'), **Kreukniet** ('don't crease'), and **Zijtregtop** ('be upright') seem to contain an imperative verb form, as perhaps do **Komtebedde** and **Komttebed** ('come to bed'). The first person recorded with this name was *Cornelis Thonis Comt te Bedde* in 1562 in the village of Ouddorp. He never went far away, nor his descendants, for most of the namesakes still live in Ouddorp near the sea. They cherish an antique pin with the decoration of a woman threatening her husband with a bedpan.

The youngest son of the English king Henry II was nicknamed John *Lackland* ('(one who) lack(s) land'). By the Dutch he is named *Jan zonder Land*. Contemporary families named **Zonderland** ('without land') may similarly be related to one of the so named royal bastard sons in Dutch history, or else took their name from a commoner who did not inherit any part of his father's properties. Other *zonder* names are **Zondergeld** ('without money'), **Zonderhuis** ('homeless'), and **Zonderzorg** ('carefree'). Perhaps the most peculiar, but also the most common surname in this group of *Zonder*-names (particularly in Friesland), is the name **Zondervan**. This name must have been given or chosen as a joke. *Zondervan* means 'without *van*'. Because so many Dutch family names began with the preposition *Van* 'from', *van* became a synonym for 'surname, family name'. Paradoxically, therefore, the family name *Zondervan* may have referred to the fact that the named person did not have one. Irony is endemic to nicknaming. **De Kwaadsteniet** ('not the worst one'), **Zeldenrijk** ('seldom rich'), and **Zeldenthuis** ('rarely at home') are from expressions employing a type of irony known as *litotes*.

Although the constituent elements of phrase-names can usually be identified, their original sense as nicknames is often ambiguous or obscure. The motivation for names such as **Niemantsverdriet** ('no man's grief') and **Naaktgeboren** ('born naked') is unknown. Perhaps

they were expressions habitually used by the person who was given the name. One can imagine that someone got the name *Naaktgeboren*, because he used to say "We are all born naked!". This name may have been coined in comical contrast to **Welboren** ('well born'; compare **Welborn**), which name was used by descendants of a noble family. Moreover, these kinds of expression occur in other categories of name, especially house and farm names, which means that family names such as **Zeldenrust** ('seldom rest'), **Zeldenrijk** ('seldom rich'), **Nooitgedagt** ('never thought'), and **Nooitrust** ('never rest'), may alternatively be habitational in origin, since these also known as names of houses and farms.

Surname Variation

Surnames are by and large a product of the spoken language, which varies from place to place and changes over time. Naturally they reflect the dialects of different regions in their vocabulary and pronunciation, and sometimes even in their grammar. Until the 19th century, spelling was also highly variable in its representation of speech, and it is, of course, these spellings of names in different places and periods and in different kinds of record that are the basis of modern research into surname origins. To some extent the diversity of the older surname stock has been "corrected" by modern pronunciation and spelling practices, which can be etymologically misleading. This is not a significant problem with recently created surnames in the Netherlands, which perpetuate a small range of fixed spellings in accordance with the regulations introduced by the Napoleonic code. In Belgium, however, where most surnames are centuries old, there are many more variants. Even in the Netherlands older family names have variant forms, reflecting former, unregulated spellings, alternative name-forms, and older pronunciations, as well as later re-interpretations.

Spelling variation

Following the inclusion of all the family names in the Civil Registration in Belgium in 1795 and in the Netherlands in 1811-1812, their hereditary forms were not subject to later spelling regulations. Consequently many (of them and particularly Belgian names) preserve ancient spellings. As an example of this we can take surnames derived from the popular given name *Dirk* (ancient Germanic *Theoderic*). Combined with other variations (of pronunciation and suffix variation) they occur in a remarkable range of different forms including **Derks**, **Derksen**, **Dirks**, **Dirkse**, **Dirksen**, **Dercksen**, **Derkx**, **Dirkx**, **Derix**, **Dirix**, **Dirx**, **Derickx**, **Dierikx**, **Dierx**, **Dierkx**, **Dierckx**, **Dirken**, etc. The archaic form **Dirksz**, by the way, recently returned to the Netherlands from one of the colonies.

Morphological and Phonetic Variation

We mentioned earlier that patronymics were often based on short forms of Germanic or Christian personal names. *Heinric* or *Henricus* have not only produced forms such as **Hendriks** (also spelled **Hendrix**), but also abbreviated forms such as **Hein** and **Heynen**. In past times, before family names became fixed, these morphological variants were often used interchangeably of the same person, as were variants using inflectional and hypocoristic suffixes. **Heynen**, for example, can be analyzed as *Heyn* + the inflectional suffix *-en* or as

Heyn + the hypocoristic (diminutive) suffix *-in*. Other hypocoristic variants include the family names **Heineken**, **Henkes**, **Heintjes**, and **Heineman**. Here we see the diminutive *-kin*, commonly shortened to *-ke*, as in many German names. In the Dutch language *-ke* generally developed phonetically into *-(t)je*, as illustrated earlier in the surname **Mannetje** 'little man'. The word *manneke(n),* by the way, has been transferred by the French into *mannequin* with quite an opposite meaning ('long legged model or show girl'). **Heineman** is identical with German **Heinemann**; *man* 'person' is also a common Dutch hypocoristic suffix, reserved for boys' names.

Female given names were often adapted from male given names. So **Heintjes** could be explained as a metronymic from the female given name *Heintje*. But, of course, boys were also given pet forms such as *Heintje*, and if they were sweet enough, they were still called *Heintje* when they were grown up. So **Heintjes** could be metronymic or patronymic and, taking into account that the naming system was very patrifocal, probably most *-ke* and *-tje* surnames refer to forefathers.

As mentioned before, the most popular given name in the Netherlands was *Jan*, from which come family names such as **Jansen**, **Jennekens** and **Jentjens**. The family name **Janke** (alias **Jantje**) is actually rare in the Netherlands, but this pet form of *Jan* (Americanized as **Yanke**, **Yankey**, etc.) is nevertheless believed to be the most likely source of the American word *yankee*, originally used as a derisive nickname in New England.

Dialectal and Regional Variation

A number of phonological and morphological features that are distinctive of Flanders or of different provinces in the Netherlands have already been mentioned in discussing the naming system, especially among patronymics and habitational and topographic names. Typical of Flemish names, for example, are the archaic spellings *-ae-* and *-t* seen in **Bogaert** (Americanized as **Bogart**) beside Netherlandish **Bogaard(t)**, itself a reduced form of (**Van den**) **Boomgaard** '(of the) orchard'. There are currently about 140 orthographic, phonetic, and morphological variants of this name. In the eastern province of Groningen (and in neighboring Ostfriesland in Germany) it occurs as **Boomgaarden**, which form may reflect the German variant **Baumgarten**.

One of the common phonetic variations is the mutation of the vowel *-o-* which is evident in **Keuning** (where the vowel is pronounced as in German *König*). This form of the name is especially frequent in Friesland besides the much commoner and widespread **Koning**. In Flanders the alternation of **Deconinck** and **Deceuninck** ('the king') shows similar devoicing of the final consonant in *-ink* for *-ing*. It is a phonetic change that also marks out a group of Dutch habitational names such as **Wissink** (alias **Wissing**) and **Mentink** from the eastern rural regions of Twente and De Achterhoek, an Old Saxon territory near the German border. They refer to farms whose own names mostly derive from an ancient Germanic personal name and the genitival plural suffix *-inga* 'of the sons or people of'. When *-ink* surnames migrated westward they were normalized to Dutch *-ing*. We can therefore presume, for example, that the Dutch and American name **Elfering** comes from the Western Netherlands, where this form has been adapted from the original name **Elf(e)rink** in Overijssel and Gelderland in the Eastern Netherlands.

Other types of regional variation are illustrated in the surname **Bakker**. It takes this form across the Netherlands above the river Rhine, but it is **De Bakker** in Zeeland and North Brabant, **Bekker** all over the country, **Bekkers** and **Bakkers** in North Brabant, **Beckers** in the vast area of Belgian and Dutch Limburg, **Debecker** in Flemish Brabant, **Debacker** and **De Backer** in Flanders. The addition of inflectional -*s* in some of these *Bakker* variants belongs particularly to Limburg, and also to North Brabant and adjacent Belgian regions. It originated in patronymics and metronymics as an elliptical form of "So-and-so's (son)" but it was later extended to all categories of surname. In Limburg even topographical and habitational names were altered in this way. **Kessels** is a variant of **Van Kessel**, from a town at the river Maas in Limburg. **Hovens** (a surname that is particular to Venlo in Limburg) is a variant of **Van den Hoven**, from *ho(e)ve*, one of several words for a farm. A parallel development occurred in hereditary English surnames from the late 15th century to the 19th, but in England non-filial -*s* seems to be a purely analogical addition with no genitival function.

The most common surname in Belgium is the patronymic **Peeters**. Second in frequency is **Janssens**, the third is **Maes**. In fact, the first nine surnames of the top ten are patronymics. The tenth is the occupational name **De Smet** ('the smith'). But in the Netherlands the pattern is different. Although the most frequent patronymic is **Jansen**, together with variant **Janssen** they are the only patronymics (from the same given name) in the first ten of the most frequent Dutch family names. **De Jong** ('the young or junior') is number one, **Jansen** (John's son') is number two, **De Vries** ('the Frisian') is number three, followed by **Van den Berg** ('of the hill'), **Van Dijk** ('of the dyke'), **Bakker** ('baker'), **Janssen**, **Visser** ('fisher'), **Smit**, and **Meijer** ('steward, bailiff; tenant farmer'). Nevertheless, Dutch and Flemish patronymics from *Jan* are so numerous (e.g. **Janssen**, **Janssens**, **Jans**, **Janse**, (Frisian) **Jansma**, **Janson**, **Janzen**, **Janszen**) that the common spelling Jansen is treated as the archetypal Dutch surname. Not that we can claim *Jansen* as only Dutch, for it is also a frequent name across the German border in North Rhine Westphalia, whose dialect of Low German is similar to Dutch in many respects.

Frisian Family Names

Frisian surnames are perhaps the most distinctively regional of all Dutch surnames, most recognizably in the endings -*(s)ma* and -*stra* and occasionally the simple genitival -*a* inflection seen **Alberda** 'one of Albert's (sons)'. **Jansma** was mentioned above as one of the variants of **Jansen**. It is a linguistic hybrid of *Jan*, the common Dutch syncopated form of *Johan* (from Latin *Johannes*), with the Dutch genitive inflection -*s* and the Frisian suffix -*ma*. It is thought to be a syncopated form of -*monna* 'one of the men of ...', originally functioning as a clan-name from a personal name.

When all Dutch families were required to take a fixed family name in 1811, many Frisians with the (non-hereditary) patronymic *Jansz(oon)* chose to adopt *Jansma* in order to declare their Frisian heritage. In the adjacent province of Groningen it was rendered as **Jansema**. At that time in Groningen (a region situated between Friesland and Ostfriesland in Germany) the Frisian language was no longer spoken, but a Frisian substrate re-emerged in the production of new family names, doubtless because they were modelled on the old corpus of names. *Jan*, of course, was one of the commonest given names all over the Netherlands but

Friesland families also perpetuated rarer names of ancient Germanic origin, sometimes in distinctively Frisian forms, to which *-(s)ma* was added as a patronymic suffix. Examples include **Sijtsma** (Sytsma) from *Sytze*, **Riemersma** from *Riemer* (or the derived patronymic **Riemers**), **Fokkema** (an equivalent of Frisian **Fokkens**) from *Fokke*, **Bouma** and **Buma** from *Bouwe* and *Buwe,* and **IJpma** and **Ypma** from *Ype* (or the patronymic **Ypes**).

The Frisian suffix *-stra*, a syncopated form of *-sittera* 'one of the *zitters* (i.e. residents or inhabitants) of ...', was often added to (a part of) the name of the hamlet, village or town that the person lived in or came from. **Dijkstra** (Dykstra), **Hoekstra**, **Veenstra** are three of the most common surnames in Friesland. Like **Zijlstra** (Zylstra) and **Terpstra** they are habitational names reflecting a landscape dominated by many a dike (*dijk*), peat bog (*veen*), sluice (*zijl*), and flood bank (*terp*) from which settlements took their names. The place-names themselves were often compounds, but the derived surnames frequently use only the generic element of the place-name. In the new Civil Registry of 1811 Jacob Ymes Terpstra, for example, is recorded as a native of Ureterp, a sizeable village in Opsterland in the east of Friesland.

Within the same region there can be different ways of expressing the same sense, varying between local dialectal forms and standard Dutch forms. The rare habitational name **Veensma** is identical in meaning to **Veenstra** and to standard Dutch **Van de(r) Veen**, all three of which are primarily located in Friesland and Groningen. Indeed the two Frisian suffixes could be used to give a Frisian character to any type of new surname in 1811, regardless of its semantic category. **Boersma** (mostly found in Friesland), **Boersema**, and **Boer(e)ma** (both mostly found in Groningen) are occupational names, equivalent to standard Dutch **De Boer** 'the farmer', which itself is the fourth most common surname in Friesland. **Schaafstra** and **Schaafsma** are both names for carpenters (from *schaaf* 'plane'), while other carpenters chose the names **Hamersma** ('hammer'), **Houtsma** ('timber') and **Zaagsma** ('saw').

De Vries is a very common name all over the country and it is the most common name in Amsterdam. It is remarkable how many Frisians chose this name in 1811. Was ethnic pride their motive, or was it just that they felt no wish to stand out by inventing a more striking name? Many Frisians also chose **De Jong**, the most common name in the Netherlands. In common with the many Jews who similarly opted for these two surnames, perhaps it expressed their need to adapt unobtrusively.

Humanistic Family Names

Most changes to family names happen by the accidents of speech but some individuals and families have deliberately altered their names for reasons of self-identity or social prestige. The growth of classical learning in the Renaissance (known as humanism) was promoted by a number of Dutch scholars, the most famous of whom was Gerrit Gerritszoon (1469–1536), who on becoming a (Catholic) priest and scholar re-named himself Desiderius Erasmus. These are two Latinized saints' names, each of which is based on a classical word for 'desire'. Perhaps he chose them because of a phonetic similarity between *Gerrit* and Dutch *begeerte* 'desire'.

This humanistic practice was not confined to men of religion. In 16th- and 17th-century Netherlands a Latin-based, literary education was increasingly adopted by respectable, secular families, among whom it became fashionable to adopt classical given names and to translate their existing names into Latin. The Dutch family name stock contains hundreds of such names, the most frequent of which are **<u>Faber</u>** for **<u>Smid/Smit</u>** ('smith'), and **<u>Nauta</u>** for **<u>Schipper</u>** ('shipman, boatman'). Most of the Latinized names, however, are recognized by the suffixes *–(i)us* or *-i*. **<u>Lamberts</u>**, for example, was turned into **<u>Lamberti</u>**, the genitive singular of the Latinized form *Lambertus*. Similarly frequent in the Netherlands and also known in the US are **<u>Jacobi</u>**, **<u>Nicolai</u>**, **<u>Kuperus</u>** 'cooper', **<u>Posthumus</u>** (for someone born after the death of his father), **<u>Simonis</u>**, **Hovius** (<u>Hovious</u> in the US, from *hof/hove* '(manor) farm'), **<u>Kanis</u>** (Latin *canis*) translating **De Hond** ('the dog'), and **<u>Silvius</u>** (a Latin personal name derived from *silva* 'wood') used as an equivalent of a surname such as **<u>Vandenbosch</u>**.

Variation through Imperfect Transmission and Folk Etymology

Names, unlike the words they may derive from, can function with no "sense". Names that are transmitted from one generation to another can therefore lose touch with their original motivations and suffer phonetic and morphological changes that obscure their historical forms and original meanings. Hereditary surnames are especially vulnerable to imperfect transmission in acts of speech and writing.

One outcome of this is the re-interpretation an unintelligible surname as something meaningful on the analogy of another familiar word or type of name, a phenomenon sometimes known as "folk etymology". Another outcome is that variant pronunciations in different communities can become so unlike each other down the generations that they are no longer perceived as having a common source. Even small differences of spelling can be mistakenly treated by some families as proof of a different family ancestry. In reality the same spelling can belong to unrelated families when the name has many original bearers, and different spellings can belong to branches of the same family when the name has a single progenitor.

Numerous variants of **Boomgaard** have already been mentioned as dialectal in origin. They can involve changes in the vowel, the devoicing of final *-d* to *-t*, the change of *-m-* to *-n-* before *-g-* (thus **<u>Bongard</u>**, **<u>Bungert</u>**, etc.), and the loss of *-t or -n-*. One of the latter, **<u>Bogard</u>**, has been re-spelled as **Beaugard**, as though the first part of the name is French *beau* 'fine, beautiful'. The name is also commonly found with a final *-s*, as in **<u>Bomgaars</u>**, **Bongaerts**, and **<u>Bongers</u>**, the last two of which are very common in the southeastern Netherlands and neighboring Flanders. As mentioned earlier, this habitational *-s* is particularly characteristic of Limburg.

As simple a change as the loss or addition of *h* in local pronunciation can easily obscure a name's original identity. The Dutch name **Olierook** looks like a strange nickname from Dutch *olie* 'oil' and *rook* 'smoke' but it is actually a de-aspirated variant of the habitational name **Holierhoek** (from the place-name Holiërhoek 'the corner of land belonging to the castle named *Holy*'). Vice versa the *H-* has been added hypercorrectly in the

name **Van Hee**, which is either from Eede at the border of Zeeland and Flanders or from the widespread stream or river name *Ee.* This happened often in Zeeland and Flanders.

Changes in name stock and vocabulary over long distances of time can put pressure on the social acceptability of some surnames, when folk etymology re-interprets a name in the light of modern usage. Families bearing the name **Tiet**, for instance, were allowed to change their name because it was homonymous with modern Dutch slang *tiet* 'tit, female breast' and therefore appeared "indecent". In reality it is a pet form of given names in ancient Germanic *Theud-* (especially *Theodoric*, modern **Diederik**), as are North German **Tietje** and **Tietjen**. On similar grounds, families named **Borst** and **Borsten** have been permitted to make minor changes (e.g. to **Borest**, **Van Brosten**, and **Bostens**) in order to avoid the embarrassment that *Borst(en)* appears to mean 'breast(s)'.

The susceptibility of surnames to phonetic and morphological variation, imperfect transmission, translation, and folk etymology is especially evident in some immigrant names.

Immigrant surnames

The formation of the new Dutch Republic (the United Provinces) in the late 16th century ushered in a "Golden age" of Dutch prosperity that attracted countless migrants fleeing political and religious persecution and economic poverty. Its cities, such as Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Haarlem, and Leiden, grew immensely wealthy and remarkably diverse in their populations. Newcomers over the following three centuries included Sephardic Jews from Spain and Portugal, French Huguenots, Walloon Protestants, English Puritans (emigrating to Leiden, for example, where the Separatists or "Pilgrim Fathers" first settled, before emigrating to America), Scottish and Swiss soldiers, seasonal workers from Westphalia, Scandinavian craftsmen, and Ashkenazic Jews. They had a considerable impact on the range and character of Dutch surnames, which in their turn often affected the linguistic form of the newcomers' own names.

Dutch names in *Van* are indigenous to the Netherlands but they were joined by a substantial number of habitational names from towns in Westphalia, such as **Van Zanten**/**Van Santen**/**Xanten**, **Van Kleef** (Cleve), **Van Keulen** (Cologne), **Van Aken** (Aachen), **Van Duren**, **Van Wezel** (Wesel), **Van Meurs** (Moers), and **Van Gulik**. They show the attraction of the 'Far West' to many North German immigrants. German habitational names in *-er* are similarly represented in **Bremer** ('man from Bremen'), **Oldenburger**, and **Hamburger**, all from North Germany, but names like this were also formed in Dutch and may have been coined in the Netherlands. The name **Gulikers**, variant of **Van Gulik**, is certainly the result of a Dutch naming process, because the German name is **Jülicher**, from Jülich in Westphalia, while **Gulik** is its Dutch form. In America **Van Gulick** evolved into **Gulick** without the preposition, which form was also phonetically altered to **Hulick**.

Foreign surnames were adapted to Dutch equivalents on a wide scale. German names such as **Müller**, **Schmidt**, and **Schneider** simply became **Muller**, **Smit**, and **Snijder** (Snyder). Syncopation is a regular source of etymological obscuration. In Leiden, for example, **Sloos** is a Dutch alteration of the northern French surname **Selosse**, itself perhaps a dialect pronunciation of Old French *gelos* 'keen, zealous, avaricious, jealous (in love)'.

Syncopation, loss of initial *H-*, and pronunciation of *-ier* as *-ee* has apparently turned **Honvillier** into **Onvlee**. Since the first known bearer of this name in Leiden came from Luxembourg, his surname probably denoted an inhabitant of Honville (in Wallonia). The Walloon name **Charlier**, itself a reduced form of French **Charrelier** ('cartwright') has been altered to **Selier**, and **Bellanger** (a French patronymic from an alternative pronunciation of *Berenger*) has developed variants such as **Blangé**, **Blansjee**, **Planje**, **Planjé**, and **Plantjé**. The Leiden family name **Sierat** seems to be either a pronunciation of French **Gérard** (Gerard), or it might be a habitational name from Sirault in Hainault. The family name **Sieraad** in nearby Haarlem is probably another variant, which is perhaps an instance of folk etymology, since it is misleadingly spelled exactly like the Dutch word for 'jewelry'.

Not only in Leiden but in all the Dutch cities where migrants settled, folk etymology has played a major role in transforming foreign surnames into something intelligible in Dutch, even if the apparent sense is implausible. Take for example the German habitational name **Willauer** ('man from Willau' in the Rhineland). It is known in this form in America but in the Netherlands it was reinvented as **Wielhouwer**, as though it were Dutch for 'hewer of wheels' (an unconvincing occupation in any language). A soldier from a Scottish regiment named **Abercrombie**, who settled in the Netherlands, has descendants with the names **Abercrombie**, **Aberkrom**, and **Apekrom**, the latter of which gives the bizarre impression that the surname should be interpreted as *krom als een aap* 'crooked as a monkey'. The French family name **Picard** denoted an inhabitant of Picardy but in one family that moved to the Netherlands it has been turned into **Piekhaar**, as if it were a nickname for a punk with spiked hair. Another branch of that family bears the name **Pikhaar** 'prick hair'. One of them was allowed to change his name legally into **Pinkhaar** (*pink* means 'little finger').

There was a time when a Dutch person could change their name at will, as we saw with humanistic names, but in present-day Netherlands a name change is centrally regulated and has to be legally obtained by royal decree. One must get permission from a subdivision of the Ministry of Justice, and name changes are subject to certain restrictions. Probably someone named **Apekrom** would be allowed to change his name because its connotations, though not obscene, might attract an unacceptable social stigma, as we noted with **Tiet** and **Borst** in the previous section. However, he would not be allowed to use the original name **Abercrombie** on the grounds that this name already exists (!). He would have to create a brand-new name. Only errors by civil servants of the Civil Registry can be corrected, not name distortions that occurred in the years before the introduction of the Civil Registry.

Family Names of Dutch Jews

The Netherlands became a major location for Jewish communities, with Amsterdam as the center of Dutch Judaism. Their surnames therefore occupy a significant place in the Dutch surname stock, although this has been much diminished following the Holocaust and subsequent emigration of Dutch Jews to Israel and America. The character of their surnames was determined partly by their own naming traditions, partly by where they came from, partly by their adoption of surnames freshly coined in Dutch, often reflecting their occupations, and partly by the assimilation of their original names to familiar Dutch surnames. The Jewish surname **Meijer** is a re-spelling of the Jewish personal name *Meyer* or *Meir*, as though it

were the Dutch occupational or status name. **<u>Van Leeuwen</u>** (habitational) and **De Leeuw** (a nickname, 'the lion'), are deliberate adaptations of the Jewish name **<u>Levi</u>** (a patronymic).

Sephardic Jews from the Iberian Peninsula fled to Amsterdam in the 16th century, bringing with them their Portuguese and Spanish names. Famous names include **<u>De Miranda</u>**, **<u>Querido</u>**, **Sarphati** (a patronymic from the saint's name, Latin *Servatus*), and **Spinoza** (a habitational name *d'Espinosa*). Double names, combinations of father's and mother's surnames according to the Iberian name system, were also introduced, eventually becoming fixed in the Netherlands in forms such as **Lopes Cardozo**, **Rodrigues Pereira**, **Da Silva Curiël**, **Jessurun d'Oliveira**, and several others.

Ashkenazic Jews from Germany and eastern Europe found a home in Amsterdam as well, some as early as the 17th century. From the 18th century Jewish communities were established in dozens of towns elsewhere, in the so called "Mediene" (the term for all the Dutch Jewish communities or *kehilla* outside Amsterdam). Some of these migrants already had surnames, such as **<u>Cohen</u>** 'priest', as well as patronymics based on their traditional personal names (*ben David* 'son of David', for example). Others either adopted or were given a new surname, frequently a habitational or ethnic name denoting where they had migrated from: **Polak** ('Polish person'); **Moscou**, **Moscoviter**, and **Muskewitter** (from Moscow), **Van Praag**, **<u>Prager</u>**, and **Preger** (from Prague), **Italiaander**, **Venetianer**, **Rimini**, and **d'Ancona**; **Spanjaard**; **Van Sweeden**; **Frans(ch)man**; **Elzas** ('Alsace'); **Van Wien**, **Weenen**, and **<u>Wiener</u>**; **Coppenhagen**; **<u>Hamburger</u>**, **<u>Frankfort</u>** (there was a strong connection with the *kehilla* in Frankfurt), **<u>Manheim</u>**, and a host of others from German towns.

When the Civil Registry was introduced in 1811-1812, all members of the Jewish population who as yet had no fixed surname were obliged to choose one. Many chose existing Dutch names, especially those that were commonplace: **<u>De Vries</u>**, **<u>De Jong</u>**, **<u>De Leeuw</u>**, **<u>Van Gelder</u>**, **<u>Van Dam</u>**, **<u>Meijer</u>**, **<u>Jacobs</u>**, **De Groot**, **<u>Waterman</u>**, **<u>Van Leeuwen</u>**, **<u>Wolf</u>**, **<u>Sanders</u>**, **<u>Groen</u>**, **<u>Prins</u>**, **<u>De Lange,</u>** and so on. Many in Amsterdam were known by a Dutch occupational name, the extraordinary range of which cannot be conveyed by this small selection of examples: **Voddekoper** (rag dealer), **Straatveger** (street sweeper), **Houtkruijer** (timber carrier), **Bloemist** (florist), **Groenteman** (vegetable man), **Vleeschhouwer** (butcher), **Hoenderplukker** (chicken plucker), **Hoedemaker** (hatter), **<u>Kapper</u>** (hairdresser), **Zilversmit** (silversmith), **Brilleslijper** (spectacle grinder), **Boekbinder** (bookbinder), **Schrijver** (writer), **Voorzanger** (cantor, precentor), and **Onderwijzer** (schoolteacher). Some bore a metonymic surname from the product that they made or sold or from the tools of their trade, such as **Aardewerk** (earthenware/pottery), **Augurkie** (pickle), **<u>Diamant</u>** (diamond), **Gaarkeuken** (portable kitchen, soup kitchen), **Scheermes** (barber's razor), and **Sigaar** (cigar), although in some cases these may have been nicknames arising from some other circumstance. The family name **Citroen** (compare **Citron** in the US) was taken by a lemon seller. A descendant became the namesake of the iconic French car brand Citroën.

For further discussion of Jewish names see the introductory essay by Alexander Beider.

Dutch Names from Former Colonies

Dutch maritime supremacy from the 16th century onward enabled the Dutch East India Company and the Dutch West India Company to establish many trading posts and a few colonial territories in far-flung parts of the world, often in competition with Spanish, Portuguese, and English rivals. Among these may be mentioned Australia, New Zealand, Indonesia, Japan, Taiwan, the Philippines, Goa, Mauritius, Sri Lanka; South Africa; South and North America; and the Caribbean.

Various Dutch creole languages arose from the interaction between Dutch masters and the indigenous peoples and others from elsewhere whom they employed or enslaved. The best known is Afrikaans in South Africa, where the Dutch East India Company set up its Dutch Cape Colony in 1652. After the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, the colony also attracted many Huguenots, who brought their own surnames (such as **Du Plessis**) and mixed freely with the Dutch. In only a few other places, however, were permanent settlements made.

The impact on the Dutch surname stock is therefore quite limited and is largely confined to migrations to the Netherlands following the granting of independence to most of the colonies after the Second World War. (South Africa had become a British colony in 1814.) Nevertheless, in part because of the Dutch practice of indenturing and enslaving peoples from a wide spectrum of cultures, they have created a wonderfully diverse substratum of unusually altered forms of original Dutch names and exotic names from a galaxy of non-European languages. This is not the place to describe these names in detail but the following selection may give some idea of the kaleidoscope of "colonial" surnames in the modern Dutch surname stock:

From Indonesia are **Rhemrev** (a reverse spelling of Dutch **Vermehr**), **Tan** (Chinese), and **Wattimena** (Moluccan).

From Suriname (on the northeast coast of South America) are **Kromopawiro** (Javan), **Lo-A-Njoe** (Chinese), **Tdlohreg** (an unpronounceable reverse spelling of Dutch **Gerholdt**), and a host of intriguing coinages in the Dutch language such as **Blaaspijp** ('blowpipe'), **Braaf** ('well-behaved'), **Geduld** ('patience'), **Huisraad** ('household goods'), and **Seinpaal** ('semaphore'). Some names became especially frequent in the Netherlands because they were chosen by dozens of individuals at one or two plantations. One of these, **Pengel**, originated in the plantation La Prospérité, where all the chosen names began with the letter *P*. **Scheveningen**, **Oxford**, and **Meerzorg** ('more care or worry'), were taken directly from names of plantations. Pseudo-habitational names were coined using a stock of standard Dutch words alluding to the topography and flora of the plantation's situation and commercial aspirations: **Rustveld** ('rest' + field'), **Wijntuin** ('wine' + 'garden'), **Burgzorg** ('fort' + 'care'), **Bloemenveld** ('flowers' + 'field'), and **Goedhoop** ('good hope') are typical.

Before the Emancipation of 1863 former slaves were often named after their former owner. A curious example is the family name *Van van de Vijver*, with twice the preposition van 'of, from', apparently signifying someone 'of from the Pond'. After the Emancipation, allusions to former owners were forbidden in the taking of a surname.

From the Dutch or Netherlands Antilles, now known as the Caribbean Netherlands, has come **Martina**, which illustrates a Catholic as well as a matrifocal dominance among the population, arising in part from immigration from other Caribbean islands and Latin America.

The given names of unmarried mothers were often adopted as family names for their children. As in Suriname, there are also Dutch-language coinages such as **Windster** ('wind star'), **Kleinmoedig** ('fainthearted'), **Toppenberg** ('mountain top'), **Vlijt** ('diligence'), **Trouwloon** ('reliable wages'), **Loopstok** ('walking stick'), **Strijdhaftig** ('militant'), **Scherptong** ('sharp tongue'), and **Kibbelaar** ('quibbler').

Dutch Names in North America

From 1614 to 1664, the region between New England and Virginia, including much of what is now New Jersey and New York state, was administered by the Dutch—a vast territory called New Netherland, which extended from the Connecticut River to Delaware Bay.

Dutch colonization was sponsored by several trading companies, such as the Dutch East India Company, on whose behalf in 1609 the English adventurer, Henry Hudson, had first sailed up the river that was later named for him. Hudson anchored at what is now called Peekskill (Dutch for 'Peeck's creek'), named at a later date for Jan Peeck, a Dutchman who bought the land there from the native Lenape people. The "patroonship" plan of colonization allowed an investor (the "patroon") to negotiate with the natives for a tract of land upon which he was obligated to settle fifty colonists within four years, at his own expense. Of all the patroonships registered, only Rensselaerswijck on the upper Hudson experienced any degree of long-term success. It was named for the merchant jeweler Kiliaen van Rensselaer**,** a founder of the Dutch West indies Company.

Dutch colonies were harassed both by Native Americans and by English colonists from the north, but by the mid-17th century there were thriving settlements on Long Island, New York, at Dutch-named places called Heemstede (Hempstead), Gravesande (Gravesend), Breuckelen (Brooklyn), and Vlissingen (Flushing). New Amsterdam, the settlement at the tip of Manhattan, officially became a city, and the settlement of Haerlem (Harlem) at the northern end of the island was granted a local court. Other Dutch towns included Bergen (now in New Jersey), Staten Island, and Esopus (now Kingston), a halfway point between Manhattan and Fort Orange. The founding of Schenectady to the north completed the settlement pattern within New Netherland. This last place-name is not Dutch but one of many local Native American names, including Manhattan and Esopus, that co-exist with Dutch place-names in New York and New Jersey.

In 1664 the Dutch settlements fell to the English, beginning a long process of accommodation, adaptation, assimilation, and development into English-speaking American communities. In 1673, the Dutch regained control of the colony in the third Anglo-Dutch war. During the peace negotiations an English official advised that all the Dutch should be removed from the province, or at least isolated in Albany. Although this drastic measure was not carried out when New Netherland again became New York in 1674, it indicates the concern with which the English viewed the Dutch majority in this province. Fifty years of Dutch commercial exploitation and colonization from the upper Hudson to Delaware Bay had given rise to a distinct non-English entity sandwiched in between New England and Virginia. Although approximately half the colonists sent over by the company were not native-born Netherlanders, they were quickly assimilated into the Dutch colonial society. Norwegians who were brought over as loggers, German refugees from the Thirty Years' War, Walloons

fleeing religious persecution in the Spanish Netherlands, Croatians, Poles, and Bohemians were all required to adhere to the colony's laws. As with most immigrants in a new land, the first requirement was to learn the dominant language.

After the final settlement with England in 1674, assimilation of the colonists of New Netherland was slow and uneven. It has been reported that in New York City, by the mid-1700s, only the elderly continued to speak Dutch. However, parts of New Jersey and, especially, the upper Hudson region of New York, with its center at Albany, became strongholds of Dutch.

Dutch social tradition and the Dutch language in which it was articulated did not die out overnight. As late as 1794, a traveler to Albany noted that "the people are of a mixed race, but chiefly Dutch, which language, as they call it, they generally speak, but it is so corrupted, and replete with new words, which a new country, new subjects, and new circumstances would unavoidably require." After almost 130 years of separation, the Dutch language in North America, called *Laeg-duits* or *de taal* by its speakers, had diverged considerably from the language in the fatherland. This was accelerated by the lack of reinforcement from standardizing developments in the Netherlands. The absence of a socially prestigious standard to emulate, especially among the younger generation, caused dialect variants to flourish.

Unless there are still speakers of *de taal* living in some isolated region of the Catskills, the only survivals of the language are now represented by a handful of words adopted into American English and by a few traditional nursery rhymes. What does survive linguistically are the numerous placenames of Dutch origin and the thousands of family names deriving from the original settlers of New Netherland. Over 5,000 of the family names appear in this dictionary (marked in this essay by underlining). Of these, the 500 or so that begin in *Van* are quickly recognized as such, but many Dutch family names are now disguised owing to the spelling conventions applied by English-speaking clerks. Names such as **Brouwer**, **Cuyper**, **Smidt**, **Voller**, **Visscher**, **Jansz**, and **Pietersz** easily merged with **Brewer**, **Cooper**, **Smith**, **Fuller**, **Fisher**, **Johnson**, and **Peters** or **Peterson**; and some names such as **Timmerman** and **Vos** were simply translated as **Carpenter** and **Fox**. Without genealogical research, we cannot hope to recover the Dutch origin of these thoroughly English-sounding family names.

Since the 17th and 18th centuries, many thousands more families and individuals have emigrated to the United States from the Netherlands, mostly for political and economic reasons. In the 19th century, a large number of Dutch religious dissidents settled in Michigan, while others continued farther west to Pella, Iowa. A handful of migrants came from the Dutch Cape Colony (now South Africa), including **Botha**, **Coetzee**, **Duplessis**, and **Venter**. In World War 1 the Netherlands were neutral and not participating, but Belgium was a major battleground, and the hardships of both world wars drove many more immigrants from Belgium and the Netherlands to America. An impressive museum in Antwerp reveals the pains and hopes of so many immigrants, and in Rotterdam a migration museum, for the thousands of Europeans who boarded the Holland America Line there, will soon open its doors.

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