

***Diemen and Oud-Diemen ('old Diemen'):* Place names as an expression of power relationships**

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Introduction

Through the centuries, scores of settlements in the Netherlands formed new settlements in the immediate surroundings. This process started in the Middle Ages. Initially, the daughter settlement mostly shared the name of the mother settlement, but in C. 13 a need for separate names arose; mostly after the daughter got her own church.¹ This naming process can be seen, for example, in the settlement of Oudehorne: in 1315 the village was called *Hoerne cum duabus capellis* ‘with two (small) churches’.

While the ‘mother’ retained her original name, the daughter inherited the mother’s name, supplemented with a specifier, usually with the meaning ‘new’.² For example, the above mentioned mother settlement of Hoerne got a daughter settlement, that obtained its own name *Nieuwehorne* (‘new Horne’) in 1408.

Afterwards, however, the daughter sometimes took over the original name, often forcing the mother to take a name containing a specifier meaning ‘old’. Thus, we see a daughter settlement called *Diemen*, with a mother named *Oud-Diemen* ‘Old Diemen’, at 2 kilometers distance. Mostly, name changes like this took some time. During a shorter or longer period, the old and the new variant coexisted.³

For the sake of brevity, I will use a symbol for the original name, namely *X*. The absence of *X* will be rendered as \emptyset . The location of the mother settlement will, for brevity’s sake, be indicated as ‘location A’, the daughter’s location being ‘location B’.

In a following phase, different evolutions were possible. Theoretically speaking, six combinations are conceivable, starting from four variables – namely *X*, *New*, *Old*, and \emptyset .

Potential combinations

¹ Van LOON 1981:151. In the second half of C. 16, location A became the name of *Olden Horn* (Van BERKEL & SAMPLONIUS 2006:312, 348).

² Van LOON 1981:151 also discusses some other types of twin settlement name pairs, like *West X* vs. *East X*, or *Upper X* vs. *Lower X*. Other specifiers are, for example, *Klein* (‘Little’), in *Klein-Bedaf* (daughter of Bedaf (later called *Groot-Bedaf*); or substantives like *hamrick* (‘hamlet’, in *Beerter hamrick*), *-dorp* (‘village’, in *Leiderdorp*) or *-brug* (in *Diemerbrug*, see below).

³ For example, POTT 1913 mentions ‘Zevenaar or Nieuw-Zevenaar’ (evidently in relationship with the daughter settlement); Witkamp 1877:727 mentions ‘Leusden or Oud-Leusden’.

X + New X

X + Old X

X + New X + Old X

∅ + New X

∅ + Old X

∅ + New X + Old X

Formulation of the problem

The paper examines, whether naming histories can be reconstructed from such combinations – contemporary combinations, as well as combinations the way they existed at any moment in the past. What is the relationship between the X's and the X's plus additive concerned (Old or New X)? And what does it mean if at a given moment no X exists, only a *New X* and/or an *Old X*?

Van BERKEL & SAMPLONIUS 2006 suggests, in the light of some examples, a relationship between the size or socio-economic importance of the respective settlements on one hand, and the presence or absence of a marker on the other.⁴ Unmarkedness would indicate a preponderance of the settlement concerned (cf. the unmarked name of *Mexico* (state), versus *Mexico City*).⁵

For example, the settlement of Beerta (unmarked) would be larger than Nieuw-Beerta.⁶ This paper assumes that the population of a settlement is indicative of its importance, either in terms of the number of inhabitants, or the number of houses. The genesis of most of these twin settlements, however, dates back to the Middle Ages,⁷ and local data concerning older periods are scarce, especially concerning the Middle Ages.

The paper is concerned with settlement names only. If a name also figures to indicate an administrative or legal district, it is not considered here as such as in the case of Niedorp.

⁴ The fact that power relationships could manifest themselves indeed in place names, as appears from placename doublets with the additives *Groot* ('Great') and *Klein* ('Little'): *Groot-Bedaf/ Klein-Bedaf*, etc.

⁵ It would be desirable to discover how big the imbalance in power relationship should be at least, in order to force X to change into Old X, or migrate to location B. Lack of historical data, however, prevents this.

⁶ In the case of Beerta/Nieuw Beerta this relationship is still visible, Beerta counting 2460 inhabitants (2008) versus Nieuw-Beerta 130 (see Wikipedia). However, the supposed old relationship between X (bigger) en *New X* (considerably smaller) is not visible any more in the present villages of Buinen (813 inhabitants) and Nieuw-Buinen (5,107 inh.); cf. *Wikipedia*.

⁷ VAN LOON 1981:149.

Some time after the settlement's name of *Niedorp* had passed into disuse as such, the same name remained for many centuries as an indication for a legal district that encompassed the settlements of Oude Niedorp ('Old Niedorp') and its daughter settlement Nieuwe Niedorp.⁸ And in C. 20 the name of *Niedorp* popped up again to indicate a merged municipality, consisting of the above mentioned residential nuclei.

Method

Drawing on Van BERKEL & SAMPLONIUS 2006 (a dictionary of contemporary official place names, supplied with their etymologies, vernacular variants and historic details), supplemented with anecdotal findings, an inventory of place names was made. It contains markers *Oud* 'old' and *Nieuw* 'new', dialectal variants of these, and their unmarked correlates. The number of name sets amounts to 54 items. By means of historical topographies and similar documents it was checked in how far the presence and absence of a marker correlates with a relative subordination and relative predominance or importance, respectively.

The paper investigates which patterns can be discovered in the naming of these twin settlements. Subsequently, an attempt will be made to range the found patterns under one main pattern.

The paper does not, of course, examine twin settlements whose names refer to different referents. For example, the names of *Oudemolen* 'old mill' and *Nieuwemolen* 'new mill' refer to an old mill and a new one, respectively;⁹ there never was one original settlement by the name of **Molen*. Left aside, too, was the combination *X + Old X*, in cases where *Old* does not refer to a settlement, but to a castle or country estate. Oud Bussem, for example, is a country estate, next to the settlement of Bussum.

Results

The relationship between importance and markedness is fairly explicitly mentioned in Van BERKEL & SAMPLONIUS 2006, in the case of the settlement of Diemerbrug,¹⁰ 'bridge near Diemen'. The name of this settlement is comparable to daughter settlement names of the type *New X*. The authors state that Diemerbrug surpassed the mother, Diemen. The decline of the mother started in 1640, when two barge canals were dug, with the result that the daughter ended with having a more favorable location. To make matters worse, the mother settlement was fire-stricken in 1652.¹¹ The result of all this was that in C. 18 the Diemen church was

⁸ BAKEN 1950:45-7.

⁹ Van BERKEL & SAMPLONIUS 2006:313, 348.

¹⁰ Van BERKEL & SAMPLONIUS 2006:99.

¹¹ De BOER 1940:60.

moved to Diemerbrug,¹² and the name of *Diemen* shifted to the new residential nucleus. Probably, the name of Diemen referred for some time to both nuclei. After 1750, the old settlement took the name of *Oud-Diemen*.¹³ For some more examples that support the hypothesis concerning power relationships as a factor in the naming process, see table 1.

Table 1: *Power shift: mother settlements obtaining the additive ‘Old’*

<i>Location A</i>	<i>Location B</i>	<i>Historical details</i>
Oldendiever	Diever	Of the mother settlement, only a rudiment remained (Van BERKEL & SAMPLONIUS 2006:332)
Oud-Borgvliet	Nieuw-Borgvliet	In 1587, the mother settlement, Borgvliet, was reduced to a hamlet after Spanish troops had almost completely destroyed it (van der AA vol. II (1840):595). Daughter settlement Nieuw-Borgvliet was built in the second half of C. 19 (http://groffenw.home.xs4all.nl/T10a.html). According to the last mentioned source, however, the decline was more recent and dates back to the second half of C. 19. The mother obtained the additive <i>Oud</i> in or before 1908 (earliest attestation).(http://users.bart.nl/~leenders/wbd/txt/oudborgvliet.html).
Oud-Drimmelen	Drimmelen	After the mother had been devastated by a fire in 1732, the settlement (under the name of Nieuw-Drimmelen) was relocated on the Biesbosch bank. In 1841, the mother was attested as <i>Oud-Drimmelen</i> (Van der AA vol. III (1841):324). In 1841, Drimmelen (location B) counted 270 inhabitants (Van der AA, ib.); Oud-Drimmelen counted 108 inhabitants in 1840 (WITKAMP 1877:958).
Oud-Leusden	Leusden	In the mother settlement, the church was demolished in 1828, after a new church had been built in the daughter (Nieuw-Leusden). In 1846, the mother was attested as <i>Oud-Leusden</i> (Van der AA vol. VII (1846):204-5).

As stated above, the first phase of the naming process consists of a daughter settlement being founded near the mother, and obtaining a name of the type of New X. A subsequent phase would be, that the new settlement would surpass its name giver and force the additive ‘Old’; e.g. *Oud-Diemen*. Another possibility, as the Diemen case shows too, was that the new settlement seized the unmarked form: the name, thus, shifted from one location to another.

¹² According to WITKAMP 1879 (vol. III):259, however, the church in location A was demolished in 1807, and relocated in location B.

¹³ Wagenaar 1750:171 does not yet mention the name of *Oud-Diemen*.

One might object that the addition of *Old* or similar words does not necessarily have anything to do with a decline of any mother settlement, and suggest that *Old* was just added because of some psychological need of symmetry: once the new settlement had acquired the additive *New*, the need may have been felt to add *Old* to the mother settlement. This seems, however, to be contradicted by the existence of many non-symmetrical combinations, such as *X* in combination with *New X*, or with *Old X*. Table 2 shows that the asymmetrical combinations are as frequent as the symmetrical ones:

Table 2: *Frequency of combinations*

X + New X	10
X + Old X	20
∅ + New + Old	21

Yet, the suggestion concerning a possible need of symmetry should not be totally rejected. One example that might corroborate this is the settlement pair of Oude Pekela and Nieuwe Pekela. Location A, after having been attested in 1660 as *Nieu Dorp* ‘new village’, obtained another name in 1781 (or before), namely *De Peekel A*, while in the same year location B was called *De Nieuwe Pekel Aa*. In 1824 location A’s name changed again, into *Oude Pekela*. Around this time, however, the two settlements were almost equal in size, the mother counting 3,555 inhabitants (1822),¹⁴ the daughter 3,899 (same year).¹⁵

Another objection might be, that the element *Old* was added just because the settlement was felt as being older.¹⁶ This argument makes sense, but is hard to prove. Therefore, as long as closer examination does not yield any counterexamples, the power relationship hypothesis deserves at least the benefit of the doubt.

Only three out of six possible combinations, mentioned in the introduction, do really occur (see tables 3-5, below; the tables refer to official names only, ignoring vernacular names).

Table 3: *X + New X*

Acht	Nieuw Acht
Beerta	NieuwBeerta
Bergen	Nieuw-Bergen

¹⁴ WITKAMP 1877:966.

¹⁵ WITKAMP 1877:857.

¹⁶ GILDEMACHER 2007:178, with regard to *Oldelamer*.

Buinen	Nieuw-Buinen
Gagels	Nieuw-Gagels
De Krim	Nieuwe Krim
Roden	Nieuw-Roden
Scheemda	Nieuw-Scheemda
Schoonebeek	Nieuw-Schoonebeek
Weerdinge	Nieuw-Weerdinge

Table 4: $X + Old X$

Bergentheim	Oud-Bergentheim
Bodegraven	Oud-Bodegraven
Borne	Oud Borne
Caberg	Oud-Caberg
Diemen	Oud-Diemen
Diever	Oldendiever
Drimmelen	Oud-Drimmelen
Eibergen	Olden Eibergen
Heusden (munic. Heusden)	Oud-Heusden (munic. Heusden)
Kamerik	Oud-Kamerik
Lemiers	Oud-Lemiers
Leusden	Oud-Leusden
Lutten	Oud-Lutten
Maarsseveen	Oud-Maarsseveen
Ootmarsum	Oud-Ootmarsum
Roosteren	Oud-Roosteren
Veeningen	Oud-Veeningen
Wulven	Oud-Wulven
Zevenaar	Oud Zevenaar

Zuilen	Oud-Zuilen
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Table 5: $\emptyset + New X + Old X$

Nieuw-Annerveen	Oud- Annerveen
Nieuw-Borgvliet	Oud-Borgvliet
Nieuw-Dijk	Oud-Dijk
Nieuwehorne	Oudehorne
Nieuwenhoorn	Oudenhoorn
Nieuwe Niedorp	Oude Niedorp
Nieuwe Pekela	Oude Pekela
Nieuweschild	Oudeschild
Nieuweschoot	Oudeschoot
Nieuwe Strumpt	Oude Strumpt
Nieuwe Tonge	Oude Tonge
Nieuwleusen	Oudleusen
Nieuw-Reemst	Oud-Reemst
Nieuw-Vossemeer	Oud-Vossemeer
Nijeberkoop	Oldeberkoop
Nijehaske	Oudehaske
Nijeholtpade	Oldeholtpade
Nijeholtwolde	Oldeholtwolde
Nijelamer	Oldelamer
Nijemirdum	Oudemirdum
Nijetrijne	Oldetrijne

It is hardly surprising that, at least on the level of official naming, there are no examples of $X + New X + Old X$; this would, after all, imply that there would be two names for location A (considering that only two locations exist at all, not three). However, if we take into account unofficial (vernacular) names, for example in bilingual areas, the combination $X + New X + Old X$ occurs four times (table 3):

Table 6: *X + New X + Old X, including vernacular forms*

<i>X</i>	<i>Old X</i>
Acht (since 1307) (standard Dutch)	Au Acht (locally)
Berkoop (locally)	Oldeberkoop (since 1320)
Hooltpae (locally)	Oldehooltpade (since 1204)
Skoat (locally)	Oudeschoot (since 1408)

This should not be surprising, if we take into account that very little is known of the age of the vernacular names. They may reflect power relationships in another period than the official names.

No examples were found of $\emptyset + \text{New } X$, either. Truly, at face value there seems to be an example of $\emptyset + \text{Old } X$, namely Oud-Sabbinge (without a corresponding Sabbinge at present, according to Van BERKEL & SAMPLONIUS). A settlement with the name Sabbinge certainly existed, but it just changed its name into Oud-Sabbinge. There was no mother-daughter-relationship, here. Thirdly, $\emptyset + \text{New } X$ is lacking.

What histories lie behind these namings? Table 7 shows, what historical backgrounds may explain these names.

Table 7: *Interpreting the combinations*

<i>Combinations</i>	<i>Reconstruction</i>
$X + \text{New } X$	Daughter settlement was built near mother settlement.
$X + \text{Old } X$	Daughter surpassed the mother and took over her name.
$X + \text{New } X + \text{Old } X$	Daughter settlement was more or less equivalent to the mother. The latter either kept her unmarked name, or was renamed <i>Old X</i> .
$\emptyset + \text{New } X$	Mother settlement disappeared, for example after a catastrophe.
$\emptyset + \text{New } X + \text{Old } X$	Daughter settlement was built near mother settlement and was named <i>New X</i> . The mother obtained the additive <i>Old</i> .

Combinations of the type $\emptyset + \text{New } X + \text{Old } X$ (like Oud-Vossemeer/ Nieuw-Vossemeer) indicate that an unmarked X must have existed, sometimes without ever having been documented. But other ‘gaps’ can be seen, too. For example, in the combination $X + \text{Old } X$ - where name shift has taken place - a *New X* is sometimes conspicuously absent, as is illustrated by the case of Heusden (daughter settlement) and Oudheusden (mother).

At least in the case of the twin settlements Oldelamer en Nijelamer, there must have been some uncertainty about powership relations. Here, the historical data show that X must have existed almost two centuries side by side with *New X* and *Old X*, before it disappeared. As early as 1165, the mother settlement had been indicated as *Lennam antiquam*, which suggests that an unmarked *Lenna* had preexisted. The unmarked name turned up again in 1313: *Lameren*.

Discussion

The diagram (below) represents the naming process as we might logically reconstruct it; that is, abstracting from possible lacunas in the documented name variants. It indicates the alternative developments that may occur.

One basic assumption is, that the place names reflect the historical situation at the time their names, with their additives, became fixed and stable. A second assumption (see the above Introduction) is, that X was the starting point of the naming process, even in the case where no historical documents can be found that attest the name X .

The next phase includes that a name like *New X* appears mostly after a church had been built in location B. After that, three possibilities occurred:

- (a) either location B remained considerably smaller than A, and on the naming level nothing changed.
- (b) both locations remained more or less equivalent. In that case, location A might obtain the additive ‘Old’.
- (c) location B surpassed location A. In that case, name shift would often occur and B would seize the unmarked name. But sometimes the mother kept her unmarked name, as in the case of Buinen/ Nieuw-Buinen. Further enquiries will have to illuminate why some mother settlements kept their names, and other ones took the additive Old. As far as Buinen and Nieuw-Buinen are concerned, the daughter settlement, first attested in 1840, soon surpassed the mother. The latter counted 284 inhabitants in 1860 and increased slowly to 463 inhabitants in 1890;¹⁷ the daughter’s

¹⁷ WITKAMP 1895:139.

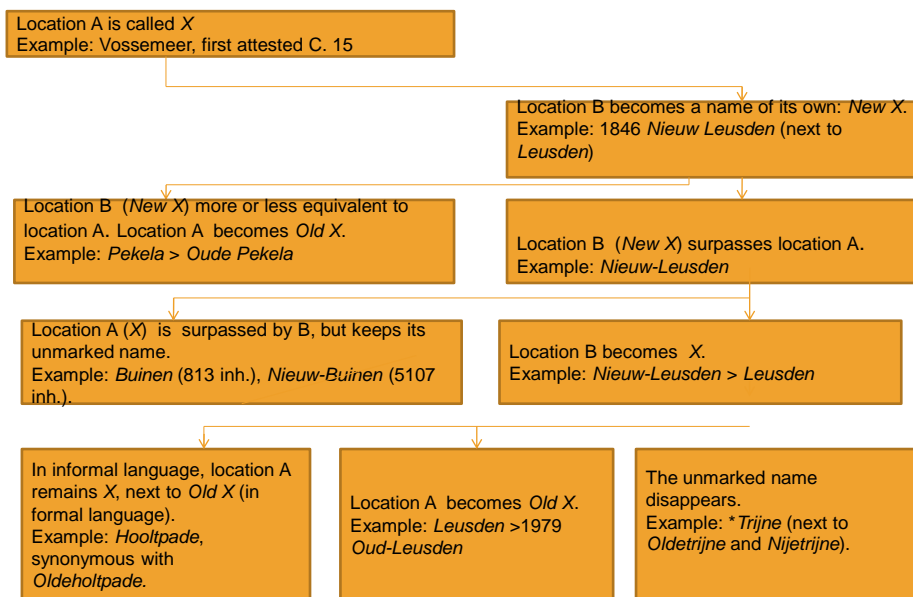
population measured in 1870 1914 inhabitants.¹⁸ At present, the power relationship is still the same, Buinen counting 813 inhabitants, Nieuw-Buinen 5107.

If the daughter seized the unmarked name, three evolutions were possible:

- a) In informal language, location A remained unmarked (like *Hooltpade*)
- b) Location A was sometimes forced to assume the marker *Old* (like *Oud Diemen*)
- c) The unmarked name disappeared (for example **Trijne*, next to *Oldetrijne* and *Nijetrijne*).

Further investigation will be necessary to establish that the proposed naming pattern does not only apply to the Netherlands, but in other countries as well.

The naming process



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