What Effect do Municipal Mergers have on the Carnival Nicknames of the Merging Entities? Place-names as an Expression of Identity

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Abstract

During the carnival season, many towns in the Netherlands bear, next to their official name, a carnival nickname. For example, the city of Eindhoven (former seat of Philips, manufacturer of bulbs) is nicknamed *Lampegat* (gat = hamlet). The nicknames usually stem from a period of small-scale administration. Recent ones were brought into being by local carnival associations.

The paper is based on the idea that Dutch carnival is a typically local feast: outsiders are not welcome (Wijers 1996). Carnival nicknames can, thus, be supposed to reflect the spatial unit the inhabitants concerned identify themselves with the most.

In the remote past, carnival nicknames used to correspond with settlement names; and if these obtained a municipal status, the nicknames corresponded with the municipal name. During the past decades, however, scores of Dutch municipalities merged. The paper investigates to what extent this scaling-up had consequences for local nicknames. Did they live on? Were they scaled up, too? And if so, how much time elapsed? The results of the investigation may give insight into the measure in which the inhabitants of the locations involved adapted their 'identification reach' to the new situation.

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Introduction

During the carnival season, more than 500 towns in the Netherlands bear, in addition to their official name, a carnival nickname. This category of nicknames is pre-eminently a Dutch phenomenon;[1] and within the Netherlands, almost half of these nicknames can be found in the province of Noord-Brabant. For example, the city of Eindhoven (former seat of the Philips Company, manufacturer of light bulbs) is nicknamed *Lampegat* ('hamlet of lamps'). These nicknames have only recently been attested in written sources, the earliest records dating back to the third quarter of the 19th century. Some are unique (like *Lampegat*), others are not: for example, two villages are nicknamed *Heikneuterslaand* ('country of heath dwellers'). The nicknames often derive from ancient invectives for inhabitants: terms of abuse used by people in neighboring places. Subsequently, these insulting names would sometimes develop into honorary nicknames. Recent carnival nicknames for cities and towns from the latter half of the 20th century, however, have been brought into being by local carnival associations; they do not have their origins in insulting inhabitant names invented by neighbors.[2]

This paper is based on the assumption that the Dutch carnival is a typically local feast: outsiders are, generally speaking, not welcome (WIJERS 1996). Carnival nicknames can thus be supposed to reflect the spatial unit with which the inhabitants concerned identify themselves the most. In a more remote past, carnival nicknames used to correspond with settlement names; subsequently, if the settlements were granted municipal status, the carnival

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[1] To a lesser degree, carnival nicknames can also be found in Germany. For example, Regensburg (Bavaria) is *Narragonia*, Dülken (Rhineland) *Narrenhofburg*. In 1827, Koblenz (Rhineland-Palatinate) was nicknamed Jocusstadt (Fransen 1996:32).

[2] An interesting example is Almere, a city that was developed in the second half of the 20th century in an empoldered part of the IJsselmeer; their carnival nickname, *Moddergat* ('pool of mud') is obviously self-invented.

nickname in some cases corresponded with the municipal name.[3] Municipal names were introduced in the Netherlands in the era of the French occupation, at the beginning of the 19th century. Most of the municipalities formed the continuation of parishes.

During the past two centuries, scores of Dutch municipalities have merged. Often, the new entity was given the name of the biggest merging partner, but not infrequently another solution was chosen. Sometimes two or more participants' names were combined (for example: *Aarle-Rixtel*), and sometimes a wholly new umbrella name was chosen; for example, a name that expressed some common feature of the merging partners, like Dinkelland ('land of the river Dinkel'): the river is a common element in the new municipality.[4]

Considering that local authorities aim at oneness of their subordinates, and – if necessary – at creating a shared identity, it may be important to know to what extent their attempts are successful. Carnival nicknames can, as we have noted, be supposed to reflect a feeling of identity. And in the case of merged municipalities, they might be supposed to be a measure of the success of the merger in terms of shared-identity feelings within the enlarged community.

Formulation of the problem

The paper attempts to investigate to what extent the scaling-up of Dutch municipalities into larger municipalities has influenced carnival nicknames. It further examines the influence of the scaling-up of a few pre-municipal entities into municipalities. The first question is: to what extent did the scaling-up of Dutch municipalities have consequences for the carnival nicknames of merging partners? Or, conversely: to what extent do carnival nicknames reflect a merger?

In the second instance the paper considers the naming patterns that can be found in terms of the nature of the relationships between the umbrella nicknames and the nicknames of the merging partners. Are they related in a way comparable to that in which their official counterparts are related?

Method

A chart of carnival nicknames and their official counterparts (names of cities, towns, hamlets etc.) has been compiled from the *Bosatlas* (2007:547), the *Wikipedia* list of carnival names, and a few minor sources. This list contains 532 nicknames, and has been matched with a list of past and present municipalities (Van der MEER & BOONSTRA 2006).[5]

From this (long) list, an inventory has been made of carnival names that are related to a specific category of municipalities: merged municipalities (past and present) that bear 'combined' names and names that are (or were) not identical with any name of any merging partner. The resulting shortlist numbers 10 items (table 1).

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[3] One of the settlements that did not obtain municipal status is Molenschot, nicknamed *Papslokkersgat* ('hamlet inhabited by porridge swallowers').

[4] Reinsma, 2008.

[5] A separate list of former municipalities is available at:
http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lijst_van_voormalige_Nederlandse_gemeenten

Official name	Municipality from … to …	Umbrella name since	Presently belonging to municipality
Beek en Donk	Ca. 1800 - 1997	Ganzendonck, since?	Laarbeek
Berkel-Enschot	Ca. 1800 - 1997	Knollevretersgat, since at least 1996[6]	Tilburg
Deursen en Dennenburg	Ca. 1800 - 1923	Schottelzakkenrijk, since?	Oss
Oost-, West- en Middelbeers	1803 - 1997	Strijkersgat, since?	Oirschot
Borkel en Schaft	1810-1934	Mulkgat, since 1979[7]	Valkenswaard
Aarle-Rixtel	Ca. 1810-1997	Ganzegat, since 1956[8]	Laarbeek
Son en Breugel	1810 until present	Krutjesgat, since 1959[9]	-
Sprang-Capelle	1923 - 1997	Cuppèls gat, since?	Waalwijk
Driebergen-Rijsenburg	1931-2006	Sparrenrijck, since 1975[10]	Utrechtse Heuvelrug
Heeswijk-Dinther	1969-1994	Snevelbokkenland, since?	Bernheze

Table 1. *Merged municipalities with an umbrella name*

Obviously, this is only a tiny minority compared to the total of 237 merged municipalities: (1) those with 'combined' official names (namely 27 present-day municipalities[11] and 104 former ones);[12] (2) those with names that do not consist of one or more participants' names (68 present-day municipalities, 38 former ones). In order to judge the nature of the relationships between the nicknames of the merging partners on the one hand, and the umbrella name of the enlarged municipality on the other, the nicknames for the *inhabitants* of the respective merging partners have been examined.

Results

As stated above, all of the 10 carnival nicknames refer to municipalities (present-day or former) that were formed out of either existing municipalities or consolidated parishes, and that bear 'combined' names, like Aarle-Rixtel. It turned out that some merging partners do not have any inhabitants' nickname at all. For example, the inhabitants of the settlement of Capelle (Noord-Brabant), one of two settlements that share a carnival nickname (see also below), do not have an inhabitants' nickname. In cases like this, we generally do not know whether a nickname ever existed, and if so, in what period it was lost. The present material is too scanty to throw light on this phenomenon, which is confined for the most part to the spoken-language domain.

The following naming patterns can be found:

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[6] Van den Oord 1996:235.

[7] http://www.mulkslobbers.nl/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=3&Itemid=3

[8] http://www.ontwerpen-voor-geld.nl/logo/logo-voor-55-jaar-carnaval-ganzegat/
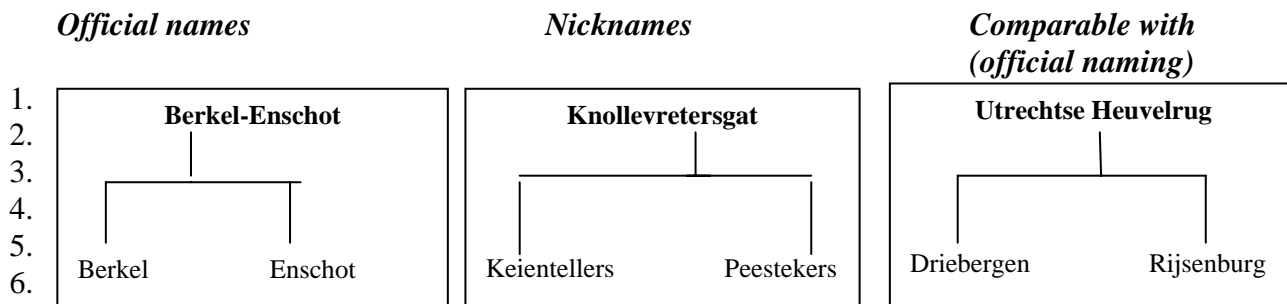
[9] Louwers 2003:13.

[10] http://www.sparrenarren.nl/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=170:voor-35e-keer-carnaval-in-sparrenrijck&catid=63:persberichten-2009-2010&Itemid=116

[11] www.metatopos.org.

[12] http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lijst_van_voormalige_Nederlandse_gemeenten

1. *The umbrella nickname does not correspond with inhabitants' nicknames of merging partners*.

The former municipality of Berkel-Enschot is nicknamed *Knollevretersgat* 'hamlet of turnip eaters'.[13] The inhabitants of Berkel, however, are nicknamed *Keientellers* ('people counting cobble-stones'), and their Enschot neighbors are called *Peestekers* ('people cutting out carrots').[14]

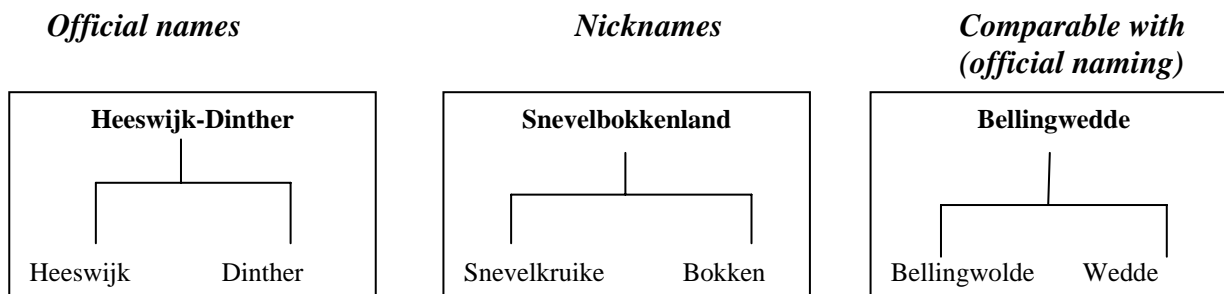|	Official names	Nicknames	Comparable with (official naming)
1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.	**Berkel-Enschot** Berkel Enschot	**Knollevretersgat** Keientellers Peestekers	**Utrechtse Heuvelrug** Driebergen Rijsenburg

A wholly new umbrella nickname - *Sparrenrijck* ('empire of spruces') - was also attached to the former municipality of Driebergen-Rijsenburg just mentioned. It refers to a local feature and probably alludes to the local country estate Sparrendaal,[15] but may also refer to the thick woods in the area.

This kind of nickname, without any reference to the (nick)names of merging partners, has a parallel in official nomenclature. In 2006, for example, Driebergen-Rijsenburg merged with other participants into a municipality called *Utrechtse Heuvelrug* ('Utrecht hills'), a name that until then had only existed as a regional name, not a municipal or administrative name.

2. *The umbrella name is fabricated from elements in the nicknames of the respective merging partners*.

The former municipality of Heeswijk-Dinther is nicknamed *Snevelbokkenland*, a contamination of *snevel* and *bokken* 'male goats': the inhabitants of Heeswijk are called *Snéévelkruike* 'people who are given to drinking',[16] their Dinther neighbors being *Bokken* 'male goats'.[17] This 'name amalgamating' procedure is also found in official municipal nomenclature. The name of the municipality of Bellingwedde, for example, derives from elements in its constituent parts, *Bellingwolde* and *Wedde*.

Official names	Nicknames	Comparable with (official naming)
Heeswijk-Dinther Heeswijk Dinther	**Snevelbokkenland** Snevelkruike Bokken	**Bellingwedde** Bellingwolde Wedde

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[13] Van den Oord 1996:235.
[14] RND 9:198.
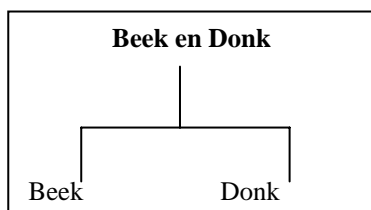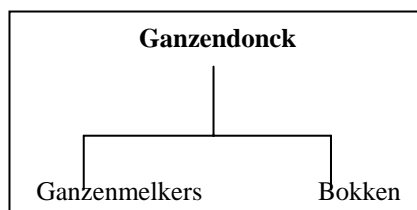[15] Cf. Laurillard 1901:108.
[16] RND 10:400.
[17] Wonders 1982:87.

3. The umbrella name is fabricated from an element in the inhabitants' nickname of one merging partner and from the official name of the other partner.

The nickname for Beek en Donk, a former amalgamated municipality, is *Ganzendonck*. This name was put together from the nickname for the inhabitants of Beek, *Ganzemelkers* ('goose herds') and of *Donk* ('sandy hill', in a would-be ancient spelling). The Donk neighbors are nicknamed *Bokken*.[18]

Official names   **Nicknames**

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┌─────────────────────────┐          ┌─────────────────────────┐
│      Beek en Donk       │          │      Ganzendonck        │
│           │             │          │           │             │
│      ┌────┴────┐        │          │      ┌────┴────┐        │
│                         │          │                         │
│  Beek         Donk      │          │ Ganzenmelkers   Bokken  │
└─────────────────────────┘          └─────────────────────────┘
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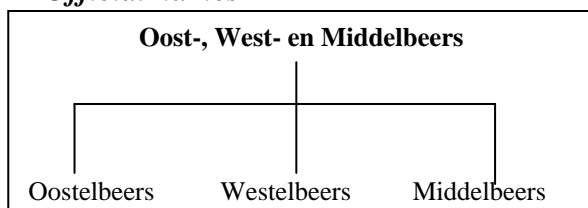
4. The umbrella name is fabricated from (part of) the official name of one merging partner, and a non-specific ending (meaning 'land', 'hamlet', etc.); or it is fabricated from the nickname(s) for the inhabitants of one or more merging parties, plus a non-specific ending.

The former municipality of Sprang-Capelle is nicknamed *Cuppèls gat* (dialect for 'hamlet of Capelle'). Borkel en Schaft, a former municipality whose umbrella nickname *Mulkgat* 'buttermilk hamlet' derives from the Borkel inhabitants' nickname *Mulken,*[19] also falls into this category. Likewise, the nickname of Son en Breugel, *Krutjesgat*, comes from one of the nicknames for the Son inhabitants: *Krutjesrapers* ('people who gather fir-cones'; the cones are to be burnt in order to heat the houses).[20]

The former municipality of Oost-, West- en Middelbeers (abbreviated from Oostelbeers, Westelbeers and Middelbeers) is nicknamed *Strijkersgat*. This nickname originates from an inhabitants' nickname that – lo and behold! – the merging parties all shared.[21] The inhabitants' nickname is *Strijkers*[22] (*strijker* = someone who rubs; in the 18th century a woman who was supposed to cure people from rheumatism by rubbing them).[23]

Official names   **Nick names**

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┌────────────────────────────────────┐     ┌────────────────────────────────────┐
│      Oost-, West- en Middelbeers    │     │            Strijkersgat            │
│                 │                   │     │                 │                  │
│      ┌──────────┼──────────┐        │     │      ┌──────────┼──────────┐       │
│                                     │     │                                    │
│ Oostelbeers  Westelbeers Middelbeers│     │ Strijkers   Strijkers   Strijkers  │
└────────────────────────────────────┘     └────────────────────────────────────┘
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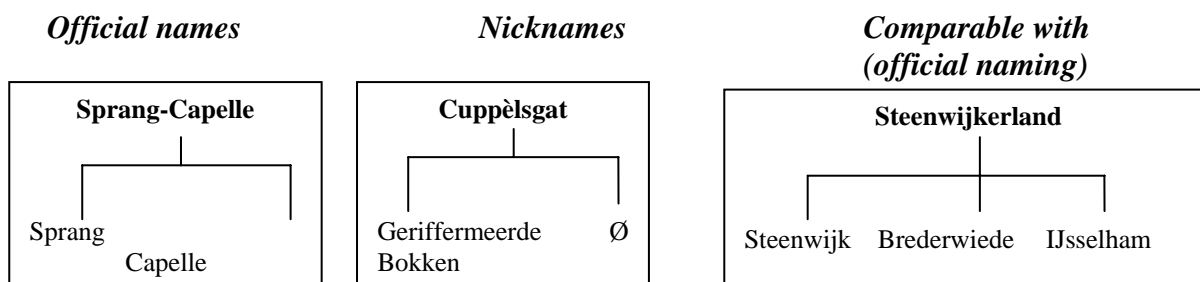
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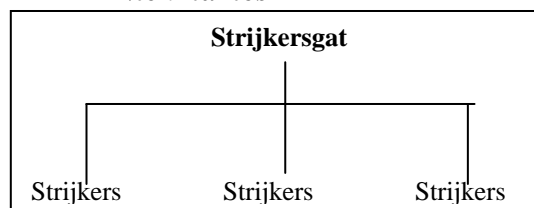
[18] RND 10:476.

[19] RND 9.

[20] Paans 1961:70.

[21] Shared nicknames are not exceptional. Another example is *Wjeeldrecht*, for the towns both of Woensdrecht and Hoogerheide.
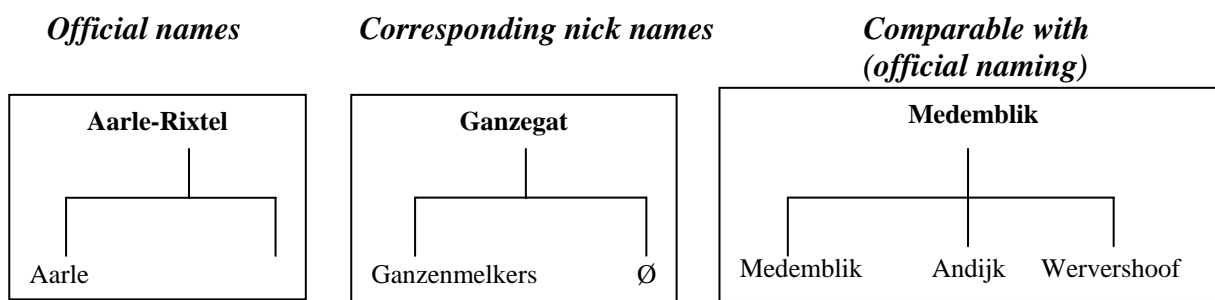
[22] Paans 1961.

[23] Van der Heide 1998:144-5.

This naming practice also occurs in the domain of official names. In 2001, for example, three municipalities merged into one new one, called *Steenwijkerland* ('land of Steenwijk'). Steenwijk was the largest merging partner.

Official names	*Nicknames*	*Comparable with (official naming)*
Sprang-Capelle Sprang Capelle	**Cuppèlsgat** Geriffermeerde Ø Bokken	**Steenwijkerland** Steenwijk Brederwiede IJsselham

5. The umbrella name is identical to the nickname of one merging partner.

Aarle-Rixtel, a former municipality, bears the nickname of *Ganzegat* ('hamlet of goose herds'). It was, however, the nickname of the town of Aarle only that gave its name to the enlarged entity. It is not known whether Rixtel ever had its own nickname. If it did, the town failed to bring its nickname into the new entity, which came into being in 1810.[24] Curiously, Aarle must also have been experienced, at least by its neighbors, as sharing its identity with another neighbor, the town of Beek. As late as 1920, the towns of Aarle and Beek, which had grown together, were called *het land der ganzenmelkers* 'land of the goose herds'.[25] Also, the town of Aarle is felt – at least by its neighbors – as being closely linked with the (former) merged municipality of Beek en Donk as a whole: Aarle and Beek en Donk share the above mentioned inhabitants' nickname, *Ganzemelkers*.[26]

This naming practice – one merging partner imposing its name on the enlarged entity – occurs very often in the official naming domain, too. When the town of Medemblik, for example, merged with Andijk and Wervershoof, the enlarged municipality received the name of *Medemblik*.

Official names	*Corresponding nick names*	*Comparable with (official naming)*
Aarle-Rixtel Aarle	**Ganzegat** Ganzenmelkers Ø	**Medemblik** Medemblik Andijk Wervershoof

The data show, though, that in addition to the 10 umbrella names for merged municipalities, there are four other phenomena that suggest a shared spatial identity – quite apart from

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[24] The shared identity of these two towns is also reflected by their inhabitants' nickname: both the inhabitants of Aarle and those of Rixtel were nicknamed *Ganzenmelkers* (RND 10 (1966):474) 'goose herds' or *Ganzegatters* (VVL1977). Seemingly, the Rixtel inhabitants never had an inhabitants' nickname of their own.

[25] Van Miert 1920:61 notes, interestingly, that Aarle and Beek were formerly one village – an indication that spatial identity can shift over a period of time, encompassing first one neighbor, then another. At some point, these twins were called *Aarlebeek*, or *Aarle-Beek* (Wikipedia s. v. *Beek en Donk*). The memory of this obsolete geographical name is kept alive in the family name *Van Aarlebeek*.

[26] Van der Heide 1998:281.

municipal mergers. First, two umbrella names refer to a combination of a municipality and (one and two, respectively) settlements outside that municipality:

(1) The settlements of Dieden and Demen share their umbrella nickname with the former municipality of Deursen en Dennenburg, already mentioned in table 1.

(2) Hoogerheide and Woensdrecht, nicknamed *Wjèèldrecht* (from *Wjèèl*, name of a swamp, and *drecht*, the final syllable of *Woensdrecht*).
This indicates that spatial identity can override municipal boundaries.

Secondly, 7 umbrella names refer to adjoining settlements that together never constituted a municipality, but obviously shared a spatial identity (table 2).

Adjoining settlements	Umbrella nickname	Presently belonging to (municipality)
Biest-Houtakker	Pinnekleuversgat ('hamlet of carrot eaters'), since 1973[27]	Hilvarenbeek
Dieden + Demen	Schottelzakkenrijk ('hamlet of carrot eaters'), since 1970[28]	Oss
Lithoijen + Teeffelen	Vèrekes en Waoterrattenrijk ('empire of pigs and water rats'), since ca. 1998?[29]	Oss
Maren-Kessel (belonging to the municipality of Alem, Maren en Kessel, from 1821-1958)	Kleidonk (*klei* = clay, *donk* = sandy hill in the lowland), since 1966[30]	Oss
Olland + Sint-Oedenrode	Papgat ('hamlet of porridge (eaters)'), since 1959[31]	Sint-Oedenrode
Overlangel +Neerloon + Keent	Nachtgraversrijk ('people who love to celebrate'), since 1974[32]	Oss
Tolkamer + Lobith	Tollusland 'tollhouse country' (the nickname derives from *Tolkamer*; this town took its name from a toll house on the River Rhine), since 1959[33]	Rijnwaarden

Table 2. *Adjoining settlements (non-municipalities) bearing an umbrella name*

Thirdly: even if no umbrella nickname has arisen, the linguistic shape of carnival nicknames of two or more adjoining entities may indicate some degree of shared identity. Seven couples of adjoining settlements have nicknames that, although not identical, are obviously closely related to each other, in that they show a high degree of similarity: the first elements of their (composed) names are identical or almost identical. The hamlet of Nuland, for example, is called *Waoterrijk* ('water empire') and the adjoining hamlet of Kruisstraat is *Waoterhaze*. In the case of the villages of Gilze en Rijen, a municipality, the resemblance is even more striking, because the nicknames of the adjoining entities are highly similar not only in form but in meaning too. Gilze is nicknamed *Dringersgat*, its neighbor *Wringersgat*, both meaning 'hamlet of obstructionists'. They were considered as twin towns as early as the 16th century,[34] although their built areas had not grown together.

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[27] http://www.pinnekleuvers.nl/historie.html
[28] http://www.schottelzakken.nl/page9.php
[29] Van der Heide 1998 mentions the inhabitants' nicknames *Vèèrkes* and *Waterratten*.
[30] http://www.dekleidonkers.nl/Prinsen.php
[31] http://www.papgat.com/?pagina=commissies
[32] http://www.cvdenachtgravers.nl/
[33] http://www.hetoldetollus.nl/Vereniging/Prinsengallerij/tabid/73/Default.aspx
[34] *nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gilze_en_Rijen*. There is also evidence that Hoogerheide and Woensdrecht were considered by their neighbors as a unit, since the inhabitants of both villages were nicknamed *Schijters* ('shitting people').

Interestingly, the adjoining settlements of Elsendorp and Venhorst, dating from the end of the 19th century and ca. 1920 respectively, were never part of one and the same municipality (more examples in table 3).

The nicknames of the municipalities Eindhoven (actual) and Geldrop (former municipality, presently Geldrop-Mierlo), respectively *Lampegat* ('hamlet of lamps') and *Lappegat* ('hamlet of rags'), constitute a doubtful case, *Lappegat* probably being an allusion to the neighbor's nickname. The question is whether the allusion indicates feelings of a shared identity – or the (ironical) opposite.

Nicknames	*Adjoining settlements*	*Presently belonging to (municipality)*
Kleigat ('clay hamlet'), since 1966[35]	Fijnaart	Moerdijk
Kleiknoestenstad ('clay nodes hamlet'), since 1955[36]	Oudemolen	Moerdijk
Strienedurp ('village on the river Striene': the river was flooded by the sea and no longer exists), since?	De Heen	Steenbergen
Strienestad ('city on the river Striene'), since 1960[37]	Steenbergen	Steenbergen
Peelvruutersrijk ('empire of chickens (?) in the Peel region'), since 1964[38]	Elsendorp	Gemert-Bakel
Peeltuuterland ('country of horn players (?) in the Peel region'), since?	Venhorst	Boekel
Heidurp ('heath village'), since?	Mariahout	Laarbeek
Heikneuters ('heath dwellers'), since?	Nijnsel	Sint-Oedenrode
Oetelhoazendam ('dam of the Oetel hares'), since 1958[39]	Hintham	's-Hertogenbosch
Oeteldonk ('sandy hill with frogs (?)'), since 1882[40]	's-Hertogenbosch	's-Hertogenbosch

Table 3. *Adjoining entities (not forming part of a municipality) with nicknames whose first morphemes are (almost) the same*

Conclusion

The data suggest that umbrella nicknames have only rarely been stimulated by municipal mergers – mergers either of municipalities or of pre-municipal settlements. Out of 532 nicknames, only 10 correspond with such mergers. Scaling-up of spatial identity thus seems to have been – and still to be – a slow process.

The background to the Gilze en Rijen merger – both villages must have been experienced as a unit long before they officially merged – suggests, however, that we have here – and maybe in other cases, too – is a chicken-and-egg problem. Which came first: the shared identity, or the official merger? Closer investigation has to be done into this subject, but at first sight a few examples seem to provide some evidence. The village of Hoogerheide, for example, must traditionally have felt particularly joined together with Woensdrecht long before 1821 (when

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[35] www.dekleibatsers.nl/Gallery/main.php?g2_itemId=269

[36] *BN De Stem* 29.01.2009.

[37] http://www.sks-steenbergen.nl/archief/1960.php

[38] http://www.cvdepeelvruuters.nl/

[39] http://www.oetelpedia.nl/wiki/index.php/De_Oetelhaozen

[40] http://www.oetelpedia.nl/wiki/index.php/De_Oetels

the two merged), because it ecclesiastically came under Woensdrecht;[41] (more examples in table 4).

Entities	Nature of special relationships
Gilze en Rijen	Were considered as twin towns as early as the 16th century [42] (although their built areas had not yet grown together).
Aarle-Rixtel	After 1672, Roman Catholic inhabitants of Aarle and Rixtel used a common shed (conventicle) for their divine services.[43] The Protestant minority could not maintain the former parish churches of Aarle and Rixtel; after Rixtel church had been demolished, the Protestants from both villages used the Aarle church.
Son en Breugel	Characterized as an 'age-old couple'.[44] The two villages have shared a bench of aldermen since the Middle Ages.[45]
Driebergen and Rijsenburg	Rijsenburg, although a municipality of its own, was almost an enclave within the Driebergen territory. Since 1850, the two municipalities have had the same mayor.[46]
Dieden and Demen	The Roman Catholic inhabitants of Dieden attended Demen church after 1614; their own church had passed into Reformed hands.
Maren and Kessel	In the Middle Ages, the two villages each had its own church. From 1648, the Roman Catholic divine services in the shed that was used as a church were conducted by priests from Maren. After the German occupying forces had destroyed part of Maren-Kessel in 1944, including the church that had been built in 1926, a new church and a new residential nucleus were built in the area between the villages, and the parishes of the villages were consolidated.[47]

Table 4. *Intensive (positive) relationships between adjoining municipal or pre-municipal entities with identical or similar umbrella nicknames*

At least in the above mentioned cases, the assumption can be made that some – maybe even many – municipal mergers do not *influence* spatial identity, but *reflect* it. They reflect a pre-existing feeling of spatial identity.[48] There is no evidence of municipal mergers influencing spatial identity.

But not all municipal mergers have taken shared-identity feelings into account. For example, the adjoining villages of Mariahout and Nijnsel, with nicknames that display a large degree of similarity, are part of different municipalities: respectively Gemert-Bakel and Boekel.

The general picture seems to be that development of an enlarged spatial identity is a spontaneous, but slow, small-scale process that sometimes ends in an official merger. And whereas municipal mergers often show a continuing trend (municipalities merge, the enlarged successor merges in its turn, etc), carnival nicknames do not. One umbrella name seems never to be replaced by another. The fact, for example, that Heeswijk and Dinther merged in

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[41] Delahaye/van Ham/Jacobs 1984:15.

[42] *nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gilze_en_Rijen*

[43] Jansen 1979:20.

[44] Van der Meeren 2002:19 characterizes the relationship as one of lovers that live apart. One of the reasons for this may be that finances are separated (Coenen 1999:67).

[45] Coenen 1999:67.

[46] Harzing 1973:87. On the other hand, the author (p. 93) states: "Life in the village of Rijsenburg was [at the beginning of the 20th century?, RR] instinctively delimitated by the Driebergen bridge on the one hand, and the toll gate on the other [both places lying on the Rijsenburg border, RR].

[47] Wikipedia s.v. *Kessel (Noord-Brabant).*

[48] One example of authorities taking into account local feelings of cohesion (or non-cohesion) was in 1846. Provincial authorities wanted the hamlet of Croy to merge with Aarle-Rixtel, but national authorities decided otherwise, 'because the respective inhabitants could not get on with each other' (for reasons that are unknown) (Jansen 1979:16).

1969 into Heeswijk-Dinther, and that the latter merged in 1994 into Heesch, that in its turn merged in 1995 into Bernheze, has no equivalent in carnival land.

The Aarle-Rixtel case suggests that such 'alliances' were not exclusive: a 'partner' could have more than one ally. The village of Aarle was experienced as being united not only with Rixtel, but also with Beek.

The naming practices concerning umbrella nicknames are often similar to naming practices in official toponymy:[49]

a) The umbrella name bears no resemblance to any name of any merging partner.
b) The umbrella name is fabricated from elements – e.g. morphemes – from the nicknames of merging partners, or from inhabitants' nicknames of merging partners.
c) The umbrella nickname is a mixture of one partner's nickname (or part of it) and the nickname of the other partner(s).
d) The umbrella name is composed of one partner's name (or from an inhabitants' nickname of one merging partner), plus a generic ending, meaning 'land', 'hamlet' and the like.
e) The umbrella name is identical with one partner's nickname.

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[49] Reinsma 2008:1-2

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