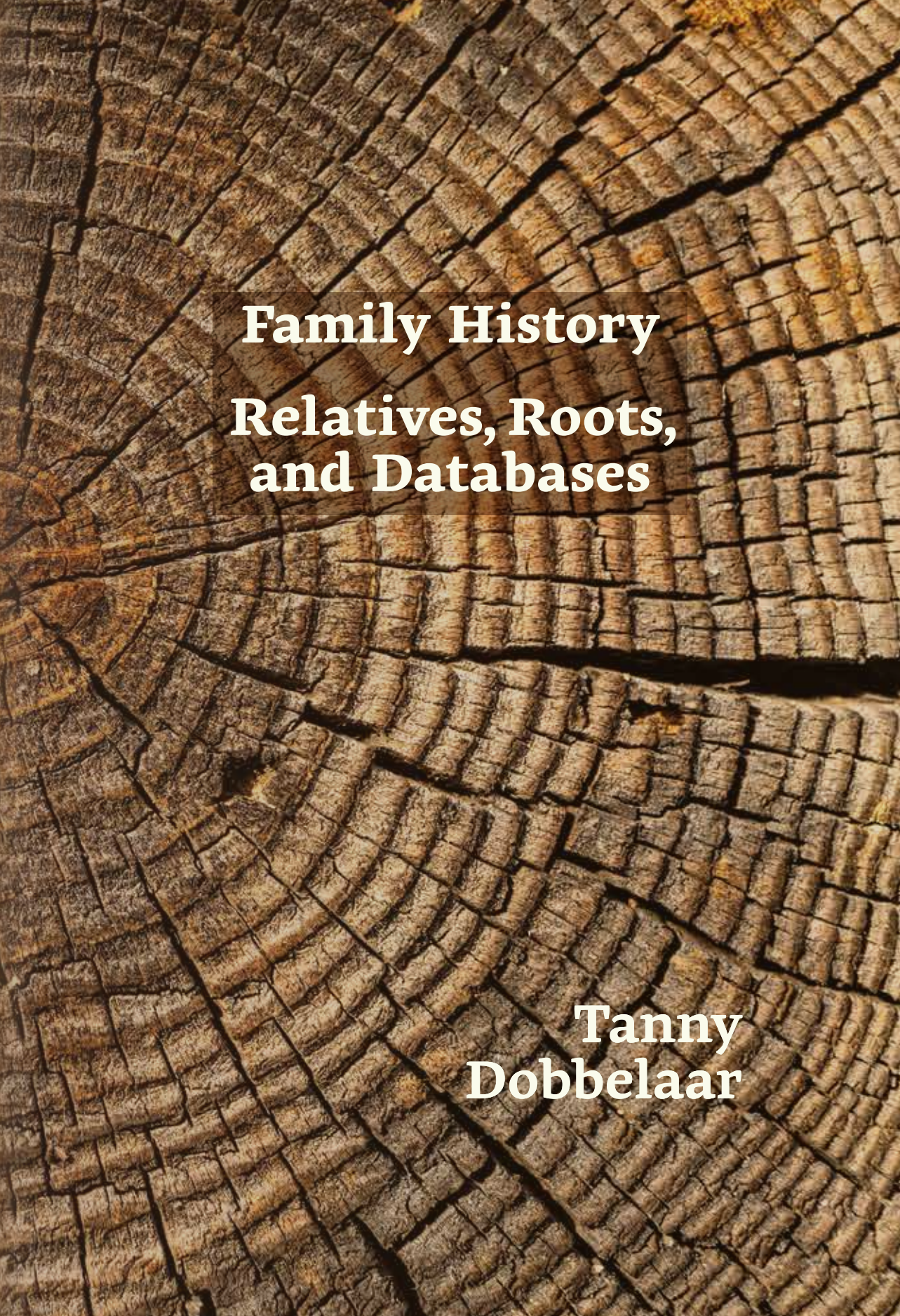


Family History

Relatives, Roots, and Databases

Tanny Dobbelaar

Family History
Relatives, Roots, and Databases

ISBN: 978-94-034-2338-8 (printed version)
ISBN: 978-94-034-2339-5 (electronic version)

Cover and book design by Erik van Gameren

© Photos
Cover: sgpozhoga/depositphotos.com.
Chapter openings: chapter 1: ekina1, chapter 2: Dimijana, chapter 5: Leonardi, chapter 6: marenka1, chapter 7: VLADJ55; all /depositphotos.com; chapter 3 and 4: Erik van Gameren.
Drawings of genealogical charts: Erik van Gameren.
Cover and inside pages of family histories: Tanny Dobbelaar.

Printing: Pumbo, Zwaag.

rijksuniversiteit
groningen

Family History

Relatives, Roots, and Databases

Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor aan de
Rijksuniversiteit Groningen
op gezag van de
rector magnificus prof. dr. C. Wijmenga
en volgens besluit van het College voor Promoties.

De openbare verdediging zal plaatsvinden op

donderdag 23 januari 2020 om 16.15 uur

door

Anthoinette Julma Cornelia Dobbelaar

geboren op 29 juni 1965
te Sittard

Promotor

Prof. dr. C.W. Bosch

Copromotor

Dr. S.I. Aasman

Beoordelingscommissie

Prof. dr. E.J. Korthals Altes
Prof. dr. E. Wesseling
Prof. dr. E. Timm

Voor Harry & Annemiek

Contents

CHAPTER 1

Written family histories as a popular historical practice

'We have long known that the role of philosophy is not to discover what is hidden, but to render visible what precisely is visible, which is to say, to make appear what is so close, so immediate, so intimately linked to ourselves that, as a consequence, we do not perceive it.' [1]

Michel Foucault

1.1 The story behind this study

This book is centred around the shaping of concepts of 'me', 'my relatives' and 'family' in a specific historical practice, that of contemporary family histories, written by men and women, here referred to as family historians, about their own relatives. It draws on various topics, in disciplines such as history, memory studies, anthropology, and digital humanities, and is inspired by the work of the philosophers Bruno Latour and Annemarie Mol, the anthropologist Katherine Verdery, and in her wake the sociologist Eviatar Zerubavel. Before delving into the theories of these scholars, I will first explain the personal and professional reasons that led me to explore this particular historical practice.

Every study arises somewhere from an author's experience of reality, and this was mine: Some years ago, I was invited to a surprise party for my uncle and aunt, to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary. I travelled four hundred kilometres to join this party for relatives I had not seen for many years. In the course of the festivities, as I met my aunt and uncle's neighbours, former colleagues, and friends from their sport clubs, I discovered that we, as the couple's relatives, were assigned a special status. We were expected to be the first to congratulate the couple when they entered the room. There were others present who were

far more intimate with them and had been sharing their lives for many years, but in this context the relatives were privileged, even those who were raised in a different part of the country and had hardly shared the same world as the couple celebrating their anniversary.

Observing this, I naively asked myself: in what sense do I belong to these people? I realize that this question is a superfluous one for many humans all over the world, for whom the nature of family relations is self-evident, and who think: 'Relatives are part of myself', or the other way around, 'I am part of my relatives'. The terms 'relatives' or 'family' could then be shorthand for a range of associations, like connections with the past, places of origin, love and loyalty, or even simply life itself.

The absence of these relationships with 'family', including all the associations that go with this concept, may be experienced as a deeply felt deprivation.[2] As the anthropologist Catherine Nash writes: 'Being able to account for oneself in terms of ancestry and roots, a version of the self that seems increasingly normative and normalized, can be a matter of cultural capital for some and a coercive requirement for others.'[3] Self-descriptions that include family in one way or another as an essential part of a person can have an enormous social, political, and emotional impact, as they challenge meritocratic ideals and investments in models of a self-fashioning, autonomous subject that is free of family ties and other determinants of human life. Thus, the question of the meaning of family ties is never an isolated one.

The Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor would classify this question as a typically modern one, belonging to a subject that desires to live a self-defined life. In *Sources of the Self*, Taylor gives a precise account of the emergence of this self-fashioning subject, which he locates in the 18th century. He points to Herder and Rousseau as the first to express this notion of the subjective self, with its inner life and its desire to articulate itself.[4] Formed by this notion, agents strive for autonomy, fulfilment, and authenticity. This may bring them into conflict with rules, rituals, and expectations that they have not established for themselves.

Questioning family expectations, for example, can arouse such conflicts. This relation between me and my relatives puzzled me for a considerable time. Eventually, as a non-academic writer, with a degree in philosophy, I wrote a collection of essays about the relation between individuals and their family histories.[5] I drew my material from personal experience, as well as from popular published family histories framed as 'literary non-fiction'. I suggested that family histori-

ans (who write about their own families) all deal with at least three issues that each lead to a number of epistemological and ethical questions.[6]

The first issue concerns the family historian's desire, in some cases even perceived as a duty, to write truthfully about the past of people who are defined as relatives. However, can we write truthfully about events we have not witnessed? The second issue has to do with the inevitable autobiographical dimensions of writing about one's relatives. What kind of self-presentation is involved in this double role as relative and writer when writing about family issues? And the third issue is that in pursuing family history, a family historian intervenes in family relationships. By 'doing family history', a family historian will give his or her relatives new stories about themselves which could change their sense of self very deeply. How do family historians justify these interventions that relatives have not solicited?

The book was published in Dutch in 2011 and received good coverage in the Dutch media, with several interviews and reviews in newspapers and magazines.[7] Yet, over the years, I discovered serious limitations to my perspective on family history. One of the reasons for these was my position as an independent writer. Lacking a university affiliation meant that I had only limited access to the university library, which reserves access to e-books and academic journals for university students and staff. I realized I had been unaware of scholarly discussions on, for instance, the framing of memory within memory studies. When I started this academic study, I became aware of two other blind spots in my popular essays on family history. The first concerned the sources my essay book was based on. By concentrating on published family histories, sold as true fiction or literary non-fiction, I had neglected the vast production by non-professional writers, often defined as amateur historians or genealogists, who also write family histories.

The second blind spot had to do with the various academic discussions about contemporary family historians and their framing of the past. Studying these discussions has transformed my approach to empirical research. Instead of stating the characteristics of doing family history *a priori*, as I did in my previous book, I wanted to start with the material itself, that is, with a collection of over a hundred recent, printed family histories, written by non-professional writers. I decided to focus on the self-references family historians make when writing about their relatives. This focus led me to formulate the main topic of this book, which is the conceptual means used by contemporary family historians in framing their relationships with their relatives, including the meanings they attach to these relationships.

1.2 Selecting the object of research

When I decided to start a bottom-up study of non-professional family historians writing about their relation with their past and present relatives, I was primarily interested in the conceptual means used by family historians to establish relationships between themselves and their relatives. In the broad outline, my question was: how do family historians relate themselves to their relatives, and what meanings do they attach to them?

In this section, I will clarify how I selected the corpus of family histories that became the centre of this study. In the following paragraphs I will describe this process, to narrow down the precise meaning of the umbrella term 'family history' within the context of this study. Subsequently, I will explain how I compiled a corpus of family histories that matched my criteria.

Educated in contemporary philosophy, thus not in history, and with my own musings about the relation between 'myself' and 'my relatives' at the back of my mind, I decided to confine my main subject to contemporary family histories.

Family histories
↘
Contemporary family histories

With this restriction, I excluded all historical performances of family histories, simultaneously therefore excluding a comparative study of family histories from different periods. As I explained above, I decided to focus on contemporary family histories written by non-professional writers.

This focus on written histories meant that I discarded studies from the famous BBC series *Who Do You Think You Are* and its adaptations in many other countries around the world, including the celebrity culture that comes with it.[8] I equally excluded published family histories, often best-sellers like the *The Hare with Amber Eyes* by Edmund de Waal, in which family history is transformed with literary techniques into popular history.[9]

Family histories
↘
Contemporary family histories
↘
Contemporary family histories by non-professional writers

I also had to think about the various media in which family histories are performed. By limiting myself to written or printed family histories, I eliminated oral histories, photo albums, websites, podcasts, power point presentations, WhatsApp messages, Facebook pages, and all other ways of transferring or creating a family history, including visuals and heritage objects of all shapes and sizes which can also be interpreted as family history.[10] I decided to restrict this study to texts, written by non-professionals about their own relatives. This focus on non-professional family historians who have written down their family history has an impact on the analysis of the family histories.

As the historian Susan Aasman demonstrates in her study on home movies, the relationship between home-movie makers and their specific audience of relatives is constitutive for the interpretation of home movies.[11] Though written family histories differ fundamentally from home movies, they are similar in the audience they target. Similarly to Aasman, I aim to analyse what concepts constitute the relations between these non-professional family historians and their relatives as their primary reading audience. Since the research question focuses on conceptual relationships between family historians and their relatives, this restriction also positions the research question in a field that studies relationships between readers and writers.

Related to this restriction is the material aspect of printed family histories. Most of them are printed using a do-it-yourself (DIY) technique, and here we enter another field of study, characterized as the DIY culture, which ranges from DIY blood pressure control to having one's own record label.[12] This concept of DIY culture is mostly associated with the current digital era, in which amateurs no longer need to rely on professionals for many aspects of their lives, including the production of movies, photographs, and books. Though media historian Lisa Gitelman points out that the professional printer's monopoly was broken as early as the end of the 19th century, when the first amateur magazines were printed at home, DIY publishing by non-professionals has thrived in these digital times.[13]

Although the family histories in this study are printed texts, thus part of an analogue medium, they have clearly been made in a digital era. They have all been written down and published with the help of digital tools such as word processors, search engines, digital cameras, lay-out software, and printers; moreover, as will become clear in the following chapters, the database tools used create a coherent ordering of sources and define relationships. Thus, narrowing the field to written family histories by non-professionals for their relatives also

leads to the introduction of the DIY digital culture.

Family histories
↘
Contemporary family histories
↘
Contemporary family histories by non-professionals
↘
Contemporary family histories written by non-professionals, primarily for their relatives, with the help of digital tools

A final selection criterion was caused partly by my initial reflections about the meaning of having relatives. What makes relatives meaningful relatives if one cannot share common experiences, common memories? This question prompted me to search for family histories that are not focused on one single life – as in a biography or an autobiography – or on contemporary relatives of the family historian alone. In this study I focus on family histories that claim to describe a family over more than one generation, as a group of relatives past and present that somehow 'belong together'.

Family histories
↘
Contemporary family histories
↘
Contemporary family histories by non-professionals
↘
Printed contemporary family histories written by non-professionals primarily for their relatives with the help of digital tools
↘
Printed contemporary family histories written by non-professionals primarily for their relatives with the help of digital tools and covering more than one generation

Starting with a question on a specific topic, without situating the question in a specific disciplinary debate or interdisciplinary field has its disadvantages – as I have experienced. This is the price I paid for designing a bottom-up study, starting from scratch, from the empirical material itself, rather than engaging

with a specific debate or theoretical framework.[14] In the following sections, after describing the selection of family histories at the National Centre for Genealogy (*Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie, CBG*), and the specific historical context of this CBG, I will reflect on the theoretical challenges posed by my study of this corpus.

1.3 Selecting family histories at the CBG

With the help of Lilian de Bruijn, editor of the CBG's quarterly *Gen*, I selected over a hundred family histories stored in the cellars of the CBG, which has been collecting printed genealogies and family histories since its foundation in 1945. The primary sources for acquisition are the family historians who have visited the CBG, who are requested to donate a copy when they print their results. Some family researchers also send their publications to the CBG unsolicited. The titles of newly acquired family histories are announced in the quarterly magazine that the CBG distributes to its donators.[15] This magazine categorizes all recent acquisitions under headings such as 'heraldry,' 'topography,' and 'family names'. This latter heading comprises all recently acquired family histories. Most titles cited under this heading have been printed recently, although some were written decades ago and were only lately given to the CBG, for reasons that often remain unclear. In that case, the release date in the magazine masks the original date of the publication.

This study is built on a corpus of family histories listed in the CBG magazine in 2013. I listed and numbered the titles that seemed suitable, then went to The Hague to examine the sources. In the cellar of the CBG, thousands and thousands of genealogies, family histories, family magazines, and books on heraldry and local history are stored on long shelves, next to boxes full of paraphernalia – ranging from pedigrees, family songs, heraldic samples, to birth, death, and marriage announcements – all sorted according to family name.

In the course of several months, I went to the CBG fifteen times and examined more than 140 publications, their layout varying from professionally printed hardcover books with full colour photographs and reading ribbons to comb-bound A4 booklets without any pictures at all. The A4 format seems to predominate. To protect all too fragile family histories, the CBG binds many of them in a uniform hard cover binding in brown, blue, or black. During my visits, I photographed the covers and some pages of the inside, especially the introductions and the prefaces. I noted down what struck me and filled my database

with descriptions of the publications.

In this way, I gained an impression of how the family historians 'performed themselves' in their texts, the audiences they addressed, the concepts of family they used, and the dominant themes and periods covered in their family histories. Not all titles turned out to belong in the category of family histories written by family historians for their relatives. Some of them were published books written for a large audience; others were only notes, referring to a much older genealogy. Some were typed parts of manuscript without any mention of an author. Finally, I made a second list, selecting the titles according to the following criteria:

- The titles are all published in 2013 in the magazine of the CBG, and the histories are written after the year 2000. Some titles are much older, although the books did not end up in the CBG until 2013. To obtain a more or less coherent corpus of contemporary family histories, I decided to admit only publications from after 2000, which was a somewhat arbitrary choice. One reason was that the focus in this research is on the use of database software that only gradually became standard in different archives, software, and catalogues from 2000 on.
- The family histories are all self-referential, in the sense that all family historians write about their relatives. (Section 2.1 gives a theoretical reflection on the terms family history/family historian versus genealogy/genealogist. I will primarily use the term family historian/family history throughout this study).

In addition to theoretical concerns about the distinction between the writer and the textual 'I,' there is another, more practical problem with this label of self-referentiality: some family histories are written (in full or in part) on commission by professional historians or copywriters, whose work is finally authorized by their clients. These arrangements complicate the question of authorship. Others are the product of intense cooperation between several family members, which makes it difficult to identify their individual contributions. Only family histories written by an 'outsider,' mainly a professional historian or genealogist, have consistently been left out. The appendix lists the titles of all the family histories included in this study, with the ID numbers I assigned them. In this book, I frequently refer to these ID numbers instead of quoting the titles of the family histories and their writers.

1.4 The institutional context of this corpus: the CBG

The *Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie* (CBG) hosts the collection of family histories at the centre of this study. The CBG aims to be the leading national institution for family history research in the Netherlands. It is financed primarily by the Dutch National Archive and collaborates with provincial and local archives. This section opens with a short history of the CBG, the main aim being to contextualize and historicize the collecting of family histories by this institute.[16] This historical part will be followed by a brief summary of the main contemporary activities of the CBG and the diverse audiences it serves.

The CBG was founded on 15 May 1945, just ten days after the end of the occupation of the Netherlands during the Second World War.[17] Its main founder was Eltjo van Beresteyn (1876-1948), a nobleman with a PhD in law who published his first Repertorium in 1933, a reference book of the genealogies he had collected.[18] In the new organization, he added his private genealogical collections to the genealogical, heraldic, and iconographical collections already in the possession of the national government.[19]

In 1947, the institute opened its doors to the general public. This 'dustbin of the nation' ('s Rijks prullemand, see Fig. 1[20]) as one headline describes the CBG, as 'to meet and accommodate the revived interest [in genealogy/td], cleansed of all political stains'.[21] It provided access to large collections of family portraits and genealogical collections, and also to the collection of the *Nederlands Verbond voor Sibbekunde,* an institute founded during the Second World War by the Nazis. The above news report from 1947 comments on this latter collection:

> This smells a bit suspicious, but a visitor of the exhibition [...] will find that the very solid set-up, devoid of all unhealthy propaganda, reflects only the pure and honest love of science of the chairman of the founding organization, Jonkheer meester Dr E. A. van Beresteyn, and his employees – their love of a science in which they have invested their heart and soul.[22]

The founding of the CBG was already initiated in the 1930s.[23] It was intended as the successor to a much earlier, private enterprise, established in 1905, that had been wound up in 1930. Van Beresteyn and a few other private collectors, all rooted in noble families, were concerned about their collective heritage.[24] In the succeeding years, they worked on a plan to prevent the loss of the library, ar-

Genealogie in een eigen bureau

In 's Rijks prullemand vindt men vele kostbaarheden

(Van onze Haagse redacteur)

Het is waar: de Duitsers en de N.S.B. waren er verzot op en dit maakte de materie in de afgelopen jaren weinig appetijtelijk, maar dit doet niets af aan de waarde van de Genealogie, die voor een volk, dat belang stelt in zijn historie, onmisbaar is.

Naar eigen inzichten bestudeerd en ingericht, zonder „hinein-interpretierung met onzuivere bedoelingen, is deze weten-

den geldt gaat ook thans op: dingen, die voor ons nu slechts een voorbijgaande gebruikswaarde hebben, zullen over honderd jaar voor de geschiedvorser waarschijnlijk begerenswaardige objecten zijn.

Zo ziet het Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie, wil men voorkomen, dat het nageslacht ons het verwijt maakt van nalatig te zijn geweest, het als zijn omvangrijke taak naar alle kanten vangarmen uit te strekken om het voorbijgaande vast te

Figure 1: 'Genealogy has an office of its own – In the nation's dustbin one can find many gems.' Part of clipping in: *De Tijd: Dagblad voor Nederland,* June 28, 1947.

chives, and documentation material of this former organization, including the collections of other historical, genealogical, and heraldic organizations.[25]

On 15 July 1940, a few months after the German invasion of the Netherlands, a report was published about the plan, supported by officials of the national government and by the national archivist, to launch a central institution, a *Rijksbureau,* supported by the national government.[26] This institution would bring together all genealogical, heraldic, biographical and iconographical documentation available to the national government. The reconstruction of the route from the original plans for the founding of a central genealogical institute in the 1930s and its rapid opening only ten days after the war would merit a separate study and goes beyond the scope of this book.[27]

For now, I will frame this history as a struggle between two perspectives on genealogy that were dominant at the beginning of the German occupation of the Netherlands. It could equally be framed as a clash between two incompatible subcultures: on the one hand the 19th-century genealogy, based on ideas of (aristocratic) heritage and legal documents, espoused by the founders of the *Rijksbureau*, and on the other the eugenically oriented *sibbekunde*, based on a worldview that interprets humanity as a hierarchical collection of races. This view was visible in the publications of the *Verbond van Sibbekunde*, which viewed *sibbekunde* as an anti-elitist and popular science, since it emphasized the shared genetic heritage of all Germanic people, regardless of their station in life. The notion of *sibbe* is reminiscent of the German *Sippenforschung* (= kinship

research), rooted in the rhetoric of blood and soil and ultimately inextricable from fascist ideology.

A striking example of the distinction between the two concepts can be found in a news clipping from 13 June 1940 (Fig. 2). In this article, the author associates traditional genealogy with hobbyism and elitism, and endorses the views of Johan Frans van Bemmelen (1859-1956), an emeritus professor of biology, who advocates *sibbekunde* as a scientific, biology-based genealogy, a branch of biological science.[28] This kind of genealogy would contribute to the breeding of the Dutch people and must be part of government care for the future of its race, which would otherwise disappear from the earth.[29]

This view on genealogy was based on eugenics, a mixture of biological determinism and population policy, in which marriage and family size were to be regulated according to the hereditary make-up of parents.[30] During the occupation of the Netherlands, the Nazis propagated this eugenic concept of family as 'sibbe', referring to all biological ancestors and descendants within a family, including their partners. The concept was actively communicated in newspapers, radio talks, and at other public activities.[31] Though this *sibbekunde* was an integral part of the Nazi ideology, it had its roots in earlier decades when, both in the United States and in Europe, eugenics was viewed as a respectable science.[32] In several countries, including the US and the UK, Darwinian and eugenic theories about hierarchies within the human race led to population politics, including enforced sterilizations among groups like alcoholics and disabled people. These practices were not part of the Dutch politics in the 1930s, probably due to the Dutch denominational pillarization (*verzuiling*), in which the various denominations did not admit any state intervention in their members' family lives.[33]

The *Verbond of Sibbekunde* appealed not only to eugenics, but also to a unity of the Dutch people associated with place and blood; this flourished from the 1930s and included the popularization of regional and local history, including genealogy.[34] In her book on Dutch folklore scholars, the historian Barbara Henkes links these ideas to the quest for Dutch identity in the interwar period. These scholars studied folk traditions with the idealist aim of defining some kind of national unity, distinctive to all Dutch people, rich and poor, elite and ordinary, from cities and the countryside. This kind of 'identity politics' was embedded in the racist ideologies of the Nazis, writes Henkes, but this appropriation did not imply that folklore science in itself was inherently 'wrong'.[35]

Without getting deeply involved in this discussion, I mention this link between *sibbekunde* and folklore science only to point out the popularization of

genealogy as an anti-elitist, popular, and at the same time biologically oriented science. The implementation of Van Beresteyn's plans for a *Rijksbureau* stagnated in the first year of the war, according to him, 'because a number of enemy collaborators wanted to take the matter out of our hands'.[36] He does not clarify who these collaborators were. In August 1940, the national news service ANP published articles about his initiative in various newspapers, one of which had a heading describing this *Rijksbureau* as an attempt by 'the gentlemen Van Poelje and Van Beresteyn' to sabotage plans to set up a new central institute 'on a popular basis' (See Figure 3). According to this newspaper, even the traditional organizations of the nobility approved the new central institute, but liberal democrats like Van Poelje and Van Beresteyn were attempting to boycott it by establishing their own *Rijksbureau*.[37] The news report adds: 'Probably this Rijksbureau will be controlled by the Jewess Duparc, of the Ministry.'[38]

The *Rijksbureau* never came into being. Instead, the *Verbond voor Sibbekunde* was founded in October 1940, with the intention of unifying all new and older organizations dealing with genealogy and heraldry. This association included the Dutch organization of genealogists, as well as *De Nederlandsche Leeuw*, an organization for Dutch genealogical and heraldic research with a strong focus on the history of noble families. The *Verbond voor Sibbekunde* propagated its anti-aristocratic, anti-elitist notion of genealogy for a wide audience by organizing

Van genealogie tot sibbenkunde

Wij moeten van onszelf weten, wat elke boer van zijn koeien weet

DE WEG NAAR VEREDELING VAN ONS VOLK

De genealogie (geslachtkunde) heeft nu niet zoo'n erg beste naam. Wetenschappelijk niet; en maatschappelijk niet. Wetenschappelijk gezien is zij een hulpwetenschap der geschiedenis, en als zoodanig pleegt zij zich vooral bezig te houden met de kennis van geslachten, die een meer

kunde nog maar aan het begin van een groote ontwikkeling. Wat weten wij eigenlijk nog van de sibben, die tezamen ons volk vormen? Heel weinig immers. De gemiddelde Nederlander kent nauwelijks zijn vier grootouders. Om inzicht in de erfelijkheidswetten moet men heelemaal niet bij hem komen. Rassenkunde is „heidensch". Eugenetiek is heelemaal des duivels.

Neen, als sociale wetenschap ligt de sibbenkunde nog in de windselen.

Figure 2: 'From genealogy to sibbekunde. We need to know about ourselves what farmers know about their cows. The way to the enhancement of our people.' Part of clipping from Het Nationale Dagblad, June 13, 1940. See also note 29.

radio talks and a well-visited exhibition, and by publishing articles and handbooks about finding one's forebears.[39] The chairman of the *Verbond,* A.R. Kleyn, stressed that this idea of 'sibbe' sought to expand the popular consciousness of being of 'one blood'. That is why he advocated ancestor charts with all ancestors of one person, in contrast to descendant charts that only highlight the paternal line, beginning with the eldest 'founding father' of a family. An ancestor chart would show how an individual was embedded in his environment, wrote Van Kleyn in the first edition of his magazine *Sibbe*.[40]

The atmosphere around genealogy and the popular term *sibbekunde* because more vicious when the German occupiers, obsessed by the aim of an *Volkstumanalyse*, set up the governmental *Centrale Dienst voor Sibbekunde* (CDS) in 1941. The chairman of the CDS was SS-officer Ten Cate. He took a particular interest in genealogical research as it could allegedly prove the so-called Aryan purity of members of the SS and their spouses by reconstructing their genealogies back to 1800, and for higher officers even back to 1750.

Ten Cate also collected genealogies of Dutch citizens of Jewish descent. Members of the Dutch pro-Nazi NSB party were appointed to oversee municipal and provincial archives and were obliged to send data at his request. In January 1941, Dutch Jews were forced to register as Jews. Civil servants lost their jobs if they could not give evidence that they were not Jewish.

Under the Nazi regime, the genealogical concept of kinship could be a matter of life and death. This is illustrated by the remarkable story of the Dutch Jews who belonged to the Aktie Portugesia, as described in the dissertation of the historian Jaap Cohen.[41] He portrays an Amsterdam-based family whose ancestors, Sephardic Jews, were expelled from Portugal and emigrated to Holland in the 17th century. Many of them had been forced to be baptised as Christians

Een Rijks Genealogisch bureau opgericht

SABOTAGE-POGING VAN DE HEEREN VAN POELJE EN VAN BERESTEYN

Rijksbureau voor documentatie op het gebied van geslacht- en wapenkunde en beeltenissen (bij afkorting: Rijks Genealogisch Bureau). Hierbij heeft zich aan-

Figure 3: 'The founding of a National Genealogical Institute. A sabotage attempt by the gentlemen Van Poelje and Van Beresteyn' in: Het Nationale Dagblad, August 16, 1940. See also note 37

in Portugal but had to leave anyway. During World War II, this family was part of a group of 4500 Jews who tried to prove their non-Jewishness. Based on a genealogy back to 1492, they requested the German legal adviser Calmeyer to 'aryanize' them retrospectively, so that they could escape persecution and deportation to concentration camps. Nazis asked genealogists to check these genealogical data in the archives. Since the members of this Aktie Portugesia believed that they had valid arguments proving them to be non-Jewish, they refused to go into hiding. Notwithstanding these beliefs and efforts, the group as a whole was deported to concentration camps on 1 February 1944. On September 5 1944, rumours were spread that the liberation by Allied forces was at hand. On that day, the CDS was dismantled, and Ten Cate fled to Germany with other Nazis and Dutch collaborators.[42]

A history of Dutch cultural heritage policy from 1875 to 1975 summarizes the actions within the Dutch archival world after 1945.[43] While many archives had been destroyed during the Second World War, and several archivists were fired because of their collaboration with the Nazis, the government swiftly restored the archival infrastructure by installing new archivists for the central and provincial archives. Financial support for organizations involved in archiving or collecting documents was part of the state budget for 1946. These organizations included the CBG, the Institute for Iconography, the International Institute for Social History, the Dutch Economic Historic Archive, the Social Economic Ar-

Van Overal

Alle Nederlanders zijn familie van elkaar!

IN den overvloed van nieuwe woorden, uitdrukkingen, leuzen en begrippen, die in den jongsten tijd hun intrede in onze samenleving, onze taal en onze hersenen hebben gedaan, komt ook het woord s i b b e k u n d e voor. Wij,s niet-sibbekundigen, denken tenminste dat het nieuw is, omdat wij er tevoren nauwelijks van hoorden en het nu opeens in kranten, tijdschriften en radiolezingen veelvuldig tegenkomen. Maar het is al oud,

traal Nederlandsch Stamboek, dat juist deze maand met de uitgave van een geïllustreerd orgaan, „Sibbe", is begonnen; voorts het Nederlandsch Genootschap voor Geslacht- en Wapenkunde; verder de Nederlandsche Vereeniging van Genealogen (welker leden echter een zekere mate van vakbekwaamheid moeten bezitten en hun 64 „kwartieren" bij het Ned. Stamboek moeten hebben ingeleverd); ten slotte het sedert kort bestaanden Nederlandsche Verbond voor Sibbekunde.

De stoot tot de bestudeering of liever: oriënteering der genealogische wetenschap werd reeds een kleine halve eeuw geleden gegeven door den Oostenrijkschen historicus Ottokar Lorentz, na wiens dood de Vereinigung zur Begründung und Erhaltung einer Zentralstelle für Personen-und Familiengeschichte werd gesticht (in 1904).

Figure 4: 'From everywhere. All Dutch people are related to one another.' Part of a clipping of Algemeen Handelsblad, January 26, 1941. See also note 39.

chive for the Province of Limburg, and the Dutch Society for Heraldry.

In 1945, the CBG started in a modest office, with a rather small collection of genealogies, family archives, prayer cards, and family announcements from newspapers, gathered mainly by its founders. It became a registered foundation and opened its doors to the general public in 1947.[44] Formally, the CBG is not a state archive as defined by the Dutch Archive Law, but a heritage institute. Its first task is to manage and preserve the CBG collections, which have expanded over the years. In 1948, the inspector of the population register prevented 720,000 personal records from burning by Statistics Netherlands and handed them over to the CBG.[45]

Over the years, the CBG has provided services for anyone who wants to find their ancestors. The *Chronicle CBG 1945-1995*, published on the occasion of the CBG's 50th anniversary, provides a few remarkable examples: in 1949, the national economic information service asked the CBG to cooperate in a campaign to arouse the slumbering 'genealogical instincts' of American citizens with Dutch roots. The aim was to generate 'a stream of dollars that could not compensate for the loss of the Dutch East Indies, but would nevertheless be very welcome'.[46] In 1958, inhabitants of this former Dutch colony, now the Republic of Indonesia, came to the CBG when they needed documentation to reclaim their Dutch nationality. In 1960, other groups needed the CBG for their claims to Dutch roots, like those who regretted adopting Indonesian nationality, and the Indonesian-Dutch inhabitants of Papua New Guinea who also wanted to become Dutch.[47]

Currently, the CBG presents itself as the prime national digital institute for genealogy, by providing public records of Dutch inhabitants and linking to online sources on its own website and to sources of other archives. The subsite www.wiewaswie.nl (who was who) functions as a central search engine for historical personal data stored in Dutch archives. This database holds data relating to more than 140 million individuals, not only drawn from public records but also including specific data from sources such as burial registers and military lists.[48] The institute also has a range of collections, including family archives and collections of genealogies, heraldic weapons, and birth and death announcements, as well as a collection of issues of Politieblad from 1852 till 1946, a periodical used by police officers to investigate crimes and find suspects and missing persons. The descriptions provide personal details, including descriptions of physical features like hair colour and scars.[49]

Since 1 January 1850, every Dutch citizen has been registered in a population register. Until 1920, individuals were mainly registered as part of a house-

hold. This registration of households took place in large ledgers, and later on separate family cards. Names, dates and places of birth, addresses, occupations, and religious affiliations were mentioned, in addition to possible other residents, boarders, or servants in the household. From 1939, these family records were replaced by personal records for each individual, with dates of birth, marriage, and death, and data about his or her children and parents. Occupation, religion, and addresses were also noted on these personal records, since here it was easier to register changes in an individual life than in the former family records.[50]

The institute provides information from record cards and record lists of people who passed away between 1939 and 1 October 1994, and the digital data of the deceased from then on. It also manages the National Register of Deceased Persons, (*Nationaal Register Overledenen, NRO*). On request, one can obtain a summary of a specific personal record, which provides names, dates and places of birth and death, parents' names (often also with date and place of birth), and data about marriages, partners, and children. Privacy-sensitive information is left out, such as details about a person's religion, and the addresses of people who died less than twenty years ago.[51]

The CBG serves a varied public, including notaries trying to find individuals named in a will, television programmes, like the Dutch version of BBC series *Who Do You Think You Are*, created around genealogical research by a celebrity, professional historians, and family historians. They can visit the websites of the CBG or the documentation centre in The Hague. For donors, the 'friends' of the CBG, the institute publishes a quarterly magazine with articles about genealogy and family history, and organizes lectures and other events for genealogists and interested individuals.

As stated above, the CBG focuses on family relations as reflected in public administration. In 2015, the institute changed its name from CBG to CBG|Centre for Family History, thereby joining an international trend of equating genealogy with family history (see also 2.1).[52] The annual report of 2016 mentions the reasons for this change:

> We chose the more public-friendly term family history because we want to express the fact that our working area covers the whole spectrum of family history: from family names to heraldry, from family archives to family trees, and from family trees to family stories.[53]

The CBG has been investing heavily in its online activities. The institute has

a portal through which many archives can be searched digitally. A marketing communication officer maintains Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn accounts. The study room with staff helping visitors has been replaced by a self-service study centre where visitors can view microfiches, read books, and consult source material. Digital sources can be obtained mainly through the CBG's website, on which the institute presents itself as the national portal for family history.[54]

Reflecting on the CBG's current activities, we may conclude that it has left behind its associations with aristocratic, elitist amateurism and has remodelled genealogy as family history, a popular activity centred around archival research that could interest anyone. Admittedly, the website also gives information on genetic genealogy (see also Chapter 2.2.): e.g., 'as a new possibility to find an answer to the question "Who am I?" [...]. DNA-research makes us aware that we are all family.'[55] Nevertheless, the CBG exclusively offers services relating to documents and archives. In so doing, it explicitly holds onto the idea of family history as primarily based on institutional documentation that must be accessible to a general public.

1.5 How to study family histories?

Having narrowed down the object of research, selected a corpus of contemporary printed family histories in accordance with a range of criteria, and examined the CBG as the place in which the family histories of this study are deposited, it is now time to focus on theoretical concerns. With the indexation of the family histories, I also needed a theoretical perspective on the analysis of this corpus. By studying the various academic disciplines and debates on family histories, I have built my argument towards an approach that could provide an answer to my question regarding the conceptual links between 'me' and 'my relatives' in these family histories.

In the next sections, I will examine perspectives on family history as an object of study by anthropologists, sociologists, historians, and researchers in heritage and memory studies. I will argue that some of these perspectives are more suited to my research objective than others. I will start this review with several meta-perspectives on family history as a cultural phenomenon.

1.5.1 Psychological and sociological explanations of family history

First, I will address perspectives on family history that are in fact often psychological or sociological explanations of the phenomenon itself. Without claiming to describe them all, I will review a few recurring explanations and show that these explanations make implicit assumptions about the nature of the link between individuals and their relatives. For some writers on family history, this interest is a congenital one, as in *Family Matters*, a non-academic book about the history of genealogy. The book's author Michael Sharpe writes accordingly:

> The desire to know one's antecedents is a basic human instinct. Since earliest times mankind has sought to connect with his forefathers and an interest in ancestry is found in all nations and periods.[56]

This general statement about family history as a product of human instinct is presented as an indisputable fact, without any explanation, giving no clue about how this basic instinct works or how it causes individuals to produce family histories.

A far more specific account is that of Freud, who describes the creation of family histories as a function of a child's psychological needs.[57] Freud unmasks family history as the result of a child's disappointment at the apparent all-powerfulness of his or her parents. This is why children fantasize about their descent and their possible adoption from parents who have a higher social status. As their world becomes bigger, their fantasies develop accordingly, and the stories about the father and the mother express, Freud holds, a nostalgic longing for the days when the child could believe in an all-powerful father and a supremely beautiful mother.

This psychoanalytical explanation of family history as the reconciliation of reality with the fantasy of an ideal state still echoes in various contemporary accounts of family history. Such explanations predominantly account for genealogy as a manner of self-making, self-understanding, or the creation of an authentic identity.[58] The anthropologist Martine Segalen, for example, states that family historians and genealogists are driven by narcissism, because 'the love of genealogy is certainly not the love of the family, but much rather the love of oneself, the self one desperately attempts to prolong beyond death'.[59]

Another example is the explanation of the sociologist Ashley Barnwell, who considers family history as both the fulfilment of a desire to have a narrative

identity and a creative act of revisionist life writing, to attune a person's narrative identity to social reality.[60] Barnwell's ideas are grounded in the discourse theory of Charlotte Linde, which states that creating coherence is the basic drive in producing life stories. Coherence is key, both within the narrative of the life story and in the relation between individuals and the social systems they live in:

> In order to exist in the social world with a comfortable sense of being a good, socially proper, and stable person, an individual needs to have a coherent, acceptable, and constantly revised life story.[61]

Barnwell interprets this desire for coherence as bringing together family history and autobiographical elements. This desire can lead to a 'fragmentary, bricolage approach' to family history, which is no less authentic than a meticulously recorded pedigree.[62] The wish to create a narrative identity can also be interpreted as an existential need, as philosopher Peter Sloterdijk does. In order to grasp the limits of their existence, the moments of birth and death – moments one can never be conscious of oneself – people reach out to the historical circumstances in which they were launched into the world. A family history supplies individuals with a basic story about the beginning of their lives. In Sloterdijk's words:

> [M]anche Autoren malten breite kulturhistorische Fresken aus, um den Zeitpunkt ihres irdischen Erscheinens zu charakterisieren, als wollten sie ihr Geburtsereignis in eine welthistorische Objektivität tauschen und den horror vacui übertünchen, der von der Vorstellung einer Welt ausstrahlt, in der das ichsagende Subjekt noch nicht vorhanden war.[63]

In addition to the existential and psychological explanations, we find social explanations. In this field, the individualization thesis frequently pops up in reflections on the popularity of family history, implying that a growing individualism estranges people from their self-evident networks, such as family and church, prompting them to attempt to recreate them from the past.[64] The heritage critic David Lowenthal, for instance, identifies global trends that cause a growing interest in heritage, including family history:

> These trends engender isolation and dislocation of self from family, family from neighborhood, neighborhood from nation, and even oneself from one's former selves. Such changes reflect manifold aspects of life-

> increasing longevity, family dissolution, the loss of familiar surroundings, quickened obsolescence, genocide and wholesale migration, and a growing fear of technology. [...] Beleaguered by loss and change, we keep our bearings only by clinging to remnants of stability.[65]

The intuition that we have less interaction with our relatives than in an undefined past is not supported by empirical evidence.[66] In fact, there is even demographic evidence that counters the idea that contemporary relatives have fewer interactions than those in the past. For example, since people now live longer, Dutch grandparents today are more present in the lives of their grandchildren than they were in the 19th century. According to a demographic study, contemporary grandmothers share their lives with grandchildren for 32 years on average (26 years for grandfathers). The different generations also still live in each other's neighbourhood. In 2006, the distance between grandparents and grandchildren up to their 20th birthday averaged 22 kilometres. Once children left home, the distance rose to 34 kilometres on average.[67]

Apart from this kind of counterevidence, there is not much proof for claims that individualization in general leads to a growing attachment to family history. The lack of empirical studies makes these claims speculative. Moreover, neither social nor psychological or existential explanations suffice as a paradigm for my research question. They start from a general premise about the psychological, existential, or social necessity for family history, and they cannot go beyond this premise other than by pointing out to particular instances of it. Speculations about the causes and reasons for people to develop a fascination with their family histories do not account for the shape their family histories take; nor do they provide tools to study the content of these family histories.

1.5.2 Disqualifications of family history

The main critics of family history can be found among metahistorians and cultural critics who understand family history as a 'wrong' way of 'doing history', a wrong way of doing life writing, or even as a wrong, i.e., uncritical, way of using notions like kinship and roots. Although family history is only on the periphery of their perspective, I will introduce these critics here, because they seem to represent feelings of ambivalence towards family history, in particular among academic historians.

Friedrich Nietzsche is one of the famous thinkers with strong ideas about

what doing history can or should entail. He describes three modes of doing history, each relating to different purposes of history for life: monumental, antiquarian, and critical history. Monumental history is meant to convince people 'that greatness is still possible'.[68] Family history, in this view, belongs to the antiquarian mode of history, a mode in which people see themselves as extensions of the past, as a necessary element in the chain of being. This mode of history cannot lead to new, critical views on the past or the future. Nietzsche adopts the perspective of an antiquarian historian when he writes:

> The history of his city becomes for him the history of his own self. He understands the walls, the turreted gate, the dictate of the city council, and the folk festival, like an illustrated diary of his youth, and he rediscovers for himself in all this his force, his purpose, his passion, his opinion, his foolishness, and his bad habits. He says to himself, here one could live, for here one may live, and here one can go on living, because we endure and do not collapse overnight. Thus, with this "we" he looks back over the past amazing lives of individuals and feels himself like the spirit of the house, the generation, and the city.[69]

In Nietzsche's antiquarian mode of history, history and personal identity are firmly intertwined. In this view, 'doing antiquarian history' is a pejorative activity. Nietzsche prefers the critical style of doing history, the ultimate aim of which is to study history critically in order to find new forms of life. Although he only implicitly refers to family history, his perspective is representative of a whole range of metahistorians who judge family history as a wrong kind of doing history. Their criticism is often simultaneously a justification of their own way of doing history.

Among them is David Lowenthal, whose *Possessed by the past* is famously disapproving of the growing heritage industry. Lowenthal sees the rise of family history as a symptom of people who have lost their roots as a consequence of migration and/or individualization.[70] In his view, doing family history is, like doing heritage, an uncritical activity, aimed at galvanizing ego-ideals and producing a past to be proud of. He advocates a strict distinction between heritage and history, where the latter strives for meticulous research into the facts and resists the needs and desires surrounding community and identity that lead to the merging of fact and fiction.

A much more ambivalent attitude to popular interest in the past is display-

ed by the literary scholar Svetlana Boym in *The Future of Nostalgia*. Although she does not pay much attention to family history, Boym tries to find out why people are so eager to return to a past that is imagined as being better than the present. In her view, nostalgia has a utopian dimension, only it is not directed towards the future. She locates one of the sources of nostalgia in modernist society. Citing the sociologist Tönnes, she posits that the individual has travelled from the community in which he or she once lived safely towards an alienating society: 'Thus modern society appears as a foreign country, public life as emigration from the family idyll, urban existence as a permanent exile.'[71]

Boym distinguishes restorative from reflective nostalgia: whereas the former uncritically evokes nationalistic pasts and futures, the latter is concerned with individual and cultural memory. 'The two might overlap in their frames of reference, but they do not coincide in their narratives and plots of identity. In other words, they can use the same triggers of memory and symbols, the same Proustian Madelaine pastry, but tell different stories about it.'[72] What does this perspective say about family historians? Apparently there is a good way of being nostalgic and a bad way, and both are rooted in this sense of defamiliarization from a past that is somehow begging to be rebuilt, according to Boym.

A stronger criticism of family history, here described as genealogy, comes from Julia Watson, a specialist in life writing.[73] (This equation of family history with genealogy opens up a whole new debate, which will be discussed in Chapter 2.) While Lowenthal advocates striving for objective knowledge, Watson is disparaging of genealogists' aims to find undisputable facts. Within family history, Watson discerns two distinctive genres: genealogy and autobiography. Genealogy is described here as 'a vast and complex institutional network, with a methodology and apparatus – journals, archives, societies, certified professional researchers, how-to books, indexes – for establishing pedigreed origin.'[74]

By contrast, she introduces autobiography as a practice based on memory, where authors situate themselves historically. Watson argues fiercely against genealogy as a way of 'doing family history', that is: 'Genealogy is used to discover and verify an established past.'[75] A genealogist does not want a personal perspective, according to Watson, because it would undermine the validity of history. In *Reading Autobiography* she writes:

> Genealogical projects recover the recorded past, which they can verify as an official past. They are interested in the objective documentation of relationships, not in the subjective stories people remember.[76]

Autobiography, on the other hand, depends on memory, which dislodges the writing subject from norms, traditions, and constraints that governed past generations. Contradictions in memories and stories contribute, in her view, to the lived experience of the author, who brings these experiences in the discursive space. Watson:

> [...] autobiography can furnish a more extensive account of lived history than can the documented historical record. In that sense, the autobiographical story of the family is a ''truer'' account than the genealogical pedigree, precisely because it incorporates several modes of rendering lived experience.[77]

In her most recent book *Life Writing in the Long Run,* published in 2017, Watson reflects on this perspective, from 1996. She has become milder about genealogy since she studied her own family history. She shows her surprise about the combinations of genealogy and biography in recent family histories and acknowledges the influence of digital access to contemporary genealogical practices. She now admits the impact of the 'emotional satisfaction of finding historical information about my ancestors and inventing fuller stories of the lives they might have lived, let alone the possibility of meeting a distant relative still in the birthplace of one of my grandmothers.'[78]

In conclusion of this section, the ideas discussed here are diverse, though they are all very critical of family history and argue for their own line of thought. This rhetorical strategy precludes the study of family histories themselves. It is simply impossible to dissect a phenomenon with an open mind, unbiased, if one has first categorized it as 'not right'. In order to study family history, one needs a theoretical perspective that respects family history as an object of research, without disparaging its practitioners a priori.

1.5.3 Family as an imagined community

One of the most appealing studies of the history of the western family is by the historian John Gillis, who coined the idea of 'the family we live by'. He states that for centuries western culture lived within a cyclical course of life. Rural society planned its life along the seasons, the tides, and other cyclical movements of time. As Gilles described, families were more often defined in dimensions of space rather than time, and most often also in a somewhat loose way, as ex-

tended communities, including long stay guests, servants, and apprentices. During the eighteenth century, the concept of linear time was introduced with the emergence of industrialization. It would be a century before large numbers of people began to see themselves as temporal beings, instead of people belonging to a particular place. 'Only a small number of families could claim a past and a future,' writes Gillis.[79] Families shrank and became distinct social units, more strictly defined as a family with one father, one mother, and their children.

Gillis sees this change in family life as the start of the idealization and historicization of the family in many ways. The concept of the family 'we live by' became materialized in doing family history, as well as in paying full attention to events that were considered less meaningful in previous centuries. Age became a key signifier and in consequence, anniversaries turned into important festivities; marriage developed into a life event; even funerals were seen more as social events than in the centuries past. A strong feeling of nostalgia intensified the interest in the past. Around 1900, historical and genealogical societies were founded all over Europe and North America.

Gillis describes all these changes as a symptom of the ideal 'family we live by', regardless of the fact that real families, the family we live *with*, are often far less perfect than we would like them to be. He offers a psychological explanation for the ongoing celebration of family events, which he views in terms of a longing for continuity:

> [B]ecause we insist on thinking of ourselves as temporal beings, each with his or her own biography, each with a unique family history, we can never escape our finitude and are tempted to turn all our events into ritual and image, all history into myth, in order to give ourselves some of the sense of permanence and connection that modern times denies us.[80]

Gillis also points to paradoxical features of the family as myth. People tend to believe that the family is primarily a harmonic unity – although so much evidence can be produced to the contrary. This myth accompanies our lives perpetually and expresses our desire for continuity and stability. Every conflict, every disagreement strengthens this desire, which finds its expression in family rituals, family myths, and family histories.

These developments continue right up to the present. Gillis even points to a new trend, in which each family claims its identity with more force than in previous centuries. In all sorts of contemporary nations, he sees the same unifor-

mity in the vision of family, which emphasizes 'stability and unity, rootedness and continuity.'[81] Apparently, Gillis interprets all family activities through the lens of this persisting ideal of the family 'we live by'. He shows how this ideal is transferred to other parts of society, like multinationals performing themselves as families. Nevertheless, Gillis is more interested in the evolution of the *ideal* of the family 'we live by' than in the phenomenon of family history itself. His perspective offers no tools for studying the ways people claim some living creatures as their relatives and others not, the notions they use, the repertoires and vocabularies that are essential to their projects.

The concept of the family 'we live by' is similar to the concept of the imagined community as coined by historian Benedict Anderson. He unmasked the alleged naturalness of nationality by introducing the nation as an 'imagined community', in which upcoming nationalism was supported by a developing consumer society and a media industry, with a printing press that distributed daily news about the nation, thus creating feelings of togetherness. In this way, individuals of different class, religion, and gender, who did not know each other, internalized a nationalism in which they were willing even to risk their lives for their nation. Anderson explains that these people felt themselves members of the same imagined community:

> It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.[82]

Benedict Anderson extended the term to other communities, although each kind of imagined community has its own style by which it is imagined.[83] For instance, nations are imagined as limited and sovereign. That distinguishes them from communities of Marxists or Liberalists, for instance. One example that Anderson gives is that many countries honour a tomb of the unknown soldier, but there is no such thing as a tomb of the Unknown Marxist ('Is a sense of absurdity avoidable?'). 'The reason', Anderson posits, 'is that neither Marxism nor Liberalism is much concerned with death and immortality'.[84]

The community of inhabitants of Java illustrates another difference from the nation as a imagined community. Anderson comments that Javanese villagers feel connected with ancestors they have never met, 'but these ties were once imagined particularistically – as indefinitely stretchable nets of kinship and clientship'.[85]

If nation can be seen as an imagined community, family could be as well. Would it be fruitful to study the topic of my study – contemporary family histories written by non-professionals and covering more than one generation – as histories of imagined communities?[86] Before addressing this question, it may help to take into account not only the conceptual but also the historical link between the concepts of 'family' and 'nation'.

Family is implicated in nation, both historically and metaphorically. The literary scholar Anne McClintock describes the metaphorization, as well as the naturalization of the term family as it has been developed since the nineteenth century. Nation and family came to mirror each other in a range of complicated ways:

> A curious paradox thus emerges. The family as a metaphor offered a single genesis narrative for global history, while the family as an institution became void of history. As the nineteenth century drew on, the family as an institution was figured as existing, naturally, beyond the commodity market, beyond politics and beyond history proper. The family thus became both the antithesis of history and history's organizing figure.[87]

Moreover, nations and families both take part in a gendered imaginary, in which the differences between man and woman are repeated on different levels, as historian Mrinalini Sinha explains:

> The family – constructed as a "natural" heterosexual and patriarchal unit – performs a variety of critical ideological services in the constitution of the nation.[88]

On an individual level, family and nation are also connected, in the sense that most people are born with a specific national identity and also within a particular family, mostly marked with a surname. Could this mean that studying family history can profit from the definition of family as an imagined community? If a community is said to be an imagined community, the question arises: imagined by whom? In the case of the nation, the nation is imagined by its citizens who feel connected to anonymous other citizens. Within families, relatives have a sense that they are bound to specific others, no matter what meanings they give to these relationships.

The question is, then, whether the term imaginary community can throw any light on this matter. We do not need the term in order to grasp the way people prove themselves, in this case with documents, to be linked to each other. There are good reasons *not* to view family as an imagined community, and by extension, family history as the history of an imagined community. The first reason is concerned with Anderson's particular definition, which refers to connections between people who are unknown to each other but nevertheless feel connected. Relatives, on the other hand, may not feel connected but are actually or possibly known to each other as particular others. Additional specifications are required if we are to define family as an imagined community.

The second reason is that Anderson opposed the notion of an 'imagined' community to the concept of the nation, which was interpreted as 'natural' or 'self-evident'. In the same line of thought, viewing the family as an imagined community could raise questions about the supposed naturalness of families as 'unimagined'.[89] I remain unconvinced that this contrast between families as imagined or unimagined will benefit the study of the concept of family as used in family histories.[90]

These two reasons lead to the conclusion that we will apply Ockham's razor and wisely decide to omit the term 'imagined community', and see if we can analyse the complexity of the phenomenon of family in its own right.

1.5.4 Family history as doing memory

Is family history a way of doing history – or of doing memory? The difference between memory and history has been debated in many ways. Pierre Nora expresses the difference as follows:

> Memory is blind to all but the group it binds – which is to say, as Maurice Halbwachs has said, that there are as many memories as there are groups, that memory is by nature multiple and yet specific; collective, plural and yet individual. History, on the other hand, belongs to everyone and to no one, whence its claim to universal authority. Memory takes root in the concrete, in spaces, gestures, images, and objects; history binds itself strictly tot temporal continuities, to progressions and to relations between things. Memory is absolute, while history can only conceive the relative.[91]

If for the moment we accept this distinction between history and memory, to what category would family history belong? The answer of the sociologist Kevin Meethan is that '[f]amily history is above all a form of memory work [...], a rediscovery of lost ties, a means to identify, catalogue and arrange the unknowns of one's personal past.'[92] Meethan here quotes from the sociologist Ronald Lambert, who concludes through his empirical research that genealogists perform themselves as memory workers:

> So, too, the genealogists studied here function as memory workers, their writing and expertise on family matters establishing them as mnemonic others within their extended families. What they say and what they write may, indeed, constitute intersubjective realities informing the thoughts and "memories" of family members; in short, genealogists participate in the process of constructing families' collective memories. An important part of these memories, beyond the mere "facts", are the arguments and interpretations that genealogists advance in favour of their ancestors.[93]

Both authors define family historians as memory workers, although Meethan gives a different meaning to memory work. There is another difference between their perspectives as well: whereas Meethan starts from the observation that family history is by definition memory work, Lambert concludes from his empirical research that the family historians in his study *behave* like memory workers. This claim triggers the question whether we can stipulate that family history is first and foremost a way of memory making. And if so, what kind of memory is implicated in doing family history?
Here we enter a long debate on the relation between individual memory, tied to a body, and collective memory, as introduced by Halbwachs.[94] The historian Jay Winter has tried to mediate in this debate:

> When individuals and groups express or embody or interpret or repeat a script about the past, they galvanize the ties that bind groups together and deposit additional memory traces about the past in their own minds. These renewed and revamped memories frequently vary from and overlay earlier memories, creating a complex palimpsest about the past each of us carries with us.[95]

This perspective possibly describes how individual and social memory influence each other, but it does not elucidate the status of written family histories. The same is true of the distinctions that Aleida Assman, who specializes in memory studies, makes between different kinds of memory. She distinguishes between individual, social, and cultural memory, using criteria such as the extent of the memories in time and place, their stability, and the size of the group they apply to. Can we categorize written family histories within one of these forms of memory? Due to the fact that most family histories cover a time span of more than two generations and at least one century, the family histories under discussion cannot solely be the product of individual memory; nor do they fit her definition of 'social memory'.

In Assman's definition, social memory is connected to a generation formulating its own perspective on history, and as such it is tied to individuals and their interactions. Social memory and individual memory have in common that they are both embodied, while political and cultural memory function as transgenerational communication and need to be materialized in physical objects like books, monuments, libraries, and museums. Given Assman's definition of political memory as anchored in one narrative with one message, family histories also cannot easily be interpreted as political memory. Family history can, finally, be subsumed under the category of cultural memory, as this is defined as a permanent body of information deemed vital for the constitution and continuation of a specific group. This cultural memory functions as a 'repository for group affinities, loyalties and identity formations in a post-individualistic age.'[96]

However, one of the problems with defining family history as a form of cultural memory aimed at a specific group is that it presupposes the existence of such groups. Is this a plausible view in a world that is so diverse, and in which groups, families included, are not as stable as they were once supposed to be? In the debate about the status of memory and the various forms of it, the media scholar José van Dijck intervenes by coining the term personal cultural memory. She takes her shoebox full of memories and paraphernalia as the starting point for her argument, proposing a research agenda that shifts the focus from the memories of groups to those of individual agents who actively produce memories.

> Personal cultural memories are not only interesting in hindsight, after history has decided whether our shoeboxes contain interesting material in the service of illustrating particular strands of the grand narrative.

> Our private shoeboxes are interesting in their own right, as stilled cultural acts and artefacts, teaching us more about the way we deploy media technologies to situate ourselves in contemporary and past cultures, and how we store and reshape our images of self, family, and community in the course of living.[97]

Van Dijck's approach is more suitable for answering my research question. It gives me the opportunity to consider written family histories as reorganized shoeboxes, so to speak, aimed at a particular audience – the family historian's relatives – and at the same time claiming to describe the memory of that same audience.

However, there is one problem with adopting this notion of personal cultural memory: the notion of 'personal' might be ambiguous in this context. Family historians are indeed writing in person about their family history, but does this mean that everything they write about their kin in the 16th century, for instance, can be seen as personal memory? The notion of the personal is one of the critical elements in my research question. For the time being, I will interpret 'personal' in the notion of personal cultural memory as referring to the producer of cultural memory.

I will situate this study of contemporary family histories in the academic subdiscipline of memory studies, which takes into account how people produce the past in the present day. From that perspective, we can study family history as a source of memory work, with an eye for conceptual tools the producers of these family histories use, whilst at the same time shaping images of self, family, and a reading public.

1.6 From corpus to research question

After I collected a corpus of family histories corresponding to the defined object of research, and situating this case study in the discipline of memory studies, the next task was to operationalize the research question that was still formulated very broadly: how do family historians frame the relation between themselves and their relatives in their written contemporary family histories?

First, it must be clear that this study will regard these texts as the *results* of doing family history. In this respect, this corpus study differs from other studies that are based on ethnographic or sociological qualitative techniques,

like interviews or participative research. Such studies include, for instance, the research of the anthropologist Elisabeth Timm, who analysed the way genealogists handled their sources. The geographer Catherine Nash travelled to Ireland with Americans of Irish descent and discovered a whole genealogical industry catering for kinship feelings. The sociologist Karla Hackstaff interviewed American family historians about the meaning of their family histories, and her fellow sociologist Anne-Marie Kramer studied the outcomes of a series of free writing tasks in which volunteers were asked to reflect on the significance of kinship and family history in their lives. Ronald Lambert, also a sociologist, studied the reactions of Australian family historians to their convict ancestry with survey questions and face-to-face interviews. The historian Alex van Stipriaan, finally, studied Dutch artists with a Surinamese or Caribbean background who travelled to Africa in order to find their ancestral roots.[98] All these studies contribute to a body of knowledge about people's uses of notions of family, their motives for doing family history, and the meanings they attach to all this.

Nevertheless, to the best of my knowledge none of these researchers has ever studied written *products of doing family*, produced by family historians with their relatives as the primary intended audience. In putting together these family histories, the writers used heterogeneous tools like software programs, historically informed concepts, and discursive genealogical repertoires. Therefore, the subject of this study is not so much the behaviour of family historians, as the contemporary domain of associations, concepts, tools, and narratives from which they create their version of the past.

One of the striking similarities between all family histories in this corpus study is that on the one hand they are produced by non-professionals, and on the other hand they are all made using digital tools, like word processors, genealogical software, and scanning and printing machines. These two similarities come together in the arena of the contemporary amateur, currently gaining cultural space on different levels. In *The Cult of the Amateur* the cultural critic Andrew Keene criticizes authors for compromising the idea of authorship, authenticity, and intellectual property in their Internet activities. However, the media historian Lisa Gitelman observes that amateurs have ended the print monopoly of professional printers, thereby changing the status of documents in contemporary society, including definitions of authenticity and authorship.[99] The influence of the amateur has many other aspects, one of which is the overlap between hobbyists, amateurs, and professionals in many disciplines.[100] In Chapter 5, I will return to the distinctions between these terms and the way

contemporary family historians deal with them.

For now, I will stick to the idea that family historians are not so much amateur historians – striving to enlarge the cultural corpus of historical knowledge – as non-professional memory builders working on their personal cultural memory projects in a mixed media environment that provides them with DIY tools, like word-processing and printing and do-it-yourself-genealogy, supported by genealogical software companies and institutions.

These digital tools have become very dominant in contemporary lives and have changed human behaviour in many respects. In this sense, the family histories in this corpus, with years of publication between 2000 and 2013, are all part of what media scholar Henry Jenkins sees as a new participatory culture in digital media. This participatory culture emerges at the intersection between three trends. In Jenkins's description:

> (1) new tools and technologies enable consumers to archive, annotate, appropriate, and recirculate media content.
>
> (2) a range of subcultures promote Do-It-Yourself (DIY) media production, a discourse that shapes how consumers have deployed those technologies
>
> (3) economic trends favoring the horizontally integrated media conglomerates encourage the flow of images, ideas, and narratives across multiple media channels and demand more active modes of spectatorship.[101]

These trends have increased the possibilities of writers to gather information and to make their own personalized productions, but they have led to an immense commodification at all levels as well. Where family histories are concerned, one can easily buy a family history nowadays, based on templates that are built in genealogical software. By reworking the research stored in a genealogical database into a written family history, family historians create not only a medium for their family history and their research, but also a place for reflection on these processes in the prefaces and introductions to their work, and a way to frame their relationships with their relatives in explicit words.

After a first quick glance at the corpus, we can sum up a provisional list of similarities. These family histories are:

- contemporary publications, at least partly made with DIY digital tools;

- written by non-professional family historians about their own families;
- selected from the collection of an institution (CBG) that stimulates genealogical research (and not, for instance, oral history, or other types of family history).

The above-mentioned similarities will function as a guide to the formulation of a set of sub-questions that will be subsequently answered in separate chapters. In Chapter 2, recurring basic clusters of associations in the field of family history are addressed by reflecting on the relation between family history and genealogy, between biology and genetics, and between the terms 'relative', 'family', and 'kin'. Chapter 3 asks what sense of 'self' or 'me' in relation to 'my relatives' is implied in digitized genealogy as found in genealogical software used by family historians in their research. I will analyse a crucial element of this software in which definitions of 'me and my family' are involved.

This last element provides a stepping stone for the analysis, in Chapter 4, of the influence of this software on the timelines of family histories. The structure of these timelines will be examined and narrowed down to the concepts of 'me' in relation to the past, as offered by genealogical software. One of the findings is that authors handle their two roles, as family member and as author, in different ways. This observation leads to an examination, in Chapter 5, of the repertoires used by family historians in their reflections on their double-bind position as writers and subjects of the same family history. Chapter 6, finally, asks what specific selection of their relatives these family historians present as 'my family'.

1.7 Approach, scope and objectives of this analysis

Key in my approach is a critical stance towards knowledge that is taken for granted. The so-called facts involved in family histories are the result of a cultural production process in which knowledge becomes accessible through man-made categories and terms, referring to agents, objects, discourses that are culturally and historically specific and, above all, contingent. They could be different, and they will change over time.[102] My research question concerns templates of timelines, digital influences, concepts of family, repertoires of authors as family historians, and concepts of family. The intertwining of classical concepts and software terms, and the intimate relationships between individuals and their technological, digital artefacts is studied here in the tradition of Bruno Latour's

Actor-Network Theory (ANT), which provides this study with more liberty for analysis than, for instance, an approach based on affordances.[103]

ANT focuses on the complex relations between technologies and human beings that are co-evolving in their production of objects, ideas, stories, and in this case, written family histories.[104] ANT does not study 'the social', 'structures', or 'affordances'. Instead, ANT aims to study phenomena 'as flat as possible', without claiming any ontological status for the terms used.[105] It tries to find out how – in alliance with subjects, technology, and other elements in the world – objects of knowledge obtain the status of natural facts. In these attempts, Latour considers all sorts of entities at the same time as 'natural, social and discourse. They are real, human and semiotic entities in the same breath.'[106] A more general formulation is found in the following explanation of ANT by Latour:

> ANT is a fusion of three hitherto unrelated strands of preoccupations:
> - a semiotic definition of entity building
> - a methodological framework to record the heterogeneity of such a building
> - an ontological claim on the 'networky' character of actants themselves.[107]

A great deal has been written about the status of ANT, but for this corpus study what is more important is the method of analysis it provides. Without impinging on big concepts, or reducing phenomena to a set of predefined categories, an ANT perspective – this 'wild and creative theoretical tradition', in the words of the philosopher Annemarie Mol – can describe and explain how phenomena come into being and how they assume meaning within a network of associations.[108]

One of the goals of this study of a collection of Dutch contemporary printed family histories is to find dominant constituents in this memory-producing practice of doing family history, without presupposing any concept of kinship, any sort of identity, or any other term with a fixed meaning. This bottom-up approach starts with the family histories in which the family historians themselves are embedded, and with the general concepts and digital tools they have used to create a family history by themselves about themselves. In subsequent chapters, I will focus on the ways concepts of time, family, and self are granted existence within family histories invoked in a databased environment.

This approach has several disadvantages. One is that it does not describe changes in the development of family histories over time. It is only concerned with contemporary objects (where contemporary refers to the first fifteen years

of this millennium). Though in Chapter 2 I do give some historical and cultural background of terms used, I will not historicize concepts in their historical depth, but will view them as contemporary tools used by contemporary 'actants', in a Latourian sense: that is, as entities that act or to which activity is granted by others. In not focusing on the historicizing of concepts, I feel supported by the view of Wittgenstein on historical ways of thinking:

> Die historische Erklärung, die Erklärung als eine Hypothese der Entwicklung ist nur eine Art der Zusammenfassung der Daten - ihrer Synopsis. Es ist ebensowohl möglich, die Daten in ihrer Beziehung zu einander zu sehen und in ein allgemeines Bild zusammenzufassen, ohne es in Form einer Hypothese über die zeitliche Entwicklung zu machen.[109]

A second goal of this research is to oppose the often speculative assumptions of cultural critics and philosophers of history about the motives, psychological backgrounds, and goals of family historians in general. By analysing the products and motivations of family historians as they themselves iterate them, I wish to provide new material for the discussion with those who dismiss these phenomena out of hand. That is why my conclusions from this study have a rather unconventional format: they are written in 43 Final Reflections, encapsulating all the findings that emerge from this case study. A number of these findings can be generalized on a conceptual level and can thus contribute to discussions in various academic disciplines.[110]

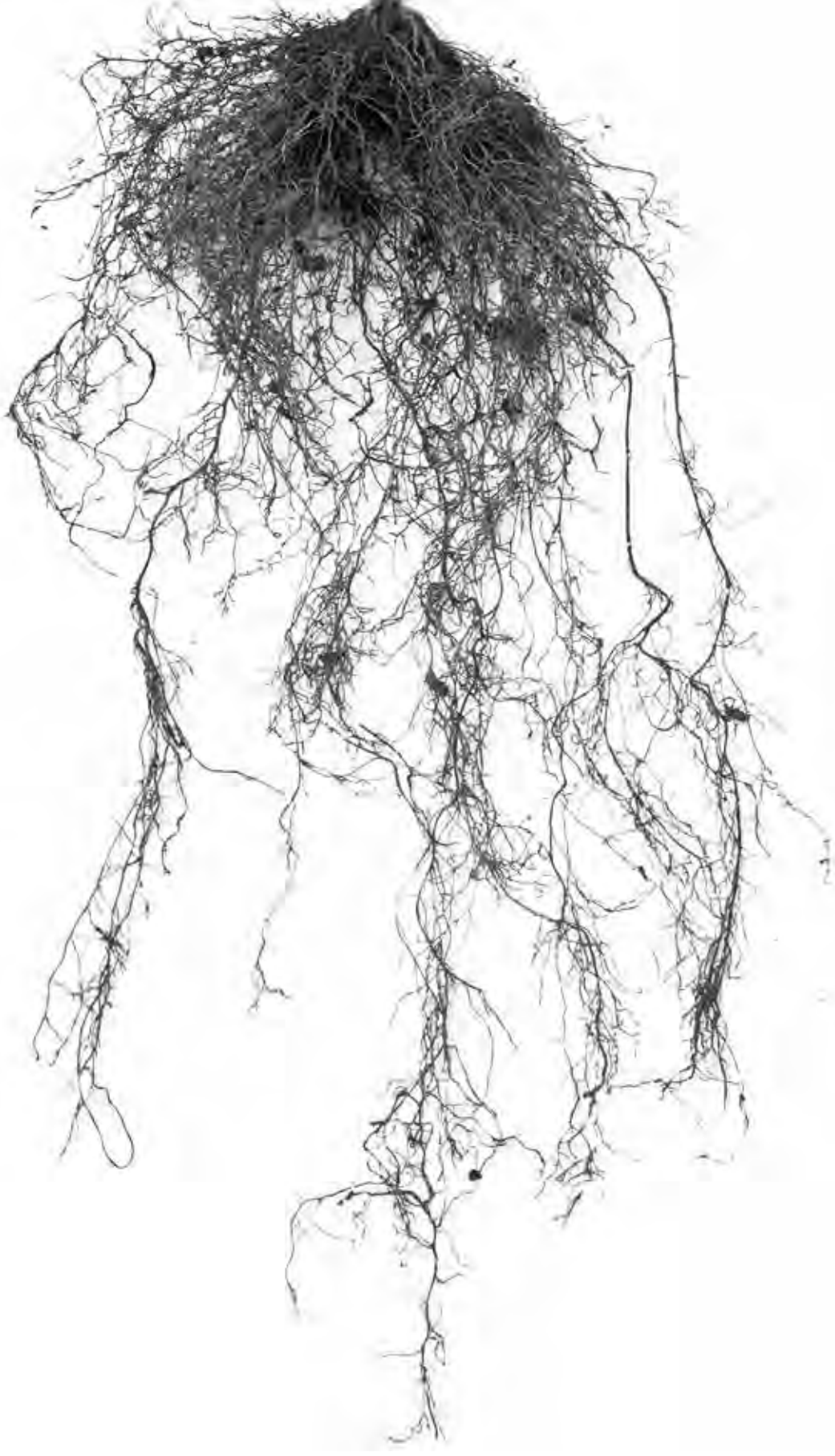
This aim was also one of the reasons for writing this study in English, which involves going to the trouble of translating Dutch quotes into English and running the risk of losing a Dutch non-academic audience primarily interested in genealogy. Writing in English also means that specific Dutch historical details, little jokes made by the family historians, and contextual information implicit in the quotes may be lost. But these disadvantages are outweighed by the advantages: I really wanted to cater for an international academic and non-academic audience, and to show them the conceptual and ideological influence of this indeed internationally widespread phenomenon, dominated by commercial genealogical software, but materialized in this local collection of Dutch family histories.

Finally, by analysing the actual ways of doing family history, I hope to contribute to new ways of taking family historians seriously and of discovering a wealth of multiple formats, alternative storylines, and new meanings in what

people find important nowadays about the history of their kin. In that sense I feel inspired by Donna Haraway's views about biology:

> That biology – at every layer of the onion – is a discourse with a contingent history does not mean that its accounts are matters of "opinion" or merely "stories." It does mean that the material-semiotic tissues are inextricably intermeshed. Discourses are not just "words", they are material-semiotic practices through which objects of attention and knowing subjects are both constituted. Now a transnational discourse like the other natural sciences, biology is a knowledge-producing practice that I value; want to participate in and make better; and believe to be culturally, politically, and epistemologically important. It matters to contest for a livable biology as for a livable nature.[111]

Deconstructing family history, whilst at the same time acknowledging that family history has a deep, existential significance for people, will hopefully lead to a perspective in which it is important to fight for liveable, meaningful family histories and for more liberty for family historians to deal with their past and with their relatives.



CHAPTER 2

Three networks of associations

'In theory, theories exist. In practice, they do not.'[1]

Bruno Latour

As an umbrella term without a strict disciplinary or methodological paradigm, family history is primarily associated with the past (history, memory, genealogy), with nature (biology, genetics), and with kinship (family, relatives). In this chapter I will explore the meanings of three sets of terms that are frequently used in discourse on family history in general, and in the specific area of contemporary family history based on genealogy in particular.[2] First, I will reflect on the similarities and differences between genealogy and family history and explore the associations of the two terms. What they share is their interest in surnames. I will pay some attention to the significances attached to names in this field. Second, I will focus on the relevance of biology in family histories, including the frequent equation of biology with genealogy, on the one hand, and the role of genetic genealogy in family histories on the other hand. Third, there many associations around the notions of 'relative', 'family', and 'kinship'. 'Family' may refer to the nuclear family, but also to a wider circle of relatives, the family extended in place and time. Another much used term is 'kin' or 'kinship', which has a special connotation in current anthropological debates. I will focus on one part of this debate in order to illustrate some meanings attached to kinship.

The aim of these three short analyses is to contribute to a deeper understanding of the association networks in which family historians operate. In this

I follow Latourian theory, in which an entity (for instance an actor, a thing, or a concept) comes into existence when it becomes associated with other entities. Latour interprets these associations as forming chains or networks that can become stronger or weaker, according to the material and semiotic support they receive. Thus they are not built by a pre-ordered logic, or structure, or Foucauldian epistème.[3]

The task of an ANT analysist is to trace the actual emergence of those networks and the ways they develop. No meta-language or logical structure should be imposed on them, because that would merely mask the actual 'coordination work' done in order to align different clusters of associations and, so to speak, 'normalize' the links between them so these come to be seen as self-evident.[4] In advocating this tracing of associations, Latour is very suspicious in respect of analytical categories like 'social forces', 'the community', or other abstractions that are meant to explain phenomena in the world. These terms suggest that they refer to ontological entities but they do not. Latour proposes that one should not use these terms as meta-language to explain social phenomena, but at most consider them as part of an *infra*-language, as tools that do not refer to ontological entities.[5]

As I am aware of the complex fields of meanings in which family historians operate, I conclude this chapter by introducing three shorthand notions of family. These three notions correspond to the three sets of terms discussed in this chapter. They do not appeal to any meta-order, but are meant as terms, within a Latourian infra-language, to describe the crossovers between networks of associations.

2.1 Genealogy/family history

The term genealogy may cause considerable confusion, since it is used in different disciplines and may have different meanings and references even within a single discipline. As an illustration: on first entering the National Centre for Genealogy, I was introduced to the librarian. When I explained my plans to collect family histories, his initial response was: 'Family histories? You won't find them here. All incoming publications go through my hands. We mostly collect genealogies and ancestor charts. I rarely read real stories.' Just one year later, the CBG added 'Centre for Family History' to its name. The CBG also stresses in one of its publications that genealogy 'in our country traditionally has a legal

meaning', referring to family relations as described in family law.[6]

2.1.1 Four uses of the term 'genealogy'

This anecdote reveals a few more uses of the term 'genealogy', some of them in opposition to, and others more or less congruent with the term 'family history'. Following Wittgenstein's adagio 'the meaning of a word is its use in the language,' I will here list the four different uses that I came across during this study.[7] A separate paragraph will be devoted to the Foucauldian use of the term 'genealogy'.

First, genealogy may refer to 'doing genealogy', in the sense of studying ancestries and histories. This *activity* is closely associated with finding documents in archives, or more recently, in these archives' databases on the Internet. Second, the term genealogy may refer to a specific *display* of genealogical research, that is, a description of relationships of descendants of one ancestor. In that sense, a genealogy is a specific product of genealogical research, different from an ancestor chart (*kwartierstaat*) or from a lineage that only refers to the first male offspring in every generation (*stamreeks*). The Dutch language differentiates a *parenteel* from a *genealogie* (genealogy), where the *parenteel* describes all male and female relationships within a family, while a genealogy is restricted to the male line in the family. To complicate this second use of the notion still further: in some contexts, 'genealogy' is used as an umbrella term for any description of relationships between generations of relatives.

Third, genealogy may refer to a specific *genre*. This is how the librarian of the CBG used the term, contrasting genealogies with family histories. In this use of the term, genealogy is thus seen as a publication in which the order of events dominates, an order marked by births, marriages, and deaths of people who are linked to each other by official documents, and in which stories about experiences and family stories are virtually absent. By contrast, family histories do contain family stories and narratives about experiences.[8]

However, in the fourth use of the term genealogy, it is *synonymous* with family history, as is visible in the name of the current CBG, with its addition 'Centre for Family History'. Another illustration of this use can be found in the debate among Wikipedians (volunteers who fill the Internet Encyclopedia Wikipedia) about the differences between these two concepts. This debate was closed on 25 June 2013 by *User: Morphh*, who merged the two English Wikipedia articles on genealogy and family history into a single article entitled genealogy.[9] The

reason given for this merging was that the distinctions between the two terms in English are too subtle to justify two different articles. The discussion that preceded this decision revealed a question of hierarchy: is genealogy a subset of family history? Or is family history a subset of genealogy? In this discussion, the term genealogy is used in accordance with the first definition given above, as a specific activity. Apart from a historical argument – according to one of the discussion partners 'family history' is a contemporary term, while genealogy has existed for centuries – there seems to be a consensus in this community about the bare 'facts', described in genealogical terms, and the context of these facts, described as family history. Remarkably, the Dutch Wikipedia reports no overlap between genealogy and family history. Only the former term has an entry in the Dutch Wikipedia, and it includes a warning that genealogy should not be confused with family history.[10]

This distinction is quite common in the genealogical world.[11] The historian Jerome de Groot makes another distinction between these terms when he writes that in the last thirty years the term 'genealogy' has been replaced by the term 'family history', the latter being 'a more inclusive term suggesting a sense of identity rather than the more traditional proving of (paternal) bloodline'.[12] In any case, this recent blending of the two terms means that family history has strongly become associated with archival research, with concepts of the family currently used in the genealogical world, and indisputably with the ongoing digitization of our lives, our archives, and our pasts.

2.1.2 Names as family signifiers

Evidently, in genealogical activity the predominant notion of family is a genealogical one. This notion refers to relationships defined by institutions that have registered, and thereby sanctioned and justified, relationships between people as, for instance, husband and wife, or parent and child. Institutional registrations are crucial for citizens in claiming their right to inheritances from their relatives or their right to care for their children, as well as in obtaining other civil rights. Records of ancestors also have another function. They can be found in archives (whether physical or online) and are the first records of proof of the existence of specific relatives.

This genealogical concept of family stimulates family historians to investigate the past through archives. In this way, the genealogical concept of family relates not only to family ancestors, but also to a specific set of knowledge prac-

tices. Jerome de Groot describes these as follows:

> Genealogy and history of family present a road map, a set of disciplining boundaries to the understanding of history; the family as classificatory function enabling the chaos of the past to be taxonomised.[13]

In this genealogical notion, a name functions as a unique identity marker for an individual. Simultaneously, it refers to a very concentrated family history of this individual. A name can also indicate the place of an individual within a family, a clan, or another community, including that person's social status and reputation. Further: institutions find names indispensable for registering specific events, such as births, marriages, deaths, divorces, adoptions and for their role in tax administration and population statistics. For individuals, these registrations entitle them to obtain services from the government and provide evidence of their entitlement to inheritances.[14]

There is a complex story to tell about the origin of names in Europe and the differences in uses of nicknames, first names, and, later on, second names or family names, in different European regions, in different times, between males and females, and among different social classes. In this section I will restrict myself to an exploration of the function of names as a way of establishing a relationship or even defining a relationship between relatives.

A quick look at the development of family names in the history of Europe shows that the famous Roman *tria nomina* system was followed by a Germanic single name system. In the Roman Republic, male civilians had three names: a personal first name, the *praenomen*; a second family name, the *gentilicum*; and a third name, the *cognomen*, that was either a nickname or an inherited name. Generally, Roman women had only one name, mostly a feminine variation of their father's name. Women were seen only as a part of the family, not as genuine individuals – although upper-class women in the Republican period began to add their husband's names to their own. Slaves often used the *gentilica* of their masters, thereby referring to the social unit they were part of.

The Germanic system of name giving was built on a totally different structure.[15] People had just one single name. Even among the early Germanic tribes, these names often incorporated a reference to the individual's parents. The parents Hilbrant and Gertrud might name their sons Gerbrant and Brantger, for instance, and their daughters Hiltrud and Gerhild.[16] Alliterations of the names of one couple were also popular.

In the early Middle Ages, monasteries were central in the recording of the names of the living and the dead. In the earliest centuries, members of the community wrote down the name of their monks and read them out during mass. Later on, the names of patrons, benefactors, and visitors were added as well. If reading the names aloud would take too long, the books of names were left on the altar as a way of dedicating the names to God. Study of these books shows that names were repeated within a family circle, and these repetitions display paternal as well as maternal ties. During the Middle Ages the matrilinear descent was important among elite groups, because women could inherit estates as well as men.

This link between naming and inheritance seems to be a constant factor in the history of naming. Names reveal the structure of the family and the continuity of social positions, and the passing on of assets was mainly regulated through the transmission of names. 'Genealogies could be massaged', the historian Stephen Wilson writes, in his study on name giving in Europe, of the way names were used to claim property.[17] Inheritance and continuity prevailed in many cases above the 'proper' transmission of names along biological lines. From the twelfth century onwards, second names were added. This process occurred slowly and unevenly throughout Europe and eventually resulted in the second name becoming recognized as a fixed and hereditary predicate. These second names were often derived from nicknames or first names, often with patronymic prefixes; from places or topographical features; or from occupations and offices.

Why did this second name, our current surname, become so important? Wilson mentions two causes. First, there were clearly too many similar names. From the 11th century onwards, the increasing use of written documentation stimulated the need for the clear identification of individuals.[18] Written sources after 1500, especially, show people being registered with a first name and a patronymic name, their father's name. Although Wilson does not mention this fact, the Council of Trent (1545-1563) must also have had a huge influence, since each parish was now required – many had long done so – to keep an official register of marriages as well as of baptisms. From then on, the private matter of marriage between two individuals became a formal, public matter, 'a disciplining of the family', sacralized by priests.[19]

Despite this early bureaucratization, the transmission of surnames was not always flawless, not least because names were written phonetically. The effect was that many variations of one name could refer to one person or one family.

Nicknames, abbreviations, as well as scribal errors produced even more variations. The second cause for the growing importance of surnames is related to the population growth in the first half of the sixteenth century. Civic life started to flourish, towns expanded rapidly, leading to more trade and more formal agreements among individuals. Second names became normal for all citizens, with the exception of women, children, and servants. Poor people, Jews, lepers and their descendants, illegitimate children, and nuns and monks continued to bear just one single name as well.

Nevertheless, the use of a second name came to be the norm and was in line with a strengthened sense of lineage among generations. As family increasingly became a social unit, in which women were excluded from inheritance. Patronymics that initially described a timeless, continuing chain of fathers and sons, like a spoken genealogy, became fixed into one single, inheritable name. Fixed names were first been established among the elite and in the cities, although their spelling was often not fixed at all. With the explosion of the population in the cities, the registration in factories and armies enlarged the need for uniform ways of identifying families and individuals.

The existence of a family came to be dependent on the continuity of its family name. People wanted to perpetuate their family name: 'Where male heirs failed, many families took special and elaborate precautions to ensure the perpetuation of the family name and fortune through the female line.'[20] For this reason, a woman might demand that her children would be given her father's name, or not uncommonly, for a new name to be added. In the 19th century, a family's identity, honour, and reputation increasingly rested on that family's name. As family historian John Gillis remarks:

> Names became the family's symbolic link with its past and the promise of its future. They were carefully recorded in family bibles and entered into the family trees that in the Victorian era became a sure sign of membership in the middle class.[21]

Gradually, the second names also became common among families lower on the social ladder and in more remote areas. After Napoleon introduced his registration system, the *Code civil*, in the Netherlands in 1810, it took several years before every man had an officially registered family name that would be transferred to the next generation. Wilson concludes:

> This all embeds each individual and each family, wittingly or not, in a historical milieu and reflects a deep continuity in our culture. […] The subordination of individual to family and its concerns is demonstrated by the custom of transmitting names.[22]

This transmission of surnames is a male-biased practice in western European countries, including the Netherlands. The transference of surnames, most commonly along the male lineage, means that a family may be said to 'die out' if only girls have been born and the surname will not be transmitted to the next generation. Surnames indicate the supposed unity of a family, and for governments this still seems to be an important concept (see Section 4.4).

The identification of relatives by their parental surnames has had important consequences for the definition and historization of the family. According to Gillis, until the mid-nineteenth century most families viewed their position in the world more in terms of place than of history:

> Only a small number of families could claim a past and a future. The relative lack of surnames prior to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries testifies to how little family name meant to any but those at the highest levels of European and American society.[23]

The transmitting of fixed names coincided with the emergence of a strong sense of families having a history, regardless of their social role. And here, at the intersection of the transmission of names and the sense of a family's history, we find the widespread phenomenon of genealogy. Names represent family histories materially and symbolically, and they somehow carry a family history that will be transmitted to the next generation. In this way of thinking, first names, surnames, memories, stories, jewellery, houses, character traits, and other material and immaterial 'goods' are all transferred from generation to generation. This view of personal history as a form of nuclear family history linked to generations is vital to contemporary genealogy and family history.

2.1.3 Genealogy as critical analysis

One network of associations around the term genealogy has not yet been mentioned: the Foucauldian use of the term genealogy. Apart from what we could refer to as the popular practice of genealogy as doing family history, genealogy

is also well known as a method of critical analysis.

Michel Foucault took the term from Nietzsche and used it to change his archaeological method – aimed at finding the structures on which our knowledge practices are built – into this genealogical method with which he searched the complex, contingent changes of thought in history, without referring to any grand scheme of history. In his article 'Nietzsche, Genealogy and History', Foucault explains how this opposition between genealogy and history can be understood. Foucault interprets Nietzsche's use of the term in *The Genealogy of Morals* as a rhetorical move, to distance himself from any grand narrative about History. Foucault's article opens:

> Genealogy is gray, meticulous and patiently documentary. It operates on a field of entangled and confused parchments, on documents that have been scratched over and recopied many times.[24]

In Foucauldian thought, genealogy as a method can detach itself from studying a stable, unified object of knowledge and can instead transform into a scrupulous investigation of the way ideas have been changed over time, and have subsequently changed people's consciousness and behaviour. The genealogical method aims at 'telling the subject the story of the powers working on him, telling it the story of its becoming'.[25]

This metaphorical use of genealogy as a method of critical analysis or critical reflexivity is far removed from the meaning of the term genealogy in the archival world. Nevertheless, some scholars make a connection between these two areas. One is Julia Watson, who, as we saw in 1.5.2., is ambivalent about genealogy, and makes a case for autobiography as a genre that can render the past more critically than genealogy can. Ironically, at the end of her article, Watson launches the idea that genealogy could, like Foucauldian genealogy, also be interpreted as a criticism of the identity-focused genre of autobiography:

> Getting an autobiographical life neither replicates models of selfhood uncritically nor appropriates the privileges of subjectivity recklessly. And yet, the genealogical project, in another sense, has been revived as a method for reforming the imperial gesture of autobiographical selfhood, the claim to "have" a historically significant life.[26]

Citing Michael Shaprio who contrasts Foucauldian genealogy with the idea of

biography, Watson states that 'the autobiographical posits an individual, autonomous human subject that imposes its view of the world as the mode of interpretation and naturalizes its others'.[27] By contrast, genealogy acknowledges its construed character, and 'evacuates subjectivity'. At the very end of her article, Watson writes:

> Genealogy as a liberatory method of relationality without pedigrees may become, for the reflexive subject, a means for getting a new kind of life.[28]

Watson does not develop this idea any further. She simply casually drops this idea of integrating the two areas. Remarkably, Catherine Nash makes a similar suggestion, also in the last sentence of her article. Nash concludes: 'Popular genealogy and Foucauldian genealogy can do the same work.' This conclusion is preceded by a long quotation from Foucault is which he states that if genealogy is not used to establish identity, it can surely be intended to 'reveal the heterogeneous systems which, masked by the self, inhibit the formation of any form of identity'.[29] Like Watson, Nash introduces this idea without elaborating on it. Both scholars seem to feel obliged to integrate Foucauldian genealogy with popular practices of genealogy, of which, in their current form, they disapprove. Their message seems to be: if only popular genealogy could change, it could fit in with the Foucauldian critical genealogy we admire.

Apart from this rather peculiar change – why would one integrate an empirical, popular practice with Foucauldian thought? – I believe the attempt to bring both instances of genealogy together is an unnecessary one. Popular and Foucauldian genealogy each belong to different networks of associations, and are involved in different fields. The conflict lies within the two theorists themselves, as practitioners of Foucauldian theory. If they could live with the idea that one term can have two different embodiments in two different practices, there would be no need to integrate them at all. Moreover, they both criticize popular genealogy because they cannot identify their lived experience as autonomous individuals with the strict ordering and, in a way, self-denial they think genealogy demands. At the same time, they admire the Foucauldian criticism of the belief in 'being an autonomous individual'. This view complicates the question of what criticism of genealogy aims to accomplish. In fact, both authors launch the essence of a research project which they, after all, do not carry out.

To conclude this section: the above reflections on contemporary uses of the term genealogy reveal that any study of the way contemporary family histories

are currently undertaken must at least glance at how names and documents enter our sense of self and our sense of our past. Meanwhile, the central subject of this study seems to have shifted from family history to genealogy. Yet, this is not entirely true. For this study, I will retain the term family history as an umbrella term, allowing for all kinds of meanings family historians themselves attach to concepts of kin, family, family history, and of course genealogy, here referred to as the search for, and collecting of, publicly available documents and other data that reveal the activities of relatives in the past.

2.2 Biology/genetics

One of the most obvious associations around 'family' is that of shared biological material, externalized in similar appearances – the real family resemblances Wittgenstein was writing about, years after he composed one portrait from the photographs of himself and his three sisters.[30]

He used this composition to oppose Francis Galton (1822-1911), a half-cousin of Charles Darwin, who made composite portraits by projecting pictures of, for instance, criminal men over each other, in the hope of discerning essential traits of 'the criminal' (or 'the tubercular', 'the Jew', or 'the prostitute'). Galton was the founding father of eugenics and added new, purportedly scientific, criteria to the ranking of natural classes within the human race. One was the measurement of body parts as stigmata for certain groups: a lobeless ear, for instance, was alleged to indicate sexual excess notable in prostitutes.[31]

To underpin his criticism of Galton, Wittgenstein also made a composite portrait, with the same techniques Galton had used, combining pictures of his three sisters and himself. With his idea of family resemblances, Wittgenstein proposes focusing not on a concept's fixed meanings or essential properties, but on its overlap with other concepts and ideas. He compares the words associated with a given term with fibres which together form one rope. Although no single fibre is essential for the rope, all the overlapping fibres together form the whole rope.[32]

Pointing to similarities is just one possible way of comparing, is Wittgenstein's message. Although one can see family resemblances between individuals, there is not a single quality that applies to all individuals with the same predicate. In more general terms: two objects can be named with the same predicate, but one cannot discern a single essential trait common to all objects named with the same word.

Figure 5. Wittgenstein and his sisters. See note 30.

2.2.1 The 'arborification' of family

Biological resemblances are often described as properties shared by relatives. These biological properties have a strong position in the network of associations around the term family history. Biological ties used to be described in terms of blood, and since the revolutionary discoveries by Rosalind Franklin, James Watson, Francis Crick, and Maurice Wilkins in the 1950s, more often in terms of DNA or genes, both referring to biological material shared by relatives. This sharing of biological material generates a specific narrative, in which each person is defined by his or her biological parents. In such a context, a contemporary answer to the question 'Who do you claim to be your relative?' is then: 'Those people with whom I share genetic material'.

The accompanying narrative to this answer tells us that every human being has a mother and a father, each of whom had a mother and father as well. All the children of one pair of parents together form one generation.[33] Generations are formed along the lines of descent, from the newest family member back in time to the oldest generation. This hierarchy of generations deploys a deep, very

Figure 6. The composite portrait of Ludwig Wittgenstein and his sisters. See also note 30.

strict linear concept of time, a concept that suggests simultaneously that all people ultimately descend from a single pair of ancestors.

The popular image of the family tree is probably the most well-known visualization of this idea. As the anthropologist Mary Bouquet has convincingly demonstrated, it has been the visual force of a tree that has influenced western though about kinship, and especially the biological aspect of it. She argues that the visual force of the genealogical diagram is derived from scientific and biblical precedents, as well as from secular family trees. The sociologist Pierre Bourdieu locates the need for genealogical inquiry solely in questions of inheritance and succession, but Bouquet stresses that the family tree also has an important religious function.[34] She describes several family trees of protestant families who inscribed the names of their ancestors in their Bibles: 'Writing their names inside the front and back covers of the Bible was a kind of mimetic act on the part of the family. They inscribed their own pedigree upon the physical extremities of the very text that inspired their practice.'[35] The families she researched believed strongly that their family history mirrored the story of Christ who stems from Adam. By the mimetic act of making a pedigree, the family integrates itself into the world, created by God. Christianity states that one God created

one man and, secondarily, from him, one woman. Subsequently, all other people are descended from them. This monogenetic view is also expressed in the very popular image of the sleeping Jesse, with a stem growing from his chest that develops into a tree, at the top of which is the crucified Christ.[36]

This position of Jesse on the ground was the outcome of a challenging problem with visualising family relations that arose in the Middle Ages. The historian Christine Klapisch-Zuber states that the visual vertical structuring of families was started at the end of the 12th century by the feudal elite, who set up a distribution system for the inheritance of fiefdoms. Klapisch: 'Around 1500, a well-born man quite naturally thought of his ancestors and descendants as a group of people through whose veins the same blood coursed. And it was this common blood, inherited through the male line just like the property received from his ancestors, which above all legitimized his power.'[37] Along a vertical axis, one can prove the continuity of one's line. Klapisch observes that most of the surviving illustrated genealogies, as in the famous Carolingian genealogy, must be read from top to bottom. The very first ancestor is placed on top, his descendants are placed below him.

Klapisch discerns three forms of genealogical visual representation from the 10th to the 14th century. The first consists of wavy lines connecting names to one another, the second of straight lines between medallions showing relatives' portraits. Both these relate to the idea of ancestors on top, with future generations as their descendants. This type of visual caused problems when it came to the genealogy of Jesus. If he is the descendant of Jesse and all other progenitors, then Jesus must lie on the ground of the tree: 'His relegation to such a place may have appeared to the people of that epoch a rather shocking material and formal consequence of the logic of descending genealogies and narratives.'[38] During the Middle Ages, this contradiction between the reading of images from top to bottom, from ancestor to descendants and the idea that Jesus is a much more important descendant than his ancestors was solved, eventually, by the image of the tree. This third form, the tree-like one with branches, roots, and leaves, became the most popular. This image introduces the idea of ascent, of spreading out, and turns the family history visually upside down: the eldest ancestor is placed at the bottom of the tree. Klapisch: 'The tree of Jesse had an immense success throughout the late Middle Ages. One reason for that success is that it expressed especially well two factors which reinforced kinship: for the tree expresses both the continuity of a line and the community of a lineage.'[39]

The tree is still a strong metaphor in European science and culture, writes

Figure 7. Tree of Jesse by Geertgen tot Sint Jans ca. 1460/65 – ca. 1488/93

Bouquet. She points to Ernst Haeckel (1834 – 1919) who used the image of the tree in his scientific tree of the relationship between species, where the most simple organisms are situated at the bottom and human beings are placed at the top of the tree.[40] Charles Darwin (1809 – 1882) too used the metaphor of the tree to describe the origin of species. The circulation of these visuals promoted the work of Darwin, Haekel, and others extremely well. Bouquet: 'The grafting and splicing that went on between trees on different scales (biblical-secular, biblical-phylogenetic, biblical-philological, phylogenetic/philological-ethnographic) attests to the visual 'language' running through the monographs.'[41] Along these lines, one could argue that scientific, religious, and genealogical 'arborification' merged in the idea of the Family of Man. This idea became very popular in 19th-century European thought, strongly naturalizing the family as well as the nation, and even the course of history itself. The blending of biology, history and nationalism resulted in a fascinating new language game, where the genealogical way of thinking became fully naturalized and at the same time completely historized.

One example of this blending of biology, history, and religion can be found in the books of the Austrian-German historian and genealogist Ottokar Lorenz (1832 – 1904) who explicitly introduced the biological grounds for genealogy. Where until then genealogy had been a tool for defining social status and managing problems with inheritance and succession, in the 19th century it became a scientific enterprise. In Lorenz's *Lehrbuch der gesammten wissenschaftlichen Genealogie* (1898), genealogy was characterized as a frontier discipline, spanning the border between history and the natural sciences ('Grenzwissenschaft', 'zwichen Geschichts- und Naturwissenschaft'). In the same book, Lorenz described genealogy, based on biology, as 'a kind of religion' 'against which socialist free-thinking will rail in vain, since it is grounded in blood' ('eine Art von Religion', 'gegen welche die sozialistische Freisinnigkeit vergebens Sturm laufen wird, weil sie im Blute begründet ist'.)[42]

Here Lorenz alludes to a strong association between family and nation: the internationally oriented socialism will be stopped by the religion of family and nation, linked by 'blood'. From a contemporary point of view, this is a breathtaking leap from a 'scientific claim' to a political statement – a leap that is nevertheless characteristic of 19th-century European nationalistic thinking, in which the concepts of family and of nation both appear as natural categories that were strongly intertwined. This elaboration on the naturalization of family and nation reveals why genealogy and biology were strongly connected. This deeply

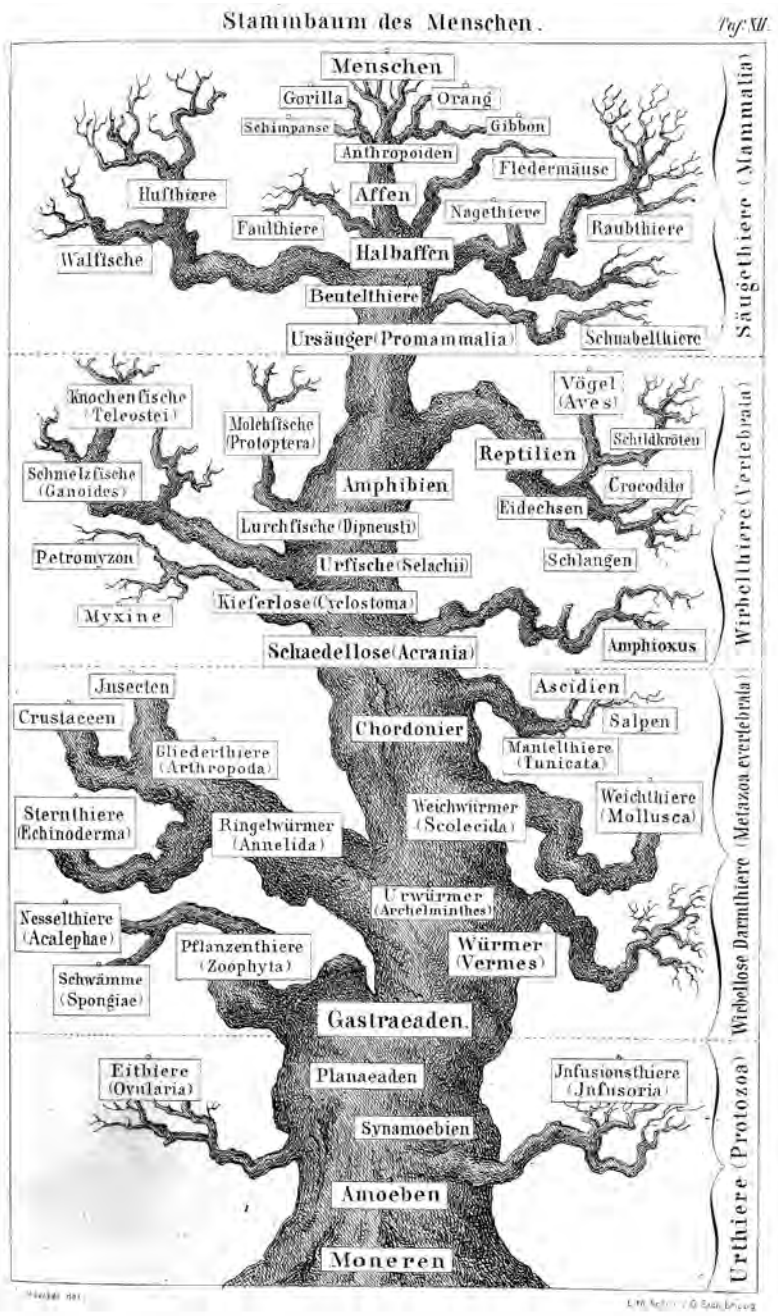


Figure 8. Haeckel's pedigree of man. See note 40.

felt connection was further fortified by the rise of nationalism in the 19th century. The family was seen as the smallest unit of the nation and, at the same time, as the most important metaphor for the nation as a whole.[43] A compact description of the relation between family and nation is given by McClintock:

> After 1859 and the advent of social Darwinism, the welter of distinctions of race, class and gender were gathered into a single narrative by the image of the Family of Man. The evolutionary 'family' offered an indispensable metaphoric figure by which often contradictory hierarchical distinctions could be shaped into a global genesis narrative. A curious paradox thus emerges. The family as a metaphor offered a single genesis narrative for global history, while the family as an institution became void of history. As the nineteenth century drew on, the family as an institution was figured as existing, naturally, beyond the commodity market, beyond politics and beyond history proper. The family thus became both the antithesis of history and history's organizing figure.[44]

With the naturalization of the nation, the concept of family became a popular metaphor of this nation, an 'afterimage', according to McClintock, for the relations between state and people. The nation was seen as a father to its children, the people who were born into it (natio in Latin). The family became even a trope in the nationalistic discourses of the West-European countries. The family as metaphor depicts a social hierarchy, not only between the state and its people, but also between the West-European countries and their colonies.

One side effect of this strong metaphorical use of the term 'family' was that it gave the national state and also the colonial bureaucracies a 'natural', legitimizing shape. The nuclear family was naturalized as 'a timeless unit of social organization', as historian Mrinalini Sinha formulates it, alluding to the work of McClintock.[45] The family as nuclear unit was interpreted as unaltered through the ages, whilst at the same time 'family' became the central metaphor in a historical, naturalized narrative in the form of the history of the Family of Man.

The German zoologist Ernest Haeckel contributed actively to the dissemination of this metaphorical idea by connecting the development of one human being to the unilateral development of mankind. The central idea of his famous aphorism 'ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny', as explained by biologist Stephen Jay Gould, means 'that an individual, in its own growth, passes through a series of stages representing adult ancestral forms in their correct order – an indivi-

dual, in short, climbs its own family tree'.[46] Haeckel's famous drawings of the genealogical Tree of Humanity strongly advocated the idea of the progressive development of the human race, culminating in the supremacy of the white man at the summit of this development.[47]

Together with the ongoing democratization of history at the end of the 19th century and a rising scientific attitude, this totalizing vision on the Family of Man led to a eugenic interpretation of family. Ethnicity was simultaneously scientifically legitimated and fully politicized. The historian Jason Tebbe traces the ascent of this biologically based genealogy, or eugenics, that started among middle class families in Germany at the beginning of the 19th century and became state policy under the Nazi regime, where every inhabitant was forced to present an *Ahnentafel,* proving Aryan ancestry. Tebbe:

> The racialist state wholeheartedly endorsed a biological vision of the family's role, terming it "the primordial cell of the *Volk*." […] Thus in about forty years genealogy had been transformed from the exclusive province of the nobility to a bourgeois "science" and finally to a national duty.[48]

How these strong associations between biology, family, and nation may have developed further in European countries in the 20th century is beyond the scope of this study. However, I will point to the re-emergence of the biological concept of family in recent decades. This concept has now taken on a new form, known as genetic genealogy.

2.2.2 Genetic genealogy

Genetic genealogy is developing very quickly, so when this book is published, this report on the possibilities of genetic genealogy will be already out of date. With this in mind, I restrict myself here to a general description of deep genealogy, or genetic genealogy, in order to differentiate it from population genetics and the discipline of genetics concerned with medical issues that recur across generations.[49]

Family historians can currently buy genetic tests that promise to find relatives that are biologically linked to them, or to find the geographical area they come from, described as their 'ethnicity'.[50] The link between surnames and genetics is one explored by family historians who are specifically interested in the

male line of descent. This type of DNA-research is based on the fact that the Y chromosome is transmitted through the male line without many modifications, and can be traced back to ancestors of several hundreds of years ago. The analysis of this Y chromosome, the so-called Short Tandem Repeats test, consists of finding similarities on 37 or 67 locations on the Y chromosome. One can compare the DNA of different men in order to see how similar they are.

The results are described in terms of the probability that two or more males share a common ancestor.[51] This type of genetic genealogy became popular among men of Scottish and Irish descent who carry the names of clans that derive from an eponymous male ancestor. There is also research on the mitochondrial DNA that is transmitted along the maternal line. Because of its lack of mutations, mtDNA can be traced back as far as the Pleistocene. The famous bestseller *The Seven Daughters of Eve* was based on this type of DNA research and states that all Europeans can be traced back to seven haplo-groups that have one mitochondrial Eve in common.[52] This type of DNA testing is used to find migrations patterns over the last 15,000 years.

Nowadays, such tests are commercially available, like MyAncestry which offers a so-called autosomal DNA test. Since chromosomal DNA is randomly inherited from ancestors, these tests compare this chromosomal DNA in order to point to relatives from only a few generations back. Companies offer to analyse this atDNA to specify someone's 'ethnicity', represented in percentages.

The anthropologist Catherine Nash is one of the critics of this idea that genetic variants are exclusive to groups of individuals that can be characterized with reference to ethnicity. She studies the relation between concepts of place and concepts of ancestry, and traces this new development of genetic genealogy as the result of the cultural desire to identify 'where you are from', which is especially strong in the United States, where the majority of the population have immigrant roots. As Nash puts it:

> The practical problem of selecting, naming, and categorizing samples within what is understood to be a geographically graded pattern of genetic variation is always a political issue of human categorization and differentiation and the power of doing so biologically.[53]

Some genetic tests promise to find ethnic origins for African Americans. Nash thinks that companies have exploited this desire of the Black Atlantic Diaspora to fill a lack of knowledge about one's ancestors.

> By suggesting that a lack of knowledge of ancient ancestry is a lack to be addressed, companies strive to produce a formerly unrealized absence of knowledge as a new deficiency. In this way, the new tests are sold to assuage a newly worked- up sense of genetic ignorance. The specific history of racial slavery and displacement is thus evoked, extended, and erased in the effort to promote a generalized sense of genetic ignorance of origins that can be ameliorated by buying these tests.[54]

As a result of this marketing of desires, DNA analysis seem to appeal to a wish to know origins without any reference to specified periods in the past. For instance, according to MyAncestry, the ethnicity estimate of my own autosomal DNA analysis was: 72 % England, Wales and north-western Europe, 15 % Germanic Europe, 6 % Sweden, 5 % Norway, 2 % Scotland and Ireland. These results do not specify when and how these influences entered my DNA. They only mirror the overlap of parts of DNA with that of people currently living in those regions, who are defined by MyAncestry as a reference panel of individuals with defined origins, meaning that they can trace back their ancestors to a single geographic location or population group. In this context 'ethnicity' refers mainly to region, to place, and the idea of an 'origin' refers to a highly unspecified past, which can vary from hundreds to thousand years ago.

As the company admits in the white paper about this subject, the interpretation of the DNA results can also vary over time, depending on the quality of the reference panel.[55] Another use of this atDNA analysis is to find close relatives. If the DNA of two persons overlaps sufficiently, they can be linked to each other as cousins in an estimated degree of relatedness. The Facebook group on Genetic Genealogy offers many stories of family historians who have found relatives by this kind of DNA analysis by comparing these results with their genealogical research.[56]

2.3 Kin/relatives/family

Relationships between individuals who call themselves family members or relatives could also be grouped together as 'kinship'. Here 'family' is equated with 'kinship', though there are differences in the associations around these two terms. In English, the word family usually refers to the nuclear family, while family in a broader sense is referred to as 'relatives'. 'Kin' has a similarly broad

meaning to 'relatives', but it also surfaces in anthropological debates about the definition of kin as a social or a biological phenomenon. In this section, I will focus on these debates to the extent that they invoke the most important associations around the terms 'family' and 'kinship'.

This debate came up after the transformation that occurred within anthropology in the 1980s, initiated by David Schneider's critique on the concept of kinship as a universal phenomenon that structures societies in all times and places. 'Kinship is one of the four privileged institutions, domains or rubrics of social science, each of which is conceived to be a natural, universal vital component of society,' wrote Schneider in his famous *A Critique on the Study of Kinship*, published in 1984.[57] His book opens with a conclusion he had formulated already in 1972: kinship is, in fact, a non-subject, 'a theoretical construct in the mind of the anthropologist which has no discernible cultural referent in fact'.[58]

Ever since the American lawyer Henry Morgan (1818-1881) launched a general theory about the development of so-called primitive societies, kinship had been the central topic of anthropological field study of non-European people till the 1970s. Until fifty years ago, the study of European families was largely neglected by anthropologists, or dismissed as 'soft'.[59] The hypothesis of a universal pattern of kinship relations was made explicit by W.H.R Rivers (1864-1922). In 1910, this British psychologist launched an influential methodological tool for comparing kinship systems throughout the British Empire (and the rest of the world). It was a genealogical grid, easy to use during fieldwork and based on the assumption that sex difference and heterosexual reproduction are the basic ingredients for every society.[60] Later on, Rivers's student Alfred R. Radcliffe-Brown transformed this tool into a social theory defining a society as made up of elementary families (parents and children) that are linked together with other elementary families.[61]

Divergence from the pattern could be explained within the same view: 'Homosexuality, polyandry, and wife swapping were immediately transformed into solutions to the seeming scarcity of women.' [62]

Schneider fiercely criticizes the supposed universality of these claims. For him, the term 'kinship' has no cross-cultural value, and the traditional distinction between biological kinship and the social meanings attached to it in different societies is a false one. To illustrate his point, Schneider analyses his own research on the Yap, inhabitants of the Pacific island of Yap (Micronesia). Forty years earlier he had automatically supposed that relations between Yap could be described in genealogical terms, derived from Rivers, such as father, mother,

generation, child. This had led him to translate *citamangen*, a central concept used by Yap to describe relationships, as 'father'. It took him years to realise that *citamangen* did not pertain to an unchanging, hierarchical relationship, as between father and child, but to a description of a practice. When a man works for a *citamangen*, the latter will reward him for his work and will give him certain privileges.

According to Schneider, for too long anthropologists have believed in the 'Doctrine of the Genealogical Unity of Mankind'. This doctrine consists of three axioms:

1. Kinship is a prerequisite to religion, politics, and economics: '[K]inship is the specially privileged of the privileged institutions, for it is kinship alone which can serve as idiom for, is the necessary prerequisite to, and out of which the other three institutions are differentiated.' [63]
2. Kinship has to do with reproduction, and sexual relations are an integral part of it.
3. Blood is thicker than water:

> What are called 'blood ties' can be understood as the bonds of solidarity that are caused by or engendered by the actual biological connectedness, sometimes figured as genetic, sometimes hereditary, sometimes in emotional terms. Or the notion of blood can be understood as figurative, iconic, but still standing for the bonds of solidarity, bonds which are deeply affective, deeply binding, actually breakable but to be broken under the most unusual, tragic, unforgeable circumstances.[64]

On the basis of numerous studies in non-western parts of the world, Schneider argues that biological ties do not necessarily lie at the basis of the social organization of a society. On the contrary, the genealogical diagrams with which anthropologists described social relations are the product of their own eurocentric biases.[65] This critique of the supposed 'Doctrine of the Genealogical Unity of Mankind' dramatically changed the field of anthropology. Schneider's intervention caused anthropologists to abandon the view that humans all over the world organize their societies according to the same kinship structures – where the term 'kinship' stands for this idea of family as the universal structuring element of societies.[66] It also prompted an extensive flood of feminist anthropological studies on kinship and gender, on new reproductive technologies, and on more flexible, less eurocentric concepts of kinship.[67]

In 1995 Janet Carsten, for instance, proposed an alternative to the concept of kinship: 'We would do better to use the term "kinship" to characterize the relatedness that people act and feel.'[68] In her line of thought, people are not born into a kinship position; their relatedness emerges rather through their actions, for instance by the receiving and giving of food.69 Carsten also studied communities in the western world who consider themselves as families, although they do not share their DNA and are not institutionally recognized as relatives. She found street gangs of so-called brothers of diverse ethnicities who had sworn eternal love and fidelity to each other. She also points to gay communities in the US in the 1980s where, when many young men were dying of HIV, new support systems were formed – 'framily (family + friends) – which were not based on biological ties alone.

One of Carsten's conclusions is that there is no big divide between traditional and new families, or between western and non-western families. She sees many opportunities for creative reformulations of kinship: 'It is these creative possibilities that lend kinship its very great symbolic force – a power that is all the more salient because it emanates from the emotional and practical circumstances of people's everyday lives – from the things they hold most dear, and with which they are, in every sense, most familiar.'[70] Further, she concludes that the key association in concepts of family is continuity. These communities oppose the traditional western idea of kinship and replace it with a concept of kinship in which given ties, associated with reproduction and DNA transmission, are replaced by other resilient ties. Reflecting on the work of her fellow anthropologist Kath Weston on chosen families among gays and lesbians in San Francisco, Carsten writes: 'Permanence is here not simply ascribed as a natural quality of blood ties, as in the dominant ideology of kinship, but must be actively produced in time.'[71]

A famous contribution to this debate comes from Marilyn Strathern, who unmasks the study of kinship systems all over the world as English kinship systems.[72] Referring to Strathern, Mol points to new reproduction techniques that also question traditional categories:

> The current technical reshaping of human reproduction works in this way, too. Now that a new-born baby can be the genetic child of one mother and the anatomical child of another, the old schemes start to crumble. The opposition between a singular natural parenthood and a pluralist range of cultural constructions that shape it later on no longer holds.[73]

In this debate, the anthropologist Marhshall Sahlins shifts the focus from kinship as a universal natural phenomenon to kinship as an intersubjective, transpersonal phenomenon. Here he radicalizes Schneider's point of view by stating that the concept of 'family' refers first and foremost to the social, the intersubjective field, the family sphere where lives are so intertwined that the boundaries between individuals fade away. He also claims – contra Schneider – that there is an universal element in kinship, an element that is essential for human beings. 'I take the risk: all means of constituting kinship are in essence the same.'[74]

In the preface of his book *What Kinship Is… And Is Not*, Sahlins expresses this element in several slightly different terms. What is specific to kinship is the 'mutuality of being', he writes, and the 'transpersonal relations of being and existence'. He also states that '[k]infolk are persons who participate intrinsically in each other's existence: they are members of one another'. This perspective denies any essential connection of family with the advent of children, thus with a biological concept of family. Sahlins argues that kinship is not given by birth, 'since human birth is not a pre-discursive fact'.[75]

His main argument is that in different cultures, the mother, the genetrix, and the father, the genitor, have been valued culturally and symbolically in many different ways. Sahlins gives examples of cultures in which mothers were only been seen as a medium for a baby, or fathers were excluded from meaningful kinship relations with a child, or where neither genitor nor genitrix were involved in the raising of a child.[76] He stresses that individuals are never the authors of their kinship relations. Human beings cannot decide for themselves who belongs to their kin and who not. For example, in some communities in New Guinea everyone who is born on the same ground is called 'kin'. In other communities, everyone who shares the same food is 'kin'. In other words, the meanings of kinship that circulate in a society are supra-individual. These meanings exist due to institutional, cultural, and symbolic support and are associated with terms like loyalty, solidarity, and love.

2.4 Three shorthand notions of family

In this chapter, I have examined some clusters of associations around the pairs 'family history/genealogy', 'biology/genetics', and 'kinship/family'. These associations appear in a wide range of human activities, including the production of

contemporary family histories, To conclude this chapter, I will now introduce three heuristic notions of family, which I will consider as shorthand for the networks of associations described above. In this study, these notions will function as Latourian infra-languages, as tools to make clear how some associations materialize in, for instance, a family history.
The three shorthand notions I propose are:

- A genealogical notion of family – legal documents, institutions, names, addresses, dates of birth, marriage, and death
- A biological notion of family – blood, trees, roots, genes, DNA
- A transpersonal notion of family – living together, continuity, love, mutuality, solidarity

In many cases these networks of associations overlap, but not in all cases. To give a few examples: other individuals (humans, but also pets, and maybe even robots) may 'feel' like family, in a transpersonal sense of the word, although they do not share the same genes or may even be institutionally acknowledged as related to another; people may be adopted legally but are not family in a biological sense. Or the other way around: individuals may be institutionally connected to each other but may not 'feel' a mutual bond, even if they are also biologically related.

Not only in real life, but also in contemporary family histories identifications between 'me' and 'my family' are important phenomena. These identifications cannot adequately be described only in terms of biological or genealogical ties. This would not do justice to the deeply felt significance people give to their family histories. So we may need another notion, in which 'mutuality of being', or 'belonging to one another', or 'living each other's lives' – phrases that could be concentrated in the term 'transpersonal concept of family' –can do more justice to these phenomena, while the biological and genealogical meanings attached to these relationships can also play a role.

CHAPTER 3

The digital shaping of 'me' and 'my relatives'

'Facts will never appear to us as brute and meaningless: they will always organize themselves into some sort of story, some drama'.[1]

Mary Midgley

This chapter considers some aspects of the rapid digitalization of the practices of family historians. First, I focus on the general influence of digitalization as reflected in the observations of the family historians in this corpus. Second, I describe some major changes within the archival world insofar as they have had an impact on the activities of the CBG, not only with regard to the digitization of the institution's archives, but also as regards its attitude towards visitors. Third, I will undertake a preliminary attempt to contextualize the ways digitalization influences the content of contemporary family histories. This latter subject will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4. Finally, I will zoom in on the smallest unit of a genealogical database, i.e., the basic definition of an individual as defined in Genealogical Data Communication (GEDCOM) files used for communication between genealogical databases.

3.1 Doing family history in a digitizing age

Within a short period of time, the archival universe has expanded so greatly that there are a wealth of resources to tempt family historians to explore their relatives' lives on the Internet. They can quickly find newspaper clippings, an-

nouncements, pictures and many other traces that their relatives have left in the world, which have been absorbed in one way or another into digital archives. This expanding digital activity encourages family historians to go beyond the mere mentioning of names and dates of birth and death.

In this chapter I will argue that the genealogical concepts of family, and the relation between family and 'myself' as a clear, unequivocal relation, are even strengthened in the computer era, from the *digitization* of analogue objects into digital bits, to *digitalization*, as 'the way in which many domains of social life are restructured around digital communication and media infrastructures'.[2] Both terms refer not only to the digital storing of information, but also to the processing, transferring, and spreading of digital information on the Internet, as well as the online accessing of archives and other information storage places.

The family histories in this selected corpus were made after the introduction of personal computers at home and the first digitizing of records in the archives, but before the emergence of what José van Dijck et al. refer to as the 'platform society', in which the services of Google, Amazon, Facebook, Apple, and Microsoft (GAFAM) have led to worldwide structural changes in the political, cultural, and economic behaviour of individuals, nations, and businesses.[3] In recent years, this digitalization has led, as van Dijck et al. point out, to datafication, in which 'every form of user interaction can be captured as data'.[4] This datafication emerges in tandem with commodification, as platforms transform both 'online *and* offline objects, activities, emotions, and ideas into tradable commodities'.[5] As the platform society had not yet fully developed in 2013, the year the family histories in this corpus were sent to the CBG, I will consider these family histories as created in an era after the first digitization of documents but before the full digitalization, datafication, and commodification of the platform society as we know it today (even though one can see some traces of datafication and commodification in the corpus). Therefore, this chapter simply explores a few influences, ranging from digitization to digitalization within the selected corpus, emphasizing the transformations that had recently taken place in the production of these family histories.

The family historians in this corpus already had access to digitized (or partly digitized) archives. Some of them could benefit from user-friendly search engines. Some DIY digital printing and scanning techniques were at their disposal, but as I read some of the introductions in the corpus, I could also sense how quickly the activities around doing family history research had changed. Take the following introduction to a family history, for instance:

> When researching the Morcus family I ran into the problem that I was always having to travel to Middelburg to go to the Zeeland National Archive. It was really busy at our cactus nursery, and of course I had the family, so I had no time to visit Zeeland. So I quickly came up with the plan to focus on my wife's family instead – after all, her family comes from the [local area of] Hoeksche Waard. It's not so far to go to Heinenoord on a Saturday afternoon and to do research in the card indexes in the regional museum.[6]

Apparently what matters most for this family historian is to do genealogical research of some kind. (See 5.2. for an analysis of the various reported motivations for doing family history). The switch to researching his wife's family history does not seem to bother him. His daily life imposes limits on the way he can practise family history, as the subject of his genealogical research is subordinate to his wish to do this archival research, though he writes that he hasn't had the time to find all the facts.

> I don't have the time to look any further. And, unfortunately some relatives were not very enthusiastic and would not cooperate. It's a pity. I did find some stuff on the Internet and with Google though, in some cases with a picture.[7]

This quotation from the introduction illustrates just how quickly digital genealogical research has developed. Given the rapid digitization of archives over the last five years, and the fact that this book was published in 2012 already, it is quite possible that the author's problem of travelling to the archives would now have become obsolete.

Probably this family historian could now do all his research at his desk. The physical confrontation with the documents referring to the life events of former generations has largely been replaced by internet-mediated images of these documents. Nevertheless, only a few family historians in this corpus reflect on the influence of the rapidly changing digitization in the course of their research. One states that finding information nowadays can be done while sitting at one's desk.[8] Yet another family historian writes, in a peculiar sentence, 'As we wandered around the cemeteries, we were overtaken by graftombe.nl'.[9] The Internet address mentioned here refers to a website providing data and pictures from all graveyards in the Netherlands.

A few authors reflect on the impact of digital developments in more detail. Travelling to archives is old-fashioned, writes one family historian in a chapter entitled, in translation: 'The start of my hobby, the production of my book'.[10] From 2007 on, he 'drew a lot from the Internet' and he recalls, in general terms, the thousands of volunteers who have contributed to the digitization of archives.[11] Despite the abundance of information on the Internet, he also went to a local archive and took 20,000 photos, so that he could study them quietly at home. Furthermore, he visited relatives and used a laptop and a scanner to scan their photographs. He brought a video camera with him to record his interviews with them. His first draft was already written 'around 1988', using the word processing package WordPerfect 5.1.[12] He copied his work to a newer type of word processor so he could continue his work without any hassle.

Another family historian recalls a local archivist referring her to the Internet where she might be able to find much more information about her family.[13] In some cases, digitization has unexpected consequences. Thus, one family historian reflects on his co-worker's experiences of the emerging Internet while working on a family history:

> Time flew by, and the Internet developed further. Partly as a result of this, in 2009 he received various queries from relatives about their history. This led him to digitize the data he already had and to make them available on the Internet for anyone who might be interested. The aim was: less work. The result was: more work, because the publication on the Internet motivated people to bring new or additional information.[14]

One family history carries the subtitle *An Internet Genealogy*, and the author comments in her introduction that it was through the now closed social network *Hyves* that she came into contact with people who shared her name.[15] These people with the same name were confused about the family relationships between them, which motivated the author to start her Internet search. She reports that she only looked for Internet sources, and she refers to websites – like Genlias.com and worldconnect.rootsweb.ancestry.com, formerly known as rawboot/accessgenealogy.com – that now, in 2019, no longer exist. One part of her research consisted of finding all the people with the same name in a telephone book on the Internet and calling them all to find out whether and how they were related to each other.[16]

Apart from digital influences on finding sources online, digitization is very

visible in the layout of the family histories. Some contain parts or copies of older typewritten manuscripts, and it is only in the comparison between typewritten and printed texts that one realizes how neat current printwork is.[17] Many family histories also have visuals made possible in the digital era, like family pictures, maps, and pictures of objects, houses, and official documents. All can be printed in full colour. Printing techniques have become very cheap over a few years, and this development has led to visually attractive books.

More substantive is the emergence of online genealogical portals with web and software products that produce new data and hence new visuals, like infographics. Enterprises such as MyHeritage offer functionalities to generate new, mostly statistical information, based on the data that have been collected. The categories listed under 'family statistics' show what data are believed to be the most fundamental in this area.[18] There is an overview of statistics about:

- Gender
- Number of living versus deceased
- Relationship status, with four categories: married, unmarried, divorced, widow/widower. The database has space to add a second 'partner' for a family member, but these partners do not show up in the family statistics.
- Common surnames (a word cloud shows up, in which the most common names are much bigger than the less common ones).
- Common first names in males and females –also represented in a word cloud.

Other categories include places (including places of birth and death, displayed on a map), ages, birth, marriages, children, and divorces. In all these categories, the phrases are the same, focusing on numbers: the largest numbers ('divorced the most'; 'longest marriage', 'age difference between oldest and youngest child', 'lived longest', 'lived shortest'). One striking element is the numbers that reveal relatives' zodiac signs, which can presumably feed ideas about similarities in personality. Database software can easily produce figures showing vertical or class mobility within generations, for instance, or spatial mobility, or the frequency of specific professions.

This summing up indicates the wide variety of associations around the genealogical concept of 'family'. The software suggests that a user can extract information about the associated concepts from these simple statistics. In that sense, the software is starting to co-produce new information by providing links between data. Do family historians actually use these statistics and reprint them in their family histories? Indeed, in some cases databased information is

copied and reprinted in these family histories without much comment.[19] Some family historians add this kind of information to a larger story, in which the statistical data are interpreted by the author.

To illustrate this phenomenon, I will focus on one example in the corpus that is part of a subset of family histories compiled by the same authors, the in-laws of the eleven children of a single couple.[20] Given the amount of statistical information, the charts, and the neat presentation of generations, the family histories in this subset are obviously all made using a genealogical software program. In addition to the long introductions and stories about relatives, the authors have reproduced and interpreted some statistical images.

One of these is an infographic showing the social mobility of relatives during the last century, showing that whereas the members of one generation were mostly day labourers, in later generations land users, and later on even farmers became more frequent. This is illustrated in Figure 9. According to the family historian, these changes had consequences for the geographical mobility of the later generations, as they became settled in farms that were transferred to the next generation (see Figure 10). Other statistics in this family history relate to the average age of marriage in the family, age of death, number of children per family, and number of marriages per person. In addition to this production of new information, the Internet has simplified the availability and accessibility of encyclopaedic texts, for instance Wikipedia. Several family histories in the corpus give standardized information, frequently copy-pasted from Wikipedia or other comprehensive works, about the regions various relatives lived in, the churches they attended, or about other buildings, customs, and traditions.

Another digital characteristic of these family histories is the presence of extensive indexes of names at the end of the books; this transforms the way the book can be used by its readers by giving it the added function of a reference book. A real conceptual transformation due to digitization is found in the tables of contents of the family histories in the corpus. More often than not, the chapters are correlated to generations in the family (see also section 4.2). This is an apparent effect of the strict classification of relatives in genealogical software. It generates a default picture of what humans are – that is, people that are defined in the first instance by their links with their parents – and also of what families are – that is, a strict succession of generations. In this chapter and the next, I will also demonstrate that these databased collections of facts lead to stories with a particular structure.

3.2 Digitizing archives in the CBG and beyond

In this section, I describe developments in the Dutch archival world that have contributed to the digital environment in which contemporary family historians now operate. This description feeds into my argument that contemporary family histories are conceptually influenced by the rapidly developing, far-reaching digital culture, described by media scholar Van Dijck as a fast moving target.[21]

Many heterogeneous developments have occurred simultaneously, and it is very difficult to pinpoint them all. What is less difficult is to trace the development of the CBG, the national centre for genealogy in which I collected my corpus of family histories: within just a few decades it has changed from a somewhat introvert organization focused on preserving genealogical collections in their building in The Hague into an outreach service organization that prioritizes digitalized communication over receiving visitors. A comparison of the homepage of the institute in 1998 with the one in 2018 illustrates this change

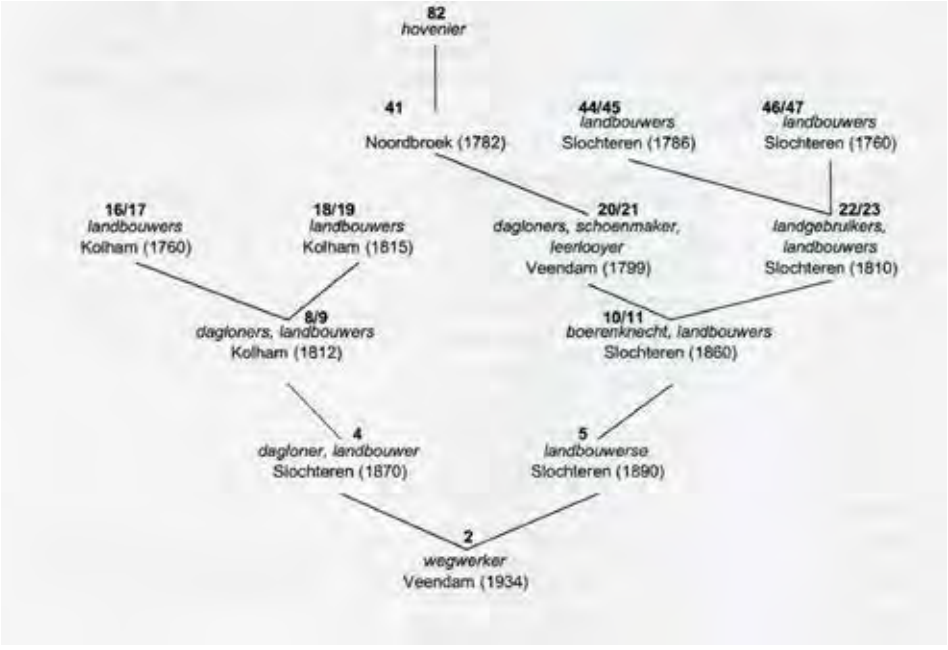


Figure 9. 'Vertical mobility': an infographic of the (male) professions in the family over several generations. ID 34, 8.

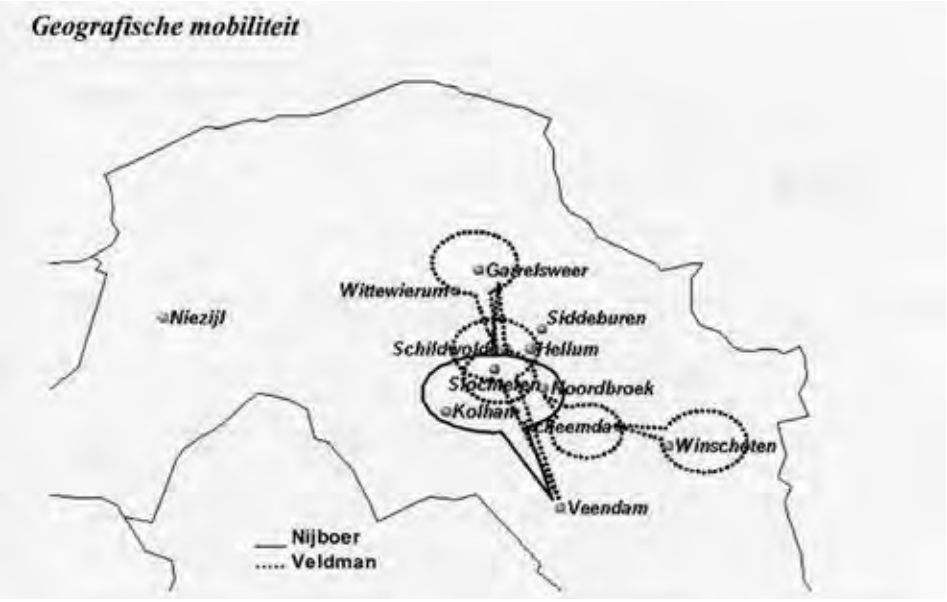


Figure 10. Geographical mobility of two families over several generations. ID 34, 11.

in appearance and attitude.

On the first homepage of the CBG, in 1998, there is just one image, a photograph of the building.[22] The accompanying text, in translation:

> Welcome to the Central Institute for Genealogy
>
> The National Centre for Genealogy (CBG) has a special position within Dutch genealogy. The centre was established in 1945 by representatives of the government and private persons, as a documentation and education centre for family history and heraldry.
>
> Since then, much of what earlier researchers have collected has been acquired by the CBG. The contemporary researcher can consult it and use it for his own research. Over a hundred visitors per day come to the CBG's study centre.
>
> The CBG is a renowned knowledge centre for genealogy and heraldry, with an international reputation. It develops methods and reference books for research and provides information about the latest developments in this field.[23]

Figure 11. Homepage of the CBG on February 8, 1998.

The blue links on the right lead to news about the institute, about archives and genealogical societies, and about publications; there are also a few links to further information about genealogy, events, and courses. Both the image and the text refer primarily to the institution itself.

In comparison, the homepage on April 11 in 2018, little over twenty years after the first one, appeals more directly to the visitor (Figure 12). The title, *Discover your family history*, is eye-catching, as is the search engine box that shows the directories one can search: collections, library, family trees, family coats of arms, family names, and *Wiewaswie* ('Whowaswho'), a genealogical subsite that offers access to millions of Dutch civil registration records from all sorts of institutional registers, often with a scan of the original document (See Figure 13).[24] One click on the icon of an eye, on the right, leads to alternating old photographs of people popping up in the background, without any description.

Many developments at the CBG are the effect of the digitalization of national and other archives with which the CBG has been firmly connected from its inception. In the following sections, I will briefly describe three demonstrable developments in the changing role of the CBG in the present archival landscape: changing ideas about archiving, the changed status of records, and the changing attitude of institutes towards genealogists and family historians.

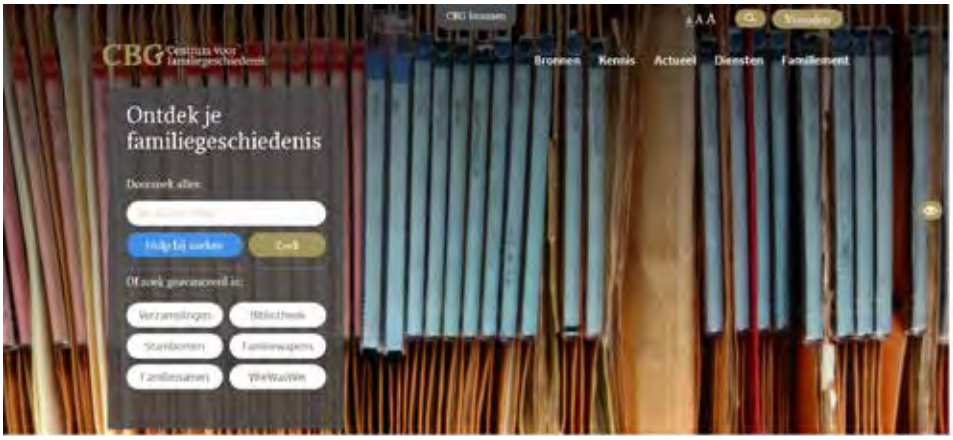


Figure 12. Homepage of www.cbg.nl on April 11, 2018.

3.2.1 Changing ideas about archiving

The developments in the archival world could be summarized in general as 'from place to context'. Since 1898, the leading principle was that of provenance, meaning that every document should be placed in the institution to which it originally belonged, according to the archival organization of the institute itself. This principle was the essence of the internationally renowned manual for the arrangement and description of archives, the *Handleiding voor het ordenen en beschrijven van archieven* (1898), written by the Dutch archivists Muller, Feith, and Fruin (who was referred to as R. Fruin Th.Az, to distinguish him from his uncle, the famous historian Robert Fruin). The manual was adapted and translated into German (1905), Italian (1908), and French (1910) by archivists for use in their own countries.[25] An English version was published only in 1940.

From its year of publication until the mid eighties of the twentieth century, the manual was a leading document for archivists both in the Netherlands and further afield. The manual created a paradigm in which an archive had primarily been formed by a state institution or a state official. The archivist was the one who made inventories or *regests*, the main signposts in the classic archive to the repository of state documents. In pre-Internet times, making an overview of all archives and their collections was, as one columnist wrote, 'a job that must be seen as super-human, even divine'.[26]

As state archives expanded in the late 1980s, the idea emerged that an archive should be interpreted not as a storage place, but as an information system. This perspective focused on the present activities of the organization rather

Figure 13. Screenshot of www.wiewaswie.nl. One can enter a name and specify a region, document type, archive, or role. 'Role' can refer to family roles (father, bridegroom, etc.) and also to societal role, as found in archived documents, such as witness, resident, slave, convict, seafarer.

than on the initial formation of the archive. Thus, the operations and functions of the organizations became leading in the archiving process, and the user of the archive became more prominent. Users' questions could be viewed as suggestions according to which the archive could be organized.[27]

With the introduction of relational databases in the 1980s, the provenance principle was recast, in an attempt to answer questions like:

> If an electronic document has only a transient existence as a 'virtual' composite or fleeting 'view' on the computer screen of randomly stored information created by the different commands of different users in different organizational structures for different purposes, how does any one accountable institution preserve reliable evidence of specific transactions?[28]

This more conceptual approach was strongly catalyzed by the Dutch government's Pivot project, which ran from 1992 to 2001. The guideline here was a functional approach, described as:

> [I]nstead of looking to traditional principles of archives and record management, which in fact tend chiefly to select and retain information generated by the administrative processes, the proposed strategy bases

the evaluation of information on its role in government activities and tasks.[29]

The century-old inventory, based on the manual by Fruin et al., became outdated. The new functional approach is supported by new database technology that paved the way to a contextual archive in which the documents' history has become less important than their significance for present users.

Archives have gradually become user-friendly, aiming to fulfil requests from their visitors. Information technology turns out to be a tool for *searching* records instead of *finding* records – as the classical inventories used to do. This public-friendly approach has been supported by political decisions, like the introduction in 1995 of a national law on archives, the *Archiefwet,* obliging authorities to keep their archives ordered and open to the public and to transfer documents to institutional public storage places in a timely manner.[30] The government also insisted on the formation of regional historical centres in which archives work together with museums and libraries, with a focus on public activities.[31]

One consequence of this public-friendly approach is that the emotional and symbolic value of archives has become more important than their informational and descriptive value. Archives have started to see themselves primarily as institutes for promoting heritage instead of institutes for preserving knowledge.[32] Over the years, the self-image of archivists has changed as well. In the words of the archival theorist Terry Cook, 'the archivist has been transformed accordingly from passive curator to active appraiser to societal mediator to community facilitator. The focus of archival thinking has moved from evidence to memory to identity and community'.[33]

3.2.2 From physical to digital records

In 'Archive and Database as Metaphor: Theorizing the Historical Record', Marlene Manoff, senior collections strategist at MIT Libraries, writes: 'Our relation to the archive is being reconfigured by the sheer volume of information emanating from our computers and digital devices. The archive is no longer a collection of artifacts, books, and records confined to particular locations that we may seek out if we so desire. Much of the archival record now consists of streams of data invading our work and private lives, perpetually tempting us to consume or contribute just a little more'.[34] One of the most obvious changes in the digitization of records is that their context, the way they are kept, is no longer self-evident or

fixed. To describe these new developments in and outside the archive, new concepts have emerged, such as process-linked information, continuum thinking, contextual facts, and metadata.[35]

One influential model comes from the Australian archival theorist Frank Upward, who advocates the idea of recordkeeping in what he calls a 'space time continuum'. His colleague Sue McKemmish explains:

> From a continuum perspective, recordkeeping and archiving processes fix documents which are created in the context of social and organizational activity, i.e. human interaction of all kinds, and preserve them as evidence of that activity by disembedding them from their immediate context of creation, and providing them with ever broadening layers of contextual metadata.[36]

Contemporary records are no longer found but *fixed* in a complex way. These digital records consist of components which bear only a logical relation to each other. In this sense, a record becomes a collection of data that can be split up, combined, and used as raw material for new data. The record consists not only of an image of an original record or a source; it also needs metadata describing the context of the original and the image, as well as information about the software able to represent the image, and information about the hardware as a necessary medium for the software and the medium in which the data can be saved. Without these metadata, the record cannot be recognized in various operating systems.

The possibilities of transferring records to various mediums multiply the original file in dazzling ways – whereas the physical object itself, in most cases a document, becomes unavailable for the average family historian. Well-known properties such as the size of the document and the place in which it has been kept become relatively unimportant.

In many cases, the original is replaced by a multiplicity of digitized variations. To give just one small example, the signature of a family member on an old official document can be enlarged and used as a full-page decoration on a title page (see Figure 14). Readers will have no sense of the original format of the signature, nor of the document on which it was signed or the reason it was placed, not to mention other physical aspects of the document.

The shift from a physical to a digital existence of records has huge consequences for our thinking about archives and archival records. Their conceptual

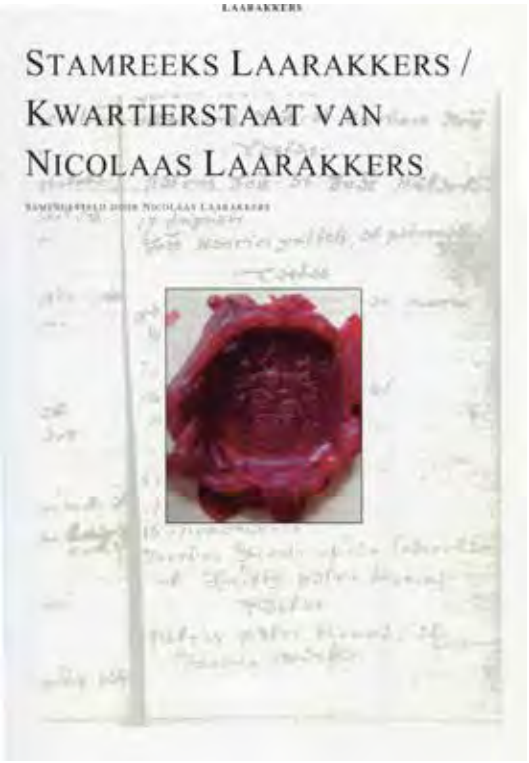


Figure 14. Front page of ID 21 with an image of a wax seal on a document.

properties and their relations with other records have become more critical. Practical problems around digitization appear and sometimes also disappear due to technological innovations. For example, in the 1999 yearbook of archival publications, an author speculates about the future of digital objects. Will they be kept on disks, on CD-ROMs, or as computer files? Will there be enough disk space to save all these records?[37] Twenty years later, these questions have evaporated: CD-ROMs and small disks are no longer standard storage mediums, and the question of disk space is no longer urgent.

On an epistemological level, the digitization of archival records has raised a question that seems more persistent: what does a record represent if it is no longer tied to a physical medium? In *Paper Knowledge*, media scholar Lisa Gitelman asks the same question about the status of the document, the most common form of archival record. According to her, a document generally has the status of a piece of evidence about a state of affairs in the world. In that sense, anything can be a document as long as it is turned into a piece of evidence. Cit-

ing Susanne Briet on the question of documentation, Gitelman draws the analogy of an antelope. When an antelope is in the wild, it is an animal. However, when it is displayed in a zoo, it is a document, in the sense that it is a specimen, an example of the animal in the wild. Likewise, a document is a specimen of what happened in the non-documental, physical world.

Apart from this intricate link between the document as a piece of evidence and a real event or phenomenon, there is the relation between an analogue document and its numerous digitized copies. One difference between analogue and digitized documents is the absence of edges in the latter. The digital document is physically identical to the window it appears in. Gitelman writes:

> So documents, for instance, are recognized according to the context dependent structures and practices of knowing-showing. For digital documents – as for digital objects generally – the jumble of discourse isn't a two-dimensional grid as much as a three-dimensional one, the layered and diverse writings that recursively make platforms, operating systems, and publications intelligible to each other in an architecture of processes that works to generate the textual event, the 'interface effect' that we recognize on screen.[38]

Archival scholar Charles Jeurgens considers other specific consequences of digitizing records, which encompass more than just adding metadata to the digital representation 'to ensure that the information is contextualized, searchable and well-presented in a digital environment'.[39] When an analogue object is transformed into a digital document, sensory information is lost. Jeurgens recalls the example of a medical historian who sniffed every eighteenth-century letter he found in a Portuguese archive. In that period, people sprinkled vinegar on their letters to prevent cholera from spreading, so the scientist hoped to trace the course of a cholera epidemic by searching for links between the smell of the vinegar and the date and place of the letter.[40]

In other words, digital documents are not mere copies of analogue documents, but new information objects, without the physical properties containing contextual information, like the paper material, binding techniques, and even the wrinkles in a document that can disclose the way it was stored.[41] Stressing the loss of all these physical properties, Jeurgens cites Kjetil Jacobsen who contends that 'with digitization the archive is once again what it used to be: texts rather than physical objects'.[42] This observation is conceivable only if one sees

digitization of archives as a partly impossible transformation of physical objects into digital ones, and if one enforces a strict distinction between content (text) and container (medium).[43] As Manoff shows in an earlier article on the materiality of digital collections in 2006, the opposite can also be true: if one turns a digital object into an analogue medium, for example by printing a digital record, information gets lost as well.[44] In a broader perspective, these observations allude to debates on the definition of text in cultural objects, including digital ones:

> Over time and under the influence of cultural studies and postmodernism, the definition of text has expanded to encompass many cultural objects including databases, software programs, video games, hypertext novels, film, television, radio, and e-mail. It is now widely understood that texts include verbal, visual, numeric, and oral information.[45]

This expansion of the definition of text even needs to be expanded still further, according to Manoff, to include the platforms, interfaces, standards, and coding by which digital text can appear.[46] A separate set of questions can be raised about search engines which use a logic other than the complex hierarchal structures of inventories. Search machines cannot simply reproduce this complexity, because they base their searches on key words and algorithms and not, as inventories do, on the place a document has in an archival structure.

Search engines are black boxes, writes media scholar Van Dijck, and users are often unconscious of the mechanisms that select and channel the results of their searches:

> Knowledge is not simply conveyed to users, but is co-produced by search engines' ranking systems and profiling systems, none of which are open to the rules of transparency, relevance and privacy in a manner known from library scholarship in the public domain.[47]

The algorithms used are not neutral but encapsulate the assumptions of the coder who devised them, the media historian Max Kemman and his colleagues acknowledge.[48] Moreover, the omnipresence of search engines intensifies the de-contextualization of the results they present:

> [T]he only explanation for search results lies in the entered keywords, which de-contextualize the retrieved information in such a way that the

> search results are only comprehensible through the ordering offered by the search engine.[49]

The complexity of search engines – which deserves far more attention that is possible in the context of this study – demonstrates the necessity of an in-depth study of developments in the digitalization of archives, including the status of digitized objects and the relation between content and context, physical and digital objects, and the searching and finding of records. With regard to this study, one question has yet to be asked: how has digitization within the CBG and with the CBG cooperation archives affected the relationship with visitors to the institute?

3.2.3 From disturber to consumer

Several factors have contributed to the present state of digitized affairs within the CBG. One is the ongoing presentation of archival records: copied onto microfiche since the 1970s, they are now being transformed into digital records integrated into database environments.[50] Another factor, from the early years of the second millennium onwards, is the interlinking of many genealogical databases.[51] In 2016, the CBG launched a revised website displaying a digital collection of, among other records, family trees, genealogical collections, sources from WWII and the East-Indies, and family archives, all available through a search engine.

By focusing on digital services, the institute presents itself through its website www.cbg.nl, which functions as a portal to various sub-sites to which many archives contribute. Collaborating archives pay a fee for access to their indexes, and the commercial multinational ancestry.com has contracts with the institute for licences on their indexes. Although visitors have free access to part of the website, they need a paid subscription for extra search facilities.[52] The ongoing process of digitalization has led to a steady reduction in the number of visitors to the CBG in The Hague and a steady growth in the number of visitors to the website: in 2016, 1,224,231 users (+5%) viewed 144 million pages. Eighty percent of the visitors are from the Netherlands, 10 percent from the US and Canada.[53]

Bearing in mind that most family historians in this corpus spend about ten to twenty years working on their family histories, it is safe to speculate that many of them have experienced the changes in their research and writing due to computer technology, including the personal computer, digital photography,

scanners, and tools like database software and search engines. Media scholar Van Dijck aptly summarizes these developments as 'digitization, multimediatization and googlization'.[54] In previous eras, family historians had to visit archives to look for sources. Nowadays, they start their research at their own personal computer screens, surfing to the websites of archives that are digitizing their records rapidly. These archives and the CBG are supported by volunteers who help to index records, collect data, take pictures of gravestones and perform other time-consuming activities with the aim of increasing the digital accessibility of genealogical information.[55] As a consequence of these user-oriented digitization activities, family historians nowadays can rely on an abundance of documents, like newspaper clippings, testaments, inventories, criminal records, covenants, migration records, military records, and land registers.

This 'data-flood' seems to be infinite.[56] Family historians are embedded in this digitization by storing all their findings on their computer, or in the cloud, mostly by using one or more genealogical software programs. This software creates a structure for organizing and saving information in a preconfigured database, and simultaneously provides access to archives all over the world. Customers are usually given free access to these functionalities, provided they store their data online, although they must pay for advanced options such as photos of original documents or access to specific inventories. In this way, genealogical data have become a key component in global genealogical business.

Major international commercial portals for genealogical research are Myheritage, Ancestry and FindMyPast, available in a range of languages. Another big but non-commercial portal is Family Search, run by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, well known for their extensive collection of family data.[57] All these providers negotiate with archives across the world to obtain access to the indexes of their digitized archives. In the Netherlands, many family historians use Aldfaer, not-for-profit-software that has been collaborating with Myheritage since 2014.[58]

Visitors to the CBG website are active users that have become crucial players in the historical industry, just as the cultural artefacts have become commodities, as described by the historian Jerome De Groot in examining contemporary public history and the dynamic involved in digital genealogy:

> On genealogical websites, national knowledge, such as census, wills, and social information of all kinds, are fed into a financial matrix. Cultural artefacts, in the form of historical knowledge and information, here

> become commodities in an economy in which the consumption of such goods is driven by a desire to understand the self and make it complete. Genealogical websites operate within a (globalized) historiocentric cultural economy, you might argue, their information commodified.[59]

Just a century ago, genealogists and other visitors were seen as an unnecessary disturbance to the archivist's real work. As R. Fruin Th.Azn. wrote in a periodical for archivists:

> Archivists take rather a dim view of genealogists. They do not like those people who turn their archive upside down just to find out when some lady or gentleman completely unknown to anyone except their closest relatives passed away or was born, and who request the dispatch of the entire protocol, merely to check whether their family name may chance to feature in the indices at the end.[60]

The relationship between archivists and family historians has improved since then. The digitization of archives, followed by their digitalization and functioning within global networks of archives and genealogical enterprises, and the political support of heritage institutes have transformed the family historian from a disturbance to the archives into a welcome consumer of the past. The next question for this study is then: In what format do genealogical institutes hand their information over to these users?

3.3 From records to data

One general conceptual consequence of the ubiquitous use of computer technology for the practices of family historians is, among many others, the introduction of 'data' as the standard unit of information. Data are the result of a complex system of collecting, storing, cataloguing, and transmitting. Data do not exist, they have to be generated, writes Lev Manovich, the author of the famous critique on database culture.[61] Whereas facts refer to actions that have taken place in the world, data are built up from digital code, referring to objects and properties that may or may not refer to facts. Though the concepts of data and facts each have their own epistemological problems, this description signals a difference that is lost in popular language that equates facts and data.

Manovich's main statement concerns the relation between on the one hand database culture, ruled by algorithms, and on the other hand narrative. Data rule the world, writes Manovich. Computer programming encapsulates the world according to its own logic, reducing this world to two kinds of software objects which are complementary to each other: data structures and algorithms. The result is the 'computerization of culture'. In Manovich' words:

> As a cultural form, the database represents the world as a list of items, and it refuses to order this list. In contrast, a narrative creates a cause and effect trajectory of seemingly unordered items (events). Therefore database and narrative are natural enemies.[62]

Narratives contain distinctively different elements from databases, writes Manovich, although he contends that 'narrative' is a buzz word in the new media world. Nevertheless, he reserves the term narrative for phenomena that fall under the definition of narrative as consisting of three levels – text, story, and fabula – with 'a series of logically or chronologically related events that are caused or experienced by actors'.[63]

Rather than deducing the opposition between database and narrative from new technologies, Manovich considers them as two competing imaginations, 'two basic creative impulses, two essential responses to the world'.[64] Database and narrative existed long before the advent of new media: the ancient Greeks produced the Iliad as well as encyclopedias. Nevertheless, in the database culture databases have become all-pervasive and have even entered the world of narrative.

In order to explain these new developments, Manovich uses Ferdinand de Saussure's distinction between paradigm and syntagm. In short, a written sentence is materialized as in a syntagmatic dimension, as a text on paper, *in presentia*, but it refers to a paradigm of sets of elements that only exists in the reader's mind, *in absentia*. This imaginary paradigmatic dimension has the function of a database as it contains synonyms, for instance, and other elements that give meaning to a specific sentence on paper. 'Thus, syntagm is explicit, paradigm is implicit', writes Manovich.[65]

In new media, the relationship between the syntagmatic and paradigmatic dimension is reversed: the database is real, material, and it contains a series of elements that can be combined into a narrative. A typical example of this reversal is the interactive screen which gives the user the choice between several

icons that will lead to a different screen. By clicking on icons, the user follows one possible trajectory 'from the paradigm of all trajectories that are defined'.[66] The narrative itself, in this example that of the trajectory as a result of clicking icons on a screen, is restricted on the material level to a set of links: 'The elements themselves remain stored in the database. Thus the narrative is virtual, while the database exists materially'.[67] In this sense, the computer layer of database culture deeply affects the cultural layer of the narrative, with categories like sorting, processing, searching, matching, and filtering.[68]

This new description of narrative as a set of links is far removed from Bal's definition of a narrative as having three layers of text, story, and fabula. But the distinction is theoretical, concedes Manovich. Databases contain narrative elements too: 'Competing to make meaning out of the world, database and narrative produce endless hybrids'.[69]

Cleary the family histories under discussion here form a set of such hybrids, as they are based on genealogical software but also contain narrative elements. Nevertheless, Manovich's distinction between database and narrative fits neatly with an old topos, repeated in genealogy books and courses, that genealogical research aims to collect the bare facts, the 'skeleton,' while the stories based on these facts put flesh on the bones.

This idea of facts as being distinct from the context in which they were found or created is quite common in genealogical discourse. Take, for instance, these descriptions in the MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) on genealogy developed by the Scottish University of Strathclyde:

> Genealogy is the retrieval of vital and familial data from records of various types, and its ordering into meaningful relationship patterns.
>
> And:
>
> Family history is the integration of this data with social, economic, political contexts to develop a narrative.[70]

The organic associations of terms like bones and skeleton strengthen the alleged naturalness of family, the relationships between relatives and the events they took part in. Archival scientist Terry Cook has pointed to other Darwinist metaphors in archival language, like the *natural* accumulations of records, as well as references to the *organic* character of archives, or to records as the *li-*

feblood of organizations. He also remarks on the image of the archivist as a paleontologist, building a 'backbone' or a 'skeleton'.[71] All these associations with nature introduce the category of data as though they are inevitable facts, disregarding the fact that they are assembled data. The genealogy course cited above advises, for instance:

> Secondary and certain primary sources can really add detail and interest to what you know about your ancestors. It's where the family history side of things comes in and you begin to put flesh on the bones of the genealogical skeleton. For example, if you find a book describing what life was like in the village where your family came from, that will help you envisage their day-to-day reality.[72]

Apart from the epistemological and ontological questions concerning the status of facts and data, this distinction between data as facts on the one hand, and narratives on the other, has been intensified by the introduction of 'data' listed in a database. In the world of these family historians, the database has priority, so that this is the basis on which narratives are generated. These narratives are indeed linked sets of elements combined into a chronological story. The computer layer of genealogical research has penetrated the cultural form of the family history and the narratives it contains. In the next section, I will focus on the smallest unit of the genealogical software, which in itself contributes to the structure of the stories that can be told.

3.4 Me and my relatives in GEDCOM

The genealogical world primarily uses a genealogical concept of family, referring to institutionalized, registered events within a human being's life. Moreover, there is a structure *within* the software that influences our thinking about 'my family'. In order to find some traces of this thinking, I focus on the GEDCOM standard, commonly used for transferring database records from one genealogical software program to another. This transmission can be necessary if two family historians want to share their data, or if one software program does not give access to a specific archive while another one does. For this reason, some genealogists use more than one genealogical program.[73]

GEDCOM, an acronym for Genealogical Data Communication, was developed

by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (LDS). This Church was founded in 1830 by Joseph Smith as a restoration of the 'true' church of Jesus Christ. Members of the LDS Church are under a religious obligation to compile their genealogy. They are supposed to trace their ancestors on both their mother's and their father's side and to take these ancestors' names to the Mormon Temple. The purpose of this is to obtain salvation for the people who were born before Joseph Smith became a prophet. Genealogy is also part of the missionary aims of the LDS Church, since its members try to collect names of unrelated individuals, so they too can be blessed.[74] This mission forms the basis of the enormous collection of genealogical data in Salt Lake City and also of the development of genealogical software by this Church, including the GEDCOM standard. Although alternatives to GEDCOM do exist, most genealogical software is supported by this standard.[75]

Examining the structure of GEDCOM reveals some essential features of the genealogical software. Every database uses a default conceptual structure within which all data can be arranged in one way or another. In most genealogical software, and similarly in GEDCOM, the crucial structural entity is the concept of the family. Every individual is defined in the first place by his or her link with a family, as a child and possibly as the founder of a new family with a spouse and any children they may have.

Figure 15 shows how family and marriage are constituted as attributes of relationships. In a database language, these relationships are first defined and then designated with tags. A family, with the tag FAM, is defined as a relation between exactly one male and one female. Together, they form a unit to which one or more children can be linked. An event can also be linked to this couple. This event is tagged as [MARR], short for marriage, and because it is defined as an event, a date and a place can be filled in. The MARR-tag is always subordinate to the FAM-tag. In this way a family structure can be described in a file, in which individuals, with all sorts of individual properties such as sex, date of birth, occupation, religion, have a unique one-to-one relationship with a spouse and, possibly, a one-to-many relationship with children.

Figure 16 shows a fictional GEDCOM file filled with data of a small family with one child. This GEDCOM file consists of four parts. The first encompasses meta-data: information about the data found, and by whom. The second contains information about the individuals in the file and their individual properties. One of these properties is a reference to the family they are part of. The third part describes which individuals are part of this family. The individuals are defined

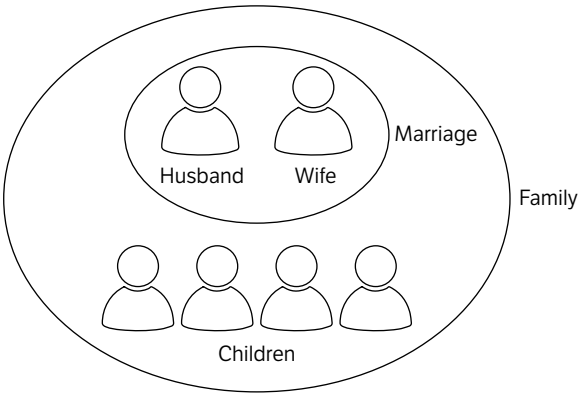


Figure 15. Scheme of relationships within a family in GEDCOM.

by their ID-numbers. Finally, the file states who submitted the information and that this is the end of the record.

HEAD	Meta data
1 SOUR PAF	Source of data
2 NAME Personal Ancestral File	Sort of file
2 VERS 5.0	Version
1 DATE 30 NOV 2000	Date of compilation
1 GEDC	Ged com file
2 VERS 5.5	Version of ged com
2 FORM LINEAGE-LINKED	Type of file
1 CHAR ANSEL	Character code
1 SUBM @U1@	Code of submitter
0 @I1@ INDI	Record for individual
1 NAME Carl/Apple/	Name
1 SEX M	Sex
1 BIRT	Birth
2 DATE 12 APR 1863	Date of birth
2 PLAC Amsterdam	Place of birth
1 DEAT	Death
2 DATE 27 OCT 1930	Date of death
2 PLAC Delft	Place of death
1 OCCU nurse	Occupation
1 FAMS @F1@	Family of which individual is part

0 @I2@ INDI	Record for individual
1 NAME Elizabeth /Bourgeois/	Name
1 SEX F	Sex
1BIRT	Birth
2 DATE 13 MAY 1866	Date of birth
2 PLAC Amsterdam	Place of birth
1 DEAT	Death
2 DATE 6 JUN 1940	Date of death
2 PLAC Delft	Place of death
1 OCCU artist	Occupation
1 FAMS @F1@	Family of which individual is part
0 @I3@ INDI	Record for individual
1 NAME Sophie/Apple/	Name
1 SEX F	Sex
1 FAMC @F1@	Family individual is child of
0 @F1@ FAM	Record for family
1 HUSB @I1@	Husband =
1 WIFE @I2@	Wife =
1 MARR	They are married
2 DATE 1 NOV 1887	Date of marriage
2 PLAC Amsterdam	Place of marriage
1 CHIL @I3@	Child =
0 @U1@ SUBM	Record for submitter
1 NAME Submitter	Name of submitter
0 TRLR	End of record

Figure 16. Fictional example of a GEDCOM file

The marriage record is part of a family record, although it is possibly not filled in, for instance if parents were not married but did both acknowledge their children, or if the date of the marriage is unknown. It is striking that one can fill in a line value Y (for Yes) in the marriage record, but there is no line value N (for No).[76]

1 MARR	Record of marriage
2 DATE 1 NOV 1987	Date of marriage
2 PLAC Amsterdam	Place of marriage

Figure 17. Part of the marriage record in GEDCOM.

By giving priority to the family record, the GEDCOM centralizes this entity as if it is a separate object, a nuclear family in itself, with or without children. It is also noteworthy that the [MARR] tag signifies an event with a start date, but without an end date. The end of a marriage can only be defined by a DIV record, since a divorce also is an event with a specific date and place attached to it. Multiple marriages are possible by entering multiple [MARR]-tags. In some cases, data found in the sources must sometimes be forced to fit into the database. Some features can be inserted very easily, but others need some adjustments before they fit into the given categories.

Take, for example, a recomposed family consisting of two partners who each have children from a former relationship. This group cannot easily be defined as a new family in most genealogical software. Tamura Jones, an expert on genealogical software, comments on this example:

> The new couple may get a few more children. All those people together are one family, yet most traditional software has a hard time recognizing that. If you print a so-called 'Family Group' reports for this couple, the older children from the previous marriage are probably completely absent. Even a hint that both were married before may be missing.[77]

The above-mentioned arrangements, and many others like adoption or guardianship, can find a place within this software, but only as exceptions to the default model. The tag [ASSO] can be used to add other-than-default relationships to one individual.

Though the GEDCOM standard was developed by a Church that allows only heterosexual marriages, the GEDCOM standard ironically provides more freedom than some other genealogical software in describing other-than-heterosexual relationships. The architecture of GEDCOM allows individuals of the same sex to be defined as a couple, notably by *not* requiring a gender specification attached to the linking of two individuals in a family.[78] The FAM record demands that only two individuals can be placed horizontally in one FAM record, either with the tag husband [HUSB] or the tag [WIFE]. Although [HUSB] and [WIFE] mirror a heterosexual marriage, these tags do not require that the individuals linked to them have the opposite gender. Likewise, the MARR record allows for two people of the same sex getting married on a specific date. This 'same-sex paradox' as Jones calls it, gives same-sex marriages essentially the same status as

heterosexual marriages, although the structure itself strongly suggests the heterosexual norm of a nuclear family with one male husband, one female wife and children who all have the same legal parents.[79]

This short examination of a few GEDCOM relations reveals that digital genealogy mirrors a view on humans as primarily defined by their links with their parents. The family is a central unit to which the individual is subordinated. By consequence, data given by official sources must be processed, edited, and adapted to a couple-with-children structure before the data can be entered into the database.[80] Although a great deal of additional information can be added to this system, this can easily be lost in the transmission from one program to the other. The basic structure of the FAM record seems to be the most robust – and thus the most normative.[81]

3.5 Conclusions

This chapter started with the statement that the ubiquitous digitalization has an impact on the stories of contemporary family historians. It implies that digitalization offers the opportunity to find new stories in the abundance of data now available. This abundance is the consequence of the global digitization of archives and the commercialization of data-driven genealogy through genealogical portals. Though the platform society as coined by Van Dijck et al. did not yet exist when the family histories in my corpus were created, they nevertheless show various signs of digitization and digitalization, varying from using digital photography to finding new relatives on the Internet.

I restricted my main research question to the conceptual relation between 'my family' and 'myself', and I have demonstrated how this is impacted by technology. This includes the digitalization of documents, with its consequences for the distribution and structuring of data, which has changed ideas about and practices of archives on many levels. As has become evident, with the almost universal use of GEDCOM as a necessary basic tool for communication between databases, some basic concepts of what an individual and what a relative is have become very rigid. A closer analysis of the GEDCOM standard shows how the genealogical software guides family historians in the way they describe their families.

To this analysis, Manovich added the insight that databases, on which genealogical software is built, form a challenge to narrative, in the sense that the ele-

ments of the database begin to function as the basic elements of the narrative. Or, inversely, that the narrative may only exist as a set of links to database elements, and may no longer be considered a primary syntagm, functioning within a paradigm. For now, we can state that family histories are indeed hybrid products of databases and, at least, narrative elements. These narrative elements are partly built in the software, as has become clear in the analysis of GEDCOM.

This chapter started with a general overview of digitization as a contemporary phenomenon that takes place in archives and at home and subsequently focused on the smallest unit of genealogical software within the GEDCOM standard and the concepts dominating this software. This zooming in leads to the conclusion that the family histories in this corpus have more in common than their shared storage place, the CBG, shared cultural context of genealogical research, and shared archival and digitized context. They also share a strong model of the family – produced and reproduced by genealogical software – which guides the way family historians reflect on themselves and their pasts and shapes the concept of 'me' in relation to 'my family'.

CHAPTER 4

Constituent timelines between 'me' and 'my relatives'

'In unserer Sprache is eine ganze Mythologie niedergelegt.'[1]

Ludwig Wittgenstein

4.1 The past constructed along timelines

This chapter considers timelines constituting the relation between 'myself' and 'my family' in this collection of family histories. Though the family histories in this selected corpus vary in many aspects, they are nevertheless all structured along chronological, continuous timelines: from the past to the present, or from the present to the past. These two timelines correspond to two major genealogical concepts, either the concept of the ancestor or the concept of the descendant.

Let me first illustrate these two crucial concepts as used in these family histories. An essential element of the concept of the ancestor is 'myself' related to other individuals in the past, who are understood as the ancestors of 'myself'. The structure of a typical ancestor or fan chart starts in the present and displays the history of 'myself', or in genealogical terms, the ego or the proband. The ancestor chart then displays the parents of 'myself', their parents, the parents of their parents, and so on. The further the chart goes into the past, the more ancestors will be involved.

By contrast, the concept of a descendant chart presupposes an individual in the present who considers himself or herself as a descendant among many others, all descending from the same ancestors. In the end, all descendants stem

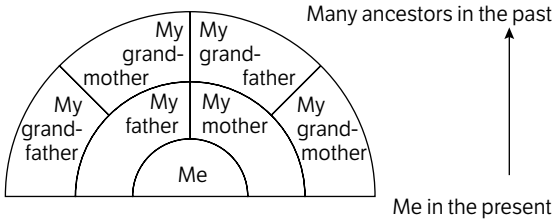


Figure 18. Structure of a fan or ancestor chart.

from one person who could be called the 'first ancestor'.

As we will see, family histories based on such a descendant chart begin with the so-called first generation and go forward in time, so to speak, until the present. Just as the 'me' in an ancestor chart finds many relatives in the distant past, the 'me' in a descendant chart is surrounded by many relatives in the present, all related to the one first ancestor.

As in any other visual, the figures above are a simplification of the real charts as used in family histories. For now, I do not focus on the graphic representations of these charts, but interpret them rather as structures of a timeline inherent to the use of terms like ancestor or descendant. In other words, the terms 'ancestor chart' and 'descendant chart' refer to the visuals used *as well as* to the timelines used, including definitions of relatives as ancestors or descendants. Contemporary family historians apply these terms in their ordering of events, and their family histories can be categorized either according to the one time vector (from present to past in the ancestor chart) or to the other (from past to present in the descendant chart). These timelines are the basic structures upon which these family histories are built. Although much more complicated timelines exist – such as flashbacks and flash forwards and variations on the two – these alternatives are virtually absent in this corpus.[2]

Timelines are relevant with regard to the main research question of this book, concerning the relation between the 'me' of the family historian and his or her family history. As has become clear from the images above, the 'me' in an ancestor chart, representing the family historian, will have a different position with respect to his or her relatives than the 'me' in the descendant chart. As a reminder, and following anthropologist Amade M'charek in her book on the Humane Genome Diversity Project, I will give the ancestor chart the fan-like symbol of a **V**, and the descendant chart the cone-like symbol of a **Λ**. Though these symbols seem to represent objectified relationships between generations of individuals, they rather represent a specific point of view, writes M'charek:

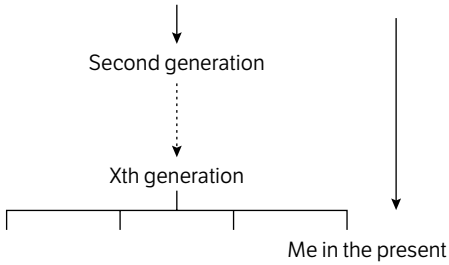


Figure 19. Structure of a cone or descendant chart.

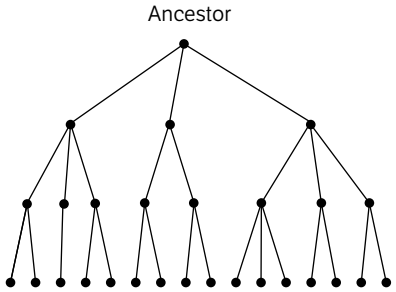
> From a genealogical perspective, going back in time means to unfold a greater complexity in biological kinship. It makes more and more individuals appear as parts of 'the family': as ancestors of a specific individual. From the perspective of an individual, this amelioration of ancestors can be presented by the form of a **V**.[3]

Going back in time from the perspective of the 'me' in the present, the past unfolds an ever-growing family. The deeper one digs into the past, the more ancestors can be found. Paradoxically, seen from the perspective of the first ancestor in a descendant chart, there is not an ever-shrinking, but an ever-growing family. The number of relatives increases, the nearer one comes to present times. M'charek interprets the differences between an ancestor chart and a descendant chart in a genetic context, summarizing the differences in this way:

> Whereas **V** is about how the individual is connected to predecessors, the **Λ** is about how individuals are connected to each other via predecessors.[4]

Although M'charek's object of research differs from mine, her interpretation of the two types of chart can be used to interpret family histories. It also supports the idea that charts are not as neutral as they seem. They mirror, among other things, a point of view in time.[5]

However, this statement does not shed light on the significance for the 'me' by using one type of chart or the other. More apt in this case is the work of the anthropologist Katherine Verdery, who points to the relation between self and history in *The Political Lives of Dead Bodies,* in which she examines how inhabitants of post-socialist countries consider themselves part of their country's history.[6] Using notions of time as developed by her fellow anthropologist Edmund Leach, Verdery concludes that the post-socialist inhabitants' reflections on their



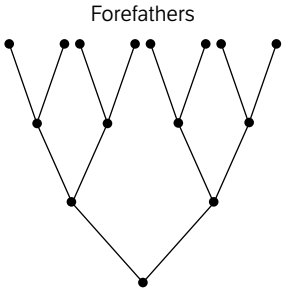


Figure 20. Cone chart with many descendants. / Figure 21. Fan chart with many forefathers/ancestors.

histories are grounded in temporal conceptions. In other words, basic notions of time people use in their reshaping of history are connected to their interpretation of their position in history and consequently to their sense of self. Verdery:

> [B]ecause the sense of self rests partly on a sense of being-in-time, the shape people attribute to history infuses both individuals' and groups' self-understanding. Therefore, locating oneself in time is a function of the shape one accords it. We can grasp this idea best by considering the shape of history inherent in various ideas about kinship.[7]

Verdery's description of the descendant chart is the cone, synonymous with the **Λ** in M'charek's terminology:

> When people in the present think of the world as inhabited by themselves and their fellows, all descended from an 'eponymous ancestor' in the deep past, history takes on the shape of a cone or a pyramid.[8]

This way of thinking features a contemporary individual as part of a group who all share the same ancestors (See Figure 20).[9] In contrast with this view, Verdery describes the shape of the ancestor chart as a fan, comparable to the **V** in M'charek's terms:

> By contrast, where people in the present think of the world as inhabited by individuals likes themselves, each the product of many forefathers, the cone is inverted into a fan (See figure 21).

Although Verdery's analysis of post-communist relationships to dead bodies is quite context-specific, her description of the relation between self and history can be applied to all sorts of groups, like nations, religions, and ideologies.

In *Ancestors and Relatives. Genealogy, Identity, & Community*, the sociologist Eviatar Zerubavel, who has written extensively on the function of time in human lives, applies Verdery's descriptions to kinship ties.[10] Zerubavel draws a striking consequence of the used direction of time for the self-understanding of relatives. He interprets Verdery's cone chart and fan chart as signifying two different forms of identity in family histories. The so-called cone chart, the descendant chart, 'represents an attempt to depict a family, thereby providing an ideal model for envisioning genealogical *communities*'.[11] By contrast, an ancestor chart is an expression of a predominantly person-centered conception of genealogy, and is 'particularly useful as a general model for theorizing genealogical *identities*'.

In this respect, Zerubavel signals a cultural switch from a traditional descendant chart-like portraying of genealogical ties to a modern one, in which the ancestor chart is dominant. This switch 'also represents the historical transition from a predominantly group-centered to a predominantly person-centered conception of genealogy'.[12]

Unfortunately, Zerubavel does not specify in what period this switch is thought to have taken place. He provides a sweeping depiction of developments in a present era, which makes his argument not very specific. However, with regard to my research question, my concern is a different one: can the present corpus of family histories support Zerubavel's claims about genealogical communities and genealogical identities? More precisely, in this chapter I will study in what ways family historians endorse the meanings Zerubavel attributes to descendant and ancestor charts as timelines in their family histories.

In order to evaluate Zerubavel's claims, I have categorized all family histories according to the timelines used as the basic structure of their family history, irrespective of whether they use a visual representation of these in a chart. I must add to this that the descendant chart has a few variants that, as will become clear further on, generate other meanings. I will list them here.

A descendant chart can either cover all male and female relationships within one family, the parental line (*parenteel)*, or just mention the relatives which have their surname in common, the name genealogy. Usually, this name genealogy contains male relatives as the name bearers, but unmarried woman and their children may also be included (see also 4.4). A variant of the name gene-

alogy is the agnatic line, in which only the eldest sons are mentioned (see also 4.4.).

Of the 132 family histories examined, 71 of them are based on a descendant chart, to which in some cases an ancestor chart or an agnatic line has been added. An agnatic line is the main structure in nineteen family histories, in some cases supplemented with a partial descendant chart or ancestor chart. An ancestor chart as the basic structure of a family history is found in 22 family histories, and three of them are structured along another kind of genealogy: a partial descendant chart to highlight the relationship between cousins; a partial descendant chart to prove the relationship between three families, linked to one woman; and a list of great-grandparents and grandchildren.[13]

This last structure could be seen as based on what Verdery calls a shallow concept of time, in which the sense of self is not necessarily connected to a deep past, but is more present-oriented.[14] A further seventeen family histories are not structured according to a dominant genealogical timeline as in the ancestor or descendant chart. They could be categorized as autobiography, biography, a re-publishing of manuscripts of relatives with an introduction or an afterword, and as a collection of letters and postcards. Though they are interesting in their own right, I have omitted these from my argument about the basic structures of contemporary family histories based on genealogical timelines.[15]

Dominant chart structure	**Number**
Descendant chart	71
Agnatic line	19
Ancestor chart	22
Partial chart	3
Other	17

Figure 22. Overview of family histories in this corpus according to their dominant chart structure.

In the following sections, I will reflect on the two dominant timelines found in the corpus of homemade histories I collected at the CBG and the meanings the authors themselves attach to their position among their relatives in those timelines. In my analysis, I will focus on the directions of time these authors

use and what consequences this has for their performance as relatives and as writers. I will consider the ways family historians link themselves to their families, thus testing Zerubavel's conceptual claims about the links between 'myself' and 'my family' resulting in either a family identity, a genealogical community, or a personal, that is, a genealogical identity. The emphasis will be on these two expressions of timelines, because they are explicitly related to genealogical practices. However, before this exploration can start, one concept needs more specific attention: this is the concept of 'generation', which is inherently bound to the passing of time and to relationships between individuals and their pasts. What function does this concept have in these family histories?

4.2 Generations as units of time

The term 'generation' is already introduced in the structure of the descendant chart, but it is equally essential in the structure of the ancestor chart. Though not mentioned explicitly, it is also crucial in the GED-COM structure (see 3.4), in which individuals are defined by their links to their parents and any children they may have. Not only is the concept of generation dominant in the gathering of genealogical information, it also structures many family histories written on the basis of this research. As several lists of contents show, the generational structure of the genealogical software recurs in the structure of the written family history. In general, a homemade family history is split up into separate chapters, each concerning one generation. This structuring element can be seen in the tables of contents, with chapters that refer to generation I, II, III et cetera.

These numbers reflect the ordering in genealogical systems, in which every generation is designated by the same symbol, e.g. a roman numeral, and every relative with an ascending number.[16] The numbering system primarily depends on the determination of the so-called first generation. In an ascending, fanlike **V** structure, the first generation will be the so-called ego or probandus. The numbering then goes back in time. In a descending, cone-like **Λ** system, the first generation is often called the progenitor. In that case, the children of the first ancestor are described as the second generation, their children as the third and so on, up to the present-day generation.

This classification suggests that the advent of children in each generation also generates a new era in the family history, a new starting point. This dominance of the concept of generation in the family histories clarifies why family

INHOUDSOPGAVE

Aparte hoofdstukken

Figure 23. ID 41 Table of contents, based on the concept of generation in a descendant chart. The first part contains all generations. The second part consists of 'separate chapters' with separate family stories.

histories in this corpus are not so much histories as chronicles – according to historian Hayden White's division of historical representation into annals, chronicles and 'history proper'.[17] Annals differ from chronicles in at least two ways: whereas annals are written by an anonymous author about a range of subjects arranged chronologically, chronicles have a known author and a central subject, in this case the history of a family. An essential feature of the chronicle is the linear structure that, as White indicates, promises closure and meaning but does not provide for it. The inclusion of separate chapters with anecdotes that are not inherently related to the generational structure will not provide for this closure either.[18]

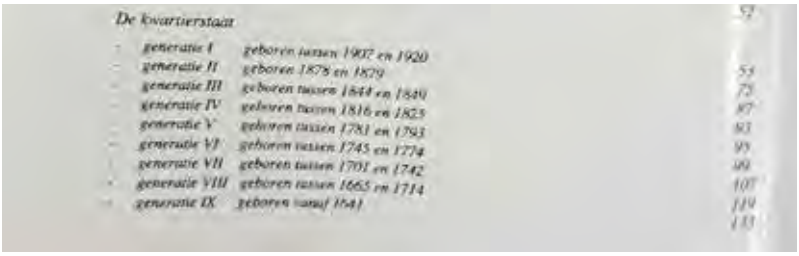
For this reason, it is important to take a closer look at the concept of 'generation' as functioning in these family histories both as a unit of time and as a structuring element of the written texts, where each chapter launches the intro-

Inhoud:

Inhoudsopgave

Figure 25. ID 74. Table of contents based on generations

Figure 24. ID 117. Table of contents based on generations



De kwartierstaat

Figure 26. ID 115. Fragment of a table of contents based on an ancestor chart

duction of a new generation. How can we interpret this classification in time?

Verdery bases her accounts of ancestors and descendants on the first two of three basic experiences of time – cyclical, linear, and oscillating – as formulated by the anthropologist Edmund Leach. Thus, we could interpret the succession of generations as an expression of the cyclical concept of time: according to folk biology, the history of the family unfolds as a cyclical process of being born, having children, and passing away, after which the cycle repeats itself when the children grow up, have children themselves, and eventually also pass away.[19]

According to Leach, this cyclical idea of time is constitutive for many religions, repudiating the inescapability of death. 'One of the commonest devices is simply to assert that death and birth are the same thing – that birth follows death, just as death follows birth. This seems to amount to denying the second aspect of time by equating it with the first.'[20] Leach considers these two approaches to time as a fallacy of conventional thinking that takes geometrical forms, such as the line and the circle, as 'true' versions of our lived experience of time. In his view, we treat repetitive and non-repetitive events as the same, as a sign of Time itself.

If we follow Leach's ordering, for the time being, the question arises what kind of temporal conception is reflected in a narrative based on a genealogical timeline. Two elements co-exist in the succession of generations: a linear idea of time, in which the irreversibility of events is central, merged with the concept of a generation that recurs as a significant unit of time.

We could argue that the concept of *generation* is an expression of the third concept of time, a concept that Verdery has left aside in her interpretation of the relation between time, history, and kinship. Edmund Leach describes this third option as a category of time that oscillates between opposites, like a zigzagging between night and day, or between life and death. These non-linear and non-cyclical movements imply the existence of a third entity that pendulates between opposites.

As Leach states: this kind of thinking presupposes a 'thing' that oscillates, like a soul that travels from death to birth, or an ego that lives in the day and goes into the night. At this point in his essay, Leach refers to animistic ideas about the soul that survives in a living body as well as in a grave, but later in his essay he applies the idea of oscillation of time to phenomena like festivals and *rites de passage*. He states that a pendulum concept of time accords with how people experience time: not as a straight line, nor as a repetition, but as a back-and-forth, as a discontinuous sequence of events that repeat themselves in

their contrasts:

> The essence of the matter is not the pendulum but the alternation. I would maintain that the notion that time is a 'discontinuity of repeated contrasts' is probably the most elementary and primitive of all ways of regarding time.[21]

To be clear, I am not outlining these rather speculative ideas about the experience of time to claim that they convey some essential epistemological truth. I put them forward here as a guideline to understanding a certain logic that produces seemingly natural and inescapable concepts, in this case in family history. In other words, these ideas shed light on recurring ideas about what is natural and self-evident in the experience of time.

Moreover, applying this notion of time to the concept of generation can help us understand how the genealogical idea of a family comes into existence. One could argue that there is something that oscillates in the succession of generations. This something creates continuity, in that it transforms children into parents, and parents into grandparents, thus forming a family. According to this interpretation, the concept of generation supports the idea of a family identity that is propelled along the sequence of generations. Note that this perspective on generations as units of time also seems to imbue the term generation with biological associations. Here, the Latourian semiotic human and material or physical dimensions of entities emerge. 'Reality multiplies,' as Annemarie Mol describes the miraculous proliferation of ontologies: the term generation still refers to biological offspring of a previous generation, but it also becomes endowed with meanings belonging to time and family.[22]

Seen through this lens of oscillating time movements, the concept of a generation works as a conceptual tool that supports the framing of family history. Whether the family history is structured from present to past, or from past to present, the concept of the generation is the leading vehicle for the transport of the concept of family through time. In the next section, I provide a schematic description of the basic forms of this generational way of thinking and how they structure the family histories in the corpus.

4.3 From 'me' to my eldest ancestor

In the corpus, I found 22 family histories based on various variants of an ancestor chart. Some of them consist of a print of a database, giving only names and dates; others present an ancestor chart as a side-product of a descendant chart or name genealogy. These side-products are easy to generate, since all data in a database are connected. Choosing the presentation format, as a visual or as a list, is also a simple matter. Only a few family histories in the corpus show a visual of the ancestor chart they display. Some charts are shown as a fan (Figure 27), but the majority as a schema of all the names and data. The fan can also be redesigned, as in Figure 28, in which a chart shows only the relatives that have been found. More often, an ancestor chart is displayed as a list (Figure 29) or an assembly of data, where each family member is numbered, and all the information, including pictures, appears under this number.

The ego, the 'me' or the 'I' in the present who perceives the past, interprets his or her relatives as ancestors. In this model of the ancestor chart, the 'me' is the starting point of the family history, as is depicted in Figure 30, which gives a more detailed and also a gendered structure of the ancestor chart, with each generation and each family member numbered. In this structure, the 'me' has many ancestors and perceives the past from the present. The 'arrow of time'

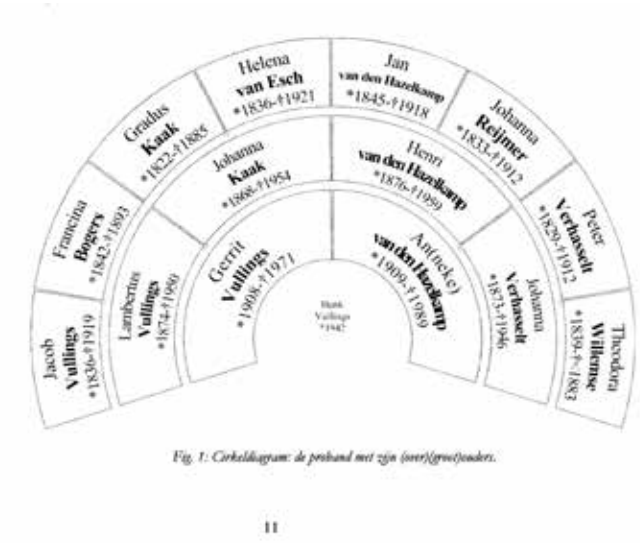


Figure 27. ID 119. A simple fan chart.

GENERATIE VI

kwartierstaat nummer en naam	datum geboorte	datum overlijden	trouw-leeftijd	leeftijd overlijden	aantal kinderen	aantal huwelijken
63 *Lena Jans van Rookveen*	02-02-1774	10-03-1812	19	38	1	2
62 *Paulus van den Houten*	06-03-1768	08-02-1828	25	59		3
61 *Maria van der Weerde*	15-03-1757	26-01-1823	28	65	9	1
60 *Klaas Marinusse Beije*	26-06-1754	22-05-1826	30	71		1
59 *Lena Jans Maartse*	22-03-1761	voor 1812			9	1
58 *Cornelis Janse Verton*	ca. 1753	na 1799				1
57 *Adriaantje Cornelisse*	26-09-1751	na 1794	24		3	2
56 *Adriaan Lauwerse Verton*		1793				1
47 *Maria van der Weide*	02-05-1758	1805	26	ca. 49	2	1
46 *Bartel Jans Straaijer*	18-04-1761	21-05-1819	23	58		2
45 *Levina Jansdr. Verton*	15-08-1755	28-01-1827	24	71	5	1
44 *Jacob Janze Verseput*	16-02-1758	01-09-1817	22	59		1
43 *Lena Jacobsdr Versteeg*	21-07-1748	29-09-1826	18	78	10	1
42 *Hardeman Riedijk*	05-10-1745	12-12-1791	21	46		1
41 *Sara Willemse Bal*	26-08-1749	13-08-1796	23	44	2	1
40 *Jan van den Berge*	01-02-1750	03-09-1794	22	44		1
39 *Dana Adriaanse de Jonge*	20-10-1748	16-04-1815	20	66	16	1
38 *Leendert van Donge*	17-10-1745	16-01-1823	23	77		1
37 *Jannetje Meulemeester*	16-01-1738	na 1799	18		2	1
36 *Leendert de Bruijne*	02-11-1727	ca. 1799	28	ca. 72		1
35 *Willemijntje Frans*	26-07-1745	02-03-1814	31	68	4	3
34 *Johannes Bienefeld*	08-09-1755	20-01-1793	21	37		1
33 *Cornelia van Son*	03-06-1752		23		8	1
32 *Cornelis Malipaard*	02-07-1753	31-03-1814	22	60		2

43

Figure 28. ID 115. Part of a databased ancestor state. The family members are numbered, with their dates of birth and death, the age of marriage, age of death and the number of children they had. The yellow rows indicate the female relatives.

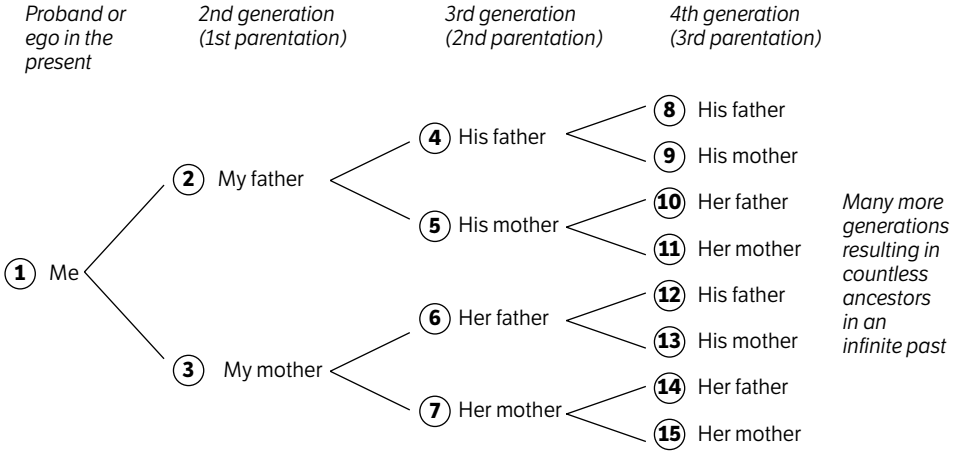


Figure 29. The structure of an ancestor chart: from present ego to previous generations. The numbering of each family member is according to the so-called Kekule system.

points from the present to the past. In contrast with earlier visuals of the **V** like, vertically depicted timelines, the arrow of time is here depicted horizontally. The reason for this tilt is to avoid the tree-like visuals that have made such a deep imprint in our culture, which has supported the conflation of biological and social concepts of kinship with the dominant monogenetic view on kinship as a universal category.

Rotating the visual by 90 degrees is an attempt 'to make appear what is so close, so immediate, so intimately linked to ourselves that, as a consequence, we do not perceive it'.[23] In this manner, I aim to create a certain analytical distance that makes it easier to scrutinize some of the foundations on which these family histories are built.

In the following, I provide three examples of family histories in which the ancestor chart clearly structures the whole book, and describe these examples using Zerubavel's statement as a hypothesis about the conceptual link between an ancestor-chart-like structure of the family history with an individual genealogical identity. Though this genealogical identity is a result of the logic of an ancestor chart, the question here is whether it can also be discerned in written texts structured according to an ancestor chart. In the same way, I will look for elements in the family histories that do *not* comply with Zerubavel's statement that ancestor charts necessarily produce an individual genealogical identity rather than emphasizing a collective family identity. The aim of this approach is to arrive at a more nuanced understanding of the structures dominating contemporary written family histories.

The title of the first example reads, in translation, *The ancestors (the DNA) of Barbara and Olivier Brouwers*.[24] This hardcover book of almost six hundred pages was written by the father of Barbara and Olivier and describes thousands and thousands of ancestors, arranged in the structure of an ancestor chart. In this case, the ancestor chart is that of the brother and sister. Their father describes himself as the first 'parentation' of these siblings. He writes: 'By identifying his/her 2 parents, 4 grandparents, 8 great grandparents et cetera, one can give an outline of – in modern terms – the composition of their DNA.'[25]

The father repeats this reference to DNA several times throughout the book, without any futher explanation. In this quotation, as in the title of this family history, the term DNA is equated with ancestors, which is somewhat problematic from a scientific point of view. Ancestors do indeed transfer their DNA to the next generation, but no one can predict which half of an individual's chromosomes will come from the father and which from the mother, apart from

the transfer of the paternal Y-chromosome to sons, and the replication of mitochondrial maternal DNA in the next generation. Besides the complex inheritance of genes, DNA seems to be very flexible and open to changes during an individual's life, so that the idea of an unchanging DNA that transmits unchangeable properties within a family could be defined as folk biology.[26]

In the description of the ancestors from earlier generations, the author uses the term DNA again, as he states that a person has 'contributed significantly to our DNA'. This is the case with Laureijns Mutsaerts (1370-1443), who occurs 270 times in the ancestor chart, and Gerardus van Broechoven (1346), who is mentioned 355 times.[27] This manifold repeating of certain names is caused by inbreeding. Relatives by definition have some ancestors in common. If they have children, and this is repeated in subsequent generations, then one individual may be the ancestor of many descendants. Obviously, the visual of a fan can never represent the ways people created kinship ties in this manner. The sentence 'has contributed significantly to our DNA' would imply that inheritable properties of one person are more often been found in his or her descendants. Clearly, this is not what the author means, because he uses DNA to refer not to the content of genes but to the links between genealogical data found in archives.

Another way of interpreting this reference to DNA is by stating that the author identifies a biological concept of family with a genealogical concept – as if DNA can be explained in terms of names and dates and places of birth and death.[28] This equation is understandable, bearing in mind that for a description of time 'something' is passed on through the generations. This 'something' needs a predicate. In a name genealogy – a common variant of the descendant chart – the distribution of a surname provides the link between generations. But what is transferred in a family history based on an ancestor chart? In this case, the author has recourse to the term DNA, here signifying the continuity of the family he describes.

How does this family history develop the narrative from the present back into the past? The book first introduces the two probands, Barbara and Olivier, on one page, with pictures of them and a short description of their dates and places of birth, their partners, and the dates and places of birth of their children. On the next page, a new, fourteen-page chapter starts, entitled 'Individuals who stand out'. The author characterizes this selection of those who stand out as subjective and arbitrary. For reasons of caution, he announces his intention to refer only to ancestors unknown to anyone now alive.

The chapter starts with two great grandfathers who died in 1922 and 1926,

respectively. The former came from a family of textile producers and acquired social standing as a regent of the church. The other is mentioned first as a miller, later as a grain merchant who, by the end of his life, owned many acres of land and even two castles. Moreover, he was one of the instigators of a bank. He married twice, and his second spouse was of noble origin.

In this chapter the author lists more examples of what he refers to as 'prominent people', including mayors, priests, bishops, and knights. The list includes women like Hanneke Pijlijser, who lived in the thirteenth century and was the mistress of Jan I (1252/3-1294) who wrote several poems about her. The family historian also describes women from very wealthy families, such as Barbara Pijlijser who died before 1547, mentioned because of her crucial link to the lineage of Charles I.

A subsequent two-page chapter covers Barbara and Olivier's genealogical links to Charlemagne, or Charles the Great (2 April 742 – 28 January 814). Although several paths within the ancestor chart lead to this famous ancestor, the shortest route leads to relative number 8.664.907.882: Louis, son of Charles the Great. This finding of a link is a well known motive for genealogists and has a long history, referring to an essential idea within Western European thought that thrived in the Renaissance. The historian Marian Rothstein describes the significance attached to the idea of an origin in this era, in which 'sources, origins, are perceived as active guides to how a thing is to be regarded and how it may be expected to perform. […] The parameters of what a thing (actually or potentially) is, can be defined by knowing its origin; in this sense, origins can be taxonomic functions.'[29]

The same line of thought applied in the Renaissance to the origins of families. As Rothstein puts it:

> A man who was related to Hector or Hercules (or better, as the kings of France, to both), had potentially at his disposition the virtue and valor for which such heroes were universally admired. By implication, he had the possibility, and the joint responsibility, to reactivate the potentials of his origins, that is, to emulate his ancestors.[30]

Rothstein describes how the historiographer Jean Lemaire (ca 1473-1525) constructed, on assignment of King Louis XII, the connection between Charles the Great and Noah, known as the ancestor of all human beings, Hector, and Hercules:

> Lemaire has proven, as he tells us, 'by strong reasons and true authorities, the French and Gallican nation, both Eastern and Western, is of pure Herculian and Trojan extraction. And the virtues and great deeds of the Great Libyan Hercules and most valiant Hector were represented in the person of the Emperor Charles the Great'. Here too origins are to be taken seriously: Charlemagne represents Hercules and Hector: in the same way, the reigning monarch Louis XII, their successor, contains the presence of (i.e. represents) all three.[31]

In this narrative, Charlemagne represents both Hercules and Hector; and tracing lineage to Charlemagne still counts as the grail in the genealogical world.[32]

Does the historical background of the Charlemagne trope mean that this family historian really believes that the greatness of Charles the Great, and by consequence of Hector and Hercules, resonates in his children's lives? There is no evidence for such interpretation. Reading his relativizing remarks about his own research, I think that the author does not so much desire to show *that* he is a descendant of the man, known as the greatest Carolingian King, but to demonstrate, rather playfully, *how* this lineage could be proven. He treats the link to Charlemagne as a research track, maybe even a research ritual, that he shares with his fellow-genealogists, comparable to the visiting of the Eifel Tower as a must-see for a tourist visiting Paris for the first time.

Before his demonstration of this lineage, the author reflects on the limitations of his research. He states that finding a lineage to Charlemagne is an absolute highlight for a genealogist, but he also admits that it is relatively easy to find such connection. If every generation had doubled itself in every subsequent generation, there would have been 17 billion ancestors at the time of Charlemagne. Around that period, Western Europe numbered approximately 20 million inhabitants. The author adds that though it is nice to find such connections, 'almost everyone in North Western Europe will stem in one way or another from Charlemagne. It cannot be otherwise. The probability of finding this is almost 1,000 to one'.[33] He found at least 27 lineages to a key figure in his research who is known to be descended from Charles the Great: Barbara Pijlijser, who died in 1547. Her parents are both linked to Duke Jan I, and he in turn has links to Charles the Great along many lineages. The family historian states that here he only mentions the most direct lineage.

In the preface to his book, the author stresses that the results of his research give a distorted picture of the past, since they do not give an accurate, repre-

sentative picture of all ancestors. 'Almost all of us stem from a few prominent ancestors and a majority of "insignificant people"'.[34] The 'us' in this sentences seems to represent a general 'us', suggesting that all people have only a few prominent ancestors. Later on, he repeats the fact that 'the poor lads' who had nothing to leave behind, who had nothing to share and certainly had owned no land, are not mentioned in any act or document, unless they were war heroes or convicted criminals.

The second time he makes this distinction is in a chapter devoted to 'individuals who stand out, either due to their social position or their remarkable or even criminal behaviour'.[35] In this phrasing the family historian demonstrates a certain class consciousness, as he explains the social significance of these relatives. By relativizing his own research, he also shows some irony, which makes it hard to hear even an echo in his texts of the traditional, nineteenth-century genealogy that was aimed at finding evidence for noble ancestry.[36] The American historian Mary Ritter Beard once famously stated 'no documents, no history', and this family historian would agree with her, by emphasizing this connection between archival traces and being memorialized.[37]

With this in mind, the author of this family history states the percentage of ancestors he found in each generation, in order to alert the reader to the minimal proportion of the names found in the total number of ancestors. Before 1600, these names together form less than one percent of the hypothetical number of ancestors.[38] The others, the 'poor lads' are untraceable and literally insignificant.

On page 26, after the introduction of the probands, the chapter on 'Individuals who stand out', and the description of the lines back to Charlemagne, the explanation of the ancestor chart starts with the first generation (called the 'first parentation'): the author himself and his wife, the parents of Barbara and Olivier, including two photographs. The description consists of their dates and places of birth, his education and career (he was a Dutch ambassador; the occupation of his wife is not mentioned) and the names and dates of birth of their children. The second 'parentation' denotes the grandparents of Barbara and Olivier, starting with the parents of the father. Here, approximately sixty words are devoted to their lives: The grandfather was the director of a textile factory. Barbara and Olivier's grandmother was widowed at a young age. As an old woman, she married her butler, who killed her six weeks after their marriage. The butler was sentenced to twelve years of imprisonment. No other facts or documents are mentioned here.

The book continues with a description of all of Barbara and Olivier's ancestors. This history consists of distinct short biographies of each member of a generation. The first six generations each receive a full page, with a portrait – a photograph or painting of each one. The next 'parentations' consist of numbered lists of identified relatives with their names, and dates and places of birth, marriage, and death. In some cases, a short biography is added to these data.

Let us return to the question at the beginning of this section, inspired by Zerubavel's statement about the link between ancestor charts and genealogical identity. In what ways does this family history express an individual genealogical identity? In ID 3, the audience addressed is clearly, and perhaps even exclusively, the family historian's two children. They can read a book about 'their' past. Despite his remarks about the limitations of his research, the family historian has given his children a story about themselves as stemming from an extensive, partly well-to-do family with a very long history. The story itself, however, is an extremely fragmented chronicle, since it consists of lists of names and dates and numerous very short biographies and some painted or photographic portraits. He combines this story with precise descriptions of the prominent ancestors from whom they are descended, including Charles the Great. In this sense, this particular homemade family history does indeed corroborate Zerubavel's statement about the connection between ancestor chart and a person-centered genealogy, culminating in a genealogical identity.

This n =1 description makes no claim to prove that every family history based on an ancestor chart implies the performance of a person-centered genealogical identity. A counter-example is provided by another family history, based on an ancestor chart of all ancestors of the author's deceased wife. The couple spent years collecting information about her family relatives, mainly born in West-Friesland. But the focal point of the book is not the wife's relatives, but the local history of the region in general, and of the town of Egmond aan Zee in particular. The book includes short accounts of the farms the local people lived on, their traditional costumes, a reconstruction of their houses, the whale hunting they carried out around Iceland and Greenland, and all other aspects of daily life.

The writer emphasizes that anyone with relatives born in this area might be interested in this book: 'There's a fair chance that one of their ancestors is mentioned in this book. After all, we are all, at some point, each other's relatives!'[39] This democratic presentation of relatives in an ancestor chart – each relative has an equal position among others – leads, in this case, to an exposé

about the history of the region.[40] Genealogical links are used as a vehicle to write about the region itself, and especially about the daily aspects of living at this location near the sea. The focus is not on the genealogical identity of the writer, nor of his wife.

If genealogical identities are involved in this family history, then they perform a shared identity of the audience addressed – all people with ancestors in this area – since they all share this past. Nevertheless, the writer also alludes to a personal genealogical identity when he quotes an old saying: 'If a person does not honor his past, he is not worth his future.' He suggests replacing this saying with one of his own making: 'You only can know yourself if you know your past.'[41]

By presupposing a reading public that consists of descendants of all ancestors mentioned in the book, this ancestor-chart-based family history complicates Zerubavel's distinction between ancestor- and descendant-based ideas of personal and group identities.

Another complication of Zerubavel's statement that modern genealogies are person-centered, can be found in a series of self-published 'periodicals', aimed at families who are connected to each other in a specific way: The central subject of each periodical was married to one of the twelve children of the couple Zwerver and Timmer. Although the title of each periodical contains the name of this proband, the subtitle of every book is: 'Warmly and coldly billeted', where 'coldly' refers to in-laws of the family.[42]

Each issue has a slightly different character. One focuses on the different occupations in a family, another elaborates on religious backgrounds, and another discusses the regional history of the family in the nineteenth century. Each issue starts with an ancestor chart of the central subject, who is one of the in-laws. As stated, the reason for the ancestor chart of each proband is their marriage into the family of this specific couple. In this respect, the form of the ancestor chart – starting with one person and going 'back' in time – is linked to a social goal in the present: the affirmation of current relationships between all those brothers- and sisters-in-law with the children of the Zwerver-Timmer parents.

In this case, a family history based on an ancestor chart does not so much seek to mirror an individual genealogical identity as a 'family in the making': the pleasure of finding connections and building up historical knowledge coincides with reconstructing family relationships. This interplay displays the utopian elements of contemporary genealogy alluded to by the anthropologist Elisabeth Timm. One of these utopian elements is the idea that we are all related to each

Figure 30. Front cover ID 41.

other, but as long as there are no documents to verify our relationships, we are all 'undocumented relatives', thus without documented proof of being related.[43]

In this series on the children-in-law of the Zwerver-Timmer parents, this utopian element appears at 'switch points' in relationships: the link between two persons forms the starting point for new research, and at the same time, the circle of relatives around the couple, with all their different backgrounds, becomes wider and wider. In this process, the ancestor chart as the expression of a genealogical identity transforms in a general feeling of being part of a culture with a past; of being part of a historical culture.

4.4 From first ancestors to their descendants in the present

The corpus contains 84 family histories based on a descendant-, **Λ**-type chart, including those with only agnatic lines. In most cases, the deswcendant chart is printed as a list, with a numbering system per generation in Roman numerals, and numbers for the relatives in each generation. Each family member is listed together with the available data, supplemented with archival material and, in some cases, short histories.

A descendant chart not only functions as a structuring element in the family history, but is also often used as an illustration, and in some cases as a fold-out appendix (see Figures 35 and 36).

Two elements are key in the descendant structure. One is the structuring role of generations. The other is the representation of the self within such descendant chart. When the 'I' states that he or she is a descendant of someone else, she or he describes herself or himself as one among many descendants. This presentation presupposes the 'I' as part of an unlimited group of relatives that together descend from a common founding father or mother in the deep

Figure 31. ID 14. Example of family history based on a name genealogy. Children of daughters are mentioned; grandchildren of the daughters are not (blurred).

Figure 32. ID 68. Appendix.

past.[44] The term 'unlimited' is appropriate here because of the very fact that the descendant chart represents a history without closure: it keeps an open eye to the future. Compared to the 'me' in an ancestor-, **V**-type chart, the position of the 'me' in the descendant-, **Λ**-type chart is more modest, more socially oriented, and less isolated.

A descendant chart can be expressed in various designs. In some descendant charts, all children of a supposed founding father or mother are included, together with all their children and their spouses, and *their* children, grandchildren and so on. This variant is called a parental chart.

A variation on this parental chart that is more often seen in this corpus is

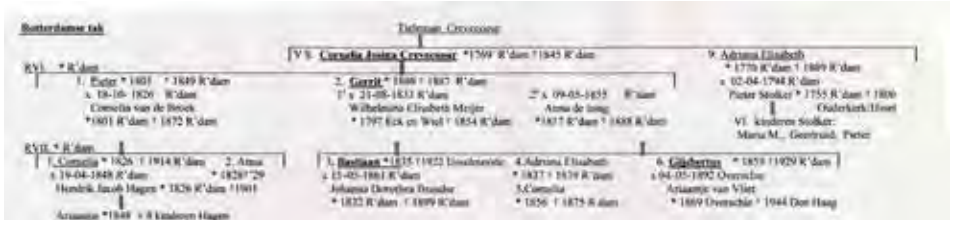


Figure 33. ID 70. Branch of a genealogy with a female progenitor. The author is one of the descendants.

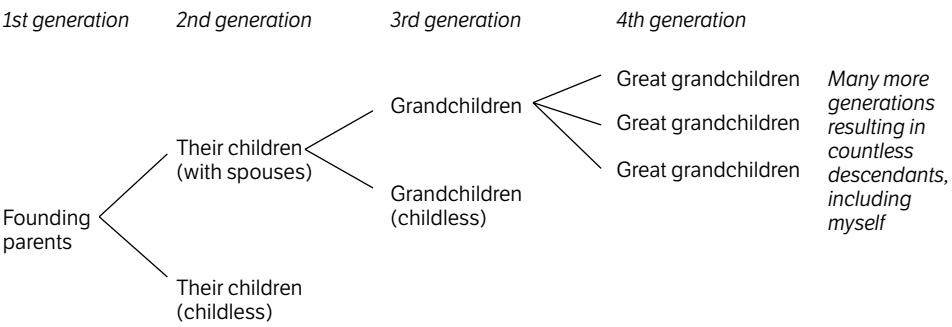


Figure 34. Horizontal structure of a descendant chart.

Figure 35. ID 97. Ong Jap Lik moved from China to Indonesia in about 1820 and married Mak Medang. Six children (1.1-1.6) originated from this marriage (the females are printed in italics). Some of the descendants moved to the Netherlands. This family history comprises all descendants of the so-called first ancestor Ong Jap Lik.

a descendant chart limited to descendants with the same surname. This variant is sometimes also described as a *name genealogy*, a genre in which the name itself is the main character of the family history. A name is indeed transmitted from parents to children. In the Netherlands, children are usually given the surname of their father if he has married their biological mother. This means that daughters will be mentioned in a name genealogy, but if they have taken their husband's name by marriage, their children will usually not be included. Here we see the normative influence of common sense: anyone who does not carry the father's name will be omitted from that part of their family history. That is why name genealogies often tell a family history along paternal lines, except for children born out of wedlock. These children are usually given their mother's surname and are thus usually also included in the name genealogy.

Why is a surname so important in a family history? Surnames indicate a supposed unity of the family and this is an important concept, even for contemporary governments. For example, until 1998, a child born to married parents in the Netherlands could only be given the father's surname. Since 1998, Dutch couples have been free to choose their first child's surname: the surname of either of the child's biological parents or of the child's 'duo-mother', if the mother is married to another woman. Once a couple has chosen a surname, all future children of this couple will receive the same surname. An information leaflet issued by the Dutch government explains that the reason for this rule is 'to preserve the unity of the name' since 'children, especially, find this unity important.'[45] Children of married couples who didn't decide about the surname before birth, will by default get the name of the father or the duo-mother. Children of unmarried couples who do not choose a surname will by default take the name of the mother. In this context, this label 'by default' shows that, at least according to the Dutch government, families are still being seen as important 'units' in society, supported by intricate combinations of cultural and judicial systems.

Some family histories in the corpus have tried to find a balance between a full genealogy describing all descendants and a strict name genealogy restricting itself to relatives, mostly males, with the same surname. In one example of such a compromise the author states that he mainly followed the paternal line, although daughters of the family are mentioned together with their partners and their children, including all available data. However, grandchildren of the daughters, by consequence generally those with a different surname, are only mentioned by their first names.[46] The author explains that he will sometimes make an exception and, in a text box, include information about those grand-

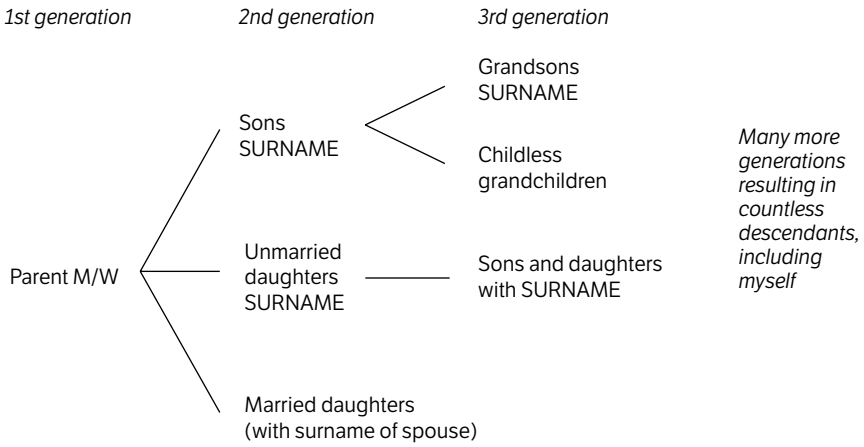


Figure 36. Horizontal structure of a name genealogy.

children who are known to a wider audience.[47]

Technically, a name genealogy does not refer to the history of a family at all, only to the historical transferring of a surname. No wonder, then, that some family historians start their genealogical research with the question: what is the history of my surname? For example, one of them introduces his family history with the question: How did we get our name, what does it mean, and where do we come from? When he was a teenager, his father told him that once upon a time a French soldier had fallen in love with a Dutch girl, so he became the namegiver of the family.[48] This story was the start of extensive research in archives that revealed a much more complex history of his surname.

A third variant of the descendant chart is that of the agnatic lineage, which is essentially a descendant chart in a summarized form, in which the transmission of a surname is the central subject, although only the first son of each generation is mentioned.

In some variations, the lineage takes the form of a rake, where the lineage of the eldest ancestors and their first sons with male children ends in a descendant chart covering all children of the last generation and their children.

One example of this variant is a family history introduced by the writers with the statement that 'our oldest known ancestor is Joost Greven, born in

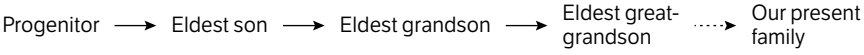


Figure 37. Structure of an agnatic lineage

Figure 38. ID 134: Above, in translation: 'The straight line'. The position of the pictures resembles a descendant chart structure, with a first ancestor, his son, his grandson and wife, and their four children.

Steenwijk in 1655'.[49] His name was found in a citizen book of the city that registered his payment of 25 Carolian guilders to become a citizen with specific privileges. The family historians conclude that this man, labelled generation I, was wealthy, since he could buy many rights. A copy of this document is added to this family history. Then, over two pages, the agnatic lines of the Greven and Wolds families are displayed: these two are the great grandparents of the three authors, their two siblings, and their cousin, and form the starting point of the family history of generation VII till the present, which fills the rest of the book. 'The lives of our parents receive a great deal of attention. After all, we were part of their lives,' the authors state in their introduction.[50] They tell their story with many family pictures, documents, letters, and memories of the authors about the lives of their great grandfathers, their grandparents, and their parents, and about 'Aunt Nan', their father's childless sister who was the director of a hospital

Figure 39. ID 9 and ID 76.

and played an eminent role in the family (see also 5.4).

These family historians focus more on the recent past than on the deep past of their relatives. The opposite is true of another family historian, who writes twenty pages about the life and circumstances of his first ancestor found: a soldier, Jan Willem, who married Catherina in 1733.[51] Their wedding certificate is the first evidence the author can trace of his name. This family historian writes extensively about the political circumstances in the Republic and mentions the correspondence he had with a military expert about the potential regiments of his first ancestor who was a mercenary.

In the archives, he also found a package of documents from around 1747/48 containing correspondence and lists including the name Jan Willem Heijden.[52] These documents refer to the last regiment Jan Willem would have been part of, had he not died prematurely of an unknown cause. The author even discovered little stales in red and blue of the uniform Jan Willem had ordered, and the tailor's bill. Jan Willem had married the widow Catherina, who died after the birth of her seventh child. When Jan Willem passed away, his mother was left with six grandchildren. She contacted an orphanage to take care of the children and died herself six months later.[53] This story is just one of many stories about ancestors

of the author, all are based on archival sources.

When we compare the latter two family histories, ID 9 and ID 76, both based on a descendant chart, the differences in time span become clear. The authors of ID 76, whose key interest lies in their recent family history, offer their readers a short introduction to the earlier period and then devote much more space to their recent ancestors. The writer of ID 9 seems to have a more historically informed view of his first ancestor – who had apparently left more traces in the archives than the early ancestors in ID 76.

The family historian of ID 9 even verifies the much-told family story about the first ancestor going to Russia to fight in Napoleon's army or, according to another story about the same man, witnessing the siege of Breda (two centuries earlier, in 1624-1625). The family historian confidently declares both stories untrue and finally states, in bold letters: 'Our ancestor is Johan Willem Heijden, a former constable with the dragoons, later an ensign with the *Waardgelders* in The Hague.'[54] A date of death was found in the archives – 1748 – which would mean that he was born in 1691, though the family historian writes that he did not find proof of his place of birth. Despite these differences, both these family histories, like many others in this corpus, end with stories and memories of the authors themselves and their near kin, supplemented with a genealogy up to the year before publication.

There are exceptions to this general impression of the endings of family histories. While these first two examples directly relate their ancestors to their own life and end by describing their own lives, one other family historian writes that he has decided not to describe living persons, because that would not suit him.[55] He gives no further clarification of this statement, but as we will see, he has at least one other motive for not describing contemporary generations.

His family history has a descendant-like structure. The story begins with the first ancestor he found in the documents, Jan Jannes (1693-1751), born of Jannys Alberts and Albertje Jans. The author spins stories about their lives, based on documentation found. He also seems to enjoy fantasizing about the times before there was any documentation, as he writes:

> Suppose that a distant ancestor of the Bootsmas was a manu from the old Celtic people. The Celts were musically talented people and they regarded the god of the underworld as their ancestor. This Celt would have transferred certain genes to his male descendants, and finally to Jan Roelofs from Ossezijl. What would it be like to see this Celt next to Jan

> Roelofs, who went every Sunday to the little church of Ossenzijl, where he was a cantor.[56]

Two men from two different time periods together who share a common trait of musicality is surely a fantasy supported by the idea that genes transfer unchangeable traits, and that this particular family is rooted in Celtic people. This idea not only performs a family identity, but also suggests that 'place' is an important identifier for the author's notion of family.

Another argument for this interpretation is the fact that this Jan Roelofs (1843-1926) appears to be the last figure in the agnatic line who was born in the same place as all the others in line before him. In the end, he moved to another village, Ossenzijl. This is why the author ends his book with this particular man. He only wants to describe those relatives who lived in one particular place for two hundred years – a second reason for this family historian not to include the newest generation which moved to another region after 1900. In other words, he wishes to concentrate his family history in one agnatic line, situated in one place. Therefore, one can conclude that in this narrative, structured along descendant-chart-type lines, the idea of family identity is supported as much by 'place' as by the genealogical identity of this family historian, who sees himself as part of a larger community of relatives.

One more explicit case of exploring 'place' as part of a family identity also uses the script of descending generations. Here, the corresponding table of contents reveals a different focus, as the author devotes each chapter to the farms the successive generations of his family had lived on.[57] For example, Chapter 2 starts with the farm on which the first ancestor (1582-1633) had lived on, and the last chapter describes the history of the farm this family historian was born on. This last chapter ends with the author's memories of the last days of his father who died on the farm on which the family had been living for the last two hundred years, illustrated with a photograph of six men carrying away the coffin with his father's corpse. Although most chapters focus on the family farms, the family history starts with a classic agnatic line from the first known ancestor to the last, the family historian's father, described as generation XII.

Here, the standard genealogical classification is subordinated to the successive farms the family lived on. So family identity can be linked to shared memories or to identity of place, but even in those cases, identity of names seems to be more important. This is why the descendant charts in family histories are mainly name genealogies.

Figure 40. Cover of ID 120.

One can find an indication of this link between the surname as a vehicle for the continuation of the family in the titles of these genealogies, which express the idea of the family as a unity that survives through the ages. This unity is often expressed by the term 'family' + surname or 'lineage (In Dutch: geslacht) + surname'.[58] As is shown by the selection of titles in the figure below, the history of the surname is mostly attached to a certain period. Only a few titles of family histories, based on an extended descendant chart, are less specific about the span of time covered, with subtitles like *They lived, they strove, they died*, or *Family in space and time*, or *From past to present*.[59]

Family identity is thus created by reference either to place, or to the transference of names, or both, supported by the term *geslacht*, the Dutch term for lineage, suggesting unity of the family. The continuity of the family in descendant charts is also realized by the ongoing expansion of the descendant chart into the future. The children and grandchildren of the present generation are the ones who will continue the family name – or not. Hence the family is depicted as having a definite start in the progenitor, but an open end in an everlasting future.

The beginning of the chart is defined as the first generation. Such beginning of a family echoes well-known narratives about the origin of humanity. Before the first man of this family with this specific name, there was no man. An apt example of this idea is found in an ironic fantasy of one of the family historians:

> More searching and researching is always possible, but searching for the sake of proving that there is nothing more to be found is searching for infinity, and also pursuing the idea that my eldest ancestor is Adam Ankringa who, with his wife Eve, lived in paradise two million years ago.[60]

Most family historians view the concept of the first generation in rather pragmatic terms, stating that this first generation is the oldest for which they have found documents in the archives that prove them to be their relative. Often a photograph of this document, bearing the relative's signature, is added as proof.[61]

As stated, a descendant-chart structure often takes the form of a name genealogy. In some cases, this name genealogy covers just one century, as in that of Ritsema van Eck, which starts in 1898, when Cornelis van Eck (1838-1912) requested permission of Queen Emma to add his grandmother's surname Ritsema to his own, as a mark of respect. Cornelis had worked his way up. He started as a warehouse hand and eventually became a captain. He became part of the local elite, which could also explain his desire to embellish his surname with an extra one.

More often, a name genealogy deals with a longer period than in this latter case, sometimes up to six centuries. This choice of a name genealogy in combination with a descendant chart creates a firm link between the passage of time and the construction of the idea of one family 'traveling through time'. In this sense, a family's lineage, *geslacht*, seems rather like the ship of Theseus, which has every individual part replaced as it goes along, but still remains the same ship.

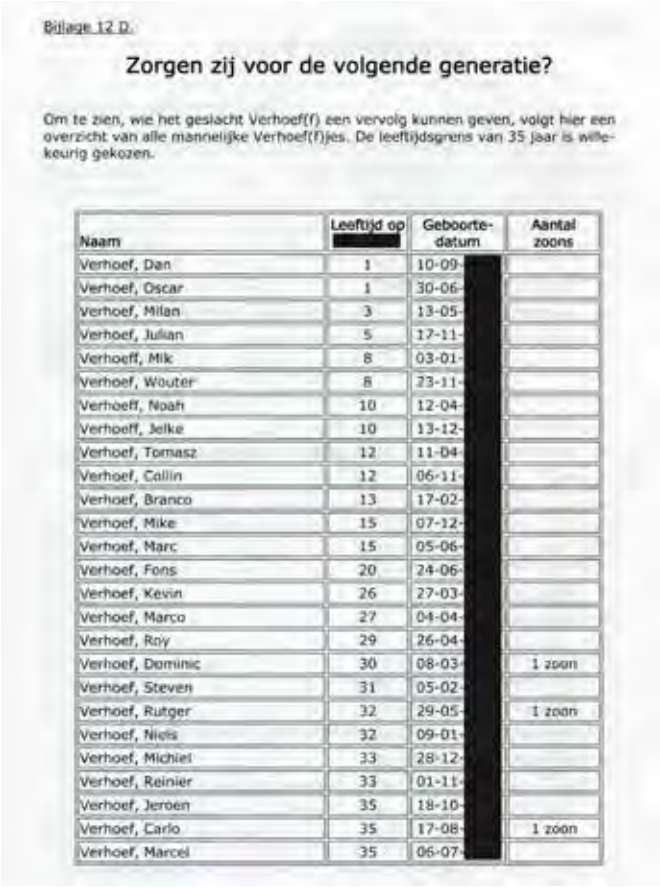
ID 1: Vijf eeuwen Ansems [Five centuries of Ansems]
ID 6: Geschiedenis en archief inventarisatie Van de Feltz. Boek 1 [History and archive survey Van de Feltz. Book 1]
ID 9: Drie eeuwen familie Heijder [Three centuries of the Heijder family]
ID 12: 400 jaar Kramer [400 years of Kramer]
ID 21 Stamreeks Laarakkers [Laarakkers pedigree]

ID 50: Twintig gezinnen Rozee [Twenty Rozee families]
ID 51: De nakomelingen van Roelof Fransen Roosje. Roosje, Roosjen, Roosien, Roossien, Rosien [The descendants of Roelof Fransen Roosje. Roosje, Roosjen, Roosien, Roossien, Rosien]
ID 59: 700 Jahre Geschichte. Vorfahren und Nachkommen von Friedrich Wilhelm Schliess [700 years of history. The forefathers and descendants of FWS]
ID 66: Een eeuw Benckhuijsen [A century of Benckhuijsen]
ID 67: Honderd jaar familie Blokhuis [A hundred years of the Blokhuis family]
ID 116: Geboortegrond: vier eeuwen Salm [Birth ground: four centuries of Salm]
ID 72: Zes eeuwen Elgersma [Six centuries of Elgersma]
ID 74: 270 jaar familie Fokkema [270 years of the Fokkema family]
ID 77: Het spoor terug. Het Zeeuws geslacht De Klerk vanaf 1570 [Traces back. The De Klerk lineage of Zeeland from 1570]
ID 78: Genealogie van het geslacht Kranenburg [Genealogy of the Kranenburg lineage]
ID 83: De familie van Rij op een rij [The Van Rij family lined up]
ID 99: Een Veluwse familie. Het geslacht van Polen [A family from the Veluwe. The lineage of Polen]
ID 103: Rostang. Een kleine Hugenotenfamilie in Nederland [Rostang. A small Huguenot family in the Netherlands]
ID 113: Over de familie Van Zoest. Van vroeger tot nu [About the Van Zoest family. From past to present]
ID 117: Boek der Siepels 1620-2011 [The book of the Siepels, 1620-2011]
ID 121: Genealogie van het geslacht Westhoven: 500 jaar familiegeschiedenis [Genealogy of the Westhoven lineage: 500 years of family history]
ID 124: Familiekroniek Boekee [Chronicle of the Boekee family]
ID 132: Genealogie van de familie Van de(n-r) Ende [Genealogy of the Van de (n-r) Ende family
ID 136: Genealogie Van Hamersveld [Genealogy Van Hamersveld]
ID 143: Klijnstra familie in de USA [Klijnstra family in the USA]
ID 148: Afstammelingen van De Ligny, De Lignij en de Lignie in Nederland [Descendants of De Ligny, De Lignij and de Lignie in the Netherlands]
ID 149: The May Genealogy 1694-2009
ID 156: Familie Veuger en aanverwante families [The Veuger family and rela-

ted families]
ID 157: Genealogie van een Vlielander familie Visser ca.1635-2004 [Genealogy of the Visser family from Vlieland, c. 1635-2004]
ID 158: Genealogieën Reveljon –Reiveillo –Reveillo en De Wekker [Genealogies of Reveljon –Reiveillo –Reveillo and De Wekker]
ID 171: Van bolleboeren en notabelen. Schohaus. Het geslacht Schoehuijs 1650-2012. [Of bulb farmers and notables. Schohaus. The lineage of Schoehuijs 1650-2012]
ID 172: Vier eeuwen Verhoeff: een geslacht uit de Krimpenerwaard [Four centuries of Verhoeff: a lineage from the Krimpenerwaard region]
ID 177: Genealogie familie Band - Bandt - Bant [Geneaology of the Band - Bandt - Bant family]
ID 181: Chronologie Van Berchem 1400-1500 [Chronology of Van Berchem 1400-1500]
ID 182: Genealogie Betgen, Bedgen en Betgem [Genealogy of Betgen, Bedgen and Betgem]
ID 193: 225 jaar familie Lelieveld/Lelivelt/Lelijveld. Van Loosduinen naar Poeldijk (1775-2010) [225 years of the Lelieveld/Lelivelt/Lelijveld family. From Loosduinen to Poeldijk (1775-2010)]
ID 190: Geslacht Kosters [Kosters lineage]
ID 209: Boeijinga/Boeijenga. Genealogie van een Sneker familie in zes generaties[Boeijinga/Boeijenga. Genealogy of a family from Sneek in six generations]

Figure 41. Titles in the corpus suggesting continuity of the unity of a family over time by using a surname.

In family histories structured as name genealogies, Zerubavel's idea about descendant charts leading to a family identity can be recognized very clearly, although it is not so much the family but rather the surname that suggests continuity and unity throughout the generations. This perspective may inspire the family historian to ask new questions. This is illustrated by Figure 42, a page in a family history with the title, in translation: 'Will they ensure the next generation?' The section contains a list of all the living young male relatives (aged 30 or younger) who can theoretically contribute to the future of the family surname by conceiving babies and giving them the right family name. Apparently, at the moment of publication only three of them had already passed on the surname.



Bijlage 12 D.

Zorgen zij voor de volgende generatie?

Om te zien, wie het geslacht Verhoef(f) een vervolg kunnen geven, volgt hier een overzicht van alle mannelijke Verhoef(f)jes. De leeftijdsgrens van 35 jaar is willekeurig gekozen.

Naam	Leeftijd op [redacted]	Geboorte-datum	Aantal zoons
Verhoef, Dan	1	10-09-[redacted]	
Verhoef, Oscar	1	30-06-[redacted]	
Verhoef, Milan	3	13-05-[redacted]	
Verhoef, Julian	5	17-11-[redacted]	
Verhoeff, Mik	8	03-01-[redacted]	
Verhoef, Wouter	8	23-11-[redacted]	
Verhoeff, Noah	10	12-04-[redacted]	
Verhoeff, Jelke	10	13-12-[redacted]	
Verhoef, Tomasz	12	11-04-[redacted]	
Verhoef, Callin	12	06-11-[redacted]	
Verhoef, Branco	13	17-02-[redacted]	
Verhoef, Mike	15	07-12-[redacted]	
Verhoef, Marc	15	05-06-[redacted]	
Verhoef, Fons	20	24-06-[redacted]	
Verhoef, Kevin	26	27-03-[redacted]	
Verhoef, Marco	27	04-04-[redacted]	
Verhoef, Roy	29	26-04-[redacted]	
Verhoef, Dominic	30	08-03-[redacted]	1 zoon
Verhoef, Steven	31	05-02-[redacted]	
Verhoef, Rutger	32	29-05-[redacted]	1 zoon
Verhoef, Niels	32	09-01-[redacted]	
Verhoef, Michiel	33	28-12-[redacted]	
Verhoef, Reinier	33	01-11-[redacted]	
Verhoef, Jeroen	35	18-10-[redacted]	
Verhoef, Carlo	35	17-08-[redacted]	1 zoon
Verhoef, Marcel	35	06-07-[redacted]	

Figure 42. ID 172: 'Will they ensure the next generation?'

The same question is suggested by the family history that describes the descendants of an ancestor named Ankringa. This family historian states that at the time of publication, only 33 individuals all over the world share his surname. Only six of them are male and will traditionally be able to transfer their surname to their children. He knows that legislation has changed and that women can also pass on their surname. He is curious whether this change in the law will produce more progeny with the surname he seems so attached to.[62]

4.5 Does the 'me' signify the end or the beginning of a family history?

As explained in 4.1, in the ancestor-, fan-type script, the history starts with a 'me' and finishes with the earliest ancestor found. By contrast, the cone-type, descendant script starts with the first ancestor and ends with the 'me' who is also the writing subject of the history. This section concentrates on the endings of family histories. Can we identify the two different kinds of endings of the two ancestor and descendant structures in the corpus? And if so, do these confirm Zerubavel's claims about family identity and genealogical identity?

Considering the endings of family histories in this corpus, we can indeed discern two different tendencies. Some of them have a very clear ending. Once the last ancestor has been found, the narrative has some sort of closure, after which in an afterword the family historian becomes visible as the producer of this family history, reflecting on the work done, giving justifications for the approach chosen, or expressing gratitude to the archivists and relatives who have contributed.

In some family histories, the afterword is used to end a particular story. This phenomenon is particularly clear in one family history, whose main subject is a piece of land bought by the family historian's great-grandfather (1806-1874) in 1829.[63] The land came with a title for its owner, together with a couple of rights, such as the right to choose the mayor and other local authorities in the region, the right to fish and to hunt, and the right to a certain pew in the local church. In his afterword, the family historian relates what has happened to the land since then. After his father's death in 1964, a large part of the land, including a farm, was sold to the farm's tenants. One small piece of land was not sold, and this now belongs to the son of this family historian, whose surname is in part identical with the name of the land that has been in the family for years.[64]

Remarkably, most family histories do not end with an afterword that completes the story. Most do not even have an afterword at all. They quite abruptly end with the last descendant, or for that matter with the last ancestor. Only twelve family histories in this corpus have some sort of epilogue, and five of these are a biography or an autobiography. Those five are more defined projects in a specific genre in which the difference between writer and subject of a text is clearer.[65] The other seven also have an afterword, but here there is no clear distinction between those structured according to an ancestor chart and those based on a descendant chart.

Figure 43. Front cover ID 62.

For an example of such an afterword, I turn to a family history which starts with a first ancestor who took the surname Terpstra in 1811. The family historian describes him as a remarkable personality and presents him as the central figure of this family history. This is what led him to compose one ancestor-, fan-type chart for this Terpstra and one for his wife, followed by a descendant-, cone-type structure from this couple onwards to the present.

In his epilogue, the writer of this family history declares his historical interest in the lives of his ancestors and in their living conditions, on farms without much support from machinery. One paragraph in this epilogue is devoted to his style of writing:

> In describing the history of individuals, the relation of the writer with the person described should be avoided as much as possible. For this rea-

> sons, with a few exceptions, I do not write in terms of my father, mother, grandmother, etcetera, but refer to the person in question by name.[66]

Here, we see the same aloofness that makes many family histories so difficult to read as an outsider. This writer seems to use a repertoire belonging to the subject position of a researcher, in which objectivity and distance seem to be important (see Section 5.3 for a more detailed discussion of this topic). Why would a family historian not describe his parents as 'my parents'?

It is primarily in the afterword that this author shows his involvement with this particular family, as he justifies the family history with the argument that he wanted to save 'our branch of the family' from oblivion. As far as Zerubavel's claims are concerned. This particular family history centralizes one man and gives his ancestors as well as his descendants a prominent place, so one could say that the genealogical identity of this first Terpstra is reconstructed, as well as the family identity of his descendants, including the faint genealogical identity of the writer involved. Leaving aside the afterword, we see that this family history ends with the youngest descendants of the first ancestor, who are only mentioned with names and dates of birth. In other words: this family history, like many others based on a descendant chart, ends abruptly.

These abrupt endings, without conclusion or afterword, form a second category, alongside the rounded-off endings with or without an afterword; and abrupt endings are much more frequent in this corpus. Abrupt endings are most frequent among family histories based on a descendant chart. One remarkable aspect of this category is the way the author's tone changes as the family history nears the present time. With the passing of time, and the approaching of the present, the genre changes: the objective tone of the 'historian', focused on sources and data evolves into the more subjective, experience-oriented tone of the 'narrator'. In the terms of the structuralist thinker Emile Beneviste, narrative is here replaced by subjective discourse characterized by the implicit or explicit presence of an 'ego' that maintains the discourse. By contrast, in a narrativizing discourse, 'the objectivity of narrative is defined by the absence of all reference to a narrator.'[…] 'Here no one speaks. The events seem to tell themselves.'[67]

A typical feature of genealogically inspired family histories is this narrativist way of presenting the past with a voice from nowhere. But as the present draws nearer, some family histories become multivocal, creating a space for the perspectives of other relatives. Family historians insert interviews, memories,

letters, diaries, and other documents of relatives, usually without any comment. Some have asked their relatives to write down their memories about their lives or about their parents and publish them in this family history. Others devote pages to relatives killed in the Second World War, by publishing their diaries and letters written during the war. In this sense, the family history transforms from a genealogical document into an archive of recent life writing, bound together for a privileged audience, the relatives.[68]

Within this category, there are also family histories based on a descendant chart that end with descriptions of the most recent generation, including the family historian, his or her children, and their families. The descriptions of these recent generations are often quite short, little more than the mention of dates and places of birth and marriage and a brief reference to activities. In both categories, the endings are abrupt, sometimes followed by a register of names, but without a clear conclusion, nor an afterword or epilogue.

How can we account for these abrupt endings? One explanation has to do with the presentation of the past. As already suggested in Section 4.2, due to the dominance of the concept of generation, most family histories can conventionally be categorized, in the terms of Hayden White, as a chronicle. This genre typically has no narrative closure, no plot or script. Another characteristic of the chronicle can be seen in the ending. According to White:

> [T]he chronicle [is] usually marked by a failure to achieve narrative closure. It does not so much conclude as simply terminate. It starts out to tell a story but breaks off in media res, in the chronicler's own present.[69]

This explanation is drawn from the domain of literary studies. I find another explanation in discussions about home movies, a medium that is also characterized by abrupt ends without a clear closure. Home movies usually end somewhere in the present. They are 'sloppy and uneven' according to the film historian Patricia Zimmermann.[70] Film historian Roger Odin even considers badly made films as the true examples of the 'real family film'.[71] His explanation goes as follows: the true function of the family film is to evoke memories, and this is only possible if the story is finished by the viewer, not by the filmmaker. This perspective presupposes viewers who have enough knowledge to know what is being seen. It privileges viewers with intimate knowledge about the people displayed in the film, the relatives of the filmmaker.

This interpretation of the ends of home movies could also provide a deeper

insight into the open endings of homemade family histories. A narrative based on descendant charts begins in the distant past and ends in the living present, the world of the family historian and the target readers, relatives who will often come across their own names at the end of the family history and realize that they are part of a broader family network. The adding of subjective accounts of the near past reinforces this intimacy with contemporary kin, with humans with a history.

Evoking this kind of consciousness is not the only function of the abrupt ending in the family history. On the last pages of many family histories, the family historian emerges and writes about himself or herself as one among many descendants. If the family historian is the youngest descendant, then he or she will appear on the very last page. If not, then the last pages are devoted to the children of the family historian or the children of his or her siblings. In the latter case, it is often very difficult to find the family historian's name and his or her genealogical position within the plethora of names and dates and short biographies and photographs of relatives.

This difficulty underlines the modest position of the family historian as one among many, as a human being who, like others, has been thrown into the world from which he or she will one day disappear. Thus, the abrupt ending again focuses not only on the horizontal family ties with contemporary relatives, but also on the vertical relationships of human beings with generations before them and, probably, after them. In other words: this kind of ending suits the idea of the family as a continuous community. Another consequence of the abrupt ending relates to the role of the family historian. As they approach the present in the story, family historians give the floor to their relatives as well. When subjective accounts of the recent past are also added, the role of the family historian consequently changes from archivist or researcher to facilitator, displaying the experiences of others.

An interesting example of this model is the family historian who claims to present an ancestor chart of his wife, but in fact starts with the oldest generation found: generation XII, consisting of Curt and Sara, born before 1661. All generations after them are mentioned, down to generation I, the present generation – of which he mentions only the eldest son with his name and date of birth and those of his partner. He concludes: 'In this story, this is generation I and now we have landed in the present. It is time to stop this story.'[72] However, after these last words, on page 66, more than 200 pages are appended containing all kinds of documents: letters and homilies of a relative who was a famous preacher in

the nineteenth century, copies of diaries written by several relatives during the Second World War as well as letters sent from a concentration camp, menus from weddings, and also wedding greetings, wedding speeches, texts of wedding songs, and even full color copies of magic lantern slides.[73]

So, in this case the family historian is a provider of his wife's family history and also a facilitator in the sense that he has collected, photographed, and displayed all documentation of the family he found interesting. The presentation of plain facts creates a platform for readers to project their own stories onto them, as though this family historian wants to say: now we are in the present and you, reader, can take all this archival material with you into the future.

4.6 Conclusions

The analysis of the relation between 'me' and 'my' family history focuses on the position of the 'me' in the timelines along which the family history is narrated. I have argued that the 'me' can be implicated in two different ways, with consequences for the story told, and I have studied the consequences for the family historian's family identity or the genealogical identity ascribed to the writer or the writer's relatives.

The idea of timelines shaping identities is developed by Verdery in her study about individuals situating themselves historically among others in general, and by Zerubavel who applies Verdery's ideas to genealogical thinking in particular. When I compared their ideas with family histories in this corpus, I found that all family histories in this corpus covering more than three generations are structured in terms of either the ancestor chart or the descendant chart. As far as these two charts are concerned, the differences between the scripts are not as significant as Zerubavel assumes. The position of the 'me' in an ancestor chart is not exclusively linked to genealogical identity. Likewise, family identity need not necessarily be linked to a descendant chart timeline: it can also be displayed in a timeline based on an ancestor chart. In other words: written family histories display more complex and more layered notions of genealogical and family identity than Verdery and Zerubavel assume.

Closer examination reveals that it is only if a descendant-chart-based family history is framed as a name genealogy that it can be clearly connected to the performance of a family identity. This connection between name genealogy and family identity emerges clearly in the abundance of titles that link a surname

with a long span of time. In this case, the family history becomes the history of the origin and transmission of a surname.

In some cases, neither the family nor the family name is the central subject of a publication: some family historians are not concerned with their family history as such, but rather focus on a part of their family history in a specific place, on a piece of land, in farms, or in a region. Thus, the context of place is more relevant than Zerubavel seems to have imagined when he formulated the structure of genealogical thinking.

It has become clear that, in terms of the genres defined by Hayden White, most family histories in this corpus are chronicles rather than narratives, because they contain no stories that can explain the meaning of the events passed. These family histories primarily record events, one after another, according to a given line of continuity. In White's view, the structure of a chronicle is that of a time bar displaying chronological time. However, in these family histories the structure is most likely that of the ancestor or descendant chart, following not so much a chronology as the order of the generations. This ordering can be quite confusing, especially in a book that displays generations one after another, even where in some instances the former generation is younger than the next. This happens especially in large families where the eldest child of a couple has children before the couple's youngest children have been born.

Furthermore, writing on the basis of an ancestor or descendant chart highlights the question of 'ending'. In an ancestor-chart structure, the description of the last ancestor found leads to the end of the family history. More precisely, it signifies the end of the research done by the family historian concerned. In a descendant chart structure, the 'me' emerges at the meeting of the lines of the past, the present, and the future. This kind of family history finds its audience precisely in the here-and-now, where the family historian appears in different roles. He or she is presented as one family member among many, equal among others, and at the same time he or she presents the past for present and future generations. In this sense, it is in the ending of the family history, especially those based on a descendant chart, that the idea of a family unity can be experienced by the readers as one that can survive the past and will continue in the future.

CHAPTER 5

Repertoires in the writing of family historians

'What a culture will most readily tell about itself, what people feel to be the safest form of self-representation, can be very revealing.'[1]

Alessandro Portelli

5.1 Family historians as writers

Introductions and prefaces are the places in which family historians most manifestly present themselves to the implied reader or addressee of their work.[2] Here, the writers reflect on the significance of their research and express personal motives for publishing the work. This addressee is sometimes explicitly referred to as 'my offspring', or may be identified in a dedication phrased in terms such as 'In honour of our ancestors, for the information of their descendants'.[3] Some writers address their audience with a wish, like 'With this book I would like my brothers and sisters, our children and grandchildren and other interested relatives to meet their ancestors and the farms they lived and worked on'.[4] Another family history openly provides the reader with a few directives: 'Read this book about your ancestors. Be proud of your ancestry. Honour your ancestors.'[5] Several introductions suggest that the implied reader can use the family history as a reference book for information about their relatives.[6]

Generally, introductions reveal what kind of audience is fit to enjoy the publication and what reasons underlie all the work done. In these introductions, writers often reconstruct the circumstances in which their family history came into being, or offer a mixture of reasons and justifications for their research.

More often than not, the writers reveal clues about the relation they observe between themselves and the relatives they mention in the family history. Their wording of this relation is the subject of this chapter, which contributes to answering the research question of this study as a whole, about how the link between 'me' and 'my family' is established.

This chapter considers the interpretative repertoires used by family historians in this corpus as they present themselves as the writers of their family history. The language they use is viewed, as in all discourse analysis, as a specific social practice in which humans are both the master and the slave of the language they use.[7] These repertoires are common in language found in a specific context, or in other words, they are the ready-made components of language writers make use of in constructing their own texts. As Jonathan Potter writes about the theoretical background of discourse analysis:

> The idea of an interpretative repertoire is intended to accommodate two considerations: first, that there are resources available that have an 'off-the-shelf' character that can be used in a range of different settings to carry out particular tasks, and, second, that these resources have a more 'bespoke' flexibility which allows them to be selectively drawn upon and reworked, according to the setting.[8]

These interpretative repertoires could be seen as building blocks in language that can be accommodated to 'flexible, local use', yet can be recognized as 'constituted out of a restricted range of terms used in a specific stylistic and grammatical fashion'.[9] After examining the family histories in this corpus, I introduce eight typical phrases frequently used in introductions and prefaces, each expressing an interpretative repertoire in this contemporary genealogical paradigm. As family historians present themselves in their introductions and prefaces as accountable writers, I link these repertoires to three main forms of self-representation as found in this corpus. In the same line of thought as Bruno Latour, who writes about objects as agents that make us do things, I propose to consider these self-presentations and repertoires as agents 'that make us describe ourselves by our motivations'.[10]

The self-representations subsequently focus on self-motivation, research, and family. By 'self-motivation', I refer to repertoires in which the family historians describe themselves as driven by the quest for roots or spending their leisure time on this particular hobby. A second self-representation is that of the

writer as a researcher who sets out to answer a specific question or to simply write down the facts, or who refers to a lineage of like-minded relatives, those who were also family historians in the past. Finally, there is the self-representation of the family-oriented writer, who uses repertoires pertaining to 'doing family' by honouring their ancestors, giving a platform to their very special family, or communicating their findings to their relatives, although their work is not yet finished.

5.2 Motivated from within

The first self-presentation I discuss here is the way family historians allude to inner drives. In this category of self-motivations, one very frequently used repertoire expresses the desire to find one's roots. Another popular repertoire considers doing family history first and foremost as a hobby, a formulation that seems to relativize the necessity of this activity.

5.2.1 'I want to know my roots'

The desire to find roots is frequently mentioned among family historians in this corpus, or as Michael Sharpe describes it in his popular book about the history of genealogy, a basic human instinct.[11] One of the family historians in this corpus would agree with him, to judge from this quote: 'Everybody has the desire to know more about their roots'.[12] Another family historian first praises his wife for her support in the building of his ancestor chart and then writes:

> Many people, including myself, wish to know where their roots are, who their ancestors were, who passed life on to us, but also who we have to thank for life. And then we must not forget who the Creator is of our lives and from Whom we receive the strength to live our lives, as psalm 90 says: [...].[13]

This writer links the concept of roots explicitly to his ancestors who are the cause of his own existence, although he also mentions God as the ultimate source of life itself. Another family historian, in introducing a family history based on a descendant chart, suggests the same desire to know roots, but links this knowledge to 'belonging to a group':

> I think the main motivation behind starting this work is wanting to know who one is related to, what group one belongs to, where one's roots lie.[14]

Maybe the term 'roots' was once reserved for trees and plants, but over the centuries they have also become an essential property of human beings. The use of the English word 'roots' has even found a place in official Dutch vocabulary.[15] As already stated in Chapter 2, this term has a religious background, and is firmly connected to a network of associations about blood, genes, place, nation, and related concepts.[16]

Several family historians present themselves as people who desire to find their roots, which is in accordance with the observations of the anthropologist Janet Carsten, who states that the construction of the self reaches across generations with a rhetoric of finding roots 'firmly oriented towards what these roots are thought to produce in the present and the future'.[17] Carsten wrote this in a study on narratives of adoptees in Europe who are seeking their biological parents. Contrary to what is suggested by the sentimental and romantic reunions we see in television programmes, she concludes that the finding of biological parents, mostly mothers, often does not lead to a sense of connection or self-knowledge: 'The symbolic importance of birth ties, which is apparently reiterated by the process of searching for birth kin, is in many cases disrupted or denied in the troubled outcome of these searches.'[18] Despite obvious differences between adoptees and family historians, in both categories the repertoire of finding roots seems to imply a desire to find them, with a suggestion that the act of finding them will bring some sort of self-knowledge.

How did the term roots enter the discourse of family historians? The term became extremely popular with the publication of Alex Haley's book *Roots* (1976) and the television series based on it. According to the historian Alex van Stipriaan, at that time the term roots became synonymous with African roots. Many African Americans started to find out where their enslaved ancestors had come from, and they enriched their identities with these rewritten histories. The term also influenced the discourse on the interplay of diaspora and roots. '[T]he more people feel uprooted the more they seem to refer to these roots,' writes Van Stipriaan in his report on the project *My Roots*.[19] Here he also summarizes current academic debates on the phenomenon of diaspora, referring to, among others, Stuart Hall, Paul Gilroy, and James Clifford:

> They made it part of their discourse of cultural identity, and introduced the juxtaposed pair of roots and routes. Cultural identities, they said, and particularly diasporic cultural identities, are a continuous dialogue between *roots*, which is a state of being tied to a specific place, and *routes*, which is a state of displacement.[20]

Apart from its impact on academic debates, the television series *Roots* is also signified as the cradle of a mass genealogy obsessed with a search for places of origin. Alison Landsberg, a scholar in memory studies who writes about contemporary medialized mass memories of slavery and the Holocaust, describes the influence of *Roots* on popular culture:

> The power of *Roots* lay in its mass circulation and its ability to generate large-scale public discussion about a long-taboo subject. Nevertheless, this achievement only underscored the unrealized political potential of the mass media. Rather than forcing white Americans to take a hard look at their own attitudes toward race, rather than forcing them to own up to the crimes of slavery, the mass media stimulated instead a fascination with the project of genealogy. Perhaps the pleasure of Roots was too much about the pleasure of healing and not enough about the pain of remembering.[21]

According to Landsberg's evaluation of the absorption of the term roots within American popular genealogy, *Roots* has almost perversely stimulated white Americans to enrich their genealogical identities instead of looking critically at a violent past. The question of whether these psychoanalytically informed claims can be applied to a European context is part of a discussion about the effects of European colonialism on contemporary family histories.[22]

My concern here is a somewhat different and rather a conceptual one: given the frequency of the term 'roots' in these Dutch family histories, what does it signify? Some family historians in the corpus motivate their research by alluding to the connection between roots and place. One interesting example in this respect is a family historian who implies that longing for roots is a universal one:

> Why record family history? Thousands of people are curious about their roots […]. Adoptees may suddenly develop a desire to know who their biological father and mother are. Third-generation immigrants may

> want to find out how their ancestors lived in their country of origin. But people who have lived their whole life in the neighbourhood of their grandparents may also feel a deep need to write down their history.[23]

This writer claims that a longing for roots is not restricted to the displaced in the world, because geographically stable persons also desire knowledge of their descent. This advocacy of non-globalized people's desire for origins seems a marked reversal of the argument in the debate about the status of uprooted people in the modern world.

According to the cultural anthropologist Liisa Malkki, for instance, in the contemporary media refugees often appear as pathologized, because uprooted, and, in Hannah Arendt's words, naked, because bereft of their own place and cast out of the family of nations.[24] Malkki criticizes these 'taken-for-granted ways of thinking about identity and territory' with their linkages between nations, cultures, soils, roots, and the presupposition that people have roots like trees.[25]

> Such commonsense ideas of soils, roots, and territory are built into everyday language and often also into scholarly work, but their very obviousness makes them elusive as objects of study.[26]

Indeed, in the isolated quotes above, 'roots' refers not only to ancestors as a group, but also to places of origin, regions or countries, a reference that is much used in the literature about diaspora and descent.[27] This double reference may explain why, more often than not, the family historians in this corpus dedicate a whole chapter to the history of the places where their earliest relatives lived, as if the identity of the family can be found in the place itself. In this sense, the focus on place exemplifies the views of the anthropologist James Leach, whose statement 'kinship is geography' has become a trope in which 'family' is firmly tied to 'place'. Citing James Leach, Sahlins writes that 'land and the persons integrated with it are in the same ontological register'.[28]

Rather than believing in origins, and in tracing roots, Malkki pleads for a Deleuzian way of thinking in rizomes, in non-linear roots that have multiple branches, that can move and change and still can have a history:

> To plot only 'places of birth' and degrees of nativeness is to blind oneself to the multiplicity of attachments that people form to places through living in, remembering, and imagining them.[29]

Without claiming that family historians in this corpus are trained in rizomatic thinking, the supposition that they think only in nineteenth-century terms of nation and soil is simply not true. Take the example of the family historian who is living in Moscow when he writes the introduction to his family history:

> In this borderless world, I wanted to record – especially for my children, four world citizens – their origins in Gelderland and Zutphen.[30]

The writer contrasts borderlessness with a specific place of origin to which genealogical research has led him. He does not clarify these words, but one can argue that these echo the statement that everyone 'ought' to know their roots. Ironically, the precise place of origin of this particular family is not at all easy to pinpoint. The table of contents shows eight possible estates in the region that can be linked to the early generations of the writer's surname, but no place that can exclusively be denominated as the precise place of origin.

So on the one hand this search for a first origin, as formulated in this particular case, reveals taking-for-granted ideas about origins. On the other hand it reveals how the hands-on research of a family historian, or, in this family history, the professional genealogist this family historian has hired for this occasion, can easily destroy or complicate these simple ways of thinking as it can undermine this plotting of places. By following the default genealogical protocol of 'finding places of origin', the research itself hinders the desired outcome of the process. Or, as Foucault puts it:

> The search for descent is not the erecting of foundations: on the contrary, it disturbs what was previously considered immobile: it fragments what was thought unified; it shows the heterogeneity of what was imagined consistent with itself.[31]

As Timm shows in her article 'Grounding the family', it is in the practical research of the genealogist that place, roots, and localization of the family becomes problematized, or in Timm's words, 'delocalized'.[32] Indeed, since the Council of Trent in the fifteenth century, 'family' has been being disciplined by attaching

relatives to documented places, but at the same time, genealogical research problematizes the 'origins' of relatives: if they have migrated, it is very difficult to trace them in locally organized parish registers and, in later times, archives organized by governments.

The reason for these difficulties is that in many sources migrants are only registered in their place of destination, with no mention of their precise place of origin. The Mormon Church in Salt Lake City has partly solved this difficulty by creating a 'superplace', a 'superlocale for grounding the family,' according to Timm.[33] Through the linking of archives, the Internet has recently become the newest superplace, where all data can, in theory, be found. These innovations have also changed the relation between family and place. In Timms's words:

> Where the historical sources are silent because they divide up kinship knowledge by place, the digital mode makes them speak again. Within a few clicks searching the index, a 'blank', or 'dead point' can become a potent relay.[34]

So, although 'place' is a significant element in family histories, the motivation of finding roots is not exclusively connected to the finding of places of origin, but to finding ancestors in general and finding links with the past in general. This is in line with Van Stripriaan's conclusion after conducting a project with a group of artists who reflect on their Afro-Caribbean background. He writes about the project *Our Back to the Roots*, in which a group of people – several young artists and two older, established artists – all with an Afro-Caribbean background, explored what roots mean to them. The project subsequently investigated the impact on this of conducting an mtDNA test that assigned each artist to a specific ethnic group in a specific West-African country. Despite their criticism of the tests and the concept of race they imply, the participants nevertheless accepted the results as true fact. They felt their identity had changed.

A subgroup of the participants went to Africa to find out more about their roots. Compared to the subgroup who stayed 'at home', the group who travelled experienced a stronger idea of roots. They were welcomed by people who looked like them, they recognized smells, houses, and music as 'like those at home' (and here 'home' refers to Suriname, the country of their parents). Van Stipriaan concludes: 'Therefore, it seems to make a lot of difference, if one actually makes physical contact with the supposed roots territory or not.' Nevertheless, after this travel, the participants never went back to Africa again, nor did they

conduct further research into the ethnic group they were supposed to belong to. Van Stipriaan:

> Obviously the present level of knowledge suffices and is clear enough to be added to the multitude of identifications we refer to as identity. Maybe even more important is that one of the main results of the quest for roots is the increasing awareness that there is a certain hierarchy in this kind of heritage. Africa is a kind of 'deep' but distant roots, to which you can refer if necessary or wanted. Suriname or the Dutch Caribbean are maybe even deeper, because much closer roots, whereas the Netherlands are not even considered roots, because too much part of daily lived reality.[35]

In the context of contemporary family history, roots are primarily connected not to place but to time: by constructing oneself as an individual that is connected to a specific past and, as the first quotes show, by reconstructing a group of deceased and living relatives to which one belongs.

The following quote shows another meaning of roots. It is from a family historian who states that his family history only reflects a small part of the roots of his family and emphasizes the limits of what he can present to future generations:

> This book reveals part of our roots: the facts of birth and death. There is much more to be told about all those human lives. A family history also consists of anecdotes, professions, joys, and sorrows. This book is a start. Who knows, maybe before too long one of us will set up a website with news, stories, and photos of the contemporary descendants of [names of ancestors/td], who together planted the seedling of this family tree at the end of the seventeenth century.[36]

In this passage, the past is seamlessly connected to the future, to being a member of a group, and to extracting knowledge from that group in the near future. Roots, in this case, are 'our roots,' of a group that exists in past, present, and future, irrespective of place.

At the end of the Roots project, Van Stripriaan concludes:

> So, what are roots? They are an emotionally laden subjective product of the selection made in one's personal history as well as the history of the groups one identifies with. What do they look like? Any shape and content one likes or feels attached to as long as it is related to the former. Is it heritage? Absolutely.[37]

This conclusion is in line with the findings in this corpus. One of the family historians' motivations for their work is to find roots. This term seems to refer to place, but closer study shows that roots seem to signify a rather random collection of associations: to place, but also to character, to stories, conflicts, and simply to the memorialization of the passing of time.

5.2.2 'I am addicted to this hobby'

A frequent remark in introductions is that genealogical research is a hobby, even an addictive hobby. In some cases the repertoire on hobby is mixed with other repertoires, as is clear in the following quote:

> Human beings have children to literally pass life on. We take photographs and make films to preserve the stories of these lives. And we write. About our ancestors, what they did for a living, whom they married, where they lived, and what their religion was. It is from a historical perspective that I wish to trace my family history. In fact, we owe it to our ancestors: it is thanks to them that we are here. For me, it is a hobby, although it can be very time-consuming. What is most important for me is to record our roots for my children and grandchildren.[38]

One family historian writes in a separate chapter about how he started his hobby. In 1987, he was a member of the organizing committee for a reunion for his mother's cousins. He was given the task of finding out more about the ancestors of this part of the family. When he shared the results at a family gathering, this only led to more questions, which stimulated him to start his family history research. Together with another relative, he published a family history of 750 pages, and they also organized an exhibition about their work.[39] Another family historian explains how he developed his hobby. Under the heading 'the start of an addictive hobby', he recalls how one day, he and his wife decided to use their holidays to put their family photographs in albums. They discovered that they

did not know the names of many of the people depicted. This prompted the research that resulted in a written family history.[40]

What is the meaning of the term hobby in this repertoire? What does it say about the interests and ambitions of family historians? These questions are also relevant in the context of a remark by the anthropologist Elisabeth Timm, who advocates the term 'popular' genealogy rather than 'amateur' genealogy. She reasons that these terms establish a hierarchy between amateurs and/or hobbyists, and professionals. Using the words amateur or hobbyist would consolidate this hierarchy even further, in Timm's view, since it would bring this group into the realm of leisure – a realm that in her opinion blocks the acknowledging of legal, scientific, and political relations with family.[41] But why would hobbyism and amateurism *not* be subject to these relations? In this analysis, I will show that even the most trivial remark refers to the cultural world in which it is stated, bringing with it legal, scientific, and political associations.

In his book *Amateurs, Professionals, and Serious Leisure*, the sociologist Robbert A. Stebbins makes clear analytical distinctions between hobbyists, amateurs, and dabblers. These distinctions can shed some light on the term 'hobbyist' as used in the self-descriptions of these family historians. According to Stebbins:

> Hobbyists are serious about and committed to their endeavor, even though they feel neither a social necessity nor a personal obligation to engage in them.[42]

Hobbyists consider their activities as non-work, while amateurs describe themselves as near-professionals. Amateurs also differ from hobbyists in being integrated into an intricate system of professionals and audiences, referred to by Stebbins as the PAP-system (professionals-amateurs-public). In this view, amateurs and professionals are connected to each other in many sorts of ways, in which amateurs reach out for the standards of the professionals in their field. In some fields there is a sliding scale between amateurs and professionals. Amateurs can become professionals, or can work together with professionals.[43]

Hobbyists, on the contrary, are not part of any PAP-system, and they lack a true professional counterpart. Hobbyists' work is defined as non-work. They are neither amateurs, nor dabblers 'aimlessly doing something as a temporary diversion'.[44] In his study, Stebbins focuses on amateurs like archaeologists, football players, musicians, and stand-up comedians, who can all recognize professionals

in their field. Could we here add the category of family historians writing about their own family?

Stebbins details several ways in which amateurs are related to professionals. By applying these to the family historians, we might find out if they can be called amateur historians. One of these ways is that amateurs and professionals serve audiences, although not necessarily the same one. While family historians write for their relatives, professional historians can cover a varied audience, ranging from a general audience to a highly specialized academic public. Moreover, there are many monetary and organizational relationships between professionals and amateurs. Indeed, there are commercial firms, institutions, foundations, and archives who accommodate family historians, assisting them with their research and offering services. These relationships by and large define them as consumers or clients, who, for example, buy access to Internet archives, follow courses in reading old manuscripts, or request library services. But these activities do not define family historians as equivalent players on the same field as professional historians.

The same is true for the intellectual relationships Stebbins stipulates between amateurs and professionals. I have not met or read family historians who are seriously critical of professionals in their work, or stimulate them to give the best they can, in Stebbins words.[45] There is a similar career path for professional and amateur genealogists, certainly, as the latter could seek payment for their services as researchers and make a business of it. Nevertheless, this career path is not feasible for the family historians under discussion, who want to study first and foremost the past of their own family. If they cannot be amateurs according to Stebbins's criteria, do they then belong to his category of hobbyists? That is indeed the case, in my view. They are hobbyists, serious ones who are dedicated to their activities – some even describe themselves as addicted to their hobby – but generally speaking, they do not aim to interfere with a professional context.

Within the category of hobbyists, Stebbins distinguishes between collectors, makers, tinkerers, activity participants, and players. If we try to label family historians accordingly, as they appear in this collection, I would argue that they belong to the category of collectors, inasmuch as they are researching names and documents of relatives, and to the category of makers, inasmuch as as they create family books with stories, pictures, and other materials.

This description of family historians as hobbyists may explain the lack of interest they frequently display in the readership for their histories. Of course,

many family historians want their books to be read, but this does not seem to be an urgent desire. The pleasure of collecting and organizing facts and pictures seems to be primary. In this sense, Stebbins is right to define hobbyists as not being part of a PAP-system. The audience targeted is a particular one, and obviously not one that the family historian shares with professional historians.

As stated, there are indeed amateur genealogists who participate in genealogical communities by contributing to forums, giving advice to other genealogists, or applying for certification as a genealogist by one the genealogical societies, with the aim of reaching professional standards for good research, formulated in books like *Genealogical Standards*.[46] This group of genealogists seem to echo the tensions at the end of the nineteenth century between genealogists as amateurs, and historians as professionals. The genealogists who explicitly engage with these standards seem to be people who are not merely writing a family history about their own family, but rather, like true amateurs, expand their vision on their subject, which is not so much their own family as genealogical activities in a broader sense. This kind of genealogist however does not appear in the corpus I assembled.

5.3 Driven to do research

In this section, I discuss repertoires that are more concerned with the content of the work and the way it ought to be carried out. These can be summarized as belonging to the role of the 'researcher', who wants to find facts and test hypotheses. He or she aims to work in a way that is as accurate and accountable to others as possible, so others can evaluate the results and use them for their own research.

This self-presentation is evidently advocated by genealogical societies, genealogy courses, and also by the CBG. They give instructions like: start with a clear question, stick to the facts, and make accurate notes so that others can profit from your results. They also give advice about the correct interpretation of sources and the building of a trustworthy body of knowledge. Advice of this kind is common in books and guides about doing genealogy, such as the principles of genealogical research published by the British Society for Genealogists, for instance (see Figure 44 below).

Elisabeth Timm describes how contemporary genealogists enthusiastically contribute to a historical culture by the criticism of sources and the histori-

cal and critical evaluation of their data.[47] This observation begs the question of whether in their publications (i.e., not only in spoken interviews with anthropologists like Timm) family historians also perform themselves as writers who reflect critically on their sources. In the following, I present family historians who present themselves primarily as a researcher, and give examples that can be summarized in three phrases that mirror points of view frequently found in the corpus.

Principles of Genealogical Research

- Accuracy and honesty of all personal research and of work published, promoted or distributed to others.
- Provision of clear evidence from primary sources to support all conclusions and statements of fact.
- Use of original sources and records (or surrogate images of originals) to gather key information.
- Citation and recording of sources used so that others may also evaluate the evidence.
- Logical and reasoned development of family links with each step proved from valid evidence before further deductions are made.
- Investigation and analysis of all possible solutions and of contradictory evidence with each alternative hypothesis examined and tested.
- Qualification of less certain conclusions as probable or possible so that others are not misled
- Acceptance of the possibility that a solution may not be found and acknowledgement of circumstances in which this occurs
- Awareness of gaps in the availability of and information from sources at all levels.
- Receptiveness to new information and to informed comment which may challenge earlier conclusions.
- Acknowledgement and attribution of research done by others and use of such work as a secondary source only.
- Evidence only becomes proof through a reasoned and logical analysis and argument capable of convincing others that the conclusion is valid.

Figure 44. Principles of Genealogical Research [48]

5.3.1 'I just write down the facts'

One consequence of taking a scientific attitude is that these family historians tend to refrain from their own personal involvement in their family history. This objectifying attitude, which stimulates a modest and cautious handling of sources and a form of scepticism towards them, is partly the result of the very complicated history of genealogy. This history has variously been described as a development from reverence (towards important ancestors) to referents (records in a genealogical database), as Timm puts it, or from phantasmatic dreaming about famous ancestors without any proof to scientific genealogy (Sharpe), or from female-oriented, memory-based story telling by women to archive research by men (Tebbe).[49] All these descriptions mention the emergence of a scientific attitude in genealogical thinking – and by 'scientific attitude', I mean strong ideas about the truth of facts and a strong ethics regarding the objective attitude of the researcher. This objectivity is also called 'modesty' by Donna Haraway, Bruno Latour, and other historians of science who have studied the material circumstances in which subjects become detached from objects, and how the creation of objectified fact as distinct from its political and religious context becomes an ideological goal.[50]

Many family historians emulate this scientific attitude in their work. Some motivate their endeavour by their wish to contribute to historical knowledge, implying that their research is interesting for a wider audience.[51] These family historians focus their research fully on facts and sources in which relatives appear, although some also formulate hypotheses on what may have happened to these relatives. They pay less or even no attention to the subjective side of their family histories, for instance to the significance of these facts in their lives.

Why do these family historians use the term 'research' for their activity, and what does this signify? One answer to this question can be found in the history of the delicate relationships between historians and genealogists that started at the end of the 19th century. In that period, historians were striving to be acknowledged as professional academics and distanced themselves from the amateur historians who focused on local and family history.

From 1900, genealogists became increasingly aware of their inferior status and began to copy behaviour and language belonging to the academic study of history.[52] They aspired to a critical form of genealogy, no longer based on speculation or fantasies but on reliable, verifiable sources.[53] This aiming at objectified analysis of family history changed the attitude towards dearly kept

memory objects and documents, and also caused a shift in gender dynamics, the historian Jason Tebbe states in his article about German popular genealogy at the beginning of the twentieth century. In brief, Tebbe's diagnosis is that men turned to the rationalized aspects of family history, like genealogy, whereas women were seen as 'guardians of memory', whose practices were 'deemed less "scientific" and hence inferior to the more research-oriented methods associated with men'.[54]

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, critical genealogy came to be defined as a non-professional activity, although there were genealogists who produced genealogies as a profession.[55] In the course of the twentieth century, this critical genealogy mirrored the ideals of historical scholarship and its scientific vocabulary and even adopted the term family history, under which all the more emotional, subjective, psychological, oral-memory-related associations were subsumed (see also 2.1 on the term genealogy).

An apt illustration of this adopting of a scientific attitude is *The story of my ancestors*.[56] In contrast to most of the family histories in the corpus, this family historian consistently uses a narrating 'I', both in the introduction and in the body text. Nevertheless, he maintains distance from the histories he tells, and even his motivation is veiled in the words of others. In the introduction, the family historian first quotes several authors – from Horace to Pascal Mercier, from the former Dutch queen Beatrix to Houllebecq and Karl Marx – who all in their own way stress that human beings cannot escape the influence of former generations. These various voices are only random illustrations of ideas about the past, according to this family historian. He notes that more writers have been concerned with themes like fate, original sin, or a possible genetic predisposition to crime. Then he concludes:

> I do not think that the hitherto unknown past of one of my ancestors has had a far-reaching influence on my life or on that of my brothers and sisters, let alone that we suffer from it.[57]

In the body text of his family history, the writer reconstructs the male lines of descent of his four grandparents, one after the other. In his description of the ancestor of one grandfather, he writes that in 1896 his great-grandfather Jacob, a small farmer and blacksmith who was widowed three times and had eight children, was sentenced for three years for the sexual abuse of two eleven-year-old girls.

After quoting legal sources about his great-grandfather's trial, this family historian remarks that he does not know what happened to this Jacobus after he was released from prison and came to live with his eldest son. In present times, many citizens would fiercely refuse to welcome a paedophile into their environment, he writes, and he wonders how the villagers and the victims had reacted to Jacobus's return. He does not know the answer.[58] Subsequently, in a section about his own youth, he reflects on the fact that no sons in the family are named after this great-grandfather Jacobus. Were his parents aware of Jacobus's conviction? The family historian does not know. He cannot ask his father, since he had already passed away by the time the story came to light.

In his writing about delving into the past of his four grandparents, this family historian shows some ambivalence. He says he likes the genealogical work, but does not give a specific motivation. He leaves interpretations about the link between past generations and present lives to famous others, as he quotes them in the introduction of his book. He focuses rather on the research of the sources he can trust. He doubts, or perhaps even denies – but this is my speculation – any link between the crime of his convicted great-grandfather and his own and his siblings' life.

As stated above, this detached attitude, belonging to the repertoire of 'just writing down the facts' is the norm rather than the exception in this corpus. The mere writing down of facts seems to be created from a subject position in which the subject effaces himself from the objects studied. As a writer, the family historian also refrains from any interpretation of the facts presented. This approach can be very convenient for the reading audience, who can interpret these facts and relate them to their own lives but are in no way obliged to do so. In some cases, family historians refer to the methods of their own profession in explaining their work on their family history, as in the following example:

> This book originated from the cooperation of two amateur genealogists, the second cousins Eduard and Arnold Zuiderent. It is the result of deep drilling and delving in the archives by a dentist, and analytical and construction work by an engineer.[59]

Here the competencies and professional backgrounds of the two cousins are of more importance to their family history work than their initial relationship. This is also clear from the second sentence in this opening paragraph: 'Even someone who has detached himself from his occupation will be often characte-

rized by the methods of his profession.'

5.3.2 'I have a specific question'

Apart from the profession of a scientific attitude, where collecting and recording facts is central, there are also family historians with specific, crystal-clear questions, as for example the one who wants to know whether his family name may be related to another surname belonging to a wealthy family that had lived in the same place (before 1810 people used to be named after the place they were living). This family historian says that a great deal of literature is available about noble families with a corresponding surname and therefore 'it is appealing to search for a link between our family and possible "noble" descent'.[60]

The answer to his specific question is also clear. He cannot prove that the oldest ancestor he has found is related to the noble family with the same surname Heslinga. Probably his ancestor adopted this name after he bought part of the Heslinga land in 1614. The question and the answer are mentioned in the introduction of the book, which has separate chapters on the role of noble families in the Middle Ages, the transmission of surnames, an agnatic lineage of the family historian's early ancestors, and a name-genealogy of the later relatives. These kinds of motives function as classical research questions, guiding the writer and the reader through the book.[61]

This question-driven research is conducted within a genealogical paradigm, in which the narrating 'I' resembles the subject position of a scientific researcher to whom a clear question is essential to successfully conduct the research. A variation on this question-driven research is a motive based on curiosity, which in some cases also leads to a specific question.[62] In one case, this curiosity is specified as wanting to know whether one branch of the family comes from Amsterdam.[63] Other questions I encountered were about trying to find out who the persons in certain pictures were, why a relative was sent to prison in 1833, what the history of a surname is, or 'scientific interest', in combination with 'passing the family history on to younger generations'.[64]

Another variant of this kind of motivation is found in a historical work about the life of Frederik de Lutiano (1562-1629). The main writer of this work is a descendant of De Lutiano, as were the two men with whom she was initially carrying out research into De Lutiano's life. After the death of her two fellow researchers, the writer decided to complete this book. She calls it a micro-history, which implies a wider reading audience, and it gives a detailed insight into

the circumstances in which De Lutiano lived. In this respect, this family historian seems then like a very modest historian.[65] This modesty is strengthened by use of an external, third-person perspective that aims at primarily describing the facts found during the genealogical research.[66] For the family historian, the *meaning* of all this historical fact-finding seems to be subordinated to the display of the sources. This is unsurprising when they present themselves as suppliers or distributers of their research to their relatives.

5.3.3 'I belong to a lineage of family historians in my family'

A recurring element, in a number of the family histories in this corpus, is the way family historians present themselves in a lineage of relatives who have previously done genealogical research. In this subsection, I will discuss the genealogy of genealogists as presented in a family history about six centuries of the Elgersma family. This family history starts with a preface of four pages, followed by eight pages of an introduction, which is much more than the majority of introductions and prefaces in this corpus (many of which are no longer than 300 words).

The introduction presents Metske Elgersma as the first relative known to have been interested in researching his ancestors. Metske was a farmer with a great interest in the breeding of cattle, and he drew up pedigrees of his cows. 'At a certain point Metske realized he knew more about the ancestry of his cattle than about his own. He started to investigate the family relations of the Elgersmas.'[67] Shortly after the Second World War, he gave his notes to a relative, who put them in his overcoat pocket as he got on his bicycle. When he got home, the pocket was empty. That was the end of the first Elgersma family tree.

Metske emigrated to Canada in 1947, with his wife and seven children. He sold his farm, but could not take the proceeds with him to Canada, so he left some of the money in the Netherlands. It went to a professional genealogist who made a family tree of the Elgersmas in 1953. This genealogist gave a lecture to his fellow genealogists about whether the Elgermas from the village of Schraard bore the name Elgersma legitimately. The answer was positive. Two brothers by the name of Steffens, who took the name Elgersma in 1811, were descended from Douwe Elgersma, who lived on the Elgersma estate in the fifteenth century. Twenty years after this lecture, Metske suggested to his son John that he extend the family tree to include contemporary relatives and, according to this family history: 'John also paid attention to the spouses, and in mentioning the children

of the female Elgersmas, he was ahead of women's emancipation.'[68]

The family historian himself was born in a village of three hundred inhabitants, forty of whom also bear his surname. Other inhabitants often had the same first name, indicating that they had the same grandfather. 'In other words, genealogy was part of my earliest childhood.'[69] When he and his parents moved to a bigger city, he also came across people with the same surname, though his father said they were not relatives. Together with his sister, to whom he dedicates this family history, the writer searched for years for the names and dates of Elgersmas, including those who were not related.

The advent of Internet made it much easier to collect data. 'Until the year 2000, collecting was rather passive: if I encountered an Elgersma, I included his data in my file. Later on, I became more active, I tried to fill in gaps, but I started to feel a bit like a bookkeeper, who is busy arranging names and figures without any knowledge of the lives behind them.'[70] For that reason he started to collect historical data about the lives of the Elgersmas. The writer also deployed other research methods: in 2003, he sent a questionnaire to all Elgersmas he could find in the telephone book, requesting them to send all data about their parents and grandparents. Approximately half of the 300 possible relatives returned a filled-in questionnaire. Fifty responses came from the United States and Canada. In 2007, he requested the Elgersmas to send in materials: anecdotes, biographies, pictures, newspaper clippings. He received around fifty reactions from Dutch relatives, and five from abroad.

He has also maintained a website about his family history which was visited by more than 4000 people in seven years. Some of these visitors gave him new information about his family. He also found information by chatting with his relatives on the telephone or during family gatherings. If he has used this information in the book, he legitimatizes it with the formulation 'according to history'. He comments: 'These are not always the most trustworthy stories, but often the most interesting ones.'[71]

In using work from previous genealogists in the family as well as the contributions of relatives who gave him material that could interest him, this family historian presents himself as a writer who put 'flesh' on the 'bones', repeating Darwinist and paleontological metaphors already mentioned in Section 3.3. He quotes Aad van der Tang, who worked for decades at the CBG and wrote a popular book on genealogy:

> A pedigree is like a skeleton: even if we have linked up the bones – the names and the data – it remains a rattling whole. It is not until the bones have been covered with muscles and skin – the 'biographical facts' – that our creation will start to look like anything. And if we have made a readable story out of it, then we can rightly say we have brought something to life: the history of the family.[72]

This family historian shows gratitude to the former genealogists in the family, his predecessors. Other family historians also pay tribute to earlier genealogists in the family, like the family historian who positions herself as number eight in a chain of family relatives (six men, one woman) who have done previous research.[73] She includes a short biography of each of them, with details about their professions and backgrounds. The oldest was John Sinclair MacDonald (1840-1987) who was the fourth son of the oldest ancestors, a former slave-holder and a former female slave. This John drew up a family register in 1885, a work that is much copied and distributed within the family. The original is still in the hands of one of the relatives.

All predecessors of this family historian contributed their part to the present research. Number 2 on the list conducted research in Scotland, where the slave-holder was born. Number 3 had an impressive collection of copies of official documents and a family photograph album. Number 4 studied the link between the Suriname McDonalds and the Scottish McDonalds, and number 5 had many photographs and information about their Scottish ancestors. Numbers 6 and 7 carried out independent research, and their data were also used by this family historian.

This genealogy of predecessors is seen in other areas – such as science, psychoanalysis, or music – where people refer to their 'symbolic ancestors' as Zerubavel calls them.[74] Genealogical thinking about academic influences has even led to a databased academic tree in which individual scientists in all fields are ranked according to those who have influenced them intellectually and those whom they in turn have influenced.[75] The genealogical way of thinking creates a paradigm to which some people are admitted and thus seen as important contributors to the body of knowledge. In the family history context, the genealogy of genealogists, the chain itself functions as a legitimation of the family historian who stands on the shoulders of predecessors and takes the family history one step further. This is similar to scientists interpreting themselves as dwarfs who have been enabled to do research by standing on the shoulders of giants,

here referring to the great scientists before them, or who need to fit into a scientific community before they can operate as a scientist.[76]

5.4 Focused on family

As stated in Chapter 2 and 3, the group of people who take an active interest in their family history by searching the Internet or visiting archives is far larger than the group discussed in this study: those who collect all the facts and stories and bring them together in one book. For some family historians this practice of revealing a family history to an audience of fellow relatives is their main legitimation. They consider the writing of a family history not so much as an individual act, but rather as a sign of their connection with all the other relatives for whom they made this book: as a tribute, as a way of sharing the results of research or, more specifically, as an articulation of the very special character of the family one belongs to. This self-presentation can be characterized as family historians who are focused on family.

5.4.1 'I bring my ancestors back to life'

Kinship networks include the living and the dead, one may conclude from reading the introductions and prefaces in the corpus.[77] Death and grief are unmistakable ingredients in writing about deceased relatives, to remember them and even to bring them back to life.

> I have a strong desire to bring our ancestors back into our lives, to not forget them. In the past five years I have been living with them and I have tried to imagine myself in their lives. I was always very pleased to find a new family member from the past. Now you can meet them as well![78]

For this writer, bringing back to life means bringing back into a community. It also means strengthening the link between deceased relatives and his own existence, and the same applies to the following writer:

> Why does one embark on such a story about the family? For me, it meant bringing these people nearby. Also curiosity about the way they

> had lived, and maybe to imagine what they had experienced in their time.[79]

For the family historians in question, this bringing back to life implies that firstly, they will find their ancestors' names and dates of birth and death and, secondly, that they will truthfully write about events in those earlier lives that can be verified by documents. Since bringing back to life can only be seen as a symbolic act, one could also describe the family historians as honouring the dead by acknowledging their former existence and their connections to other members of the family.

Describing ties and lives is one kind of honouring. Another is honouring by dedication. A large number of family histories in this corpus are dedicated to a beloved relative, like a grandmother or a childless aunt.[80] For some family historians this dedication is even a motive for starting their research. For example, several relatives of one family historian died in 2011. The book opens with four portraits, one of which depicts her father, and in the introduction she writes:

> The passing of these family members prompted me to write this book and to start with an "In memoriam". I am pleased to dedicate this book to them.[81]

One family historian writes that his wife gave him an assignment on her deathbed. She had just one wish: 'Jan, please do something with all the data we have collected'.[82] So he made a family history from all sources they had found. Besides this kind of honouring, linked to death, anniversaries also serve as a motive for starting a family history. Some family foundations use their 100th anniversary as a reason for publishing a family history.[83]

Other family historians give a genealogy or a family history to a relative as a birthday present, or to commemorate the last publication of a family history 100 years before.[84] This summing up of death and honouring relatives shows that remembrance can be seen as part of a repertoire.

This view is in line with the conclusion of the sociologist Ann Kramer, who studied the texts of British volunteers who wrote an assignment about the meaning of their family history in their lives, and also with anthropological research based on interviews with genealogists.[85] The processing of loss and grief seems to be an integral part of genealogical research and plays an important role in the personal lives of family historians.

A psychologist might say that these family historians seem to process these emotions in their books either by paying tribute to the deceased, celebrating an anniversary, or by symbolically recreating the family in pedigrees and stories. The cultural anthropologist Fenella Cannell even points to these symbolic acts as a way of making kin. She knows that the genealogists have various reasons for doing family history and that their focus can differ widely. Nevertheless,

> While acknowledging these variations, I want to argue that one of the consistent effects of hobby genealogy is that it reconnects the living to their dead as kin. Or, to put it in more Schneiderian terms, in the enormous popularity of genealogy as a pastime, one sees a great number of people at work, deliberately enlivening their sense of the dead as 'persons', and thus overcoming 'distance' and activating relatedness.[86]

In Cannell's view, doing family history presupposes an orientation which shifts the focus of attention away from the self and towards the other (whether living or deceased).

> The vast majority of these genealogists are quite undeterred by the fact that their dead relatives are not famous; the point is not to remember only those who confer status, but seems closer to Strathern's observation that in English kinship, connections between people are in themselves a good […]. As my acquaintances clearly suggested, if you don't have plenty of connections with living kin, then having those links with dead kin is certainly better than not having them at all.[87]

The establishment of relations with the deceased – for example by naming them and describing their biographies, by honouring them – can be one of the motives for genealogists. Nevertheless, not all family histories are so focused on the past and on deceased relatives. I found one family history that emphasizes the future, by referring to a contemporary network of relatives. This family history is from an internationally oriented family with many members living in Europe, Indonesia, and other Asian countries. In the preface, the writers explain their motives:

> The feeling of kinship, feeling part of a big family, does not come naturally. This feeling can only be acquired if it is transferred from gener-

> ation to generation. Conversations among each other will become easier, contacts will be more frequent and possibly a network will arise in which people can help each other. It is therefore important to cultivate this feeling of kinship among the younger generation.[88]

In this family, the cultivation of a sense of kinship is a way of making ties in a globalized world, and it is far more concerned with the future than with the past. This example shows that the repertoire of bringing ancestors to life is not a universal repertoire, at least not explicitly. Cannell's conclusion that the value of ancestors for family historians is by definition based on the relationships with the death is an over-interpretation. Honouring ancestors is just one of the repertoires available for explaining this kind of doing family.

5.4.2 'I want to complete this project'

Investigating facts and collecting data differs from publishing the results, as every scientist and also every family historian knows. Not every part of the process is enjoyable for everyone. As one family historian remarks: conducting research is much more fun than publishing. His relatives wanted to see his results, so it was about time to publish them.[89] Others assumed that it would not be too difficult to make a book out of the gathered results, like the one who initially thought that making a family history would be a nice, uncomplicated task, done together with a few relatives, which proved to be disappointedly untrue.[90] Although his family name had only existed for a hundred years, the number of relatives was limited, and the family historians could build on earlier research, it nevertheless took three years to publish a very small booklet of 28 pages with preliminary results.

The same sort of motive is displayed by the family historian who writes that he wanted to do 'something' with a box filled with family papers he acquired after his mother passed away. In the end he decided to make a book of his research, to prevent an unfinished manuscript itself being stowed in a box in his children's attic.[91]

The following family historian shares his thoughts about completing his family history research project:

> Sometimes my heart sank when I saw all those mountains of notes piled high. It was a matter of perseverance winning out over motivation. But

> then you walk through a flea market and see an album with yellowing family pictures. People looking into the camera lens, and there is no longer anyone who knows who they were. They were photographed during the happiest moments of their lives. An album, found in the attic of a grandma or grandpa, now for sale for a few cents. That, I knew at that moment, was not going to happen to everything my grandfather had carefully collected in cigar boxes, kept together with rubber bands.[92]

In this quote, the completion of a project is connected with a sense of loyalty to deceased relatives.[93] Family historians feel responsible towards these deceased, and sometimes also to future generations:

> You simply have to finish up at some point, because […] if you are only prepared to publish once the last question has been answered, you will take all the knowledge collected with you to the grave.[94]

This completion of a family history becomes an end in itself. It will mark the end of the research period. Several family historians comment on this process, which is why I see the duty to complete the project as a repertoire in itself. To give an example: one family historian writes that he completed his project when he fell ill. His disease was the real motive for making a publication out of the material he had gathered.[95]

Several other family historians demonstrate the motivations that Susan Tucker, in her study on the differences between American family historians and scrapbook makers, views as characteristic precisely of the latter group. Tucker concludes that the main difference between the two groups is that whereas scrapbook makers may consider their work done, family historians keep searching:

> Album makers make albums. Family historians gather family history. The differences between the two verbs 'to make' and 'to gather' tell the main difference between the practices of the two. Most simply put, album makers see their work in separate projects, as completions of separate albums. Though technology (new types of albums, and online scrapbooks) are changing this attitude, on the whole album makers see their legacies as finished at some point. Family historians see their work as never ending, as an ongoing process.[96]

The distinction Tucker draws between family historians, with their never-ending quest for public records, versus the present-oriented scrapbook makers, who are more interested in stories and recent events, does not apply to the writers of my corpus.

One reason for this difference might be a cultural one, as Tucker is focused on the United States. Another reason probably has to with the publication date of Tucker's book in 2007. Since then, the digital possibilities for family historians have been dramatically improved and have also altered the possibilities for making books that are hybrid composites of a family history and a scrapbook. A different explanation is that as only a small number of contemporary family historians write a book on the basis of their research, it is conceivable that the majority of the family historians do *not* aim to finish their work, and do indeed focus on the research, not on the end product. And yet another explanation has to do with the subject of Tucker's research: she compared the *products* of scrapbook makers, who produce scrapbooks, with the *research* of genealogists.

Looking at my corpus of the works of contemporary family historians, one might conclude that these written family histories have an overlap with the works compiled by scrapbook-makers. Despite several differences, there is one similarity: in most cases the family histories in this corpus have a present- and self-oriented side to them, like the scrapbooks in Tucker's research. The motivation of the project that needs completing is thus connected with the need and the desire to transmit the findings so far to present relatives.

One could say that making a book out of the research results forces these family historians to 'come out' as curators. Those who refer explicitly to the completion of a project centralize family in many ways, including reflecting on the family as a body one belongs to and simultaneously as an object of writing and research.

5.4.3 'I observe a very special family – which is mine!'

Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.[97] According to the famous opening of Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*, families are unique in their unhappiness, but this obviously does not mean that each unique family is also unhappy. The argument of uniqueness recurs in several family histories as an important argument to start doing research and write about a family. In emphasizing this uniqueness, the family historian becomes a promotor of this very special family.

Take the writer of the title, in translation: *Friedrich Staudt, ventriloquist, balloonist, and inventor. The history of a 19th century immigrant and his family*.[98] She writes in her introduction: 'A family tree from approximately 1650 is nothing special, but not everyone has an ancestor who was a ventriloquist and balloonist.'[99] Her book shows many illustrations from 19th-century newspapers about the performances of this particular man, and also about his peculiar inventions, like a stamping machine. The writer presents a special affinity for him and his talents, although she also places him in the context of a traditional genealogy by summing up his ancestors and his descendants. In the afterword, she states that in the 27 years of her research, she has corresponded with many relatives about this common ancestor. She was astonished by the e-mails with stories that were repeatedly told about the artistic talents of her relatives (among them writers, painters, comedians, and singers), and by several relatives who have never met but told her that they also have unusual gifts like the laying on of hands.

Many stories were rather exaggerated and colourful, designed to appeal to the reader's imagination, writes this family historian, cautiously alluding to general family traits she discerns in the responses from her living kin. She interprets this as a hereditary trait of Friedrich Staudt, whose rhetorical gifts were renowned.[100] The uniqueness of this one character in the family is not only a motive for describing this particular family history, it also reveals a colourful perspective on her relatives, who at the same time form her main reading public. In her description of her relatives' responses, she creates a family identity of which Staudt is the outstanding exemplar.

Another way of predicating the family's uniqueness is found in a family history I mentioned earlier, written by two cousins who worked together for three years to write about their family, which they describe as unique because of the fact that virtually no other Dutch family has DNA proof that its ancestors of a thousand years ago lived in the same place.[101]

The writers of the book, a former engineer based in Switzerland and his cousin, a dentist from the Netherlands, state that this unique fact prompted them to start writing about their family history. They take their starting point in the finding of 41 coffins in a cemetery near a church in Vlaardingen in 2007. These coffins seemed to be a thousand years old and the conservational circumstances proved so excellent that bones, wood, and even straw was preserved. Specialists extracted molars from the thousand-year-old skulls, and in 24 cases DNA specialists found material suitable for comparison with DNA from living

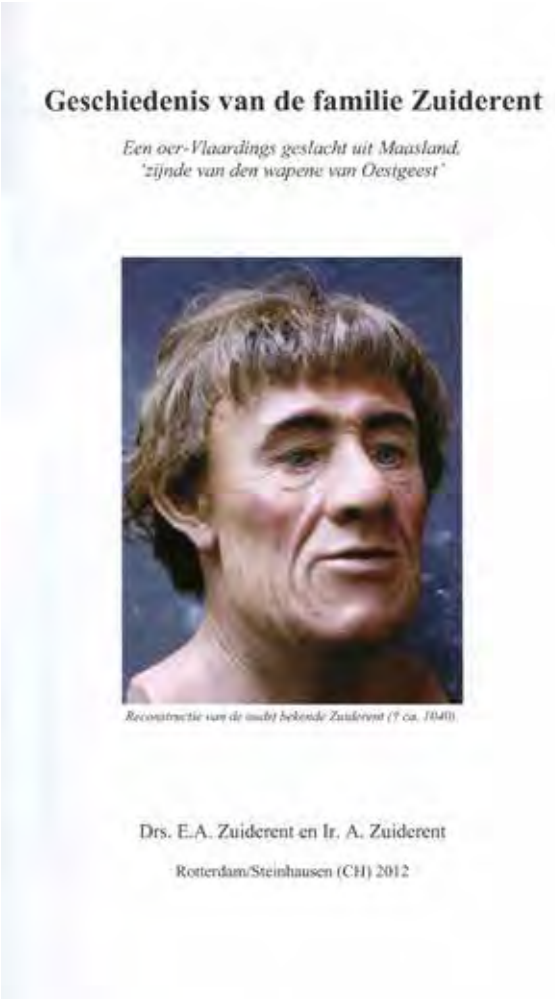


Figure 45. Front page of ID 87, with a photograph of the reconstruction of the first ancestor.

persons. 88 men were invited to donate their DNA. These men had surnames that occur in a book containing census data from 1555, some of the earliest census data for the city.[102]

Members of the Zuiderent family were not invited to donate DNA, because their surname was not mentioned in this 16th-century register of citizens. However, the dentist Zuiderent convinced the researchers that some of the remains could also belong to one of his ancestors, because his oldest known ancestor was a farmer who lived in a polder nearby, and since this area had no church at that

time, it was probable that this man was buried in the city church.

After a long period of research, one perfect match was found, with a certainty of 99.5 percent: the Y-DNA from one of the thousand-year-old molars, which belonged to a 45-year-old man, was almost identical to the Y-DNA of the dentist Eduard Zuiderent. 'This DNA match means that all persons with the surname Zuiderent (unless a DNA test proves other paternity) stem in the paternal line from this thousand-year-old ancestor.'[103] A physical anthropologist made a reconstruction of the ancestor's head, without seeing a picture of a living descendant, and according to one of the writers, it closely resembled the dentist. The head is on display in the local archive in the city where the remains were found.

Where the uniqueness of one single relative was reason for the writer of *Friedrich Staudt* to elaborate on his life and to extend his uniqueness, though with some reservations, to at least a part of her family, the uniqueness of the Zuiderent is described as lying in the documented proof of the existence of ancestors in the distant past. The family historians of the Zuiderent family have constructed this evidence on the basis of a mixture of genealogical and biological concepts of family that together establish a firm idea of their family identity. This identity is reinforced by a range of descriptions that are thematically arranged. Separate chapters are devoted to the dominant first names and main places of residence, and a chapter on 'The Zuiderents and their activities' deals with professions that were dominant over time, the rising level of education, and the activities carried out in spare time.

An extensive chapter is devoted to the role of religion in this family, and the influence of the complex developments of the protestant church on the previously Catholic family. In this chapter, descriptions of the history of these denominations are alternated with personal sources, like the diary of a brother of an in-law relative who was on the side of the Orangists and wrote about a revolt he witnessed in 1747.[104] These general chapters are followed by a genealogy with short biographies and pictures, described as 'a genealogy with traits of a parental', meaning that it is a name genealogy, although the names of the married daughters and the first names of their children are also mentioned. A separate text box explains that in some cases individuals outside the name genealogy are mentioned as well, like grandchildren who are well-known.[105]

A milder variant of 'having a special family' is the idea of 'having a specific family', which is of course true to all family historians, but only some see this a reason for doing research, like the family historian who has sent a list of ques-

tions to all her relatives. On one page, she asks rhetorically in a subtitle: '[W]hy all these questions?', and then: 'Don't you want to leave more behind than only a name? Otherwise, the family knows nothing about you. You will see that hobbies also run in the family: you have something in common'. She adds that especially the hobbies of mothers will tell something about their personalities.[106]

In conclusion, the demonstration of being member of a very special family centralizes the family historian as the one who promotes the family, and in doing so he or she supports and creates and even strengthens the family identity. This 'doing family by writing' also creates another self-presentation than the more distant one of the researcher, who in a way has no reason to desire a specific outcome of his question. Family historians in this category *justify* their research by finding evidence for the claim that the subject is indeed a very special family.

5.5 Conclusions

Although here I have neatly classified the repertoires found, family historians often use a mixture of repertoires and self-representations in their introductions and prefaces to their work. An example is the family historian who writes that he has been searching for his roots for years, because he wanted to fill in 'a piece of history'.

> For many years, you've been busy searching for your roots. Busy colouring in a piece of history. Why? Maybe simply because you once started something and are then determined to finish it. But as time went by, it felt increasingly like a tribute to all who went before. Because the future begins in the past, even if everyone carries their own baggage through life. On all those photographs, there are all those people looking at you, often at the happiest moments of their lives. Realizing that most of them are no longer with us is a confrontation with transience. The fact that every life ends is actually quite an injustice. You are given something, and then it is taken away.[107]

Several disparate motivations are blended in one passage, and none of them is elaborated by the writer, as if a staccato summary of motives, perspectives, and points of view are playing around in the writer's mind. He seems to speak from

different angles, using a range of repertoires. This staccato summing up could be seen as a flitting between different repertoires by subjects in their process of sense-making.[108] Or, as the social scientist Michael Billig says, as a sign of common sense: 'In many respects, common-sense resembles a kaleidoscope. A limited number of elements is continually twisted into an infinite number of new configurations.'[109]

What does the analysis of the ranges of repertoires used by family historians tell us? First, it reveals the cultural and historical backgrounds in which these repertoires are produced. Second, it illustrates the reflective power of writing. The introductions and prefaces contain more variety in repertoire than the body texts of the family histories. A reason for this difference can again be found in the digitization of the work at hand.

Transforming the results of digital archived research work into an analogue medium gives the family historians space to formulate what they have done during their research – which in some cases took them more than twenty years. The introductions and prefaces are places for reflection and also to answer the question of why and how this family history was made. Though the writers express highly individual motivations for writing their unique family history, this analysis of their discourse shows that they use a specific range of repertoires.

CHAPTER 6

Who belongs?

'Genealogy is for the living, not the dead.' [1]

Alison Landsberg

6.1 Writing creates flexibility

Genealogical databases have a one-dimensional, univocal concept of family, described as a genealogical concept, embedded in generations, and founded on family law and the transference of surnames. This univocal interpretation of 'family' can be reproduced in a written family history, and this happens in a number of the family histories that consist of an extended ancestor chart or descendant chart of relatives, grouped according to the generation they belong to. All relatives in the chart are numbered according to a genealogical numbering system, and the printed family history contains a numbered list of all relatives with their biographical data and, in some cases, short biographical accounts.

However, a substantial number of writers of the family histories in this corpus show more independence and flexibility towards the genealogical basic structure and supplement it with their own classifications and discourse. A concise description of this kind of practice is given by Marianne W. Jørgensen and Louise Phillips in their book on discourse analysis:

> In specific speech acts (and writing), people draw on the structure – otherwise speech would not be meaningful – but they may also challenge the structure by introducing alternative ideas for how to fix the meaning of the signs.[2]

This process of adapting existing structures of language and meaning is visible in the way family historians tell the story of their research, or add personal recollections of some relatives, or give more contextual information about the history of places of birth and death, while simultaneously reproducing the basic order of an ancestor chart or descendant chart.[3]

In this chapter, I investigate a number of ways in which these family historians show flexibility in handling genealogical structures. I interpret the genealogical databased programs they use as built on fixed protocols, routines, and meanings, and on fixed links between relatives; in this sense, the programs have the structure of a fishing net, in which each knot is linked to a limited number of other knots in the net.[4] At the same time, however, I describe family histories based on these database programs as the outcome of specific practices in which the univocal software discourse can mingle with other discourses. These discourses are introduced by the family historians who, as writers, use a much more flexible language than software can offer. This mingling of one-dimensional, databased, fixed language with concrete human language brings to the fore different meanings and uses of categories.

The central question of this chapter is: given that there are fixed genealogical concepts, expressed in these databased programs, what happens when family historians turn these into writing? To a certain extent they will echo these genealogical concepts, but they can also change them by adding other meanings.

In the following sections, I introduce three themes in which the family historians in this corpus move away from genealogical structures. The first one pertains to the recurring association with biology, more specifically with genetics or, in the words of the anthropologist Schneider, 'substance', by which he refers to the bio-genetic relations that are seldom interpreted as symbols, nor dismantled as constructs themselves.[5] The second theme refers to the histories of family organizations. As a special category within the genealogical imaginary, the family organization displays a hybrid form of doing family, since it is based on both an institutional membership system and on ancestor ties that are considered natural and self-evident. A comparison between two family associations structured according to very different principles reveals how the intertwining

of ideas about heritage, community, and ancestry can lead to different ideas about who belongs to the family organization.

The third theme concerns the demarcation of what a relative is, and the justifications that family historians give for these demarcations. On what grounds does a family historian decide that a specific individual is entitled to inclusion in the family history? As we will see, this theme of inclusion and exclusion shows awareness of biases at the heart of the genealogical structure itself. Here I interpret family historians as jugglers who use different notions of family in order to link their research to their own personal lives in a more or less coherent way.[6] This coordination work is most obvious in family historians' descriptions of who belongs to their families, where they reflect on their inclusion and exclusion criteria. In most cases, family historians in this corpus follow the standard paths laid down for them by the genealogical paradigm, but some improvise other routes by associating themselves with other notions, with significant others who are perhaps not genealogically acknowledged relatives, or with an different ordering of the past.

6.2 Biological associations with relatives

In what ways are biological associations part of the notions of family used by family historians? Chapter 5 analysed the metaphorical use of organic terms like roots and trees associated with a much used repertoire. This section will focus on the explicit references in this corpus to biological discourse in association with relatives. Some family historians hint at biology in mentioning natural children of the family, or in alluding (mostly only in passing) to blood, genes, or DNA. 'Our ancestry is in our blood', writes one family historian.[7] Another one hopes that good characteristics of his relatives will be saved in the genes of future generations.[8]

One very clear case is the family historian who refers to family traits, including character and medical problems.[9] She describes her relatives as proud, hard-working, very polite, honest, and content with their lives and fates; they were good-humoured and liked singing and making music. She also mentions heart problems in the family. Some of them had a hunched back; others died of lung cancer, probably caused by smoking. In this passage, standard genealogical discourse is merged with what could be described as folk biological discourse, in which the relatives are described as people of flesh and blood, with hereditary

characteristics. Remarkably, this merging of biological and genealogical discourse is less obvious in the family histories that refer to the rapidly expanding field of genetic genealogy, which covers many subjects.[10]

Given that this book focuses on the practices of contemporary family historians, I will restrict myself here to the few family historians in this corpus who mention DNA-analysis. One of them refers to the analysis of mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA), focusing on the inheritance of DNA along the maternal line. This writer explains how this mtDNA analysis works and remarks: 'The inheritance of mtDNA is passed down the maternal line, independently of the Y-chromosome. As a female genealogist with a lot of information about my female ancestors, this kind of analysis naturally appeals to me.'[11] Subsequently, she cites one of the former managers of the CBG who states that genealogy only covers legal relationships and not biological ones. In a biological sense, the paternal line is *unsafe*, according to this manager, while in most cases the identity of the mother is obvious. The impact of this statement remains unclear, and the family historian merely alludes to the existence of mtDNA-analysis, without any clarification or elaboration, as if it is only a future promise; she does not return to the subject of DNA-analysis in other parts of her book. The mere existence of DNA-analysis that *could* uncover the maternal lines in the family seems to be exiting in itself. The allusions to this biological discourse do not seem to interfere with the classic genealogical one.

Only four other family histories mention genetic genealogy. These include the history described in Chapter 5 in which two cousins state that that they belong to the only Dutch family that has DNA proof of the fact that its ancestors have been living in the same place for a thousand years. This conclusion is the result of DNA matching by archaeologists between DNA from 1000-year-old remains found in the locality and DNA donated by local inhabitants.[12]

In addition to this story, the same family history has a chapter on the Y-DNA analysis of one of the writers, which leads to an exposition on the possible migration routes of a man, 45,000 years ago, from the Middle East to northwest Europe. The succeeding chapters are concerned with subjects like the history of the place of birth of the first male family member, common professions, and the diversity of Christian churches these relatives belonged to, followed by a printed descendant chart with biographical details of all male members, including their wives and daughters. Again, the story of genetic data running in the family is not integrated with the history of its members based on genealogical research.

At the time of the selection of this corpus, in 2014, this kind of DNA analysis

was exceptional. The autosomal DNA test was not marketed to a general Dutch public, and the Y-DNA test was also not as affordable as it is today, in 2019.[13] However, a further three family historians in this corpus write about the results of their Y-DNA analysis, which gives genetic information about the paternal line.

The first one starts his section about genetic genealogy with the fundamental question: 'What is it that makes us feel like family? Is it solely the name? Or is it that we originated from the same ancestors?'[14] He gives examples of family relations in which the genealogical and the biological relations diverge: some female relatives died young, and their children were subsequently given their mother's surname after the widower remarried, in order to differentiate them from the children from the second marriage. The family historian also came across descendants of the first ancestor Albert Derks (1625-1687/90) who had a different surname. These descendants must have Derks's Y-chromosome in their cells, but in 1811, when Napoleon ordered everyone to register a surname, this branch of the family adopted a different one since they did not use the name Derks in daily life.

These divergences between genetic and genealogical ancestry caused this family historian to order a Y-DNA test, in 2006, together with two men who bear different surnames but were perhaps genetically related. The test showed that this was indeed the case. A second question was that one man who was born before the marriage of his parents on 28 November 1861 and yet legally acknowledged as their son on this date. The test proved that he was indeed the biological son of his genealogical father, since their Y-chromosomes were shown to overlap convincingly.[15]

Another family historian who writes about Y-DNA analysis found more disappointing results. His DNA could be traced back to a specific region, the Basque Country, but due to a lack of participants, nothing else could be proved about this link. He hints to future developments in genetics as he writes:

> If in a certain number of years my grandson in the male line enters my data into the database again, maybe it will become clear to him how my and his ancestors lived their lives. Whatever I write now is bound to be superseded very soon. But it does have its charms: he will also find out that his grandfather was pretty up to date for his day.[16]

A third example of Y-DNA test results in the corpus occurs in a family history comprising a collection of divergent texts, written by relatives in one family,

mostly about their personal memories. One of these texts is on genetic genealogy. This five-page piece contains many descriptive paragraphs about the essence of genetic genealogy and its scientific background. In the second paragraph, the family historian writes that he knows that not all of those who share his name will agree with what he writes about genetic genealogy, but 'with all due respect, what is written down is in line with recent scientific knowledge'. It is possible that this family historian thinks that some of his relatives will not agree with the references to evolutionary biology in his text. He gives an extensive explanation of how Y-DNA analysis works and how differences in haplogroups can provide an insight into migrating patterns ten to twenty thousand years ago.

This family historian took part in a Y-DNA test together with two members of his branch of the family and with two people from the eastern part of the country who share the same name but with whom no genealogical relationship had yet been established. As a result of the test, he concludes that though there is a certain genetic relationship between the two groups with the same name, no common ancestor in prehistoric times could be identified. The family historian was also involved in a second DNA test, as part of a research project that collected the DNA of 400 participants from different families. He writes that his family belongs to haplotype 1, to which 20 percent of contemporary Europeans belong. He describes their migration pattern – from the Middle East 28,000-20,000 years ago, via the Balkans to northwest Europe. Probably his family stems either from the Frisians or from the Vikings, he suggests, but this cannot yet be proved. He hopes that future research will provide more evidence. The relatives have so much genetic material in common that they may have the same ancestors in prehistoric times. Further research is needed, he concludes, to establish whether his family is indeed of shared Frisian and/or Viking descent.

This short overview shows that family historians are aware of the differences between biological and genealogical ways of doing family history, but nevertheless believe that some day these two lines will come together and can verify each other. Some of the family historians did indeed carry out a DNA test with a view to proving genealogical relations or to underlining the bonds between contemporary lives and lives in the past. Those bonds are often described as bonds of blood, genes, or DNA. Nevertheless, when it comes to family history the genealogical lines prevail above the biological ones. Take the female family historian who reflects on the last page about the loss of the family surname: 'Although the genes will live on in the children of Nicolaas's daughter […], it seems to me that the loss of the family name is the right point to finish this

chronicle.'[17]

Apparently, the two distinct discourses on DNA analysis and genealogy give family historians an escape route: if one of the lines of continuity is blocked by missing facts, one can jump to the other one. Both function as sources of clarification and evidence for the family historian who aims at a story with one simple timeline. Both rest on a mythical belief that 'something' can be transferred from one generation to the other and that ideally the genealogical and biological descriptions would completely overlap. In these practices, however, the discourses about DNA and the about genealogical ties seem to remain distinct and do not generate new, merged meanings.

6.3 New hybrids: family organizations

Some family histories are written to mark the anniversary of a family organization in which the members are linked by their ancestry. These family organizations became popular at the end of the nineteenth century, when middle-class families started to locate themselves along the temporal line of progress and invented traditions to underline their pasts. The historian John Gillis, voices the general feeling at that time: 'A person, a family, a nation – nothing without a past can have meaning or substance.'[18]

Where aristocratic and patrician families created genealogies for themselves, and working class families cherished nostalgic and bitter stories about their past hard times, the middle class advocated positive family identities, for instance by investing time and energy in starting up a family organization. In the Netherlands, these kinds of organizations began to emerge after 1848, when the right of association was laid down in the Constitution. The oldest known Dutch family foundation, Berit Salom, was established by a Jewish family in Borne in 1861, on the occasion of the golden wedding of Salomon Cahn and his wife Sybilla Gottschalk.[19] At the suggestion of a non-family member, the association aimed to gather money for wedding gifts for poor female descendants of Salomon and Sybilla. Other aims included the maintenance of relatives' graves, the administration of the pedigree, and the performance of religious services for deceased relatives.

Over the years, hundreds of family organizations have been established in the Netherlands. Usually they have a legal framework, either as a foundation led by a board, or as an association with a board as well as a membership structure.

Figure 46. Front covers of ID 116 and ID 67, the Salm and Blokhuis families.

Their tasks may vary from taking care of the family archive (or online archive), maintaining graves and other material objects, to managing family capital gathered from donations and legacies. Some organizations supervise special funds, usually reserved for a particular group of deprived relatives, like the elderly or students. Some family foundations regularly publish a family magazine, a newsletter, or a book about the history of the family. In the context of this research, family foundations deserve particular attention because they create an obviously hybrid idea of kinship, in which membership of an organization is linked to both biological and family legal ties. Admission requirements may sometimes even be more specific, as in the above-mentioned foundation of Berit Salom, where the members debated whether membership of the family foundation should be restricted to relatives who actively professed the Jewish religion, or whether genealogical ties were sufficient.

In this section, I will compare the definitions of 'family' in two family histories produced by family organizations, looking at the admission criteria for their organization, which create an idea of belonging for their members. These family organizations both commemorated the 100th anniversary of their family foundation with a publication. The first one is entitled, in translation, *A Hund-*

Figure 47. Inside cover of the family history of the Blokhuis Foundation, ID 67.

red years of the Blokhuis Family Foundation 1912-2012. It consists of two volumes in a case, with a picture of the family coat of arms on the front.[20] One book is entitled, in translation, *Stories*, and the other *Genealogy*; the inside cover of both books shows many pictures and paintings of family members past and present.

The books are a co-production by a considerable number of relatives who contributed their memories, filled in a survey about their present situation, or had an interview with one of the editors of the book, who are also all members of the family. In this sense, the book is a multi-vocal product.

The other family history is written by two young professional historians commissioned by the Salm family. This book is evidently a co-production between writers and family, as shown for instance by an afterword by a family member who praises the two writers for being able to understand and reproduce the core values of the family.[21] This full-colour, luxurious paperback is 184 pages long and includes two ribbon markers. The inside cover reveals a fold-out map of Amsterdam, indicating all the significant buildings in the lives of family relatives over the past four hundred years. The inside of the back cover has a fold-out as well: a

Figure 48. Inside of the front cover (left) and back cover (right) of the family history of the Salm Foundation, ID 116.

picture showing a female angler catching a big salmon with a male human head on it (a reference to the word 'Salm'). The book includes many photographs of relatives, paintings, houses, objects, and embroidery related to this particular family. In the following section, I compare the concept of 'relative' in these two family histories.

6.3.1 Association of the Salm family

The *Vereeniging Familie Salm* was founded on 29 September 1912 by 54 members of various branches of the family, all descended from the first known ancestor, Claes Salm. What motivated these relatives to start a family foundation? According to the writers of the book entitled, in translation, *Native soil. Four centuries of the Salm family*, the foundation was initiated by Coenraad Salm (1878-1940).[22] This enterprise corresponded with a trend among citizens to organize themselves in associations, based on a common interest and codified by law.

The first aim of the association was to support the social standing of all relatives and to help relatives who were ill or in financial need. According to the writers of this family history, the founder's concern with less successful relatives emanated from the family's religion. The Baptists had a strong tradition of social commitment and played an important role in the civilization drive that started at the end of the 19th century.[23]

However, the initial idea of a nursing home for the deprived was considered too ambitious, as the founders feared a lack of funding. The foundation also aimed at maintaining the family archive, graves, and monuments, and exploring the genealogical background of the family. In this respect, the foundation's aims

were in harmony with societal trends at the time: the interest in heritage and preservation of the past became a high priority at the end of the nineteenth century.[24]

The name 'Salm' was seen as the backbone of the association. Nevertheless, almost immediately major discussions arose about the membership policy of the association. Female members were allowed until the second generation. Some members, as Johanna te Winkel-Lodeesen (1853-1923), initially held that membership should be restricted to true 'Salms': men and women with that surname. Nevertheless, she did become a member herself, together with her two sons. The eldest of these, Pieter te Winkel, in turn argued for the admission of his children. In his view, descendants of female members should have the same advantages as those of male members.[25]

Influenced by the first wave of feminism, Maria Kielstra (1867-1933), the granddaughter of a 'Salm,' and her husband appealed for all women relatives to be incorporated, 'at this time, where women are also seen as human beings, with the same rights'.[26] After all, 'it is just about a name', Maria wrote. The couple's proposal was rejected. Other proposals to admit relatives in the third or fourth degree were also dismissed. In 1981, however, one article of the admission rules changed: the board of seven members would be reduced to five, and at least one of the board members, but preferably a majority, must be a 'Salm'.

Pragmatists in the family, who noted the diminishing of the number of men with the surname 'Salm,' later decided to alter the rules yet again. Since 1995**,** the surname itself is no longer a prerequisite for admission to the association. Under the current rules, anyone who can prove descent from Claes Sybrandsz Sallem (1609-1664) and Marritie Sipkes (1608-1667) is eligible to become a member of the association, and can, if necessary, be supported by a fund for low-income relatives or another fund for students.

The family history quotes a comment about this decision from the female chairperson of the association:

> The main point is that from now on the female line of the family may remain a member of the association. The name 'Salm' will more quickly be outstripped by other surnames, but what does that matter? They are all family, and that is what counts, in my opinion. It is a bit old fashioned if after a few generations you can only remain a member through the male line**.**[27]

Probably the amendment of the articles of the association saved it from extinction. In 1997, the association welcomed 26 new members, 23 of whom would not have been allowed according to the old regime. Although today only a minority of the members have the surname 'Salm', the name still has strong emotional and cultural value for the members of the association. Quite recently, a female relative passed on this surname to her sons, which is still the exception in the Netherlands. In 2010, a few other relatives officially changed their name to their mother's name, 'Salm'.

The association has grown from 54 members when it was set up in 1912, to 300 members in 2012. As the book shows, the association is still very active in the performance and strengthening of its family identity: organizing exhibitions, annual reports, and meetings; producing historical publications; and arranging national and international visits to significant places in the history of the family. There is a collection of family jewellery, a Salm song, and many other displays of the name: like on images on the flag, a family crest on utensils like bread and cheese boards, and in 'Salmon' songs and poems.[28]

The book itself is a strong manifestation of this commonly experienced past. It spans four centuries and describes lives of relatives in Amsterdam, in the colonial Dutch East Indies, and during World War II. It also touches on very different subjects within the family, such as the formation of the Nuysink Fund for the support of young students. This fund was established from the legacy of the unmarried pharmacist Albertine Nuysink (1872-1962), after the sale of her pharmacy. The capital of the family association doubled with this contribution.

One remarkable aspect is the account of the excommunication of one relative due to her sympathy with the Nazis during World War II. In the early years of this war, she cancelled her membership, but in 1944 she signed up again, probably because of the support the association gave to members in poor financial circumstances. She was admitted again, because, as the chairman explained after the war, a refusal to give membership to a Nazi collaborator could have led to the Nazis putting a stop to the family association. After the war, in 1945, she was convicted of collaboration, and in 1946 she was excommunicated from the Salm Association, despite pleas from some relatives who said she had had her punishment and deserved the trust of the family.[29]

What are the main features of this Salm family? The epilogue of the book lists a few qualities, having stated that the family is characterized through the ages by an upward social position. They started as simple salmon sellers in the 17th century and became merchants, architects, and finally internationally

operating technicians and soldiers. From the 18th century onwards, they were well-to-do citizens. A combination of ambition, solidarity, and non-conformist behaviour is common to the descendants of Claes Sallem, according to the book.

One of the characteristic features of this family history is that its focus is not so much on the past as such, but rather the significance of the past for the members of the family association in the 20th and 21th century. The writers constantly reflect on this past, for instance in the first chapters of the book where they look back at the birth place of the Claes Sallem. The writers find out that in the 19th century, relatives became fond of Claes Sallem's birthplace Workum, and started to describe their family as a Workum family. According to a local journalist at that time, the founders of the Salm Association even decided that if the association ceased to exist, they would donate all its assets to this little town as a contribution to founding a library. The writers introduce this anecdote to illustrate the start of the family's self-image as a Frisian family – although it was mainly based in Amsterdam. By combining sources from the past with earlier research, and by mainly focusing on the events within the association, this book echoes one of the aims of the family association itself. In addition to focusing on the family past, it also aims to be active in the present through all sorts of activities, and to keep an eye to the future of the association and its members.

This view is endorsed by the writer of the preface, who considers this family history an example of how a family can reinvent itself with modern means, in which relatives transform themselves into association members with their own, accurate memory system. The writer, Rob van der Laarse, a professor of cultural studies at the University of Amsterdam, also states that this modern family association, which has survived even the deep wounds of World War II, is a symbol of a general need for binding.

> Today, the family association seems to play a new role in this more individualistic, postmodern society, in which, since the sixties, the traditional classes and denominational pillars have lost their authority. The image that emerges is of a younger generation in search of authenticity, which they localize in the Frisian and Amsterdam native soil of centuries ago.[30]

Van der Laarse pays ample attention to the feminization of the family association and the remarkable way these relatives have revitalized their heritage. His explanation for these activities is concerned with searching for authenticity,

caused by a loss of authority. I think what is involved is not so much the need for new connections as a creative rethinking, reflecting on the concepts that still give access to the past. One could even interpret the activities of this family association as a form of reflective nostalgia, as Svetlana Boym has framed it, in the form of critically assessing one's heritage, putting it into context, and renewing old ideas, in this case the idea of kinship.[31]

Van der Laarse also points to the inventing of a community, but he is less sensitive to the playful side of this invention: the members of the association are aware of the new interpretations of the roles they play as relatives. The females know that their roles as members of this particular family association are the result of a number of deliberate decisions, in which the institutionalized transfer of the name Salm from generation to generation is considered less important than the genealogical lines of descent from the first ancestor Claes Salm.

6.3.2 The Blokhuis Family Foundation

The Blokhuis Family Foundation was founded on 5 December 1912, by the gentlemen Hendrik Jacob, Mijndert, and Eduard Arthur Ferdinand Blokhuis.[32] The aims of the foundation are to advocate genealogical research and maintain contact with relatives all around the world. The foundation publishes a family magazine, preserves earlier genealogy books of the family, and organizes a family day every five years. There is also a fund that can give loans and donations to support poor family members and their children or their studies. Relatives who have passed their exams can receive a financial reward from the foundation.

These aims of the family foundation are written down in the articles of the association.[33] Article 3 defines the relatives of this family as the descendants of Gijsbert Blokhuis (1725-1799) and his wife Lijsbeth Rikkers (1728-1804).[34] Partners, widows, and widowers of these relatives are also counted in, as are those who do not bear the family name but have one parent with the name Blokhuis. Nevertheless, their children are only part of the family if they have the same surname as Gijsbert Blokhuis. This Gijsbert was the great-grandson of the so-called first ancestor Rijckert Blokhuis (ca 1620 – 1680).

The portrait of Gijsbert and his wife Lijsbeth van de Brink (sometimes referred to as Lisje Rikkerts van den Brink) adorns the front cover of the *Genealogy.* Gijsbert was a farmer and also held the position of mayor, as well as other local political positions. His descendants expanded in several branches,

named after the Dutch cities they initially moved to, such as Nijkerk, Amsterdam, Velp, and Lisse. These branches have an important role in structuring this family history. In the book of anecdotes, for example, representatives of all branches are interviewed or have contributed written memories. The text focuses on a theme introduced in the introduction, namely the several professions within the family and the changes these professions have undergone in the last hundred years. The various contributions have titles like 'Gijsbert and Aart, founders of a dictionary', 'Four generations in education', and 'A much appreciated plumber'. These stories are written from a personal perspective. In that sense, the book is a collection of multiple voices with their surname as a common denominator. The collection of stories is preceded by a chapter on genetic genealogy, as is described in Section 5.2.

In the book *Stories*, one of the final chapters, by Saskia Blokhuis-Muller, has the title: 'Blokhuis, a name to be proud of'. It opens with the much quoted last line of a poem by the Dutch poet Neeltje Maria Min, in translation: 'For whom I love, I wish to be named.'[35] Although the article touches on various subjects, the dominant one is the question of the surname and its relation to the family. Blokhuis-Muller carried out research by sending a written questionnaire to an unspecified number of relatives. She received 52 responses, answering questions about topics such as first names, professions, marital status, and the size and composition of each family.

On the subject of first names, the writer concludes that certain names have run in the family for more than four hundred years. This is certainly true of the name Rijckert, belonging to the first ancestor Rijckert Blokhuis. The names of his sons Rickert, Jan, Gijsbert, and Gerrit are still present in the family as well, although some relatives do not know that their name is linked to their ancestry. According to the survey, children are often named after a relative, mostly a grandfather or grandmother.

When it comes to marital status, Blokhuis-Muller observes that almost all relatives are married and have up to eight children. After a period in which families with one or two children were standard, a growing number of highly educated people now wish for larger families, and the same applies to relatives in the Blokhuis family, she writes. In earlier periods, the family almost 'died out' after three generations with only one son. Happily, the last of these, Rijckert, had four sons and one daughter, so the name in this branch continues to exist. Blokhuis-Muller reflects on this phenomenon of 'dying out':

> The Roman Ulpianus worded this phenomenon very beautifully in the saying: 'Mulier autem familiae suae et caput et finis est': a woman is both the beginning and the end of her family: she is the beginning because she is the one who gives birth to the next generation, but her name ceases to exist with her being. Today there is the possibility of passing the woman's name on to the child, but this does not happen very often. In the case of the extinction of a surname, it might be handy that this possibility exists.[36]

This idea of the dying out of a family supposes that families are identified by their names. Families that do not produce relatives with the same surname risk so-called extinction. If a child is only given the surname of his or her father, families need to produce sons to survive – at least until 1998, when the Dutch law changed in this respect.[37] This is what the family historian is referring to in the above passage. Until 1998, daughters could only transfer their surname to illegitimate children, but now this option is also available to married women.

The writer also reflects on the range of the professions (and former professions) found among the respondents. Some professions – such as farmers, doctors, dairy merchants, and fishermen – run in the family for several generations. She dedicates a few paragraphs to the professions of female relatives and to the fact that women enjoyed no legal capacity until 1956 – except in the Dutch Golden Age when, in the absence of their husbands, women could run businesses and take financial decisions independently. She also criticizes the idea that 'housewife' is not considered a profession.

This is followed by interviews with two highly educated relatives: a doctor and a politician. Since there have been several doctors in the family in recent generations, this career is interpreted as part of a family tradition, but in the interview the doctor shows no particular affinity with his surname, nor with family traditions in general. The next paragraph states that the doctor has a PhD, and the writer continues with a summary of the educational background of her family. She concludes that the level of education in the present generation is higher than that of their grandparents: the majority of the relatives born around 1900 only attended primary school. The next interview is with a politician, who was the first in his agrarian family to go to university.

When asked about the role he wants to play for future generations, he answers: 'I live primarily in the present. Of course, you yourself want to have been of some significance for your own children and the students you've taught. You

want to leave the world behind in good order, but in politics too the focus is less on the future than on the here and now.'[38] Why these two men are singled out for closer acquaintance is not clarified. Probably, since Blokhuis-Muller emphasizes the progress generations have made in their careers, she chose these two because they have reached the highest rung on the professional ladder.

The chapter ends with a short reflection on the 100th anniversary of the family foundation and again on the binding force of a surname in the family. In former times, the writer points out, referring to the fairy tale of Rumpelstiltskin, to know someone's name meant 'to have power over that person':

> These days it is nice to have a name and to know other people's names. In this individualized society, it forms a bond. A group, a family you belong to.[39]

Despite her wish to find binding elements among relatives and to identify patterns in occupations, traditions, and other recurring behaviour in the succession of generations, she gives the floor to relatives who do not univocally identify themselves with such a family identity. As with her observations of the meanings of a surname, these reflections show a critical distance to the genealogical concepts and structures on which this family history is built.

6.4 Exclusion, and the response of family historians to exclusion

The articulation of relations between a human being and his or her relatives inevitably leads to the exclusion of others, by default described as non-relatives. This section focuses on the question of how family historians handle the specific selection of relatives on the basis of genealogical concepts of family. Some family historians print their genealogical results according to a genealogical format offered by the genealogical programs, without any comment; others reflect on the inevitable exclusions as a result of creating a family history on the basis of such a framework.

In this section, I look at three main kinds of exclusion, which I cluster into the categories institutional, genealogical, and gender exclusion. I will show how family historians respond to these kinds of exclusion, either by justifying it or by apologizing for it to their readers, or by finding means to include the per-

sons they find interesting or important or significant for their personal lives. By looking at these practices, we can see how family historians respond to pre-established ideas about relatedness and belonging as implicated in the standard genealogical categories they rely on in their research.

6.4.1 Institutional exclusions

The first category of exclusion is that on institutional grounds, according to church or national laws dictating who belongs to a specific family and who does not. Recently, a Dutch example of institutional exclusion was the subject of public debate. When a baby dies within 24 hours after birth, the government records the date and place of its death. Its birth, however, is not given the same institutional recognition: in the Netherlands, until recently, no birth certificate was issued. A protest group has been trying to have the law altered. One of their arguments in the favour of register the birth of stillborn babies is that future genealogists would otherwise not be able to find their date of birth, since that they are only registered as deceased.[40]

An older, very poignant example of institutional exclusion is shown in the family history written by Gonda Nekrui-MacDonald. She uses two surnames: the first is her husband's name, the second her maiden name. Both are closely connected to the history of slavery in her family and family in law in Suriname, a former colony of the Netherlands. Her husband's surname was created in the nineteenth century by the slaveholder of her husband's ancestors, named Van Kruijne.[41] After the abolition of slavery, his former slaves were given the surname Nekruij, an anagram of Kruijne, later changed into Nekrui.

Gonda's surname MacDonald originates from the Scottish slaveholder Alexander MacDonald (1800-1870). Her ancestor Sophia van Bunschoten (1809-1853) was enslaved as a domestic servant, and bore seven children to her master, MacDonald, who came from Scotland. In 1834, he requested and received manumission for Sophia and her eldest son. The first children were given their mother's name, but in 1847 all children were legally recognized by their father, and their names were changed into their father's name. Sophia and the father of her children, her former owner, never married.

Gonda Nekrui-MacDonald wrote about the history of her family-in-law and also about her own family in Suriname. In her introduction to the history of her own family she notes:

> Friends and family used to ask me how far back in time I went with my genealogical research. They meant to ask if I had found data on my earliest ancestors.[42]

She used to answer she could go very far back in time regarding her Scottish ancestors.

> But about the African descent of my ancestor Sophia I found nothing. No documents, no names of her parents, nothing.[43]

And further on:

> It hurts to realize that slave traders were only concerned with money and wealth. Slave traders were not interested in the descent of the people, young and old, captured in Africa: what family, village, or small town in Africa they came from, or even what names they had.[44]

This family historian describes how institutions did not acknowledge the enslaved as humans, thus not including them in their administration as citizens, merely as the property of their bosses. She seems to be extremely aware of the fact that this part of her family history is therefore limited to the period during which the manumissions were started. By contrast, the family history of Alexander goes back to 1753, when his father was born in a Scottish village. The date of birth of Alexander's mother Barbara Gordon is unknown.

A very interesting case of neither inclusion nor exclusion, but rather adaptation to the genealogical framework is a comprehensive, German-Dutch book about seven hundred years of the family Schliess, entitled *700 Years of History. Ancestors and Descendants.*[45] In the preface, the family historian introduces himself, his father, and his partner:

> When in 1971 – 31 years ago already – I met my partner Léon, who was studying law in Utrecht, I was living at home at the Bolwerk, together with my father and his housekeeper, and working hard in the company. I remember coming home one day and seeing Léon and Daddy in a corner of the living room, Daddy in his wheelchair and Léon sitting opposite him with big white sheets of paper on the table. On the basis of his ques-

> tions and my father's answers, Leon had schematically sketched out a first draft of the family tree of the Schliess family.[46]

This cooperation was the start of a project in which the couple worked together with professional genealogists on a book about the history of the German region where many relatives of the Schliess family lived. After this book, the fam ily historian ordered a second book, written by the same genealogist, about the long history of his Schliess family. In the introduction, he writes about the reason behind this project:

> In view of my age, 70 years, I wanted not to delay in recording all Léon and I have been working on for decennia. Now we can proudly present this work to you, […].[47]

Within the seven-hundred-year history of the family, the relationship between Léon and the writer of this introduction takes a prominent position. Photographs of the couple are accompanied by a photograph of the document in which their partnership is legally registered. A few pages are devoted to Léon's parents, and there is a copy of a document from 2001, in which Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands gives Léon permission to add his mother's surname to his own, 'in memory of my mother who, after my posthumous birth due to the early death of my father, bore the complete responsibility of bringing me up'.[48]

This extensive family history displays the homosexual relationship, giving it a distinct but not very explicit status. The writer and his partner bring themselves and their relationship into their family history, into a special kind of history, although the system they rely on is based on sex difference, heterosexuality, and sexual reproduction. This couple handle this phenomenon implicitly by pointing to the extended family of the partner and the way he helped the writer's father with his research.

6.4.2 Genealogical exclusions

A second type of exclusion comes from within the genealogical infrastructure itself, as became clear in Chapter 2. This type manifests itself on different levels. The first, most fundamental, level is concerned with the definition of an ancestor that ignores every person who is not defined as a parent according to church or civil registers. As the anthropologists Carsten and Sahlins have pointed out,

other ideas of parenthood – not based on sexual conception – have existed in all ages and in all parts of the world, but are not reflected in a genealogical ancestor chart.

This awareness is also evident in the case of the family historian who gives his children a family history based on an ancestor chart, but reflects on all the facts he cannot know as a family historian, and on all the relatives that do not come to the fore in his research. His ignorance is caused by a lack of documents, but also by the illusion created by an ancestor chart that every person has a unique set of parents, grandparents, great-grandparents and so on. In reality, there were many more cross relations between people, caused by intermarriage. He also gives the percentage of ancestors identified: in the first generations the identification is 100 percent, but this percentage quickly falls from 52 percent in the tenth generation to less than 1 percent in the seventeenth generation.[49] For these calculations, he used a standard function in genealogical software. So by supplying these kind of calculations as a reality check, the genealogical database program itself warns people, so to speak, of the fictions created by the ancestor charts. While non-fathers and non-mothers do not appear in ancestor charts, they do in genealogies based on a descendant chart, where they are often being described as members of 'dead branches'.[50]

Although this corpus makes no claim to be representative, my impression is that these extended genealogies in printed form are not very popular. The complete collection of relatives, including those without issue, will be found in the genealogical databases, but when they are converted into a printed family history, these relatives are the first to be left out. As a consequence, what I refer to as 'non-fathers' and 'non-mothers' are not mentioned or remembered very frequently. One clear exception in this corpus is the biography of Johannes Ruardi (1746-1815). Because Ruardi had only one daughter, his status in the genealogical structure is described as a dead end, in which nevertheless three families are connected through Ruardi's father, his mother, and his wife. This family history is more or less a biography of one man. Its writer legitimizes this publication by stating that Ruardi was a fascinating preacher and professor, who left much documentation behind.[51]

A similar solution was chosen by a male family historian who gave special attention to six unmarried, childless daughters by devoting short biographies to their lives.[52] Another solution for the inclusion of non-fathers and non-mothers is presented in a family history dedicated to an unmarried, childless aunt who played an important role in the lives of the writers. The family historians write

fondly about her in an *in memoriam,* describing her importance for them. Although this family history seems to be structured by a descendant chart, with chapters added about the geological and archaeological features of the region the family's ancestors came from, the greater part of this family history concerns a fairly shallow concept of time, as described in Section 4.1: the relatives narrate more extensively about themselves, their parents, and grandparents than about earlier ancestors.

In other words, in this family history, an experience-oriented concept of kin is expressed more strongly than the purely genealogical one. In the introduction, the writers promise: 'The lives of our parents will receive much attention. After all, we were part of their lives.'[53] From a strictly genealogical point of view, a childless woman like these writers' aunt Nan will find herself at a dead end in a descendant chart, but this family history creates a present-oriented sense of a community with descendants who share ancestors, but more importantly who share memories. The subtitle *Family in time and space* underscores this idea of a community. If one describes this book in Zerubavel's terms as a performance of a family identity, one must add that it is not so much the descendant structure as the present-oriented community structure that forms the backbone of this idea of family.

6.4.3 Gender exclusions

Standard genealogical structures prioritize the male lineage, especially in name genealogies and lineages that usually start with the oldest known relative, called the progenitor or forefather or, in some cases, a foremother. An example of the latter is a family history describing a descendant chart along the male lineage, except for one of the branches – from which the family historian in question stems – which has a foremother who had two children out of wedlock. The family historian barely comments on this phenomenon. More reflection on the connection between gender and surnames is evident in the preface of the family history called, in translation, *Always Prudon! Genealogy and Family History Preud = Homme + Prudon.* The introduction states:

> This book is a so-called name genealogy, which means that not only the descendants of male name-bearers Preudhomme and Prudon is elaborated, but also the women with descendants named Preudhomme and

> Prudon. In most cases these are the children of unmarried mothers, or children born before their parents married.[54]

By following the history of the surname, Dutch name genealogies inevitably omit large parts of the family, given that the number of unmarried women who had children and passed on their name can be expected to be small. From 1811, the female half of a family will be excluded. Name-giving before 1811 shows a more complicated history of the distribution of surnames and patronyms, characterized by disparate developments in different regions.[55]

The idea of the extinction of a family recurs in several family histories in the corpus. In one of them, the family historian keeps track of recent male relatives who bear his name. He writes:

> Anno 2012 we are sixteen or seventeen generations further, and we have at least 32,768 ancestors. According to the population census of 1947, there were 104 people with the name Kreike, and the Municipal Administration in 2007 showed 190 bearers of the name. We are not extinct yet.[56]

One family historian reminds his relatives of their duty to procreate, when he writes of his currently living male relatives:

> They form the twelfth and thirteenth generation, counting down from the oldest Jan Kramer found. It is up to these men to ensure that our branch of the Kramers does not die out.[57]

Some family historians accentuate their individual preferences and interests and show more independence towards the dominant genealogical context that steers the content of their family histories. This tension between family historian and genealogical infrastructure can be observed in one family history, in which the writer uses the system of name genealogy rather loosely, as a central path along which he can make little detours towards interesting documents and stories he found during his research. One such detour leads to a famous preacher who is also connected to the family and has left many documents. Another detour runs via a man the family historian met in the archives. The two discovered that they were relatives and this was a good reason for the family historian to elaborate on that branch of the family.

A third excursion takes in the maternal line. In his research on the female side of his family, he found several documents about an unmarried couple, born at the beginning of the 19th century, with two children who were named after their father. The mother was locked up on accusations of frequent adultery, and the father was imprisoned on the suspicion of theft of spices. Their children were sent to an orphanage, and one of them died of tuberculosis at the age of seven. The writer narrates lively stories about them on the basis of traces left in the archives. He concludes that these stories illustrate the poverty in Amsterdam during the French occupation, since on the same day that the children were admitted to the orphanage, twenty other children were also admitted.[58] In summary, this writer here presents himself as an archivist. Everything that could be interesting for the family is brought up. The exclusion of relatives is primarily motivated by the absence of documents that makes them interesting to a contemporary public. In this case, this motive is apparently stronger than the desire to write a history of a group of primarily male relatives who share the same surname.

By contrast, some other family historians see the exclusion of women as an inevitable consequence of the genealogical system itself. As one of them suggests, it is a plain fact that the genealogical method used gives a generation code only to the sons in each generation. 'Wives and daughters are listed in the genealogy but are not assigned a generation code.'[59] Another family historian also seems to have no problem with the gender biases of the genealogical system. He writes:

> In a genealogy like this one we start from the family name, and in western society the family name follows the male family line. Whether this is perceived as logical is a matter of culture.[60]

What is remarkable in this family history is the otherwise far from 'logical' use of surnames. In one instance, when a mother in the eighteenth century died young and her husband subsequently remarried, the children of the first wife were given their mother's name. Their descendants are thus related along this female connection. Another deviation from the norm mentioned in this family history is that when, under Napoleonic law, all citizens of the Netherlands were obliged to adopt an official surname, some descendants chose a different name, probably, the writer suggests, because they had forgotten their surname, which was seldom used. Later DNA research proved that descendants of these relatives belonged to the same family, signified by one surname.[61] In other words: the

'logic' of a family name is clearly interwoven with other acts.

One female family historian writes, slightly defensively, that her family book is not a pedigree but a register – a term I have not come across in other family histories in the corpus. The main reason for her use of the word register is that, according to her, a pedigree can only refer to male relatives. She writes:

> Ultimately, it's all about finding your roots. This will make it easy for you, your children, and their descendants to research their family register. Do not forget that we, who are almost at the end of our lives, have not maintained the tradition of calling children after their parents, which will make it harder to find one's ancestors in 25 years' time.[62]

She repeatedly stresses the difficulties of finding one's ancestors and refers to the right of every man and woman to be called by their first name and their surname.

> Every individual, whether alive or dead, has the right to be addressed by his or her full name (first name and surname), even if only on paper. Everyone has two parents, and those mothers had their own surname. Did you know that if you want to find a woman's death certificate, it is filed under her maiden name? So it is very important for that name to remain known in the family.[63]

One family historian acknowledges the one-sidedness of his genealogy. 'Halsema' refers here to the name of the family:

> A family tree is just half the story. It is the enumeration of the offspring, in the male line, of an ascertained common male ancestor, of which the respective family relations are displayed. Naturally the women who married in to the family are also mentioned, because there would be no Halsema progeny without them. You and I know that the Halsema blood in our veins is mixed with the blood of our mothers, grandmothers, and so on. So, where does that leave all this Halsema stuff, then? In fact, an elaboration of all the male and female descendants would give a more accurate image of the descendants of our male ancestor, Jan Geerts. […] However, for our family it would be impossible to make a complete descendant chart of Jan Geerts, because that would have to include vir-

> tually the entire Hegge family, as well as large parts of the Poelma, Werkman, Slinger, Feddema, and Stok families. You will have to content yourself with a traditional family tree.[64]

Another response to the noted gender bias of the genealogical framework used is to apologize, as one family historian does when he excuses himself for the one-sidedness of his research. His family name stems from an unmarried woman who had a son and gave him her surname. The family history follows the transmission of this name, mainly according to the male line of descendants. This family historian writes in his preface:

> By the way, my apologies. Describing a family by following the historical line of surnames cannot do justice to all those loving and caring mothers. Their background remains underexposed. In every generation, you restrict yourself to just one half of the genetic lines that determine who you are. Unfortunately, this is inherent to the system of giving names in these countries.[65]

Although he accuses the genealogical infrastructure of one-sidedness, he seems to surrender to the genealogical infrastructure he uses. Nevertheless, he pays ample attention to two men who were significant in his personal life, although they do not fit neatly into the genealogical framework of his family. He writes:

> It is really interesting to reconstruct the ups and downs of previous generations. However, more important still are the people who surround you and are dear to you in the present day. This is why I permit myself, after all these years of hard work, to complete this book with a compilation of relatives who, although they bear another surname, play or have played a role in my life that is just as important, if not more important.[66]

In this passage, he is alluding to his stepfather, his mother's second husband, and also his stepbrother. Here the genealogical mould is accepted and criticized at the same time: he follows the rules of the genealogical infrastructure, but he also tries to evade them by pointing out to what has been more important to him.

The same kind of response can be seen in name genealogies, as some family historians are aware of the two sides of the coin of name genealogy. On the

one hand, the surname functions as affordance, a means to build up a family history.[67] On the other hand, the surname may entail the exclusion of relatives significant to the writer. In some family histories, these excluded individuals are nevertheless recognized as significant others.

These choices are often justified by mentioning emotional ties to, or specific memories of these relatives. One example is the family history which, though based on male lineage, nevertheless makes some detours to the female line. Why these detours? 'We have chosen [for these female lineages/td] because we want to do justice to those descendants who were very involved into the collecting of data, documents, and pictures.'[68]

Social motivations are also mentioned as a reason to deviate from the prescribed genealogical grid. One family historian, for instance, sticks to the name genealogy, but includes the data of all daughters and their partners. Grandchildren are only mentioned by their first names. But in a text box, the family historian says that grandchildren are mentioned if they are known to a wider audience. Some contextual information is then provided as well.[69]

Some family historians find another solution to the exclusion of women inherent to a name genealogy. For example, one name genealogy describes fifteen generations of one surname, but the family historian compensates for the exclusion of the relatives with other surnames by adding the ancestor charts of the wives of the first man in every generation.[70] Others take an explicitly gendered perspective on their family history, in reflecting on those relatives who do not automatically fit in a genealogical straitjacket. A few examples: one states that the first generation of this family starts with Jannys Alberts, who lived from 1640-1695. His wife was Albertje Jans (1651-1712). In the chapter about the position of women in his family, the family historian writes about her:

> A farmer's daughter who marries, has children, and raises them. A woman who is indispensable to her family and the family business. Or: the wife of Jannys Alberts! But she is not just 'the wife of', but also a human being with her own personality and character.[71]

He reflects on the absence of women in genealogy and states that there is a practical reason for this: in the past much more was written about men than about women. The cause lies, according to him, in the way men thought of women as physically feeble and mentally weak:

> This book tries to describe Albertje, not in the first place as 'wife of', but above all as a separate being. However, we may well wonder what Albertje herself would have thought of this issue.[72]

Here the family historian also justifies the focus on male relatives by saying that they are much more interesting and that they had more influence on history than women. Nevertheless, he tries to correct history on this point by paying attention to the wives of his male descendants.[73]

These examples illustrate the deep consequences of the connection between family, gender, and surname for the way family historians describe their family histories. For lack of adequate models that meet their needs and experiences, they show different ways of handling these connections, ranging from compensating for the male-oriented genealogical infrastructure by adding supplements of their own to using the genealogical infrastructure to justify their focus.

6.5 Conclusions

The act of writing enables family historians to deviate from genealogical terms and logics in various ways, although none of the writers examined entirely escapes them. Some deviation is found in using biological discourse, sometimes as a way to link the genealogical family relatives to a personal life. In the picking and choosing of terms to relate oneself to the results of genealogical research, terms like 'blood' and 'genes' appear to be the most obvious ones. Another collection of associations operates around the term 'genetic genealogy', an area that seems to convey scientific notions and that seems, remarkably, not to mingle much with genealogical discourse.

The family historians I studied seem to separate genetic from genealogical discourse, as they do not seem to mix them to generate new, unexpected meanings. Allusions to biology, and especially to genetic genealogy, are rather a confirmation of existing categories than a critical reflection on these. Moreover, some family historians seem to expect that one day, once science has made enough progress, the two discourses will reinforce each other's results and will finally merge into one discourse that reveals the truth about people's origins. This observation underlines Timm's idea about undocumented relatives (see Section 4.3), a term she introduced after studying contemporary genealogists: these undocumented relatives are those who have not yet been proved to be relatives,

but whose presence is a real incentive to start searching for proof.

More space to reflect on existing categories is provided within family organizations. This phenomenon combines genealogical relations with, in most cases, a membership structure that in itself generates debates on the question of admission criteria. As the comparison of the family histories of two such organizations shows, the question arises how important a surname is. The one organization sticks to the surname as a binding element; the other has abandoned this concept, which even has generated new practices: since the majority of the board members are now females who do not carry the family name, other female members have decided to pass their surname to their children, contrary to what is still common practice in the Netherlands.

However, there seems to be a difference in attitude towards the genre of the family history. The family organization that upholds the surname has created a multi-vocal book, an edited volume with contributions from relatives in all branches who all have the same surname. The other family organization seems to have more distance from the significance of genealogy, history, and naming, and was probably more aware of the productive or creative power of narrating history: they hired two professionals to make a very readable production on the basis of source material and interviews.

The above study of exclusion categories shows how the act of writing can free writers from self-imposed research restrictions. Supplementary stories, detours, and reworkings of sources found are all strategies deployed by writers who did not merely print out their research results but supplemented the names and dates with extensive chapters with stories, local history, or memoires. These family historians position themselves as agents with an active role in selecting, reworking, and interpreting the materials found. They also add people who 'feel like family'. This is a phenomenon of the transpersonal notion of family as described in Chapter 2, in which the self identifies strongly with others as if they together live one life, and as if they share one single family history.

Final reflections

'Nostalgia can be a poetic creation, an individual mechanism of survival, a countercultural practice, a poison, or a cure. It is up to us to take responsibility for our nostalgia and not let others "prefabricate" it for us.'[1]

Svetlana Boym

0. In conducting this study, I felt like a geologist who takes a sample by drilling at a specific place in the ground. The result is a drill core that shows all the sediment layers present underneath that particular point of the Earth's surface. Analyzing this drill core, with the help of other disciplines, allows a precise determination of the composition of the earth at this specific place, as well as some extrapolations about how some of these layers extend across a wider area. In a similar way, I made an analysis of a sample of a specific set of family histories, found at a specific time and place, that constitute my own 'drill core'. When I analyze my sample, some of my findings are specific to this particular collection, while others apply to the wider cultural, historical, digital context in which this collection is embedded. In the following, the geologist's sediment layers provide an analogy for the layering of the various reflections drawn from the work on my sample study, some of them specific to the sample, while others reflect issues that are widespread across the current cultural landscape.

1. A girl has her arm tattooed with '157622', her grandfather's concentration camp number.[2] A woman wears her aunt's pearl earrings. Jokes, songs, and pet names run in the family and are repeated at every gathering. A woman writes about her childhood for the children of her sister, who died young.[3] Family history can have many manifestations (section 1.1), and this book studies just one subset of them: the practices of Dutch family historians who have recently written down their family history based on genealogical research (section 1.2). For this study, I selected a corpus of contemporary written family histories over more than three generations at the CBG (section 1.3). This national centre for genealogy and family history was founded on 15 May 1945, just ten days after the end of the occupation of the Netherlands during the Second World War (section 1.4).

2. I try to render these family histories 'as flat as possible' (as Latour puts it).[4] This is why I did not take the approach of any one specific discipline or adopt a specific psychological, sociological, or anthropological vocabulary, including its associated claims about the world; nor did I start with the assumption that family is an imagined community (section 1.5). This is not to say that family is not an important psychological, sociological, and anthropological phenomenon: I just did not study it as such.

3. There are many presuppositions about what family historians do and want. I came across several explanations and speculations about family historians (section 1.5), which inspired me to one central resolution: I intend not to speculate about the motives of family historians in general.

4. My overarching research question (section 1.6) is: how do contemporary family historians frame the relation between themselves and their relatives in their written family histories? The verb 'to frame' in this question became a signpost for the dismantling of a specific practice of family history in which I consider family histories simultaneously as, in Bruno Latour's terms, 'natural, social, and discourse', as 'real, human and semiotic entities in

the same breath' (section 1.7).[5] In this Latourian approach, I use various disciplines in the investigation of the heterogeneity and solidity of the notion of family itself, and, in its wake, the notion of family history.

5. In writing about their family history, and in compiling it, family historians refer to clusters of associations around the term 'family'. I categorize these clusters into shorthand notions of family: biological (section 2.1), genealogical (section 2.2), and intersubjective or transpersonal (section 2.3), respectively.

6. These shorthand notions are meant only as analytical tools (section 2.4). They also shed some light on the terminology I use in this study: I prefer the term 'family' to 'kin', which has a broad network of associations in anthropological debates about the universality of kinship systems. Likewise, I favour the term 'family historian' rather than 'genealogist', since the latter is more associated with institutionalized definitions of family, laid down in documents.

7. A conceptual analysis of the notion of family and its associations shows how people may use these notions while thinking about family and family history. This analysis prompts the question of how, in referring to these notions, family historians are actually bound by a materialized practice. Consequently, the focus shifts from an analytically oriented, armchair philosophy to an empirically based analysis of the ways family history is written down. This analysis needs the help of other disciplines such as anthropology to make sense of actual performances of these concepts.

8. Research can have unpredictable outcomes. When I studied the corpus, I was at first deeply disappointed about the uniform character of these family histories. The uniqueness of each family seems to be made invisible by the strong similarities in the ways the histories are written down. Focusing on the similarities led me to discover the influence of the genealogical databases, whether online on a genealogical website or locally on a personal

computer, that almost all contemporary family historians use to store their archival sources.

9. This specific part of the contemporary cultural practice of 'doing family history' occurs at the intersection between internationally spreading database culture (section 3.1) and locally operating individuals who are concerned with the past, present, and future of their relatives. In the last ten years, this practice has been actively supported by institutional archives, genealogical organizations, and multinational companies which sell access to archives as a way to enter family history (section 3.2). Some companies offer family historians DNA testing, in this way reinforcing links between identity, ethnicity, and place.

10. Genealogical institutions and companies actively interpret records as digital data (section 3.3), and family history as genealogy – thereby defining family as a concept that must comply with strict rules. The basic structure of GEDCOM, the standard that facilitates communication between mainstream genealogical software and websites, represents the current genealogical relation between individuals and their relatives (section 3.4). In short, GEDCOM provides definitions of an individual and the family that pervade all family histories.

11. Genealogical databases display a view of the self as consisting of an atomized individual with two necessary links to others, a father and a mother, and in the first place described by a biography, based on documents and possibly accompanied by a DNA-profile.

12. The still ongoing digitalization of archives and in other areas over the last twenty years has changed the way documents are handled. Filed documents are photographed and digitized. Nowadays, finding a document means finding a digital file with properties that are in some ways disconnected from the function or context in which the 'original' documents were once filed. This disconnection of content and function has not only changed the policies of archives worldwide, and even created a related

commercial field, but has also changed the behaviour of family historians.

13. Apparently, family historians are increasingly using online archives and platforms, genealogical software, and other digital tools to do genealogical research and publish a family history. As a consequence of the ongoing digitization in the archival world, as well as in the world of consumers, the manufacturing of family history no longer starts in archives but at home, at a computer screen. The searching and finding, saving and arranging of genealogical results – all based on documents – relies heavily on the architecture of digital tools and the definitions used in these tools.

14. Since the beginning of this millennium, genealogy has come to be identified primarily with family history. In 2015, the Dutch National Centre for Genealogy, the CBG, has added Centre for Family History to its name. Another example is the merging of the English Wikipedia entries on genealogy and family history (section 2.1.1). Archives and multinationals nowadays monopolize the term family history by equating it with the structures of their databases.

15. Recent reflections on family history emphasize that the past of a family is constructed along a timeline, either starting from the present, as is characteristic of an ancestor chart, or ending in the present, as is characteristic of a descendant chart (section 4.1). Referring to the anthropologist Catherine Verdery, the sociologist Eviatar Zerubavel states that modern individual genealogical identities are developed according to a timeline that starts in the present, while family identities are based on timelines that end in the present.[6]

16. Studying genealogical timelines in more detail shows how the structure of genealogical charts shapes contemporary family histories. The main unit of time in these narratives is the concept of 'generation' (section 4.2). The narrative about these generations

either starts from the present, in most cases the life of the family historian, or from the 'oldest' relative found. These two different starting points in time generate different notions of family identity. Moreover, these different narratives give different criteria for who can be counted in as a relative and who not.

17. With regard to the main research question: these timelines support two different ways of linking oneself to others who are called 'my family'.

18. A detailed study of several family histories based on an ancestor chart reveals that genealogical identity is not exclusively linked to the position of the 'me' in an ancestor chart (section 4.3). A family history based on an ancestor chart can serve other goals, like finding genealogical links between oneself and Charlemagne, an old and esteemed motive among genealogists.

19. Closer examination reveals that only if a family history that is based on a descendant chart is framed as a name genealogy can it be clearly connected to the performance of a family identity (section 4.4). This connection between name genealogy and family identity is expressed in the abundance of titles that link a surname with a long span of time. The family history then relates the history of the origin and transmission of a surname.

20. In some cases, neither the family nor the family name is the central subject of a publication: some family historians do not wish to describe their family history as such, but rather focus on a part of their family history in a specific place: on a certain piece of land, on particular farms, or in a region. The significance of place is more relevant than Zerubavel seems to have imagined when he formulated the structure of genealogical thinking.

21. Most family histories in this corpus are chronicles rather than narratives, according to the definitions of the historian Hayden White, because they contain no stories that would explain the meaning of past occurrences.[7] These family histories primarily

record events, one after the other, according to a given timeline. In White's view, the structure of a chronicle is that of a linear time bar, displaying chronological time. However, in these family histories the structure is most likely that of the ancestor or descendant chart, thus not following chronology but rather the order of the generations.

22. Writing on the basis of an ancestor chart or descendant chart structure also leads to the question of 'ending' (section 4.5). In a family history based on an ancestor chart structure, the description of the oldest ancestor found leads to the end of the family history. More precisely, it signifies the end of the research done by the family historian concerned. In a descendant chart structure, the 'me' emerges at the intersection of past, present, and future.

23. This descendant-chart form of family history finds its audience precisely in the here and now. In this kind of ending, the idea of family unity can be experienced by the readers as something that has survived from the past and will continue in the future.

24. If one takes into account the fact that the 'me' is produced in an analogue medium, a written text, the link between 'myself' and 'my family' displays more complex and more layered notions of individual and family identity than Verdery and, in her wake, Zerubavel assume. Place and surname are much more important than timelines alone. Nevertheless, these conventional timelines limit ideas about family configurations to strict orderings of generations (section 4.6).

25. In a family history, a family historian appears in different roles. On the one hand, he or she is presented as one relative among many others. On the other hand, the family historian is also the writer of the family history. How do family historians reflect on being simultaneously a writer and a relative? Primarily in the introduction and preface, and in one case in an afterword, these writers disclose their motives and ideas about the making of

their family histories, including justifications and, in some cases, apologies. These motives and ideas could be seen as interpretative repertoires used by these family historians.[8]

26. It should be clear that the term 'repertoire' is here used only as an auxiliary tool to describe the performance of these writers as family historians. The analysis shows that current psychological, sociological, and existential explanations for family historians' activities - like the need for self-making, the wish to bring narrative coherence to a life story, or the fulfilment of an existential need - are not confirmed by the family historians themselves. Their repertoires are often more hybrid and more self-effacing than one might expect from general explanations as offered in Section 1.5.1.

27. Motives mentioned for doing family history vary from wanting to know one's roots, to finding answers to questions about matters such as the source of a surname or the places of descent, or honouring specific family members. Some family historians emphasize motives from within themselves (section 5.2), others perform themselves primarily as researchers (section 5.3), or view family history as a way to engage with the family (section 5.4).

28. Some family historians give disparate reasons for creating a family history, sometimes on the same page, or even within a single paragraph. This blending of motives makes it impossible to define a family history as belonging to a given category, for instance amateur history, heritage, or memoire; the act of doing family history equally defies definition as the formation of identity or the construction of imaginary communities (section 5.5).

29. Who belongs - and who does not? Family historians in this corpus use different criteria to describe a relative in their family history. Here, the analytical distinction between biological, genealogical, and intersubjective or transpersonal shorthand notions of family provides a tool for describing different patterns

of association. Not only is the folk biological notion currently complemented by a gene-oriented approach (section 6.2), the genealogical notion also appears with some interesting twists.

30. Family organizations are a special variant of engaging with family. A comparison between two family organizations that celebrated their 100th anniversary by publishing a history of the organization shows how 19th-century concepts are adapted to 21st-century needs and desires (section 6.3).

31. Although the genealogical repertoire, shaped in the 19th century, is still appealing and even guiding, some of the writers do also reflect on the limits of the genealogical framework (section 6.4). As citizens of the 21st century, they use their databases, but at the same time try to escape the compelling categorizations of the software (section 6.5). Examples of this include apologizing to those who are excluded by the genealogical charts, or describing relationships that are significant to them, despite these not fitting into the genealogical framework of their choice. Especially the way women are ignored in genealogical narratives is mentioned and, in some cases, compensated for with stories about the life and work of female relatives that do not otherwise fit into the overall genealogical structure. Here, transpersonal notions of family emerge: writers, both male and female, feel obliged and connected to their female relatives past and present.

32. Some family historians intend their family histories to be significant for their afterlife.[9] They reach out to future relatives, assuming that these will be born, to legitimize the value of the genealogical work they have done.

33. The institutional registration of life events is often the only thing left of a human life – 'no documents, no history', as the historian Mary Ritter Beard puts it – and family historians fully endorse the idea that the data in these documents deserve to be transmitted to contemporary and future family members.[10] This

belief in the value of documents illustrates a persistent definition of the concept of evidence.

34. Family historians in this corpus refrain from any direct judgement about the lives of their predecessors, other than an incidental remark about a given relative's tragic or complicated life. Some publish eye-witness accounts, or include diaries and letters of relatives. These texts are even considered as facts that can be copied into a book. Gossip and speculations are rare. Instead of evaluating their relatives' lives, the writers seem to give priority to transmitting what they view as fact, and only create stories that are supported by documents and other evidence.

35. Nowadays, I see two ways to understand this objectifying: on the one hand, database culture enforces an old positivist idea of studying the world of which the family historian is only a modest witness (section 5.3.1).[11] This statement could be the starting point for new research on the epistemological consequences of working within database culture.

36. On the other hand: the distanced, objectified way of creating a family history by searching for facts can be seen as an ethical stance: the family historian creates narrative space for existing and future relatives.[12] The ethical dimension then consists in the writers providing their reading audience, their relatives, with possible self-descriptions. All relatives are free to insert these self-descriptions in their personal collections, but are not bound to do so. In a way, this attitude creates a level playing field in the community of relatives - equal access to the facts, the stories, without gossiping or speculations.

37. Family history as databased genealogy worries me in two ways. One concerns the implicit ordering of the world with which family historians comply: the assumed heterosexual norms, the privileging of the surname, the sad designation of 'dead end' for those who have no children or, in many cases, even for married mothers whose children only bear the surname of their father. If

these attitudes are an intrinsic part of the notion of family history, maybe we should abandon the term family history altogether and investigate other ways of dealing with our intimate past.

38. Another worry: if family history is confined to drawing up a genealogy in a database, then the individual appears as nothing more than an atomized part, a node in a network of nodes. This image of the self fits well with the idea of mass individualism that Alessandro Baricco puts forward in his popular book on digital culture, *The Game*. He claims that in the digitalized world, in which people seem to be fused with their mobile phones, social layers tend to disappear: each individual acts, with the help of apps, upon the world, rather than interacting with others in the world. All action from one individual to another seems to be mediated by an app. This worry needs more research.[13]

39. The pursuit of objectivity by family historians can be contrasted with the sheer subjectivity of the experience of relatives: each child, each relative, has his or her own truth about the history of a family. On the one hand, by restricting themselves to clear data, by objectifying history, family historians distance themselves from the subjectivities of their relatives and from their own subjectivity: they handle the standards of truth and create a different position for themselves. On the other hand, by archiving institutional data and collecting stories that are 'harmless', they are still devoting attention to the family. This act brings the family into existence. After all, doing family history is doing family.

40. 'Computation does not merely augment, frame, and shape culture; by operating beneath our everyday, casual awareness of it, it actually becomes culture', writes the artist James Bridle in *New Dark Age.*[14] Computation, digitalization, our lives in a world dominated by the Internet, have - like global warming, evolution, or capitalism - become a 'hyperobject', in the term coined by philosopher Timothy Morton: 'Hyperobjects are entities that are massively distributed in time and space. They are so mas-

sive that humans can think and compute them, but not perceive them directly.'[15]

41. These properties of hyperobjects make case studies like this particularly relevant. Digital humanities could systematically reflect on the concepts implemented in digital tools, on the fusion between humans and apps, and on the way databases reinforce, signify, enable or block our intentional acts.

42. Family historians could create more diverse family histories if they could use tools with more narrative freedom than genealogical software based on GEDCOM can provide. I strongly advocate experiments with new database categories that enable new ideas about what a family history could be. Only after defamiliarizing the family as defined in GEDCOM specificiations, new family histories can arise.

43. I analyzed this corpus as a geologist analyzes a drill core. Like a geologist, I used a range of disciplines to determine the sediment layers of this specific historical practice. However, to fully understand the composition of a wider area, a geologist must drill in several places. Similarly, my study of the material, social, and discursive manifestations of family history in this corpus should be supplemented with case studies about other aspects of family history and/or other kinds of family histories, including matters such as material culture (objects, heritage), family rituals, or family histories in media other than books. In this way, one could set up a new research program that could systematically examine family history in all its many facets and investigate the relation between 'me' and 'my family'.

Samenvatting

Familiegeschiedenis: verwanten, wortels en databases

Wat betekenen familieleden voor je als je ze niet of nauwelijks heb gekend? Deze vraag heeft me al een aantal jaren in zijn greep. Ik schreef er een populair essayistisch boek over, *Familieverhalen, de kunst van het schrijven over je naasten* (Ambo/Anthos, 2011). Daarin onderzoek ik hoe schrijvers van familiegeschiedenissen zichzelf verhouden tot de familieleden waar ze over schrijven en welke vragen dat oplevert. Ik onderzocht hiervoor alleen gepubliceerde familiegeschiedenissen die in de boekwinkels te koop zijn. Sommige lezers vroegen zich af waarom ik geen aandacht had geschonken aan familiegeschiedenissen van hobbyisten die hun familiegeschiedenis onderzoeken en daarover een boek maken voor hun familie. Ze hadden een punt. Daarom bestudeerde ik voor dit proefschrift meer dan honderd recente familiegeschiedenissen die hoofdzakelijk geschreven zijn voor familieleden van de desbetreffende familiehistoricus.

Familiegeschiedenis kun je terugvinden in gebouwen, juwelen, verhalen, en zelfs WhatAppgroepen. Geschreven familiegeschiedenissen zijn dus maar één mogelijke uiting van familiegeschiedenis (zie paragraaf 1.1). Voor deze studie concentreerde ik mij op een verzameling hedendaagse familiegeschiedenissen geschreven voor de familieleden van de familiehistoricus en die meer dan drie generaties bestrijken (1.2). Deze geschiedenissen zijn volgens een aantal criteria verzameld, waaronder het criterium dat ze in 2013 op de planken bij het CBG (Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie) in Den Haag zijn beland (1.3). Dit CBG werd in 1945 opgericht en kent een bijzondere geschiedenis (1.4).

Omdat ik deze studie niet ben gestart vanuit een specifiek theoretisch raamwerk, heb ik lang gezocht naar een theoretische benadering waarmee ik een antwoord kon geven op mijn centrale vraag naar de verhouding tussen 'ik' en 'mijn familie' in deze familiegeschiedenissen. Uiteindelijk kan ik de vraag op drie vlakken beantwoorden: die van de tijdlijnen waarlangs de geschiedenissen zijn beschreven, de motieven die familiehistorici zelf noemen voor hun familiegeschiedenis en de manieren waarop ze anderen juist wel of niet tot hun familie rekenen. Voordat ik daartoe kom, verken ik in eerste drie hoofdstukken de context waarin deze verzameling tot stand is gekomen en ontwikkel ik een theoretisch perspectief waarmee ik de hoofdvraag kan beantwoorden.

In het eerste hoofdstuk van dit proefschrift laat ik een reeks interpretaties

van het fenomeen familiegeschiedenis de revue passeren. In de literatuur vind ik een aantal benaderingen die me ongeschikt lijken als uitgangspunt voor deze casestudie, ofwel omdat ze gebaseerd zijn op speculatieve vooronderstellingen, of omdat ze het concept 'familie' bij voorbaat definiëren als een gemeenschap met een specifieke structuur. Datzelfde geldt voor theorieën die familiegeschiedenis vooral zien als een onvolwaardige manier van geschiedenis bedrijven, als een vorm van narcisme of als het creëren van narratieve coherentie tussen individuen en de sociale systemen waarin ze leven. Speculatief lijkt me ook het idee dat familiegeschiedenis bedrijven een reactie is op individualisme. Dergelijke interpretaties bieden eveneens weinig aanknopingspunten voor een studie naar de inhoud en structuur van familiegeschiedenissen (1.5.1-1.5.3). Zinvoller is het uitgangspunt dat familiegeschiedenis onderdeel is van een hedendaagse historische praktijk waarin mensen hun verleden actief vormgeven en die bestudeerd wordt door memory studies (1.5.4).

In mijn uitwerking van de hoofdvraag (1.6) laat ik mij inspireren door Bruno Latour en Annemarie Mol: deze filosofen onderzoeken hoe concepten in een materiële praktijk met elkaar geassocieerd raken. En net zoals een sporter oefent om bepaalde bewegingen 'in te slijten', zo cultiveert een samenleving bepaalde associatievelden rondom concepten. Een voorbeeld daarvan is de associatie van familie met biologie. Latour en Mol speuren naar deze associatieketens in zowel materiële, sociale als talige manifestaties van concepten en onderzoeken het coördinatiewerk, zoals Mol dat noemt, bij mogelijke conflicten tussen die verschillende manifestaties.

In navolging van Latour en Mol zie ik de familiegeschiedenissen in mijn casestudie ook als een materiële, sociale en discursieve praktijk waarin onder meer het concept familie vorm krijgt. Daarbij bestudeer ik deze geschiedenissen 'zo plat mogelijk', zoals Latour het uitdrukt. Dat wil zeggen: niet bij voorbaat met hulp van overkoepelende theoretische begrippen (1.7).

In hoofdstuk 2 bespreek ik een aantal associaties rondom het begrip familie. Ik groepeer deze in drie noties van dit begrip, waaronder de biologische noties met associaties als bloed, wortels, bomen en DNA (2.1). Bij de genealogische notie focus ik op de associatie van familie met achternamen. Ook analyseer ik de verhouding tussen familiegeschiedenis en genealogie (2.2). De intersubjectieve of bovenpersoonlijke notie van familie koppel ik aan het debat dat antropologen sinds de jaren tachtig van de vorige eeuw voeren over de universaliteit van familiesystemen (2.3).

In hoofdstuk 3 behandel ik de internationaal verspreide databasecultuur

die ook familiegeschiedenissen van lokaal opererende individuen beïnvloedt (3.1). Hedendaagse familiegeschiedenissen lijken op elkaar doordat ze geheel of gedeeltelijk zijn gebaseerd op genealogisch onderzoek dat in databases wordt opgeslagen. De structuur van die genealogische databases stuurt in de meeste gevallen de vorm waarin een familiegeschiedenis gestalte krijgt. De snel toenemende digitalisering van archieven bepaalt de manier waarop documenten worden bewaard, gezocht en gevonden (3.2), waardoor ze ook het zoeken van genealogische gegevens vergemakkelijken. Documenten, die symbolisch verwijzen naar gebeurtenissen, worden onder invloed van digitalisering geïnterpreteerd als data die moeten passen in de structuur van genealogische databases. Die trend heeft grote invloed op de verhalen die over die gegevens worden verteld (3.3).

De meest basale eenheid van genealogische databases is GEDCOM. Dit is een internationaal geaccepteerde softwarestandaard die de communicatie van genealogische data tussen verschillende softwareprogramma's faciliteert. Deze GEDCOM, een acroniem van GEnealogische DataCOMmunicatie, is ontwikkeld door de Kerk van Jezus Christus van de Heiligen der Laatste Dagen, beter bekend als de Mormonen. In paragraaf 3.4 laat ik zien welke conceptuele definities van individu en familie deze standaard hanteert en aan welke regels een relatie moet voldoen om door GEDCOM als 'familierelatie' te worden geaccepteerd.

Hoofdstuk 4 behandelt de meest voorkomende tijdlijnen waarlangs familiegeschiedenissen worden geschreven: ofwel beginnend in het hier en nu en terugredenerend naar het verleden, zoals in een kwartierstaat, ofwel beginnend bij een stamvader of stammoeder in het verre verleden en vooruit redenerend naar het heden. Alle familiegeschiedenissen in mijn corpus zijn volgens een van deze twee tijdlijnen geschreven.

De socioloog Eviatar Zerubavel stelt dat een individuele genealogische identiteit het resultaat is van een familiegeschiedenis met een tijdlijn die begint in het heden, terwijl concepties van een familie-identiteit juist samenhangen met een tijdlijn die start in het verre verleden (4.1).

De belangrijkste eenheid van tijd in familiegeschiedenissen blijkt het concept generatie (4.2), waarbij wat telt als eerste generatie samenhangt met de vraag of de familiegeschiedenis begint of eindigt in het heden. Hun startpunt heeft invloed op wie bij 'mijn familie' hoort, en wie niet. Als de 'ik' namelijk vanuit het heden 'terugkijkt' dan ziet die in het verleden vele familieleden. De 'ik' die een familiegeschiedenis verhaalt vanuit de oudste voorouders en dan richting het heden vertelt totdat het eigen leven in zicht komt, constateert juist

dat de 'ik' veel meer familieleden in het heden dan in het verleden heeft.

De verhouding tussen 'ik' en 'mijn familieleden' is dus onderdeel van de tijdlijn waarlangs de familiegeschiedenis wordt verteld. Klopt het nu dat je daaruit ook een individuele genealogische identiteit of familie-identiteit kunt destilleren, zoals Zerubavel beweert? Het korte antwoord luidt: nee. Er blijken nog andere motieven invloed te hebben op familiegeschiedenissen die beginnen in het heden, motieven die leiden tot andere vormen van genealogische identiteit (4.2).

Ook familie-identiteiten zijn niet zozeer gebaseerd op de richting van de tijdlijn als wel op het gebruik van achternamen, zoals in een naamgenealogie (4.4). De betekenis van achternamen in familiegeschiedenissen voor de vorming van familie-identiteit kan nauwelijks worden overschat. Ook de geboorteplaats van stamouders spelen een belangrijke rol in de familie-identiteit.

Genealogisch tijdlijnen blijken de narratieve vorm van deze verzameling familiegeschiedenissen sterk te beïnvloeden. Historicus Hayden White zou de meeste bestempelen als kronieken en niet als verhalen, juist omdat ze geen duiding geven aan gebeurtenissen in het verleden. Veel familiegeschiedenissen laten zich eerder lezen als gedocumenteerde verslagen van gebeurtenissen op een tijdlijn waarin niet de chronologische tijd, maar de opeenvolging van generaties de tijdlijn bepaalt.

Hoe kan een familiegeschiedenis eindigen (4.5)? Als die start vanuit het hier en nu, dan eindigt hij met het familielid dat het langst geleden geboren is. Als die familiegeschiedenis daarentegen in het heden eindigt, dan is dat vaak bij het jongste, laatst geboren familielid. Heel vaak zijn dat de familiehistorici zelf, soms ook hun kinderen, kleinkinderen of neven en nichten. Bij de tegenwoordige tijd aangekomen, draagt de familiehistoricus de toekomst van de familie als het ware aan de lezers over (4.5). Hierin onderscheiden gepubliceerde familiegeschiedenissen zich nadrukkelijk van deze groep familiegeschiedenissen die gemaakt zijn voor familieleden van de familiehistoricus zelf. Resumerend (4.6) stel ik vast dat de relatie tussen een individu en zijn of haar familie veel complexer en gelaagder is dan blijkt uit de structuren die Zerubavel voorstelt. Plaats en naam zijn belangrijker in de vorming van familie-identiteit dan de tijdlijnen zelf.

In een familiegeschiedenis verschijnt een familiehistoricus als schrijver en als familielid. Hoe combineert men deze beide rollen? In voorwoorden, introducties en soms in een nawoord vertellen de schrijvers dikwijls over hun motieven voor het produceren van een familiegeschiedenis. Deze motieven kun je beschouwen als interpretatieve repertoires. Ik heb deze onderverdeeld in motie-

ven die volgens de familiehistorici 'uit henzelf' komen, zoals de wens om hun 'wortels' te vinden (5.2), hun onderzoekslust (5.3), of een aangename manier om met de familie 'bezig te zijn' (5.4). Opmerkelijk is dat sommige familiehistorici een mengsel van verschillende motieven presenteren, sommige zelfs in één alinea. De Britse sociaal wetenschapper Michael Billig noemt dit de 'caleidoscoop van de common sense', waarin een beperkt aantal elementen in steeds andere configuraties terugkeren. Deze mengeling van motieven maakt eens te meer duidelijk dat familiegeschiedenissen niet zo makkelijk onder één noemer te scharen zijn (5.5).

Wie hoort er nu bij iemands familie en wie niet? Familiehistorici gebruiken diverse criteria om familie te onderscheiden van niet-familie (6.1). Het onderscheid tussen biologische, genealogische en intersubjectieve of transpersoonlijke noties van familie helpt voor een goed begrip van de manier waarop familiehistorici hun familierelaties definiëren. Niet alleen kunnen biologische en genealogische noties gedeeltelijk overlappen (6.2), ook verschijnt de genealogische notie in verschillende gedaanten. Dat blijkt onder meer uit een vergelijking tussen twee familie-organisaties die beide vanwege hun honderdjarig jubileum een familiegeschiedenis publiceerden. De ene organisatie selecteert leden op hun achternaam, op de achternaam van een van hun ouders, of op die van hun huwelijkspartner. De andere accepteert iedereen als lid die kan bewijzen afkomstig te zijn van de stamouders van deze familie. Gevolg is dat het aantal leden met dezelfde achternaam als de stamvader in deze familie-organisatie in de minderheid zijn. Zo zie je hoe negentiende-eeuwse concepten van familie kunnen worden aangepast aan behoeften in de eenentwintigste eeuw, hoewel dat niet vanzelfsprekend is (6.3). Dit blijkt eveneens uit de reflecties van sommige familiehistorici op de institutionele, genealogische of op sekse gebaseerde uitsluiting van familieleden uit de familiegeschiedenis (6.4). Denk bij institutionele uitsluiting onder meer aan de bittere constatering van afstammelingen van tot slaaf gemaakten. Zij kunnen hun voorouders niet terugvinden in de verschillende archieven, omdat ze niet als burgers maar als bezit werden gezien. Pas na de afschaffing van de slavernij kregen ze een achternaam, vaak een anagram van de achternaam van hun voormalige eigenaren.

Sommige familiehistorici gebruiken gegevens uit de genealogische databases voor hun familiegeschiedenis, maar proberen daar tegelijkertijd aan te ontsnappen (6.5). Zo voegen ze beschrijvingen toe van mensen die niet passen in het genealogische raamwerk, maar die wel belangrijk voor hen zijn geweest. Sommigen bieden hun lezers excuses aan voor het gegeven dat sommige fami-

lieleden, vooral vrouwen, niet in hun genealogische structuur passen. Anderen hebben voor deze uitsluiting een compensatie bedacht, in de vorm van bijlagen met verhalen over leven en werk van de 'buitengesloten' familieleden. Hieruit blijkt hoe belangrijk transpersoonlijke ofwel intersubjectieve noties van familie zijn: de familiehistorici geven uitdrukking aan hun verbondenheid met mensen uit hun leven, onafhankelijk van de biologische of genealogische relaties met hen.

Bij het uitvoeren van deze casestudie voelde ik me als een geoloog die op een bepaalde plek in de grond boort om na gaan uit welke lagen de aarde bestaat. Het resultaat van deze boring is een boorkern die de precieze samenstelling van de aarde op één specifieke plek prijsgeeft. Toch verleidt die boorkern de geoloog tot uitspraken over de samenstelling van de aarde in een breder gebied.

In dit proefschrift bestudeer ik als het ware een conceptuele boorkern, bestaande uit de vele laagjes van de historische praktijk van familiegeschiedenis bedrijven. Net zoals een geoloog verschillende wetenschappelijke methodes bij de analyse van een boorkern gebruikt, zo ben ook ik bij disciplines als digital humanities, archiefwetenschap en antropologie te rade gegaan om een aantal laagjes van de relatie tussen 'ik' en 'mijn familie' in deze verzameling van familiegeschiedenissen te analyseren.

De 43 reflecties waar deze studie mee eindigt, leiden dan ook tot conclusies over deze collectie familiegeschiedenissen, alsook tot reflecties over de bredere context waarbinnen deze familiegeschiedenissen zijn geproduceerd. Eén conclusie is dat de meeste familiehistorici zich onthouden van oordelen over de levens van hun voorouders. Aan roddel en achterklap doen ze niet. Ze presenteren alleen bronnen, uit genealogisch onderzoek, maar soms ook uit dagboeken of brieven, veelal zonder commentaar. Door geen oordeel uit te spreken, bieden ze hun familieleden de ruimte om hun eigen zelfbeschrijvingen als familielid te produceren.

Dat familiegeschiedenis sinds de digitalisering vaker gelijkgesteld wordt aan genealogie roept verschillende vragen op. Een ervan is dat de meeste familiehistorici haast automatisch lijken in te stemmen met de ordening van de wereld zoals de genealogische databases die voorstellen, inclusief de heteroseksuele normen en de gebrekkige mogelijkheden om een samengestelde familie te beschrijven. Genealogie kent ook vele specifieke gebruiken die bij andere vormen van familiegeschiedenis ontbreken. Denk aan de grote betekenis die genealogie hecht aan achternamen, het predicaat 'dode tak' voor wat ik noem niet-moeders

en niet-vaders, of voor getrouwde vrouwen met kinderen die de achternaam van hun vader dragen. Die genealogische manier van omgaan met familiegeschiedenis sluit andere verhalen makkelijk uit.

Een andere vraag: als een familiegeschiedenis gebaseerd is op de genealogie in een database, dan verschijnt een individu als niets meer dan een atoom, een knoop in een netwerk van knooppunten waarin individuen gereguleerd worden door software en apps. Wellicht gaat dit ten koste van een visie op het individu dat in een sociale wereld met anderen leeft en communiceert.

In bredere zin kun je stellen dat de invloeden van digitalisering op de hedendaagse cultuur zo diffuus en alomtegenwoordig zijn dat ze van digitalisering een hyperobject maken (Timothy Morton): een object dat je niet direct kunt waarnemen, net zoals kapitalisme of klimaatverandering, maar dat wel een allesbepalende invloed op het dagelijks leven heeft. Die constatering maakt casestudies als deze bijzonder relevant. Ze analyseren de wijze waarop databases bepaalde praktijken, inclusief veelgebruikte concepten, laten domineren en andere naar de marge verschuiven. Ik pleit dan ook voor digitial humanities als een noodzakelijk vakgebied dat systematisch kan reflecteren op categorieën waarmee databases de wereld indelen, en waarmee ze menselijk handelen sturen, versterken, betekenis geven of juist als betekenisloos afdoen. Wat dit proefschrift ook aantoont, is dat *schrijven* over, in dit geval familie-onderzoek, meer narratieve vrijheid creëert dan databases kunnen bieden.

Geologen boren vaak op verschillende plekken om hun uitspraken over één bepaald gebied te staven. Ik heb zowel de materiële alsook de sociale en talige structuur van een specifieke verzameling familiegeschiedenissen bestudeerd, vertrekkend vanuit de vraag naar de verhouding tussen 'ik' en 'mijn familie'. In termen van geologisch veldwerk: deze studie heeft slechts één boorkern opgeleverd. Eigenlijk zouden er meer boringen moeten volgen. Dit soort onderzoek kan immers ook heel goed worden toegepast op andere manifestaties van familiegeschiedenis, waaronder erfenissen, familieobjecten, familiegebruiken, liedjes en verhalen, zowel in het heden als in het verleden. Met andere woorden: deze casestudie bevat het begin van een groter onderzoeksprogramma dat systematisch kan verkennen hoe de verhouding tussen 'ik' en 'mijn familie' steeds opnieuw gestalte krijgt.

Acknowledgements

Writing a PhD must be like running a marathon. You arrive at the start, nervous but determined to finish as quickly as possible and to enjoy the run. As you run, your mind wanders: memories pop up, good and bad, as well as new ideas and fantasies, as you progress step by step. Halfway through, you chastise yourself for ever having started this run. The process is too exhausting, too painful at times. But when the finish is near, relief, joy, and pride prevail.

Writing this PhD has been one of the most intensive and mysterious activities of my life so far. In 2013, I overconfidently started this process with the aim of finishing it in three years, alongside my work as a writing coach. Six years later, I am much more aware of the work and energy that is needed for an academic life, and much more sensitive to all the privileges I enjoy in my life. Doing this work has also made me very grateful for all the support I have received during this process.

First of all, I thank my supervisors for their trust in me. Without knowing much about my academic abilities, Susan Aasman and Mineke Bosch invited me to submit a proposal as a follow-up of my book of essays on popular family histories. Throughout the research, they have stimulated me by providing new literature, encouraging me and reminding that trial and error is a necessary part of the process, and finally by giving me more compliments about the work than I could handle. I will never forget the cake Mineke produced when we discussed the first complete version of my dissertation, nor the Whatsapp message Susan sent me after reading the final version. Thank you so much for your trust, your support, and your patience, and for respecting my intellectual autonomy!

Every two weeks, I met up with my fellow PhD-candidates in the PhD-group set up by Mineke. I thank Kim Bootsma, Anna Cabanel, Laura Fahnenbruck, Margriet Fokken, Marga Greuter, Laurien Hansma, Annemiek Houwen, Femke Knoop, Nadja Louwerse, Rasa Navickaite, Susanne Neugebauer, Monica Soeting, Jet Spits, Esmeralda Tijhoff, Rozemarijn van de Wal, and Antia Wiersma for their comments on often very sketchy drafts of my chapters. The fortnightly meetings gave me a sense of belonging to the university. Monica Soeting has been stimulating my career for much longer, ever since I met her twenty years ago or more. She encouraged me to join the IIABA Europe conferences, which had the pleasurable by-effect that we went running together in Madeira, London, Madrid, and Amsterdam. To my relief, she helped me to fix the bibliography of

this book, which I could never have done on my own. She also edited the Dutch summary. Thank you so much! A deeper sense of belonging to the academic world of historians was given to me by Barbara Henkes, the most energetic and engaged historian I have ever met. I learned so much from her during the master's courses we both gave on Oral History.

I thank Lilian de Bruijn for introducing me to the CBG, and for our inspiring lunches during my visits to The Hague. I first met Lilian in 2012, when she attended a workshop I gave in Amsterdam on writing family stories. She had started writing about her father, and while she was immersed in the story of his life, I studied family history on a conceptual level. Her recent book *Ik kreeg mijn vader niet dood. Het roekeloze bestaan van een kampoverlevende* (Boom, Amsterdam, 2019) is a moving and well-researched story about a daughter who traces how her father survived the Second World War.

In the orientation phase of this study, I had long interviews with family historians who gave me background information about the practice of doing family history: I thank Annemine Scheffer, Caroline Kruit, Gonda Nekrui, Sjors Zanoli, Gert Zuidema, Nelleke Buzeman, and Richard Hubert for their openness, and their willingness to answer all my questions. I also thank my friend Jolet Plomp for her stimulating conversations on the topic of family history, and for her analysis of *Verborgen Verleden*, the Dutch version of Who Do You Think You are. Though I did not integrate her findings in the final book, they have certainly contributed to the development of my thoughts on this subject.

I am very grateful for the hospitality the CBG has shown me during my visits to their underground stacks, where family histories are stored on long shelves. Here I searched, found and photographed a selection of family histories that form the basis of this study. Aad van der Tang, Rob van Drie, Jacques Hartman, and Jean Niewenhuijse looked after me and answered all my many questions, and Frank Faber and Pieter van de Polder kindly kept me supplied with coffee as I worked away in the basement.

Erik van Gameren, Femke Wester, Maria Sherwood-Smith were indispensable in the production of this book. Femke has helped me to believe that English is a language that can be mastered even by me, Maria has done a great job in editing my Dunglish, and my dear friend Erik supported me in the last stage of this book: he lowered my stress levels by listening carefully to my stories about my research, and drew pictures of timelines, blurred personal details in photographs, and designed the whole book.

In my thoughts, I thank my dear parents, Mimi Fassaert (1939-2001) and

Adri Dobbelaar (1932-2018) for providing me with the creativity and discipline needed to start and finish this piece of work. I also thank the philosopher Marjan Slob, my soulmate with whom I have been sharing large parts of life and work for thirty years. Her wit, love and loyalty is an enduring balm for my soul, just as is my deep friendship with Caroline Thomas, who enlightens my daily work at our workplace in the Biotoop with her lively presence and her practical support.

There were others who contributed to this work unnoticed: by telling me their family history, or by making just one remark that influenced my thoughts on this subject. I cannot mention you all by name, but know that I thank you with all my heart for all your support. Among you were Vej Adler, Timothy Ashplant, Nicole Baars, Diana van der Beek, Jan Bransen, Mériam Cheikh, Cateleyne Deodatus, Noël van Dooren, Jitske Gulmans, Barbara Jiskoot, Rob Noorda, Renate Schepen, Rineke Verbrugge, Christa Verver, Kel Weinhold with her brilliant online program *Unstuck* for academics.

I want to thank my dearest, Fred Keijzer, who has supported me emotionally and intellectually in so many ways. He was always willing to listen to my stories, even in the middle of night. Fred, during this period you have been my role model as a scholar. Your modesty, combined with a strong determination about what you need to do in this life, impresses me more than I can say. When you started to joke about my PhD-worries, I knew I was on the right track. Your sense of humor has been entirely transmitted to our beautiful sons, who are the light of our life together. Thank you, Koen and Lucas, for being there!

Finally, I wish to thank my brother Harry and my sister Annemiek. Ever since the early death of our mother, we have each experienced how difficult and artificial the concept of family can feel. When our father started to lose his grip on life, we began working together in our care for him until he died. Our doing family together was an exercise in mutual respect, carefulness, intimacy, friendship, and loyalty. I am deeply grateful for the bonds we created by our recently shared experiences. That is why I dedicate this book to you both.

Notes

Chapter 1

1 'Il y a longtemps qu'on sait que le rôle de la philosophie n'est pas de découvrir ce qui est caché, mais de rendre visible ce qui précisément est visible, c'est-à-dire de faire apparaître ce qui est si proche, ce qui est si immédiat, ce qui est si intimement lié à nous-mêmes qu'à cause de cela nous ne le percevons pas.' In: M. Foucault, La philosophie analytique de la politique (1978), in Michel Foucault, '*Dits et écrits, 1954-1988 / III, 1976-1979,* 540-541.

2 Television programs about adoptees trying to find their biological parents are based on this assumption.

3 Catherine Nash, 'Geographies of Relatedness', 455.

4 Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity.* Charles Taylor, *The Ethics of Authenticity.*

5 Tanny Dobbelaar, *Familieverhalen. De kunst van het schrijven over je naasten.* See also Tanny Dobbelaar, 'Schrijven over je naasten', *Schrijven Magazine.*

6 In this book, I use the term 'family historians' as shorthand for 'family historians who write about their relatives'.

7 See for a collection of interviews and reviews of *Familieverhalen*: https://www.tannydobbelaar.nl/familieverhalen-in-de-pers/ (accessed November 25, 2019).

8 See for instance Anne-Marie Kramer, 'Mediatizing Memory: History, Affect' and Anne-Marie Kramer, 'Identity in Who do You Think You are?'.

9 Edmund de Waal, *The Hare with Amber Eyes: A Hidden Inheritance*.

10 Modern ways of doing family were explored in the Österreichisches Museum für Volkskunde in Vienna, in the exhibition *Familienmacher. Vom Festhalten, Verbinden und Loswerden*, in which text conversations between relatives were performed, and visitors could give away a family heirloom with a description of the significance the item had for its owner. Visitors could also adopt such pieces and describe their motives for doing so. See: Alison J. Clarke et al, *Familienmacher, Ausstellungsmachen.*

11 Susan Aasman, *Ritueel van huiselijk geluk. Een cultuurhistorische verkenning van de familiefilm*. See also Annamaria Motrescu-Mayes and Susan Aasman, *Amateur Media and Participatory Cultures: Film, Video, and Digital Media*.

12 Elena Solomon, 'Homemade and Hell Raising through Craft, Activism, and Do-It-Yourself Culture'.

13 Lisa Gitelman, *Paper Knowledge: Toward a Media History of Documents*.

14 This study is a case study as defined by Robert Yin: as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, in which the boundaries between phenomenon and context are no clearly evident. Robert Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, 13.

15 The magazine *Genealogie* altered its name into *GEN.magazine* in 2015.

16 A secondary aim is to show that the history of the CBG is a complicated one that deserves a separate study, based on more and more varied sources than I could cite here.

17 Bert Lever, *Kroniek Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie 1945-1995*, 9.

18 The donation of the collections of the private collector and art historian Hofstede de Groot (1863-1930) to the government caused Minister Terpstra to reserve a budget in 1932 for an institute that would cover artistic and iconographic heritage. Thereafter, other collections, like Van Beresteyn's, were also donated to this institute. Frederik Jules Duparc and Willem Albertus Es, *Een eeuw strijd voor Nederlands cultureel erfgoed: ter herdenking van een eeuw rijksbeleid ten aanzien van musea, oudheidkundig bodemonderzoek en archieven 1875-1975*, 234.

19 Ibid. 465-466.

20 "'s -Gravenhage Genealogie in een eigen bureau. In 's Rijks prullemand vindt men vele kostbaarheden" in: *De Tijd: Dagblad voor Nederland.* Amsterdam, 28-06-1947. https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:011201599:mpeg21:a0043 (accessed March 3, 2019).

21 The original quote reads: 'Het "Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie" aan de Nassaulaan te Den Haag, dat vrijdagmorgen in tegenwoordigheid van mr. H. J. Reinink, secretaris-generaal van het departement van O. K. en W., geopend werd, wil de herleefde en van alle politieke smetten ontdane belangstelling, die na de oorlog van vele kanten gegroeid is, opvangen en bevredigen en heeft daartoe de beschikking over een uitgebreide collectie familieportretten, die in Rijksbezit zijn, over niet minder dan 13 miljoen familieadvertenties, afkomstig van wijlen C. H. van Penema, Conservator der Universiteitsbibliotheek te Groningen en binnenkort ook over de kostbare verzamelingen van het Koninklijk Nederlands Genootschap voor Geslacht- en Wapenkunde.' In: "'s -Gravenhage Genealogie in een eigen bureau. In 's Rijks prullemand vindt men vele kostbaarheden" in: *De Tijd: Dagblad voor Nederland*, 28-06-1947.

22 Ibid. 'Het riekt nog een beetje verdacht, maar wie de tentoonstelling bezoekt, die ter gelegenheid van de officiële opening van het gebouw is ingericht, vindt in de oerdegelijke opzet, die beslist wars van alle ongezonde propaganda is, de zuivere en eerlijke liefde van de voorzitter van het Stichtingsbestuur, Jhr. Mr. dr. E. A. van Beresteyn, en zijn medewerkers voor een wetenschap, die zij met hart en ziel beoefenen.'

23 A part of Van Beresteyn's article is reprinted in Lever, *Kroniek Centraal Bureau Voor Genealogie 1945-1995*, 6.

24 The *Kroniek* mentions W. Beelaerts van Blokland and H.H. van Dam who tried to prevent dissemination of the material after the liquidation of the company by sheltering it in the organization *Stichting Nederland's Patriciaat*. Ibid., 6.

25 These organizations included the Koninklijk Genootschap voor Geslacht- en Wapenkunde *De Nederlandsche Leeuw*, Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische en Inkonografische

Documentatie, Bureau voor Historische Demografie, het Fonds voor Biographische Documentatie, and others. Ibid., p. 6/7.

26 The official name was *Rijksbureau voor Documentatie op het gebied van Geslacht- en Wapenkunde en Afbeeldingen*.

27 During the Second World War another initiative was started by people in hiding in a factory in Amsterdam, known after the war as the *Nederlandse Vereniging voor Genealogie* (NVG). After the war, they published the first issue of their genealogical magazine *Gens Nostra* in December 1945. Officially, the NVG was established on 1 July 1946. https://ontdekjouwverhaal.nl/over-ngv/geschiedenis-ngv-zelf/ (accessed April 24, 2019).

28 In 1933, Van Bemmelen founded the *Nederlandsch Instituut voor Erfelijkheidsonderzoek bij den Mensch en voor Rassenbiologie*.

29 'Van genealogie tot sibbenkunde. Wij moeten van onszelf weten, wat elke boer van zijn koeien weet. De weg naar veredeling van ons volk' in: *Het Nationale Dagblad: voor het Nederlandsche volk*, 13-06-1940. https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?coll=ddd&identifier=ddd:011132255:mpeg21:a0109 (accessed March 26, 2019).

30 The term 'eugenics' was coined by Francis Galton in 1883. Stephen Jay Gould, *The Mismeasure of Man*, 107.

31 Jos van den Borne. 'Dichter bij gewone mensen. De popularisering van de genealogiebeoefening in Nederland vanaf 1930', 220.

32 See Jason Tebbe, 'From Memory to Research: German Popular Genealogy in the Early Twentieth Century', 205-227; Stephen Jay Gould, *The Mismeasure of Man*. A well-known Dutch eugenic researcher was Marie-Anne van Herwerden (1874-1934). See Mineke Bosch, *Het geslacht van de wetenschap* and 'Looking at Laboratory Life, Writing a Scientific Persona: Marianne van Herwerden's Travel Letters from the United States, 1920'.

33 Barbara Henkes, *Uit liefde voor het volk. Volkskundigen op zoek naar de Nederlandse identiteit 1918-1948*, 16.

34 Jos van den Borne. 'Dichter bij gewone mensen. De popularisering van de genealogiebeoefening in Nederland vanaf 1930.'

35 'Wrong' here means 'associated with Nazi ideology'. Henkes, *Uit liefde voor het volk*, 357.

36 '[…] omdat een aantal collaborateurs met de vijand ons de zaak uit handen wilde nemen.' Cited in: Lever, *Kroniek Centraal Bureau Voor Genealogie 1945-1995*, 7.

37 The 'traditional organizations of the nobility' referred to here are organizations such as *De Nederlandsche Leeuw* and *Nationale Vereeniging voor Geslacht- en Wapenkunde.* See: 'Een Rijks Genealogisch bureau opgericht. Sabotage-poging van de heeren Van Poelje en Van Berensteyn', in: *Het Nationale Dagblad: voor het Nederlandsche volk*. Leiden, 16-08-1940. https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?coll=ddd&identifier=ddd:011132310:mpeg21:a0132 (accessed March 26, 2019).

38 Ibid. 'Vermoedelijk komt dit nieuwe ''Rijksbureau" onder de controle van de Jodin Duparc van het Departement.'

39 See for instance Figure 4: 'Van overal. Alle Nederlanders zijn familie van elkaar!' in: Algemeen Handelsblad, 26-01-1941. https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=KBNR-C01:000056201:mpeg21:a0032 (accessed March 28, 2019).
Footage (39 seconds) of the exhibition, published on Januari 1, 1942 at https://www.openbeelden.nl/media/1127820/Tentoonstelling_van_het_Nederlandse_verbond_voor_sibbekunde (accessed March 28, 2019) Footage (39 seconds) of this exhibition at https://www.openbeelden.nl/media/1127820/Tentoonstelling_van_het_Nederlandse_verbond_voor_sibbekunde (accessed March 28, 2019).

40 'Het juiste begrip der sibbe-gedachte voert ons tot de bewustwording der volksgemeenschap - daarom is het dat wij in dit nieuwe tijdschrift vooral ook den nadruk zullen leggen op den kwartierstaat, d.w.z. de lijnen die aantoonen, op hoe tallooze wijzen elk individu vergroeid is met zijn omgeving en hoe hij uit deze omgeving, dus uit het volk waarin hij leeft, zijn krachten geput heeft.' A. Kleyn, 'Ter inleiding', *Sibbe* 1 (1941), geciteerd in Jos van den Borne. 'Dichter bij gewone mensen. De popularisering van de genealogiebeoefening in Nederland vanaf 1930', 227.

41 Jaap Cohen, *De onontkoombare afkomst Van Eli D'Oliveira: Een Portugees-Joodse familiegeschiedenis*.

42 Dolle Dinsdag (Mad Tuesday) is Dutch for Tuesday, 5 September 1944. On this day, many rumours circulated in the occupied Netherlands that liberation by Allied forces was at hand. In the succeeding days, more than 65,000 collaborators and their families fled to Germany. Jong, L. de, and Rijksinstituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie (Amsterdam). *Het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden in de Tweede Wereldoorlog/Dl. 10b, Het laatste jaar II: tweede helft*, 281.

43 Duparc and Es, *Een eeuw strijd voor Nederlands cultureel erfgoed: Ter herdenking van een eeuw rijksbeleid ten aanzien van musea, oudheidkundig bodemonderzoek en archieven 1875-1975*, 468. About the state budget of 1946: 'Daarnaast waren er gelden uitgetrokken voor financiële steun aan stichtingen en verenigingen op het gebied van het archiefwezen werkzaam en in het bezit van eigen collecties bescheiden. De belangrijkste waren het hiervoor al genoemde Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie, de eveneens genoemde Stichting Iconographisch Bureau, het Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis – totdat dit werd omgezet in een interuniversitair instituut –, het Nederlands Economisch Historisch Archief, het Sociaal-Economisch Historisch Centrum voor Limburg en het Nederlands Genootschap voor Geslacht- en Wapenkunde.'

44 Lever, *Kroniek Centraal Bureau Voor Genealogie 1945-1995*, 11.

45 Ibid., 12.

46 Ibid.,13: 'De Economische Voorlichtingsdienst vraagt medewerking "om sluimerende genealogische instincten van Nederlanders afstammende burgers van de Verenigde Staten door een advertentie-campagne wakker te roepen. Wanneer met hulp van het Centraal Bureau het genealogisch onderzoek kan worden georganiseerd en bedoelde advertentie-campagne losbarst, dan zou misschien een dollarstroom naar Nederland kunnen worden gericht, die weliswaar het verlies van Indie niet zal goedmaken, maar toch uiterst welkom zal zijn.'"

47 Ibid., 22.

48 https://cbg.nl/bronnen/wiewaswie/ (accessed March 29, 2019).

49 https://cbg.nl/bronnen/cbg-verzamelingen/algemeen-politieblad/ (accessed March 29, 2019).

50 https://cbg.nl/kennis/basiskennis/gemeentelijke-bevolkingsregistratie-als-bron/ (accessed March 29, 2019).

51 https://cbg.nl/diensten/uittreksels-pkpl/ (accessed March 29, 2019).

52 Jerome de Groot, *Consuming History: Historians and Heritage in Contemporary Popular Culture*, 73.

53 'We kozen voor de toegankelijker term familiegeschiedenis, ook omdat we willen onderstrepen dat we het volledige spectrum van de familiegeschiedenis tot ons werkgebied rekenen: van familienamen tot –wapens, van familiearchieven tot stambomen en van stambomen tot familieverhalen.' In: Annual report CBG 2016, 10-11: https://cbg.nl/over-het-cbg/organisatie/ (accessed August 29, 2019).

54 On https://cbg.nl/bronnen/bibliotheek/ one can find a range of sources, including the digitized Repertorium. The digitized collections can be found on https://cbg.nl/bronnen/cbg-verzamelingen/ (both accessed September 8, 2018).

55 'Het is een nieuwe mogelijkheid om antwoord te geven op de vraag "wie ben ik?". Ons DNA is uniek en verbindt ons tegelijk met de generaties voor ons. DNA onderzoek maakt je er bewust van dat we "allemaal familie" zijn.' https://cbg.nl/kennis/themas/dna-en-familiegeschiedenis/ (accessed April 1, 2019).

56 Michael Sharpe, *Family Matters: A History of Genealogy*, 4.

57 Sigmund Freud, 'Family Romances'.

58 See Anne-Marie Kramer, Anne-Marie Kramer, 'Kinship, Affinity and Connectedness: Exploring the Role of Genealogy in Personal Lives', 380; Anne-Mari Kramer, 'Mediatizing Memory: History, Affect and Identity in Who do You Think You are?', 429. In my article 'Familiegeschiedenis als zelfinterpretatie' I also adopted such a view. This study shows the development of my thinking on this subject.

59 Martine Segalen and Claude Michelat, 'L'amour de la généalogie' , cited in Cannell, Fenella. 'English Ancestors: The Moral Possibilities of Popular Genealogy', 463.

60 Ashley Barnwell, 'The Genealogy Craze: Authoring an Authentic Identity through Family History Research', 263.

61 Charlotte Linde, *Life Stories: The Creation of Coherence*, 3.

62 Barnwell, 'The Genealogy Craze: Authoring an Authentic Identity through Family History Research', 273.

63 Peter Sloterdijk, *Zur Welt Kommen, Zur Sprache Kommen*, 41-42.

64 Jennifer Mason 'Tangible Affinities and the Real Life Fascination of Kinship', 31. Annie-Marie Kramer lists a range of social explanations for genealogical research, in particular, including a reaction to depersonalized modernity and mobile lifestyles (Paul Basu, 'My Own Island Home – The Orkney Homecoming'), social dislocation and/or migration (Michael Erben, 'Genealogy and Sociology – a preliminary set of statements and speculations'), or a response to a crisis in belonging in postcolonial societies (Paul

Basu, 'Macpherson Country: Genealogical Identities, Spatial Histories and Diasporic Clanscape'.

65 David Lowenthal, *Possessed by the Past: The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History*, 6.

66 Jennifer Mason and Anne-Marie Kramer make the same claim. Elizabeth Timm also objects to this 'compensation thesis', described by Segalen and Michalet as 'a strategy to deny modernity, as a strange effort to grow roots in a rapidly changing world that no longer needs such foundations.' Cited in Timm, 'Reference and reverence: two modes of popular genealogy in Europe since the 19th century'.

67 Frans van Poppel, 'De familie Doorsnee tegen het licht. Anderhalve eeuw veranderingen in de Nederlandse familiestructuur'.

68 Friedrich Nietzsche, 'On the Advantage and Disadvantage of History for Life', 69.

69 Ibid., 73.

70 David Lowenthal, *Possessed by the Past,* 9.

71 Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2001), 14.

72 Ibid., 49.

73 See also 2.1. on the distinction between family history and genealogy.

74 Julia Watson, 'Ordering the Family: Genealogy as Autobiographical Pedigree', 298.

75 Ibid., 300.

76 Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson, *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Life Narratives*, 195.

77 Watson, *Ordering the Family*, 317.

78 Julia Watson, 'A Personal Introduction to Life Writing in the Long Run'.

79 John R. Gillis, *A World of their Own Making*, 13.

80 Ibid., 107-108.

81 Ibid., 6.

82 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 6.

83 Ibid., 6.

84 Ibid., 10.

85 Ibid., 6.

86 The historian Timothy Ashplant concurs with Ross Poole, who extends the notion of the nation as an imagined community in trying to explain how individuals are as committed to their families as they are to their nations. He sees the nation as an extension of the family because they are both unchosen conditions which offer the individual a social identity and give meaning to commitment, death, and sacrifice in an individual life.

Ashplant argues not only that family and nation are parallel in these properties, but that there is a structural continuity between family and nation. Timothy. G. Ashplant, *Fractured Loyalties: Masculinity, Class and Politics in Britain, 1900-30*, 31-36.

87 Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest*, 44.

88 Mrinalini Sinha, *Gender and Nation*, 15.

89 This reason is inspired by an argument of Elisabeth Timm regarding the pair 'imagined' and 'unimagined' family, though she uses it in a different context, that of imagining family members in genealogical research. Elisabeth Timm, 'Grounding the Family: Locality and its Discontents in Popular Genealogy', 36-50.

90 Ironically, there is a study of unimagined communities, i.e. sexual networks in Africa, that twists the definition of the term: 'Thus, unlike the explicit networks of friendship or kinship, the sexual network is an invisible community; it is unimagined. Although sexual networks are necessarily subsets of friendship networks and supersets of kinship networks, they are rarely traced as a genealogy is or as one might construct a guest list for a wedding. They do not constitute social categories.' *In:* Robert Thornton, Unimagined Community: Sex, Networks, and AIDS in Uganda and South Africa, xviii.

91 Pierre Nora, 'Between Memory and History: Les Lieux De Mémoire', 9.

92 See Kevin Meethan, 'Remaking Time and Space: The Internet, Digital Archives and Genealogy', 101.

93 Ronald D. Lambert, 'Reclaiming the Ancestral Past: Narrative, Rhetoric and the "convict Stain"', 124.

94 Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory.*

95 Jay Winter in *Performing the Past*, 11.

96 Aleida Assmann: 'Re-framing memory. Between individual and collective forms of constructing the past', 39.

97 Jose van Dijck, 'Mediated Memories: Personal Cultural Memory as Object of Cultural Analysis', 275.

98 Timm, 'Grounding the Family: Locality and its Discontents in Popular Genealogy'; Karla B. Hackstaff, 'Family Genealogy: A Sociological Imagination Reveals Intersectional Relations', Anne-Marie Kramer, 'Kinship, Affinity and Connectedness: Exploring the Role of Genealogy in Personal Lives'; Lambert, 'Reclaiming the Ancestral Past: Narrative, Rhetoric and the "convict Stain"'; Alex Van Stipriaan, 'Testing Roots: A Heritage Project of Body and Soul'.

99 Andrew Keen, *The Cult of the Amateur: How Blogs, MySpace, YouTube and the Rest of Today's User Generated Media are Killing our Economy, our Culture and our Values*; Lisa Gitelman, *Paper Knowledge: Toward a Media History of Documents*.

100 Robert A. Stebbins, *Amateurs, Professionals and Serious Leisure*.

101 Henry Jenkins, 'Interactive Audiences?', in *Fans, Bloggers, and Gamers: Exploring Participatory Culture*, 135-136, cited in Henry Jenkins, 'Rethinking "Rethinking Convergence/ Culture"', 269.

102 This view is partly inspired by the key premises formulated in Marianne Jørgensen and Louise Phillips, *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method*, 2-3.

103 Cognitive psychologist James Gibson coined affordances as 'possibilities for action provided to an animal by the environment – by the substances, surfaces, objects, and other living creatures that surround it'. Cited in Erik Rietveld and Julian Kiverstein, 'A Rich Landscape of Affordances', 325.

104 Annemarie Mol, 'Actor-Network Theory: Sensitive Terms and Enduring Tensions', 253.

105 Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*, 16.

106 Cited from abstract of Bruno Latour, 'On Actor-Network Theory: A Few Clarifications', 373.

107 Ibid., 373.

108 Annemarie Mol, 'Actor-Network Theory: Sensitive Terms and Enduring Tensions', 254.

109 Ludwig Wittgenstein, 'Bemerkungen über Frazers *The Golden Bough*', 241.

110 See also Robert Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, 10: '(..) in doing a case-study, your goal will be to expand and generalize theories (analytical generalizations) and not to enumerate frequencies (statistical generalizations.'

111 Donna Haraway, *'Modest-Witness@ Second-Millennium. Femaleman [Copyright]-Meets-Oncomouse [Trademark]: Feminism and Technoscience'*, 218.

Chapter 2

1 Bruno Latour, T*he Pasteurization of France*, 178.

2 I used these three notions of family in an earlier article about family as self-interpretation, in 'Familiegeschiedenis als zelf-interpretatie', 4-15.

3 Mol gives a very clear description of Latour's claim that the subject is part of a network of associations that does *not* have a logical coherence, but whose existence is supported by the strength of its associations with other elements in the network. In a section entitled 'Associations and Multiplication', Mol interprets Latour's and her own work as building on, as well as moving away from, Foucault. *The Body Multiple*, 61-71.

4 Ibid. Here, Mol uses the term 'coordination work' several times.

5 Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social,* 49.

6 See Rob van Drie and Maarten van Bourgondiën, *Stamboomboek*, 11: 'Aan het begrip afstamming geven de beoefenaren van de genealogie in ons land traditioneel een juridische inhoud. Zij plaatsen stamboomonderzoek in het kader van het personen- en familierecht, dat verankerd is in het Burgerlijk Wetboek. Boek 1 van dit wetboek behandelt onderwerpen als naam, burgerlijke stand, huwelijk, echtscheiding, voogdij, alimentatie, (..). De familierechtelijke betrekking tussen mensen staat centraal in genealogisch onderzoek.'

7 Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*), § 43, 50.

8 Watson, *Ordering the Family: Genealogy as Autobiographical Pedigree*.

9 See Nathan Murphy in https://familysearch.org/blog/en/difference-genealogy-family-history (accessed May 2, 2016.) See for discussion on merging: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Talk:Genealogy#Merger_proposal] (accessed May 2, 2016.).

10 See https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genealogie_(geschiedkunde) (accessed July 11, 2018). The new name for the CBG as CBG – Centre for Family History can be interpreted as a consequence of ongoing globalization in the genealogical world, in which these two English terms are used interchangeably.

11 See for instance the University of Strathclyde's free online MOOC course on genealogy: https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/genealogy (accessed April 15, 2019).

12 Jerome de Groot, *Consuming History: Historians and Heritage in Contemporary Popular Culture*, 73.

13 Ibid., 76.

14 Since the digitization of the registration systems, priority has been given to the identification of citizens by a tax number or a social security or civil number.

15 I here follow the descriptions of Stephen Wilson, *The Means of Naming: A Social and Cultural History of Personal Naming in Western Europe*.

16 R. A. Ebeling, *Voor- en familienamen in Nederland. Geschiedenis, verspreiding, vorm en gebruik*, 20.

17 Stephen Wilson, *The Means of Naming: A Social and Cultural History of Personal Naming in Western Europe*, 85.

18 Ibid., 160.

19 Elizabeth Timm, 'Grounding the Family: Locality and its Discontents in Popular Genealogy', 42: 'The council of Trent decree turned the private matter of marriage, an undertaking between two individuals, into a public, formalized, written, clericalized, and sacralized act and made priests the crucial figures in what may be described as a "disciplining" of the family.' Timm here cites Gabriella Zarri, *'Die Tridentinische Ehe'*, 364f.

20 Stephen Wilson, *The Means of Naming: A Social and Cultural History of Personal Naming in Western Europe*, 254.

21 John Gillis, *A World of Their Own Making*, 75.

22 Stephen Wilson, *The Means of Naming*, 337.

23 John Gillis, *A World of Their Own Making*, 14.

24 Michel Foucault, 'Nietzsche, Genealogy, History', 139.

25 Martin Saar, 'Genealogy and Subjectivity', 236.

26 Julia Watson, *Ordering the Family: Genealogy as Autobiographical Pedigree*, 319.

27 Ibid., 319.

28 Ibid., 319.

29 Foucault, 'Nietzsche, Genealogy, History', 162, in Catherine Nash, 'Genealogical Identities', 49.

30 From http://hilobrow.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/sisters.jpg (accessed April 12, 2019). and http://hilobrow.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/mashup.jpg (accessed April 12, 2019).

31 Based on Carlo Ginzburg. 'Family Resemblances and Family Trees: Two Cognitive Metaphors', 537-556.

32 Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations,* §67, 32.

33 Henderson defines a generation as: '(1) in a line of descent, individuals that share a common ancestor and are all the same number of broods away from that ancestor; (2) in human populations often refers to all individuals in the same age group.' Henderson, Isabella Ferguson, William Dawson Henderson, and John Henry Kenneth. *A Dictionary of Biological Terms*, 254.

34 Bourdieu, Pierre, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, 207, note 71.

35 Bouquet, Mary. 'Family Trees and their Affinities: The Visual Imperative of the Genealogical Diagram', 48.

36 Jesse is mentioned in the Bible in Ruth 4:22, Isaiah 11:1-2, and Matthew 1:6-16. Figure 7 shows a picture of the tree of Jesse by Geertgen tot Sint Jans ca. 1460/65 (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam). https://www.geheugenvannederland.nl/nl/geheugen/view?coll=ngvn&identifier=RIJK01%3ASK-A-3901 (accessed December 4, 2019).

37 Klapisch-Zuber, Christiane. 'The Genesis of the Family Tree', 109.

38 Ibid., 112.

39 Ibid., 122.

40 See also Figure 8, Haekel's pedigree of man. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:E._Haekel,_Entwicklungsgeschichte_des_Menschen._Wellcome_L0014862.jpg (accessed December 4, 2019).

41 Bouquet, Mary. 'Family Trees and their Affinities: The Visual Imperative of the Genealogical Diagram', 62.

42 Ottakar Lorenz, *Lehrbuch der gesammten wissenschaftlichen Genealogie: Stammbaum und Ahnentafel in ihrer geschichtlichen, sociologischen und naturwissenschaftlichen Bedeutung,* 251, note 1, cited in: Martin Zwilling, 'Mutterstämme. Die Biologisierung des genealogischen Denkens und die Stellung der Frau in Familie und Gesellschaft von 1900 bis zur NS-Zeit', 29 in: José Brunner, *Mütterliche Macht und väterliche Autorität: Elternbilder im deutschen Diskurs*: Wallstein Verlag, 2008), 29-47.

43 See for a good overview Sinha, *Gender and Nation*, 40.

44 McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest*, 44.

45 Sinha, *Gender and Nation*, 16.

46 Stephen Jay Gould, *The Mismeasure of Man*, 143.

47 See figure 8

48 Jason Tebbe, 'From Memory to Research: German Popular Genealogy in the Early Twentieth Century', 225.

49 See David C. Mountain and Jeanne Kay Guelke, 'Genetics, Genealogy, and Geography', 153.

50 A whole new genre has been created on YouTube, where people share the results of their DNA test. See for instance this clip, in which a young woman fantasizes about the African tribe she stems from, only to be very disappointed when the DNA results disclose her European, that is, white ancestry in the female line: I'm UPSET! | Nia Hope in https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h5u_jTzwbLo (accessed April 14, 2019). The famous TV psychologist Dr. Phil also reveals 'his true self' by disclosing the results of his DNA test in: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V8I5ac_7Nsg (accessed May 7, 2019).

51 Based on the section 'How genetics can help genealogists' in online course on genealogy by the University of Strathclyde. https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/genealogy (accessed April 15, 2019).

52 Brian Sykes, *The Seven Daughters of Eve: The Science that Reveals our Genetic Ancestry*.

53 Catherine Nash, *Genetic Geographies: The Trouble with Ancestry*, 36.

54 Ibid., 51.

55 See https://www.ancestrycdn.com/dna/static/images/ethnicity/help/WhitePaper_Final_091118dbs.pdf (accessed October 23, 2018).

56 Facebook group Genetic Genealogy Tips & Techniques: https://www.facebook.com/groups/geneticgenealogytipsandtechniques (accessed February 27, 2019).

57 David Schneider, *A Critique of the Study of Kinship*, 187. The other institutions are: economics, politics and religion.

58 David Schneider, 'What is Kinship about', 269.

59 Parkin and Stone, *Kinship and Family*.

60 William Rivers, 'The Genealogical Method of Anthropological Inquiry', 1-12.

61 Alfred R. Radcliffe-Brown, 'The study of kinship systems', 51-52, cited in Elizabeth A. Povinelli, 'Notes on Gridlock: Genealogy, Intimacy, Sexuality', 223.

62 Povinelli, 'Notes on Gridlock: Genealogy, Intimacy, Sexuality', 224.

63 Schneider, *A Critique of the Study of Kinship*, 188.

64 Ibid.

65 Robert Wilson gives a nuanced analysis of the ambiguities in Schneider's work in: 'Kinship Past, Kinship Present: Bio-Essentialism in the Study of Kinship'.

66 This overview is based on Robert A. Wilson, 'Kinship Past, Kinship Present: Bio-Essentialism in the Study of Kinship'; Sahlins, *What Kinship Is - And Is Not;* Janet Carsten, *After Kinship*; Robert Parkin and Linda Stone, *Kinship and Family: An Anthropological Reader*; David Schneider, 'What is Kinship About'; David Schneider, *A Critique of the Study of Kinship*.

67 See for an extensive description of these developments Linda Stone in Parkin and Stone, *Kinship and Family: An Anthropological Reader*, 241.

68 Ibid.

69 See for a reconstruction on recent approaches of kinship the handbook and the introductions by Linda Stone in Ibid., 1-23.

70 Janet Carsten, *After Kinship*, 154.

71 Carsten, *After Kinship*, 144.

72 Marilyn Strathern, *After Nature: English Kinship in the Late Twentieth Century*, 240.

73 Annemarie Mol, *The Body Multiple: Ontology in Medical Practice*, 19.

74 Sahlins, *What Kinship Is - And Is Not*, 29.

75 Ibid., 3.

76 See for critiques on Sahlins: Andrew Shryock, 'It's This, Not That: How Marshall Sahlins Solves Kinship'.

Chapter 3

1 Mary Midgley, *Evolution as a Religion: Strange Hopes and Stranger Fears*, 4.

2 Scott Brennen and Daniel Kreiss, 'Digitalization and digitization', http://culturedigitally.org/2014/09/digitalization-and-digitization (accessed April 23, 2019).

3 José Van Dijck, Thomas Poell, and Martijn de Waal, *Platform Society* (New York etc.: Oxford University Press, 2018).

4 Ibid., 33.

5 Ibid., 38.

6 ID 86, 5: 'Bij het uitzoeken van de familie Morcus kreeg ik het probleem dat ik er steeds voor naar het Rijksarchief van Zeeland te Middelburg moest. Wegens drukte in de cactuskwekerij en natuurlijk met het gezin ontbrak me de tijd om naar Zeeland te gaan. Dan is de overstap naar de familie van mijn vrouw snel gemaakt. Haar familie kwam immers uit de Hoeksche Waard. Dat is niet zover weg om op zaterdagmiddag naar Heinenoord te gaan en daar onderzoek te doen in de kaartenbakken van het streekmuseum.'

7 ID 86, 5: 'Mij ontbreekt de tijd om verder te zoeken. En enkele familieleden waren niet zo enthousiast wilden niet meewerken. Helaas. Ook op internet en Google werd één en ander gevonden. Soms ook met foto.'

8 ID 112, 7; ID 169, 3.

9 Www.graftombe.nl (accessed September 8, 2018); ID 117, 3: 'Zwervend over de dodenakkers op zoek naar grafstenen van Siepels, (graftombe.nl) heeft ons ingehaald'.

10 ID 141, 674: 'Het begin van mijn hobby, realisering van mijn boek.'

11 An example of this volunteer activity is the community of contributors to the Dutch site geneaknowhow.net, concerned with the online support of genealogical researchers. See for a short history of geneaknowhow.net, built by two men who have both IT and genealogy as a hobby. See http://www.geneaknowhow.net/algemeen/lustrum-geneaknowhow-22apr2005.pdf. The website covers six different aspects of online sources. One is devoted to royalty-free illustrations, such as the well-known and often re-printed engravings of occupations by Jan Luyken (April 16, 1649 - April 5, 1712), a Dutch poet, illustrator, and engraver. Another site is concerned with transcriptions from sources like telephone directories from all villages in one province, or of passengers' lists to America in the 17th century. This diverse collection is supplemented regularly with new materials.

12 ID 141, 674: WordPerfect 5.1 was released in November 1989. It is much more likely that the first draft was written in WordPerfect 4.2, released in February 1988. http://www.columbia.edu/~em36/wpdos/chronology.html (accessed April 17, 2019).

13 ID 70, 3.

14 ID 170, 5: 'De tijd schreed voort en het internet ontwikkelde. Mede hierdoor werd hij in 2009 een paar maal benaderd met vragen over de familie. Dit bracht hem ertoe de hem beschikbare gegevens te digitaliseren en op het internet beschikbaar te maken voor wie maar ook geïnteresseerd zou zijn. Het doel was minder werk. Het resultaat was meer werk omdat meer mensen nieuwe of aanvullende informatie aandroegen.'

15 ID 207. Hyves was a Dutch social media platform. In October 2013, when Facebook became dominant on the Dutch market, Hyves closed its platform. https://www.nu.nl/internet/3616383/profiel-hyves-verloor-bij-tmg-razendsnel-alle-glans.html (accessed April 17, 2019).

16 ID 207, 5.

17 as in ID 112 and ID 137.

18 Seen under 'family statistics' in Myheritage, www.myheritage.com.

19 See ID 115 for new information based on databased info about average ages per generation. See ID 28/29 for new information based on databased information about places and professions (an ancestor chart of professions across the generations).

20 ID 26; ID 28; ID 29; ID 34.

21 José Van Dijck et al, Platform Society, 8.

22 See Figure 11. Homepage of the CBG on February 8, 1998. Found on the Wayback Machine of the Internet Archive: https://archive.org.

23 'Welkom bij het Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie. Het Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie (CBG) neemt een bijzondere plaats in binnen de genealogiebeoefening in Nederland. Het werd in 1945 opgericht door vertegenwoordigers van de Rijksoverheid en particulieren, om als documentatiecentrum en voorlichtingscentrum op het terrein van de familiegeschiedenis en heraldiek te dienen.
Sindsdien is veel van wat vroegere onderzoekers op dit gebied bijeengebracht hebben, door het CBG verworven. De onderzoeker van nu kan het raadplegen en gebruiken voor zijn eigen onderzoek. Per dag maken meer dan honderd bezoekers gebruik van de studiezalen van het CBG. Het CBG is het toonaangevende kenniscentrum op genealogisch en heraldisch terrein, met een internationale reputatie. Het ontwikkelt methoden en naslagwerken en verschaft informatie over de nieuwste ontwikkelingen op het werkterrein.'

24 www.wiewaswie.nl (accessed April 18, 2019).

25 See Eric Ketelaar, 'Muller, Feith and Fruin'.

26 René Spork about the national archivist Eric Ketelaar making an overview of all public archives and collections in the Netherlands in the 1980s: 'Een klus die bovenmenselijk, die goddelijk genoemd moet worden'. René Spork in 'Ketelaar', 33.

27 Bert Looper and Bert de Vries, 'Contextuele toegankelijkheid: panoptische utopie of realiteit?', 248.

28 Terry Cook, 'What is Past is Prologue: A History of Archival Ideas since 1898, and the Future Paradigm Shift', 41.

29 Tora K. Bikson and Erik J. Frinking, *Preserving the Present: Toward Viable Electronic Records*, (The Hague: Sdu Publishers, 1994), 33, cited in Terry Cook, What is Past is Prologue, 32.

30 Archiefwet 1995. https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0007376/2018-07-28 (accessed May 21, 2019).

31 See 'Cultuurnota Cultuur als confrontatie 2001-2004' in https://docplayer.nl/2653052-Cultuur-als-confrontatie-cultuurnota-2001-2004-cultuurnota-2001-2004-publicatie-van-het-ministerie-van-onderwijs-cultuur-en-wetenschappen.html (accessed May 21, 2009)
See for a more recent interpretation of user-friendly digital archives: http://www.den.nl/art/uploads/files/Publicaties/Nationale_Strategie_Digitaal_Erfgoed_MinOCW.pdf (accessed July 8, 2018).

32 Theo Thomassen, *Archiefwetenschap, erfgoed en politisering*, 7.

33 Terry Cook, 'Evidence, Memory, Identity, and Community: Four Shifting Archival Paradigms', 95.

34 Marlene Manoff, 'Archive and Database as Metaphor: Theorizing the Historical Record', 391.

35 Hans Hofman, 'De digitale archivaris: een nieuwe wereld. De invloed van informatietechnologie op het vak', 213-214.

36 Sue McKemmish, 'Placing Records Continuum Theory and Practice', 336. See for an explanation of the space-time continuum Frank Upward, 'Modelling the Continuum as Paradigm Shift in Recordkeeping and Archiving Processes, 115.

37 Hofman, 'De digitale archivaris', 221.

38 Lisa Gitelman, *Paper Knowledge: Toward a Media History of Documents*, 17-18.

39 Charles Jeurgens, 'The Scent of the Digital Archive: Dilemmas with Archive Digitisation', 34.

40 Ibid., 30.

41 A beautiful illustration of this argument, on the loss of information of paper index cards in libraries, in: Nicholson Baker, 'Annals of Scholarship: Discards'.

42 Jeurgens, 'The Scent of the Digital Archive', 42.

43 Manoff, Marlene. 'The Materiality of Digital Collections: Theoretical and Historical Perspectives', 311-325.

44 Ibid., 314.

45 Ibid., 312.

46 Ibid., 312.

47 José Van Dijck, 'Search Engines and the Production of Academic Knowledge', 574.

48 Max Kemman, Martijn Kleppe, and Stef Scagliola, 'Just Google it-Digital Research Practices of Humanities Scholars', 4.

49 Ibid., 4.

50 According to the Chronicle of the CBG, the first microfilms arrived at the CBG in 1972. See Lever, *Kroniek Centraal Bureau Voor Genealogie 1945-1995*, 36.

51 Archiefblad, juni 2003, 11.

52 CBG Annual Report 2016, 4: https://cbg.nl/over-het-cbg/organisatie/ (accessed August 29, 2019).

53 CBG Annual Report 2015, 2016.

54 José Van Dijck, *Mediated Memories in the Digital Age*, 150.

55 Some of these volunteers participate in international networks like Random Acts of Genealogical Kindness that help family historians to find local information about a specific relative: https://raogk.org/ (accessed May, 22, 2019). In this way, intense relationships and networks are created. All these form an important part of contemporary genealogical research.

56 On the managing of archiving in an era of ubiquitous computing, see Charles Jeurgens, 'Threats of the Data-Flood: An Accountability Perspective in the Era of Ubiquitous Computing'.

57 De Groot, *Consuming History: Historians and Heritage in Contemporary Popular Culture*, 85.

58 Http://www.Aldfaer.org and https://blog.myheritage.nl/2014/11/myheritage-verste-vigt-nederlandse-positie-middels-samenwerking-met-aldfaer-en-coret/ (accessed April 26, 2018).

59 De Groot, *Consuming History*, 75.

60 'De genealoog staat bij de archivaris niet al te best aangeschreven. Zij houden niet van de lieden die hun halve archief overhoop halen, alleen om te ontdekken, wanneer een aan ieder, behalve aan de naaste familie volkomen onbekend heer of dame gestorven of geboren is, en die de opzending van een geheel protocol aanvragen, alleen om na te zien in de aan het einde geplaatste indices, of hun familienaam er bij geval in voorkomt.' Robert Fruin Th. Azn, 'Het wetenschappelijke karakter van maandblad van "De Nederlandsche Leeuw"', 100. in: Nederlandsch Archievenblad, jrg 29, 1920/1922, 100.

61 Lev Manovich, *The Language of New Media*, 224.

62 Ibid., 225.

63 Mieke Bal, *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*, 5.

64 Lev Manovich, *The Language of New Media*, 233.

65 Ibid., 230.

66 Ibid., 231.

67 Ibid., 231.

68 Ibid., 46.

69 Ibid., 234.

70 'Family history research basics', week 1 of the MOOC genealogy course at The Scottish University of Strathclyde. In 2016, I took this course with the platform website www.futurelearn.com.

71 Cook, 'Evidence, Memory, Identity, and Community: Four Shifting Archival Paradigms', 103.

72 'What's in a name?', week 5 of the MOOC genealogy course at The Scottish University of Strathclyde.

73 There are alternatives to GEDCOM, but they also have to be compatible to GEDCOM, which is a disadvantage. According to Michael Kay, who designed one of these alternatives, 'Compatibility means deliberately repeating other people's mistakes', quoted on https://www.tamurajones.net/GEDCOMAlternatives.xhtml (accessed May 22, 2019).

74 Fenella Cannell, 'The Blood of Abraham: Mormon Redemptive Physicality and American Idioms of Kinship', S77.

75 https://www.tamurajones.net/GEDCOMAlternatives.xhtml (accessed April 15, 2019).

76 Tamura Jones remarks: 'This awkward design feels wrong because it is wrong. The MARR record should not be subordinate to the FAM record, but that's how it is in FamilySearch GEDCOM'. In https://www.tamurajones.net/MarriageInGedcom.xhtml (accessed September 8, 2018)

77 https://www.tamurajones.net/FamilyInTraditionalGenealogySoftware.xhtml (accessed 9 September, 2018).

78 Tamura Jones: 'It is true that GEDCOM was created by FamilySearch, which is part of the LDS, an openly homophobic organization. It is true that FamilySearch attempted to exclude same-sex marriage from their GEDCOM specification. However, it also true that they, through their sloppiness, failed to do so.
Although you won't get that impression from a superficial reading, the FamilySearch GEDCOM specification does allow same-sex marriage.'

See: https://www.tamurajones.net/DeliberatelyLimitedGenealogyPrograms.xhtml (accessed September 9, 2018).

79 Jones states that GEDCOM was created to support traditional genealogy: 'The dishonest assumption that there is just one genealogy permeates the GEDCOM specification'. See https://www.tamurajones.net/FamilyInTraditionalGenealogySoftware.xhtml (accessed September 9, 2018).

80 Jones argues for a model in which individuals have several genealogies, such as a biological genealogy, a legal genealogy (based on non-vital records), and an official genealogy (based on 'vital' records, traditionally described as birth –marriage – death records). In Jones' vision, all genealogies together form one's family history. Jones: 'Traditional genealogy is wrong. Traditional genealogy fits everyday behaviour, taboos, and silent assumptions, but it does not fit reality.' https://www.tamurajones.net/SimplisticGenealogy.xhtml (accessed September 9, 2018).

81 It is possible to imagine alternatives to the FAM-tag. One could have cut out the family tag, and left two individuals coupled only by a relationship-tag. One could even leave out the relation between the two parents and only emphasize that a given child has been acknowledged by one or two or even more legal parents.

Chapter 4

1 Ludwig Wittgenstein, 'Bemerkungen über Frazers *The Golden Bough*', 242.

2 One of the questions that will be answered later on concerns the status of family histories: are they narratives or chronicles?

3 Amade M'charek, *The Human Genome Diversity Project: An Ethnography of Scientific Practice,* 128.

4 Ibid., 129.

5 M'charek links these points of views to genetics and genealogy, respectively. In my argument, both points of view play a role in the structures supporting family histories.

6 Katherine Verdery, *The Political Lives of Dead Bodies: Reburial and Postsocialist Change*.

7 Ibid., 117.

8 Ibid., 117.

9 Figure 20 and 21 are copied from Verdery, The Political Lives of Dead Bodies, 118.

10 Eviatar Zerubavel, *Social Mindscapes: An Invitation to Cognitive Sociology*; Eviatar Zerubavel, *Time Maps: Collective Memory and the Social Shape of the Past*.

11 Eviatar Zerubavel, *Ancestors and Relatives: Genealogy, Identity, and Community*, 67.

12 Ibid., 67.

13 ID 17, ID 52, and ID 138, respectively.

14 Verdery, *The Political Lives of Dead Bodies*, 118.

15 Clearly, these are part of the collection of the CBG because they are based in one way or another on genealogical research, in most cases demonstrated by a short reference to genealogical research or a genealogical visual. I divide these writings in the categories autobiography (ID 100; ID 125), biography (ID 31; ID 79; ID 82; ID 94; ID 128; ID 153; ID 169; ID 185; ID 188; ID 191), a republishing of manuscripts of relatives with an introduction or an afterword (ID 61; ID 85; ID 139), and a collection of letters (ID 205) and postcards (ID 23).

16 For an overview of the various genealogical numbering systems, see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genealogical_numbering_systems (accessed November 25, 2019).

17 Hayden White, 'The Value of Narrativity in the Representation of Reality', 9.

18 See for instance ID 1; ID 41; ID 67.

19 Folk biology refers to people's everyday understanding of what they see as natural or biological. See for instance Douglas L. Medin and Scott Atran, *Folk biology*.

20 Edmund Leach, 'Two Essays Concerning the Symbolic Representation of Time', 109.

21 Ibid., 115.

22 Annemarie Mol, *The Body Multiple: Ontology in Medical Practice*, 5.

23 Quote from Michel Foucault, see note 1 of Chapter 1.

24 ID 3, *De voorouders (het DNA) van Barbara en Olivier Brouwers*.

25 ID 3, 6: 'Door het opsporen van zijn/haar 2 ouders, 4 grootouders, 8 overgrootouders enzovoorts schept men een beeld – in moderne termen van de samenstelling van zijn/haar DNA.'

26 Epigenetics studies the way experiences of a parent can be inherited by the next generation due to changes in the epigenome. See for a basic explanation https://learn.genetics.utah.edu/content/epigenetics/inheritance/ (accessed May 6, 2019).

27 ID 3, 14: 'Laureijns Mutsaerts (1370-1443) komt 270 keer voor en heeft dus aanzienlijk bijgedragen aan ons DNA.' Gerardus van Broechoven (1346) is also mentioned in this

connection. ID 3, 15: 'Hij komt als voorouder 355 maal voor in deze kwartierstaat en heeft dus aanzienlijk bijgedragen aan het DNA.'

28 Jason Tebbe gives a historical description of the biological interpretations of genealogical concepts in Germany from the 19th century onwards in 'From Memory to Research: German Popular Genealogy in the Early Twentieth Century'.

29 Marian Rothstein, 'Etymology, Genealogy, and the Immutability of Origins', 333.

30 Ibid., 334.

31 Ibid, 338.

32 See for instance https://www.theguardian.com/science/commentisfree/2015/may/24/business-genetic-ancestry-charlemagne-adam-rutherford (accessed May 22, 2019).

33 ID 3, 6: 'Als klapstuk de afstamming van Charlemagne. Ook hier een soortgelijke analyse. Tussen ons en Charlemagne bevinden zich rond 34 generaties en aangezien het aantal voorouders zich per parentatie verdubbelt komt men uit op 17 miljard voorouders in de generatie van Charlemagne. Evenwel in heel west-Europa woonden in die tijd slechts rond 20 miljoen mensen. De afstamming van Charlemagne aan te tonen geldt wel als het gildestuk voor genealogen. Maar goed bezien: het is aardig als je het gevonden hebt, maar iets bijzonders is het echt niet. Practisch iedereen in Noord-West-Europa zal wel op een of andere manier van Charlemagne afstammen. Dat kan bijna niet anders, de kansen op raakschieten zijn bijna 1.000 op 1.'

34 ID 3, 6: 'Het resultaat, zoals dat wordt voorgelegd, geeft echter een vertekend beeld. Dat wordt veroorzaakt door de onevenwichtige verhouding tussen de weergegeven, gevonden gegevens en de niet-weergegeven, niet gevonden gegevens. Bijna allemaal stammen wij hier en daar af van enkele vooraanstaande voorouders en verder van een overgrote meerderheid van "onbetekenende mensen".'

35 ID 3, 10: 'In het oog springend vanwege hun maatschappelijke positie of vanwege hun opmerkelijke – soms zelfs criminele – gedragingen.'

36 Jason Tebbe, 'From Memory to Research: German Popular Genealogy in the Early Twentieth Century', 205.

37 Famous quote from American historian Mary Ritter Beard (1876 – 1958) who co-founded the World Centre for Women's Archives in 1935. See Anke Voss-Hubbard, ''No Documents—No History": Mary Ritter Beard and the Early History of Women's Archives', 16.

38 ID 3, 6: 'Maar de arme drommels, die niets na te laten hadden, die niets te verdelen hadden en die zeker geen grond bezaten, die staan in geen enkele akte of document vermeld en zijn dus ontraceerbaar. Daarom dat ik met nadruk bij elke parentatie vermeld het percentage van de gevonden voorouders. Opdat de lezer zich wel bewust is dat al die mooie en soms indrukwekkende namen slechts een infiem gedeelte (vóór 1600 minder dan één procent) uitmaken van onze voorouders. De ontbrekende 99 procent bestaat uit die ontraceerbare, letterlijk "onbetekenende" mensen. Een heel enkele keer slechts duikt zo iemand toch nog op uit een archief, omdat hij een lovenswaardige krijgsverrichting (tegen de Spanjaarden of tegen de Geuzen b.v.) had gepresteerd of … omdat hij een misdaad had begaan.'

39 ID 41, 4: 'Goede kans dat een voorouder met zijn voorgeslacht staat vermeld. Tenslotte zijn we op een gegeven moment allemaal familie!'

40 This relation can also be found in the ancestor chart of Maarje Verton's link to Zeeland, ID 115.

41 ID 41, 4: 'Men zegt wel eens "wie het verleden niet eert, is de toekomst niet weerd", maar misschien is beter: "Je weet pas wie je bent als je je verleden kent?"'

42 Translation of 'koud en warm ingekwartierd'. Found in: ID 26; ID 28; ID 29; ID 34; ID 162.

43 Elisabeth Timm, '"Meine Familie"': Ontologien und Utopien von Verwandtschaft in Der Populären Genealogie', 161.

44 See Verdery, *The Political Lives of Dead Bodies*, 118.

45 'De ouders kunnen samen de achternaam van hun eerste kind kiezen: die van de moeder, de duomoeder of de vader. Deze keuze is eenmalig en geldt voor alle volgende kinderen in het gezin. Dit is zo om binnen het gezin eenheid van naam te bewaren. Vooral kinderen vinden dit belangrijk.' In: www.rijksoverheid.nl Informatieblad De keuze van de achternaam, dd. 30-01-2017 (accessed August 31, 2018).

46 ID 87, 67: 'Bij de kleinkinderen houdt het op; van hen noemen we slechts de (roep-) naam, voor zover ons bekend.'

47 ID 87, 67: 'In enkele gevallen worden personen buiten dit schema vermeld, bijvoorbeeld kleinkinderen die een zekere bekendheid genieten. Deze gegevens zijn dan in de regel van een omraming voorzien.'

48 ID 81, 7: '"Hoe komen wij aan onze naam, wat betekent die en waar komen wij vandaan?", waren vragen die ik in mijn tienerjaren aan mijn vader stelde. Hij vertelde mij dat er volgens hem ooit eens een Franse soldaat was geweest die in Nederland aan een meisje was blijven hangen en dat uit die relatie onze familie was voortgekomen.'

49 ID 76, 15.

50 ID 76, 8: 'De levens van onze ouders krijgen veel aandacht, we waren er ten slotte zelf bij.'

51 ID 9.

52 ID 9, 7.

53 ID 9, 32.

54 ID 9, 70: 'Onze voorvader is Johan Willem Heijden, eerder wachtmeester bij de dragonders en later bij de Waardgelders in Den Haag, als vaandrig.'

55 ID 2, 3: 'Ik vond het niet op mijn weg liggen ook de nog daarna komende stamhouders in de verhalen op te nemen.'

56 ID 2, 7: 'Stel, dat ontdekt zou worden dat een zeer verre voorvader van de Bootsma's een manu uit het oude Keltenvolk was. Kelten waren een muzikaal volk en ze beschouwden de god van de onderwereld als hun stamvader. Deze Keltische man zou bepaalde genen hebben doorgegeven aan zijn mannelijke nakomelingen, en uiteindelijk aan Jan Roelofs

uit Ossenzijl. Het zou veel te denken geven om deze Kelt te zien naast Jan Roelofs, die zondags naar het kleine kerkje van de Vrije Zendings Gemeente in Ossenzijl ging, waar hij voorzanger was.' (Jan Roelofs 1843-1926).

57 ID 120.

58 The historian Geertje Mak analyses the translation of the German term *Geschlecht* and *geslacht* in Dutch into the English 'gender', while it also refers to lineage. Originally, the English term *race* also refers to lineage. In *Huishouden in Nederlands Nieuw-Guinea: geschiedenis van geslacht op geslacht*, 7.

59 ID 2: *Stellingwerfse Boosmannen, Bootsmannen en Bootsma's: Ze leefden, streefden en stierven*. ID 76 *Greven. Familie in ruimte en tijd*. ID 114: *Over familie van Zoest: van vroeger tot nu*.

60 ID 88, 5: 'Nog langer speuren en onderzoeken kan altijd nog maar speuren om zeker te weten dat er niets meer te vinden is, is zoeken naar de oneindigheid, alsmede ook het najagen van het denkbeeld dat mijn oudste stamvader Adam Ankringa zou zijn die samen met zijn vrouw Eva zo'n 2 miljoen jaar geleden in het Paradijs verbleef.'

61 See for instance: ID 9; ID 12; ID 76; ID 172.

62 ID 88, 120.

63 ID 62.

64 ID 62, 34.

65 ID 31; ID 79; ID 94; ID 153; ID 191.

66 ID 110, 79: 'Bij het beschrijven van de geschiedenis van mensen dient de relatie van de auteur met de beschreven persoon zoveel mogelijk te worden vermeden. Daarom spreek ik, behoudens enkele uitzonderingen, niet over mijn vader, moeder, grootmoeder enz. maar noem de bedoelde persoon bij zijn of haar naam.'

67 Cited in Hayden White, 'The Value of Narrativity in the Representation of Reality', 7.

68 See for instance ID 32 and ID 172.

69 Hayden White, 'The Value of Narrativity in the Representation of Reality', 23.

70 Patricia Zimmermann 'Democracy and Cinema: A History of Amateur Film', 73 and 78, cited in Susan Aasman, *Ritueel van huiselijk geluk*, 18.

71 Roger Odin, 'Le Film de Famille dans l'Institution Familiale', 36, cited in Aasman, *Ritueel van huiselijk geluk*, 131.

72 ID 32, 66: 'Dit is in het verhaal Generation 1 en zo zijn we aangeland in de tegenwoordige tijd. En is het tijd het verhaal te stoppen.'

73 Remarkably, the author has an extended genealogy in his website, and here, he defines the first generation according to the numbering of an ancestor chart. The generation XII in the book is generation I on the website http://www.lee-munnik.nl/Genealogie/pro-gen-bestanden/parentelen/munnik/munnik-frm3.htm, (accessed August 28, 2019),

and the descendants are supplemented with children and grandchildren (without names and dates of birth, due to privacy regulations).

Chapter 5

1 Alessandro Portelli, *The Battle of Valle Giulia: Oral History and the Art of Dialogue*, 12.

2 Smith and Watson prefer the term addressee or implied reader. Smith and Watson, *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Life Narratives*, 89-90. Paula Backscheider, who studied best-selling published biographies, has a stronger interpretation of the relation between writer and reader as established in an introduction to a biography: 'At the beginning of these books – the prefaces, introductions, and opening chapters – where the establishments of the contract beings and readers expect set pieces of information, the voice that transmits the 'magisterial' or ''in expert hands' is conveniently available for comparison.' Paula Backscheider, *Reflections on Biography,* 22-23.

3 ID 191, 1; ID 62, 1: 'Ter ere van het voorgeslacht. Het nageslacht ter informatie.'

4 ID 120, 5: 'Via dit boek wil ik mijn broers & zusters, onze kinderen & kleinkinderen en andere geïnteresseerde familieleden laten kennis maken met hun voorouders en de boerderijen waarop zij hebben gewoond en gewerkt.'

5 ID 174, 1: 'Lees dit boek over je voorgeslacht. Wees trots op je voorgeslacht. Houd je voorgeslacht in ere.'

6 ID 171; ID 176; ID 180; ID 193; ID 209.

7 Roland Barthes (1978) 'Inaugural lecture, Collège de France', cited in Marianne W. Jørgensen and Louise Phillips, *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method*, 17.

8 Jonathan Potter, 'Discourse Analysis and Constructionist Approaches: Theoretical Background', 131.

9 Margaret Wetherell and Jonathan Potter, 'Discourse Analysis and the Identification of Interpretative Repertoires', 172.

10 Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social : An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*, 50.

11 Sharpe, *Family Matters*, 4.

12 ID 174, 1: '[I]edereen heeft het verlangen meer over zijn roots te weten.'

13 ID 155, 1: 'Veel mensen, ook ik, willen graag weten, waar hun wortels liggen, wie hun Voorouders waren, en wie ons het leven hebben doorgegeven, maar ook aan wie we het leven te danken hebben. En dan mogen we niet vergeten, wie de Schepper is van ons leven en van Wie we de kracht ontvangen om ons leven te leven, zoals Psalm 90 zegt: [..]'

14 ID 72, 9. 'Ik denk echter dat de voornaamste drijfveer om aan dit werk te beginnen is, het willen weten aan wie men verwant is, tot welk groep men behoort, waar je wortels liggen. Als bekend is dat de verste voorouders leefde op het einde van de 15e eeuw, dan komen de vragen: is er in de geschriften uit en over die tijd iets te vinden over zijn

ouders, over de omstandigheden waaronder zij leefden? Gegeven twee mensen met Elgersma als familienaam: zijn ze familie van elkaar en hoe zit dat dan?'

15 See the official glossary of the Dutch language, approved by the Dutch government: http://woordenlijst.org/#/?q=roots (accessed September 24, 2018).

16 Bouquet, 'Family Trees and their Affinities', 43.

17 Janet Carsten, 'Connections and disconnections of memory and kinship in narratives of adoption reunions in Scotland', 89, cited in Fenella Cannell, 'English Ancestors: The Moral Possibilities of Popular Genealogy', 474.

18 Carsten, After Kinship, 153.

19 Van Stipriaan, 'Testing Roots: A Heritage Project of Body and Soul', 167.

20 Ibid., 166.

21 Alison Landsberg, Prosthetic Memory: *The Transformation of American Remembrance in the Age of Mass Culture,* 105-106.

22 See for different way of ignoring colonial violence in reconstructing a family history for instance Ann Laura Stoler and Karen Strassler, 'Castings for the Colonial: Memory Work in "New Order" Java', 4.

23 ID 121, 3: 'Waarom familiegeschiedenis vastleggen? Duizenden mensen zijn nieuwsgierig naar hun wortels, of zoals we tegenwoordig dikwijls op zijn Engels zeggen, naar hun "roots". Bij adoptiekinderen ontstaat opeens de wens te weten wie hun biologische vader en moeder zijn. Derdegeneratieimmigranten willen achterhalen hoe hun overgrootouders leefden in het land van herkomst. Maar ook mensen die hun hele leven lang in de buurt van hun grootouders hebben gewoond voelen soms een diepe behoefte hun geschiedenis op schrift vast te leggen.'

24 Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 294 and 300. Cited in Liisa Malkki, 'National Geographic: The Rooting of Peoples and the Territorialization of National Identity among Scholars and Refugees', 33.

25 Ibid., 25.

26 Ibid., 26.

27 See for instance Lowenthal, *Possessed by the Past*, 9.

28 James Leach, *Creative Land: Place and Procreation on the Rai Coast of Papua New Guinea*, 30-31 in Sahlins, What Kinship Is - And Is Not, 7.

29 Malkki, 38.

30 ID 68, 7: 'In deze grenzeloze wereld wilde ik speciaal voor mijn kinderen, vier wereldbewoners, hun Gelderse en Zutphense afkomst vastleggen.'

31 Foucault, 'Nietzsche, Genealogy, History', 147.

32 Timm, 'Grounding the Family: Locality and its Discontents in Popular Genealogy', 36.

33 Ibid., 44.

34 Ibid., 45.

35 Van Stipriaan, 'Testing Roots: A Heritage Project of Body and Soul', 165.

36 ID 96, in 'Vooraf': 'Dit boek legt een deel van onze roots bloot: de feiten van geboorte en overlijden. Er zou nog veel meer over al die mensenlevens te vertellen zijn. Een familiegeschiedenis bestaat ook uit anekdotes, beroepen of lief en leed. Dit boek is het begin. Wie weet, start iemand van ons binnenkort een Neijens-site met nieuwtjes, verhalen en foto's van de hedendaagse afstammelingen van Paulus Neuyens en Ellegundis Dierickx, die samen eind 17e eeuw het stekje van deze stamboom geplant hebben.'

37 Ibid., 185.

38 ID 121, 3: 'Mensen krijgen kinderen om het leven letterlijk door te geven. Wij maken foto's en filmpjes om die verhalen van die levens te bewaren. En we schrijven. Over onze voorouders, wat die deden om in leven te blijven, wie ze trouwden, waar ze woonden en wat voor geloof ze hadden.
Het is uit historisch oogpunt dat ik de familiegeschiedenis wil achterhalen. Eigenlijk zijn we het aan onze voorouders verplicht. Zij zijn de mensen die ervoor gezorgd hebben dat wij hier zijn. Voor mij is het een kwestie van liefhebberij, ook al kan die tijdrovend zijn. Het belangrijkste voor mij is het vastleggen van de wortels voor mijn kinderen en kleinkinderen.'

39 ID 141, 674.

40 ID 122, 9. A similar story is told in ID 165. ID 141 writes about a hobby, ID 183 about an addictive hobby related to curiosity, and ID 192 about the family-tree virus.

41 Timm, 'Meine Familie', 165.

42 Stebbins, *Amateurs, Professionals and Serious Leisure*, 10.

43 I am aware of the problematic and vague sense of the word 'amateur', which suggests a real difference between work done by professionals and that of amateurs done in their leisure time. In the 19th century an amateur was someone with a hobby, 'the person, thing or occupation that pleases one most', as Samuel Johnsons dictionary (1823) defines it (Gelber 1999), 27. Andrew Keen uses the term in a pejorative way in *The Cult of the Amateur.* Others celebrate the revenge of amateurs on professionals as they pursue amateur activities to a professional level (see Leadbeater and Miller 2004).

44 Ibid., Stebbins, *Amateurs, Professionals and Serious Leisure*, 10.

45 Ibid., 38.

46 Brendag Dougall Merriman, *Genealogical Standards of Evidence: A Guide for Family Historians*. The Dutch CBG has formulated seven starting points for critical genealogical research. See: http://cbg.nl/kennis/themas/de-zeven-pijlers-van-de-genealogie/ (accessed May 24, 2019).

47 Elisabeth Timm, 'Grounding the Family : Locality and its Discontents in Popular Genealogy', 45.

48 http://www.sog.org.uk/learn/education-sub-page-for-testing-navigation/hints-tips-six-standards-and-good-practice-in-genealogy/ (accessed December 8, 2018).

49 Timm, 'Reference and Reverence: Two Modes of Popular Genealogy in Europe Since the 19th Century'; Michael Sharpe, Family Matters, 278; Jason Tebbe, 'From Memory to Research', 205.

50 Both Haraway and Latour refer to *Leviathan and the Air-Pump: Hobbes, Boyle and the experimental life* in which Steven Shapin and Simon Schaffer study the life of (among others) Robert Boyle (1627-1691), who created circumstances in which modest witnesses of a certain class and gender had enough credibility to prove the existence of a vacuum. Donna Jeanne Haraway, *Modest-Witness@ Second-Millennium. Femaleman [Copyright]-Meets-Oncomouse [Trademark]: Feminism and Technoscience*, 23-38. See also about witnesses in modern science who declare that they are not speaking: '[R]ather, facts speak for themselves', in Bruno Latour, *We have Never been Modern*, 18.

51 ID 13 ('interesting enough'), ID 79 intends to write a 'micro history', ID 138 ('writing down')

52 Jason Tebbe, 'From Memory to Research', 205.

53 Jos van den Borne, 'Dichter bij gewone mensen', 214.

54 Jason Tebbe, 'From Memory to Research', 205-206.

55 Borne, 'Dichter bij gewone mensen', 214. Another perspective on this so-called amateurism in the UK is given by Fenella Cannell, who writes: 'Genealogy, I suggest, belongs to a long English tradition of autodidacticism among ordinary people, and overlaps with amateur local history. It is simultaneously about kinship, and about the ownership and class positioning of knowledge. Most genealogists are not social radicals, but they "know" that illegitimacy and other causes of historic "shame" were in reality forms of social injustice. Thus one way to view "ordinary genealogy" would be to see it as an assertion that history is not the possession of the privileged ', in 'English Ancestors: The Moral Possibilities of Popular Genealogy', 475.

56 ID 119, *Het verhaal van mijn voorouders.*

57 ID 119, 8: 'Ik heb niet de indruk dat een tot voor kort onbekend verleden van een van mijn voorouders een ingrijpende invloed heeft gehad op mijn leven en dat van mijn broers en zussen, laat staan dat we eronder gebukt gaan.'

58 ID 119, 72.

59 ID 87, 5: 'Dit boek is ontstaan uit de samenwerking van twee amateur-genealogen, de achterneven Eduard en Arnold Zuiderent. Het is het resultaat van diep boren en spitten in de archieven door een tandarts en het analytisch en constructief bezig zijn van een ingenieur. Ook wie al geruime tijd afstand van zijn beroep heeft genomen, blijft vaak in zijn methodiek daardoor gekenmerkt.'

60 ID 84, 7: '[…] en het wordt dan aantrekkelijk te zoeken naar een mogelijke link tussen onze familie en een mogelijke adelijke afkomst.'

61 Another example is ID 171, 9. It tries to answer the question if and when three brothers went from Germany to the Netherlands, and if three relatives married a person with the surname Hartke. Both stories proved to be true.

62 ID 13 (among many other motives); ID 59; ID 70; ID 94; ID 110; ID 118; ID 122; ID 133; ID 163; ID 169.

63 ID 163.

64 See respectively ID 118 and ID 122; ID 169; ID 81; ID62.

65 ID 79.

66 An exception is ID 141. The authors are two men who are both married to someone named Jaspers. They wrote a big, very detailed book about this Jaspers family, and also about the presentation of their research in an exhibition, the newspaper clippings about their presentation, et cetera. The two are very present as the producers of the book, not so much as characters who are related to this particular family.

67 ID 72, 9: 'Op een gegeven moment realiseerde Metske zich dat hij van de afstamming van zijn vee meer wist dan van die van zichzelf.'

68 ID 72, 9-10: 'John besteedde in dit boek ook aandacht aan de aangetrouwden en met de vermelding van de kinderen van de vrouwelijke Elgerma's was hij de emancipatie voor.'

69 ID 72, 10: 'Kortom de genealogie werd mij met de paplepel ingegoten.'

70 ID 72, 10: 'Tot 2000 was het verzamelen vrij passief: kwam ik een Elgersma tegen, dan nam ik zijn gegevens op in mijn bestand. Daarna werd het meer actief, ik probeerde gaten op te vullen, maar ik begon me wel wat een boekhouder te voelen die bezig was met het ordenen en rangschikken van namen en cijfers en weinig weet heeft van het leven dat daar achter schuilgaat.'

71 ID72, 10: 'Het zijn niet altijd de betrouwbaarste verhalen, wel vaak de interessantste.'

72 Aad van der Tang, *Stamboomonderzoek*, 8, quoted in ID 72, 10.

73 ID 168.

74 Zerubavel, *Ancestors and Relatives: Genealogy, Identity, and Community*, 1.

75 See https://academictree.org/ (accessed December 9, 2018).

76 This phrase is attributed to the 12th-century philosopher Bernard of Chartres, repeated by Newton, and now transformed into a slogan of Google. In *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Kuhn puts forward the idea of scientists who only will be acknowledged by their peers if they do 'normal science'.

77 ID 10; ID 12; ID 41; ID 54; ID 66; ID 76; ID 88; ID 121.

78 ID 98, 8: 'Ik heb het sterke verlangen gekregen om onze voorouders weer in ons midden te brengen; hen niet te vergeten. In de afgelopen vijf jaar heb ik met hen geleefd en mijzelf in hun leven geprobeerd te plaatsen. Ik was altijd heel blij als ik weer een familielid uit het verleden vond. Maken jullie nu ook kennis met hen!'

79 ID 32, 1: 'Waarom ga je beginnen aan zo'n verhaal over de familie. Voor mij betekende het: die personen dichterbij brengen. Ook nieuwsgierigheid hoe zij geleefd hebben, en misschien kunnen indenken wat zij beleefden in hun tijd.'

80 Respectively ID 66 and ID 88, and ID 76.

81 ID 12, 7: 'Het wegvallen van deze familieleden was voor mij aanleiding om dit boek te schrijven en te openen met een "In Memoriam". Ik draag het graag aan hen op.'

82 ID 41, 4.

83 ID 67, ID 116.

84 Anniversary as a motive is seen in 118 and 192.

85 Kramer, 'Kinship, Affinity and Connectedness: Exploring the Role of Genealogy in Personal Lives', 379.

86 Fenella Cannell, 'English Ancestors: The Moral Possibilities of Popular Genealogy', 465.

87 Ibid., 465.

88 ID 97, 4.

89 ID 107. The desire to complete the project is also found in ID 10; ID 14; ID 16; ID 17; ID 46; ID 65; ID 171.

90 ID 46, 3.

91 ID 119.

92 ID 10, preface, 2nd paragraph: 'Soms was het me zwaar te moede als ik die bergen aantekeningen zag liggen. Doorzettingsvermogen moest het dan winnen van motivatie. Maar dan loop je over een rommelmarkt. En zie je een album liggen met vergeelde familiefoto's. Mensen die in de cameralens kijken maar van wie niemand meer weet wie het zijn. Gefotografeerd op de meest gelukkige momenten van hun leven. Een plakboek, gevonden op zolder bij een oma of opa. Nu te koop voor een paar euro. Dat, wist ik, mocht niet gebeuren met alles wat mijn grootvader zo zorgvuldig had bewaard in sigarendoosjes met elastiekjes eromheen.'

93 See also ID 65, in which a family historian finishes the genealogical work her now deceased husband started fifty years ago.

94 ID 14, 5: 'Men moet eenvoudig een keer afronden, want [..]: Wie pas wil publiceren nadat de laatste vraag is beantwoord, neemt de vergaarde kennis mee in zijn graf.'

95 ID 65, 4.

96 Susan Norris Tucker, *The most Public of all History: Family History and Heritage Albums in the Transmission of Records*, 259.

97 Tolstoy, Leo. *Anna Karenina*, 1.

98 *Friedrich Staudt, buikspreker, ballonnist en uitvinder. De geschiedenis van een 19de eeuwse Duitse immigrant en zijn familie*. ID 15, 10: 'Een stamboom die teruggaat tot circa 1650 is niet bijzonder, een voorvader die buikspreker en ballonist was, heeft niet iedereen. Er valt veel te vertellen over Friedrich Staudt en daar begin ik nu maar mee.'

99 ID 15.

100 ID 15, 161: 'Vol verbazing heb ik de mails gelezen en de verhalen gehoord, waarin steeds weer bepaalde karaktereigenschappen naar voren kwamen, De artistieke kant, die bij

veel familieleden aanwezig is. Schilders, schrijvers, cabaretiers en zangers/zangeressen komen werkelijk in alle takken van de familie voor. Meerdere familieleden (uit verschillende takken, die elkaar niet kennen) beschikten/beschikken over de gave van handoplegging en bovennatuurlijke waarnemingen. Ook viel me op dat de vele verhalen boeiend, kleurrijk, beeldend en met een tikje overdrijving werden verteld. Heel herkenbaar en een regelrechte erfenis van Friedrich Staudt de kunstredenaar.'

101 ID 87, 11.

102 ID 87, 12: 'Een belangrijk instrument van de kandidaten was het poortersboek uit 1555.'

103 ID 87, 12: 'De DNA-match betekent dat alle personen met de naam Zuiderent (tenzij een DNA test een vreemd vaderschap zou vaststellen) in mannelijke lijn van deze duizend jaar oude voorouder, afstammen.'

104 ID 87, 52.

105 ID 87, 67: 'In enkele gevallen worden personen buiten dit schema vermeld, bijvoorbeeld kleinkinderen die een zekere bekendheid genieten.'

106 ID 98, 186: 'Waarom al die vragen? (..). Wil je niet iets meer achterlaten dan alleen je naam? Anders weet de familie niets over je. Ook zul je zien dat hobby's in de familie zitten; je hebt iets gemeen.'

107 ID 10, 247: 'Jarenlang ben je op zoek geweest naar je "roots". Bezig met het inkleuren van een stukje geschiedenis. Waarom? Misschien wel simpelweg omdat je ooit iets bent begonnen en het dan perse wilt afmaken. Maar het voelde gaandeweg ook steeds meer als een hommage aan al degenen vóór ons. Want in het verleden begint de toekomst. Ook al draagt iedereen zijn eigen bagage mee door het leven.
Op al die foto's kijken mensen je aan. Veelal op de meest gelukkige momenten van hun leven. Beseffen dat de meesten van hen er niet meer zijn, is een confrontatie met de vergankelijkheid. Dat ieder leven eindigt is best onrechtvaardig. Je krijgt iets en dan wordt het je weer afgenomen.'

108 In Potter, 'Discourse Analysis and Constructionist Approaches: Theoretical Background', 10.

109 Michael Billig, *Talking of the Royal Family,* xvi.

Chapter 6

1 Alison Landsberg, *Prosthetic Memory: The Transformation of American Remembrance in the Age of Mass Culture,* 105.

2 Jørgensen and Phillips, *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method*, 11-12.

3 Timm points to this double role more specifically in 'Meine Familie', 179: 'Wie ego das organiserende Zentrum der Diagramme der Verwantschaftsetnologie war, ist in der populäre Genealogie die recherchierende Person der Operator, der ''meine Familie'' in gang bringt, aber auch der Referent, welcher dem gesamten Unternehmen eine Ordnung gibt.' [Just as the ego was the organizing centre in the diagrams of the ethnology

of family relationships, in popular genealogy the researching individual is the operator who sets "my family" in motion, but also the referent that gives the entire endeavour a structure.]

4 This metaphor is used in a description of De Saussure's theory of language, and in the critique of post-structuralists who do not believe that words have fixed meanings as the metaphor of the fishing net suggests. Marianne W. Jørgensen and Louise Phillips, Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method, 11.

5 Carsten, *After Kinship*, 112.

6 Linde, Life Stories: *The Creation of Coherence*, 242.

7 ID 209, in 'Inleiding': 'Als je er goed over nadenkt, zijn we allemaal mensen met een verleden. De hele geschiedenis van ons voorgeslacht zit in ons bloed en zonder die voorgeschiedenis zouden we niet zijn wie we zijn.'

8 ID 12, 135. Other examples are: ID 1, 108 about possible illegitimate children who are difficult to trace in the archives; ID 2 refers in a note to DNA-research that states, without any clarification, that the male relatives stem from a group that entered Europe via Spain or Portugal; ID 3 has the repeated phrase 'has contributed to our DNA'; ID 10 has an image of DNA with the suggestion that DNA could solve a question of ancestry – without any clarification. ID 72 hopes that DNA research will reveal in the future the possible blood relationships between groups with the same surname; ID 183 writes that 5 percent of all legally registered fathers are not the biological father.

9 ID 98, 184.

10 For instance the relations between surnames and outcomes of DNA-analysis: Pierre Darlu et al., 'The Family Name as Socio-Cultural Feature and Genetic Metaphor: From Concepts to Methods', or the verification of the urban myth that many fathers care for children who are biologically not their own: M. H. Larmuseau et al., 'Low Historical Rates of Cuckoldry in a Western European Human Population Traced by Y-Chromosome and Genealogical Data'.

11 ID 80, 13: 'De overerving van mtDNA voltrekt zich dus langs de moederlijke lijnen en is onafhankelijk van het Y-chromosoom. Als vrouwelijke genealoog, met veel gegevens over mijn "oermoeders", spreekt mij dit natuurlijk aan.'

12 ID 87.

13 The Genetic Genealogy Standard was only published in 2015. This document gives guidelines for obtaining, using, and sharing DNA-material and warns about a too rigid interpretation of different DNA tests. See http://www.thegeneticgenealogist.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Genetic-Genealogy-Standards.pdf (accessed November 10, 2018). This standard is the product of a group of individuals, including genealogists, genetic genealogists, and scientists. A list of their names can be found on the same website.

14 ID 117, 15: 'Wat is het dat wij ons familie voelen? Is het uitsluitend de naam? Of is het dat wij uit dezelfde voorouders voortkomen?'

15 ID 117, 16.

16 ID 119, 276: 'Als mijn kleinzoon in mannelijke lijn over een X aantal jaren nog eens mijn gegevens (die dus ook de zijne zijn) in de database invoert zal hem wellicht duidelijk worden hoe mijn en zijn voorouders gevaren zijn. Wat ik op dit moment ook opschrijf, binnen afzienbare tijd is het achterhaald. Maar het heeft zijn charme: opa was destijds behoorlijk up-to-date.'

17 ID134, 80: 'Hoewel de genen doorleven in de kinderen van Nicolaas' dochter (…) lijkt me het teloorgaan van de familienaam het juiste punt om deze kroniek te beëindigen.'

18 Gillis, *A World of Their Own Making*, 14.

19 https://archief.amsterdam/inventarissen/overzicht/1096.nl.html, (accessed May 24, 2017).

20 *Honderd jaar Familie Blokhuis Stichting 1912-2012. Verhalen en Genealogie.*

21 ID 116, *Geboortegrond, vier eeuwen familie Salm*, 183.

22 ID 116.

23 ID 116, 9.

24 See for a history of the growing interest in history in the Netherlands at the end of the 19th century, Maria Mathijsen, *Historiezucht. De obsessie met het verleden in de negentiende eeuw.*

25 ID 116, 77.

26 ID 116, 78: 'Het gaat hier om de naam alleen. En dat in dezen tijd, waar vrouwen ook als menschen gelden, met gelijken rechten.'

27 ID 116, 130: 'Het gaat erom dat vanaf nu ook de vrouwelijke lijn lid van de vereniging mag blijven. De naam Salm zal dan sneller overvleugeld worden door andere namen, maar wat maakt dat uit? Het is familie en dat is toch wat telt, is mijn persoonlijke mening. Dat je alleen via de mannelijke lijn lid kan blijven na enkele generaties, dat vind ik toch wat ouderwets.'

28 ID 116, 136.

29 ID 116, 117.

30 ID 116, 5. 'Vandaag de dag lijkt de familievereniging, in een steeds individualistischer, postmoderne samenleving waarin de traditionele standen en zuilen sinds de jaren zestig hun gezag verloren, weer een nieuwe rol te spelen. Het beeld dat zich opdringt is dat van een jongere generatie op zoek naar authenticiteit, gelokaliseerd in de Friese en Amsterdamse geboortegronden van eeuwen terug.'

31 Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia*, 404.

32 http://www.blokhuisstichting.nl (accessed May 25, 2017).

33 From the website of the family: http://www.blokhuisstichting.nl/stichting/statuten-2/

34 'Artikel 3
Als leden van de familie Blokhuis worden beschouwd en kunnen derhalve voor de bevordering van hun belangen in aanmerking komen:

a) dragers en draagsters van de geslachtsnaam BLOKHUIS, hetzij deze aldus dan wel in gewijzigde spel- of taalvorm wordt geschreven, die nakomelingen zijn van GIJSBERT BLOKHUIS gedoopt te Bunschoten acht juli zeventienhonderd vijf en twintig, in leven Schepen en Burgemeester aldaar, en van diens echtgenote LIJSBETH RIKKERTS;
b) de echtgenoten, weduwnaars en weduwen van a) bedoelden;
c) personen die niet de geslachtsnaam Blokhuis dragen, maar waarvan één van de ouders vallen onder de definitie onder a); Kinderen van deze personen zijn vervolgens uitgesloten;
d) dragers en draagsters van de geslachtsnaam BLOKHUIS, hetzij deze aldus dan wel in gewijzigde spel- of taalvorm wordt geschreven, die een gemeenschappelijke stamvader hebben met voormelde GIJSBERT BLOKHUIS;
e) de echtgenoten, weduwnaars of weduwen van de onder d) bedoelden.' See: http://www.blokhuisstichting.nl/stichting/statuten-2/ (accessed May 25, 2019).

35 Neeltje Maria Min: 'Voor wie ik liefheb ik wil ik heten'.

36 ID 67, 105: 'De Romein Ulpianus verwoordde dit fenomeen al heel mooi in een gezegde: "Mulier autem familiae suae et caput et finis est" – de vrouw is van haar familie zowel het begin als het einde. Zij is het begin omdat zij degenen is die de volgende generatie baart, maar de naam van de vrouw houdt ook meteen bij haar op met bestaan. Tegenwoordig is er natuurlijk de mogelijkheid om de naam van de vrouw door te geven aan het kind, maar heel veel wordt hier nog niet gebruik van gemaakt. Voor het geval dat een familienaam zou uitsterven, is het misschien wel handig dat deze mogelijkheid er is.'

37 Article 4-9 of the Dutch Civil Code, Book 1: http://www.wetboek-online.nl/wet/BW1.html

38 ID 67, 110: 'Ik leef voornamelijk in het nu. Uiteraard wil je zelf van betekenis zijn geweest voor je eigen kinderen en de studenten die je hebt lesgegeven. Je wil de wereld goed geordend achterlaten, maar ook in de politiek is de focus minder op de toekomst gericht dan op het hier en nu.'

39 ID 67, 110: 'Tegenwoordig is het fijn om een naam te hebben en de naam van anderen te kennen. In deze geïndividualiseerde maatschappij schept het een band. Een groep, een familie waar je bij hoort.'

40 The law will be changed: the certificate of stillbirth will be replaced by a birth certificate that states that the child was born lifeless. See https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/brieven_regering/detail?id=2016Z16890&did=2016D34788 (accessed November 15, 2018).

41 ID 167.

42 ID 168, first page of the introduction, no page number.

43 ID 168, preface, no page number: 'Vrienden en kennissen vragen mij wel 's "hoe ver ik terug ben gegaan" met mijn stamboomonderzoek. Ze bedoelen hiermee of ik gegevens heb weten te verzamelen over mijn vroege voorouders van jaren her.
Mijn antwoord is dan dat ik wat MacDonald betreft, ver terug zou kunnen gaan, maar van stammoeder Sophia heb ik niets van haar Afrikaanse afkomst kunnen achterhalen. Geen documenten, namen van haar ouders, niets.'

44 ID 168, preface, no pagenumber: 'Het steekt als je beseft dat het de slavenhandelaars slechts om geld en rijkdom ging. Slavenhandelaars die het niet kon schelen waar in Afrika de gevangen mensen, jong en oud, vandaan kwamen, uit welke familie, dorp of stadje uit Afrika, sterker nog, wat hun namen waren.'

45 *700 Jahre Geschichte. Vorfahren und Nachkommen von Friedrich Wilhelm Schliess.*

46 ID 59, 4: 'Toen ik in 1971, inmiddels 31 jaar geleden, mijn partner Léon, student rechten in Utrecht, leerde kennen, was ik, thuiswonend op het Bolwerk samen met mijn vader en onze huishoudster, druk bezig met de zaak. Ik herinner mij dat ik op een gegeven dag thuiskwam en Léon en Papa aantrof in de erker van de huiskamer. Papa in de rolstoel en Léon tegenover hem met grote vellen wit papier op tafel, waarop hij op basis van zijn vragen en de antwoorden van Papa, schematisch een beginnende stamboom van de familie Schliess had getekend.'

47 ID 59, 5: 'Gezien mijn leeftijd, 70 jaar, wilde ik toch op korte termijn vastgelegd hebben, al datgene waarvoor Léon en ik ons de afgelopen tientallen jaren zo hadden ingespannen. Nu is het dan zover dat wij met trots bijgaand werk aan u presenteren […].'

48 ID 59, 130: 'In dankbare herinnering aan mijn Moeder, die na mijn posthume geboorte, door het vroegtijdige overlijden van mijn vader, de volledige verantwoordelijkheid gedragen heeft voor mijn opvoeding (..).'

49 ID 3, 3.

50 For instance in ID 52; ID 67.

51 ID 52.

52 ID 74.

53 ID 76, 80: 'De levens van onze ouders krijgt veel aandacht. We waren er tenslotte zelf bij.'

54 *Altijd Prudon! Genealogie en Familiegeschiedenis Preud=homme - Prudon*. ID 81, 51: 'Dit boek is een zogeheten naamgenealogie, dat wil zeggen dat niet alleen het nageslacht van mannelijke naamdragers Preudhomme en Prudon wordt uitgewerkt, maar ook dat van de vrouwen met nageslacht Preudhomme en Prudon. In de meeste gevallen gaat het om kinderen van ongehuwde moeders, of om voorechtelijk geboren kinderen.'

55 See Wilson, *The Means of Naming.*

56 ID 13, 134: 'Anno 2012 zijn we zestien of zeventien generaties verder en minstens 32768 voorouders. De volkstelling van 1947 levert 104 naamdragers Kreike op en de gemeentelijke basisadministratie van 2007 190 naamdragers. We zijn nog lang niet uitgestorven.'

57 ID 12, 93: 'Zij vormen de twaalfde en dertiende generatie gerekend vanaf de oudst gevonden Jan Kramer. Op deze mannen rust de taak om onze tak van de Kramers niet te laten uitsterven!'

58 ID 32, 29.

59 ID 9, 8: 'In deze publicatie wordt het nageslacht beschreven van Johan Willem Heijden/Heijden, omdat er vóór hem geen eerdere voorvader in de archieven gevonden is, benoemen wij hem tot de eerste generatie. Omdat hij de eerste is van die generatie, krijgt hij de aanduiding 1-a. Zijn zonen, dus de tweede generatie, krijgen de aanduiding II-a en II-b,

enzovoort. Echtgenotes en dochters worden in de genealogie wel genoemd, maar krijgen geen generatiecode.'

60 ID 117, 15: 'In een genealogie als deze gaan we uit van de familienaam en met de familienaam in de westerse samenleving volgt men de mannelijke lijn. Of dat logisch is, is een kwestie van cultuur.'

61 ID 117, 15-16.

62 ID 98, 189: 'Het heeft uiteindelijk allemaal te maken met het terugvinden van ieder's wortels. Het maakt het zo gemakkelijk voor jullie zelf, je eigen kinderen en hun nageslacht om hun familieregister te onderzoeken. Vergeet niet dat wij, die bijna aan het eind van ons leven staan, de traditie van ouders vernoemen niet gehandhaafd hebben en het moeilijker gemaakt hebben om de voorouders te vinden over 25 jaar!'

63 ID 98, 189: 'Iedere persoon, of die nu nog leeft of gestorven is heeft het recht om bij de volle naam (voor-en achternaam) aangesproken te worden, al is het dan maar op papier. Ieder heeft 2 ouders en de moeders hadden een eigen achternaam. Wisten jullie dat als je van een vrouw een sterfakte wilt vinden, deze onder haar meisjesnaam staat? Dus het is van groot belang dat die in de familie bekend blijft.'

64 ID 166, 5: 'Een stamboom is maar een deel van het hele verhaal. Het is de opsomming van het nageslacht in mannelijke lijn van een zeker gestelde gezamenlijke stamvader, waarin onderlinge familierelaties worden weergegeven. Uiteraard worden daar ook de ingetrouwde dames genoemd, want zonder hen zou er geen mannelijk Halsema-nageslacht zijn. U en ik weten dat het Halsemabloed in onze aderen gemengd is met het bloed van onze moeders, grootmoeders, enzovoorts. Dus, wat nou Halsema! Eigenlijk zou een uitwerking in alle lijnen, mannelijke en vrouwelijke, een juister beeld geven van het nageslacht van onze stamvader, Jan Geerts. In de genealogie wordt deze uitwerking een parenteel genoemd. In Amerika wordt, meer dan in Nederland, de parenteel gehanteerd, hoewel dit om praktische redenen veelal beperkt blijft tot enkele generaties. Het zou voor ons geslacht ondoenlijk geweest zijn om een parenteel van Jan Geerts te maken, waarin dan vrijwel het gehele geslacht Hegge, en flinke delen van o.a. de families Poelma, Werkman, Slinger, Feddema, Stok zouden voorkomen. U zult het dus met een conventionele stamboom moeten doen.'

65 ID 10, 11: 'Even een verontschuldiging, trouwens. Een familie beschrijven door de historische lijn van de achternaam te volgen, doet per definitie geen recht aan al die lieve en zorgzame moeders. Immers, hun achtergrond blijft onderbelicht. Bij elke generatie beperk je je tot de helft van de genetische lijnen die uiteindelijk mede bepalen wie je bent. Maar dat is helaas inherent aan het systeem van naamgeving in onze landen.'

66 ID 10, 40: 'Het is boeiend om het wel en wee van al die voorbije generaties te reconstrueren. Maar vele malen belangrijker zijn de mensen die je in het heden om je heen hebt en die je dierbaar zijn. Daarom permiteer ik mij, na al die jaren van noeste arbeid, dit boek af te sluiten met een compilatie van familieleden die weliswaar een andere achternaam dragen maar die een minstens zo belangrijke rol mijn leven spelen of hebben gespeeld.'

67 Affordances have become very popular in the social sciences and humanities in the description of the working together of human and non-humans, especially digital devices and platforms. See for instance Aimée Morrison, 'Facebook and Coaxed Affordances',

Identity Technologies: Constructing the Self Online (2014), 112.; Mol, 'Actor-Network Theory: Sensitive Terms and Enduring Tensions', 253. For a theoretical approach of the concept of affordances, see for instance Erik Rietveld and Julian Kiverstein, 'A Rich Landscape of Affordances'.

68 ID 65, 10: 'Daar is voor gekozen om nazaten die erg betrokken zijn geweest bij het verzamelen van gegevens, documenten en foto's recht te doen.'

69 ID87, 67: 'Bij de kleinkinderen houdt het op; van hen noemen we slechts de (roep)naam, voor zover ons bekend.' On the same page, in a text box: 'In enkele gevallen worden personen buiten dit schema vermeld, bijvoorbeeld kleinkinderen die een zekere bekendheid genieten. Deze gegevens zijn dan in de regel van een omraming voorzien.' ID 172, 4: 'Er bereikten mij diverse verzoeken om de hele stamboom in een familieboek vast te leggen en de familieleden uit de jaren '20 en '30 van de 20e eeuw stellen er uiteraard prijs op dat ook al hun kinderen en kleinkinderen daarin vermeld worden. Zowel in de mannelijke als de vrouwelijke lijn. Bij een genealogie zou dat uiteraard niet mogelijk zijn.'

70 ID 10.

71 ID 2, 26: Chapter on 'Albertje Jans (c. 1651-1712)', subtitle: 'Positie van vrouwen': 'Albertje Jans. Een boerendochter die opgroeit, die trouwt, kinderen baart en kinderen opvoedt. Een vrouw ook die onmisbaar is in gezin en bedrijf. Oftewel: de vrouw van Jannys Alberts bij Wolvega! Echter: niet alleen "vrouw van" maar ook een mens met een eigen persoonlijkheid en een eigen karakter.'

72 Ibid., 'In dit boekje wordt geprobeerd Albertje niet in de eerste plaats te beschrijven als "vrouw van" maar vooral als zelfstandig persoon. Het is overigens de vraag wat Albertje zelf gevonden zou hebben van dit vraagstuk.'

73 ID 144, 3 also shows gender consciousness when he notes that women were thought to have no profession, while in reality they did have one.

Final reflections

1 Boym, 'Nostalgia and its Discontents', 18.

2 https://nos.nl/video/493156-een-tattoo-met-holocaustnummer.html (accessed May 29, 2019). Also cited in Tanny Dobbelaar, 'Vier overwegingen bij het schrijven van een familiegeschiedenis', 159.

3 ID 185.

4 Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social*, 16.

5 Bruno Latour, 'On Actor-Network Theory: A Few Clarifications'. The quote is from the abstract on https://www.jstor.org/stable/40878163?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents (accessed August 20, 2019).

6 Katherine Verdery, *The Political Lives of Dead Bodies: Reburial and Postsocialist Change;* Eviatar Zerubavel, *Ancestors and Relatives: Genealogy, Identity, and Community.*

7 Hayden White. 'The Value of Narrativity in the Representation of Reality'.

8 The term ‘interpretative repertoires’ is coined by Jonathan Potter, 'Discourse Analysis and Constructionist Approaches: Theoretical Background’.

9 The philosopher Samuel Scheffler argues in *Death and the Afterlife* (2013) that the collective afterlife of humanity is a fundamental guide for our actions. He proposes a thought experiment in which you imagine that everyone dies thirty days after your own death. This scenario offers food for thought about the value we attach to our actions – and the notions of the future of mankind involved in these values.

10 Voss-Hubbard, Anke, '"No Documents—No History": Mary Ritter Beard and the Early History of Women's Archives'.

11 Donna Haraway. *'Modest-Witness@ Second-Millennium. Femaleman [Copyright]-Meets-Oncomouse [Trademark]: Feminism and Technoscience'.*

12 See for the ethical dilemmas around publishing about the lives of others, including relatives. Paul John Eakin (ed.), *The Ethics of Life Writing.*

13 Alessandro Baricco, *The Game*. See also José van Dijck et.al, *Platform Society.*

14 James Bridle, *New Dark Age, Technology and the End of the Future*, 39.

15 Timothy Morton, ‘Victorian Hyperobjects’.

APPENDIX

Titles of family histories in this study

[The numbers refer to the ID numbers in the first collection of titles. This second list only mentions family histories used in this study with their year of publication.]

ID	
1	Vijf eeuwen Ansems. Genealogie met verhalen uit het Dongense verleden (2012)
2	Stellingwerfse Boosmannen, Bootsmannen en Bootsma's. Ze leefden, streefden en stierven (2012)
3	De voorouders (het DNA) van Barbara en Olivier Brouwers (2012)
6	Geschiedenis en archief inventarisatie Van der Feltz. Boek 1 (2011)
9	Drie eeuwen familie Heijder/Heijden/Heiden op het eiland Ijsselmonde en in de Hoeksche Waard 1691-2011 (2012)
10	Het geheim van de Spinster. Kroniek van de families Van Huffel en Van Uffelen afkomstig uit Vlaanderen (ca. 1500-2011) (2012)
12	400 jaar Jan Kramer. Historisch overzicht van een Noord-Hollandse familie (2012)
13	Verleden familie Kreike doen herleven. Een genealogisch en historisch onderzoek (2012)
14	Stamboom Sonke. Een genealogisch onderzoek (2012)
15	Friedrich Staudt, buikspreker, ballonnist en uitvinder. De geschiedenis van een 19de eeuwse Duitse immigrant en zijn familie (2012)
17	Fragmentgenealogie Huig van Kesteren en Pietertje van den Heuvel. Jan Verwolf en Hendrika van den Heuvel (2008)
19	Het nageslacht van Teede Jans en Jetske Hendriks Kroon (1760-1985) (2009)
21	Stamreeks Laarakkers / Kwartierstaat van Nicolaas Laarakkers (2009)
22	Het gezin van Kees van der Lee en Jo Groenhuijse. De voorouders van Jo Groenhuijse (2007)
23	Het gezin van Kees van der Lee en Jo Groenhuijse. Geschiedenis in prentbriefkaarten. Poesie Albums Nel en Bep (no year of publication)

26 Kwartierstaat van Barbertje Zwerver-Looijenga(2009)
28 Kwartierstaat van Klaas Meems (2009)
29 Kwartierstaat van Trijntje Meijer (2009)
31 Kees Mudde vertelt … Herinneringen uit het bewogen leven van een 90-jarige Lekkerkerker (2008)
32 Munnik. Van Arnstad naar Amsterdam (4dln) (2007)
34 Kwartierstaat van Alida Bouchina Nijboer (2009)
40 Genealogie van de familie Overstegen, Oversteege, Oversteegen (2009)
41 Bijna allemaal Westfriezen en Kennemers … Het voor- en nageslacht van Lourentius van der Peet en Catharina Wester (2009)
46 Genealogie Ritsema van Eck (1898-2007) en beknopte levensloop van Cornelis Ritsema van Eck (1838-1912) (2007)
50 Twintig gezinnen Roozee (2009)
51 De nakomelingen van Roelof Fransen Roosje. Roosje, Roosjen, Roosien, Roossien, Rosien (2009)
52 Johannes Ruardi 1746-1815 (2010)
53 Kwartierstaat van Theodora Anthonia Maria Ruijs 1908-1991 (2010)
54 Kwartierstaat van Gerardina Adriana van Rijn, geboren Veur 25 jan. 1928 (2009)
58 Kwartierstaat van Joanna Maria Scheuter, geboren Borgerhout 17 oktober 1906, overleden Rotterdam 6 juli 1991 (2010)
59 700 Jahre Geschichte. Vorfahren und Nachkommen von Friedrich Wilhelm Schless (2002)
61 De familie Sigmond in Werkendam (2006)
62 Slingeland, Een korte familiegeschiedenis in een verdwenen ambachtsheerlijkheid (2009)
65 Het Zeeuwse geslacht Baljé en de tak Flissebaalje (2012)
66 Een eeuw Benckhuijsen. Personen en gebeurtenissen tussen 1800 en 1900 (2012)
67 Honderd jaar Familie Blokhuis Stichting 1912-2012. Verhalen en Genealogie (2012)
68 Eerste aanzet tot een genealogie Ten Bosch (Vierakker, Zutphen, Lathum). Levens bij de Ijssel (2012)
70 Crevecoeur. Een Hollandse familie met een Franse naam (2012)
72 Zes eeuwen Elgersma=s. Genealogie en geschiedenis van drie Friese families 1400-2000 (2009)
74 270 jaar familie Fokkema (2010)

76 Greven. Familie in ruimte en tijd (2011)
77 Het spoor terug. Het Zeeuwse geslacht De Klerk vanaf 1570 (2012)
78 Genealogie van het geslacht Kranenburg (2011)
79 Frederik de Lutiano (1562-1629), ambachtsheer van Ellewoutsdijk, Everinge en Coudorpe. Zijn voorgeslacht en zijn afstamming van de Van de Maalstedes en de Van Everinges (2012)
80 De familie Mulder - Rijken. Een zoektocht naar de voorouders van Gisela Mulder (2012)
81 Altijd Prudon! Genealogie en Familiegeschiedenis Preud=homme - Prudon (2012)
82 Moeders verleden. Wonderlijke leidingen Gods met mijn moeder (2012)
83 De familie van Rij op een rij (2012)
84 Het geslacht Spoelstra uit Oosterend, oorspronkelijk ontstaan uit een welgestelde familie Heslinga in Menaldumadeel (2010)
85 Onze vriendelijke republikeinse reis. Pieter Tak (2012)
86 De geschiedenis van de familie Wols, een familie afkomstig uit het land van Altena maar groot geworden in de Hoeksche Waard (2012)
87 Geschiedenis van de familie Zuiderent. Een oer-Vlaardings geslacht uit Maasland 'zijnde van den wapene van Oegstgeest' (2012)
88 Ankringa, wie waren de voorouders vanaf ca. 1600 (2012)
89 Parenteel van Johann Friedrich Bennewitz (2010)
92 Genealogie Thomas Millar, Newcastle on Tyne (UK), geb. ca. 1760-ovl. Caa. 1840. (2009)
94 Ik heb mijn lied gezongen. Het leven van Daniel Quirin Robert Mulock Houwer (1903-1985) (2010)
96 Stamboek van de familie Neijens (2004)
97 Ong Jap Lik. Family Book and Tree 2010 (2010)
98 Oudshoorn, familieregister 1700-2000 Koudekerk aan den Rijn (2000)
99 Een Veluwse familie. Het geslacht Van Polen (2006)
100 Het leven in Japan 1941-1947 (2009)
103 Rostang. Een kleine Hugenotenfamilie in Nederland (2002)
107 Familieboek Silvius-Silvis. Het nageslacht van predikant Johannes Sylvius uit Noord-Brabant vanaf 1607 (2009)
110 Voorouders en nageslacht van Haije Ulbes Terpstra en Hyke Wybrens, een boerenfamilie op het Oudland onder Stiens (2008)
112 Van Zanten. Geschiedenis van een Steenwijker familie (2009)
113 Over familie Van Zoest. Van vroeger tot nu (2009)

115 Kwartierstaat van de kinderen van Jan Geerardus Malipaard en Maatje Verton, ogenschijnlijk een Schouwse familie (2011)
116 Geboortegrond. Vier eeuwen familie Salm (2012)
117 Boek der Siepels 1620-2011 (2012)
118 Genealogie van de familie Freijtag of Vrijdag (2012)
119 Het verhaal van mijn voorouders Vullings, Kaak, Van den Hazelkamp, Verhasselt (2012)
120 Van Bontekoe tot Woelige Stal. De boerderijen waarop mijn voorvaderen woonden en werkten (2012)
121 Genealogie van het geslacht Westhoven. 500 jaar familiegeschiedenis (2012)
122 Eert uw vader en uw moeder. Het geslacht Weststrate (2012)
124 Familiekroniek Boekee. Deel 9: het Rijnlandse geslacht (2012)
125 Memoires van P.A.J. Coelwij. Deel 6: 1961-1964. Deel 7 1964-1967 (2004)
128 Petrus Anthonius van Dongen (2006)
130 Duivenvoer. Supplement II (2010)
133 The American descendants of Jan Griffioen (1815) and Willemijntje Stam (1818) [...] (2001)
132 Genealogie van de familie Van de(n-r) Ende, met als stamvader Jacobus Cornelisz. van den Eijnden, timmerman te Nootdorp (2008)
134 De kroniek van De Haarten (2008)
136 Genealogie Van Hamersveld. Vooral afkomstig uit Achterveld, Stoutenburg, Hoogland en Amersfoort (2010)
137 Stamboom familie Heijboer (2010)
138 Reis door de tijd van de familie Hoendermis en Meijer (2007)
139 Scheepsjournaal van de Engels-Nederlandse expeditie tegen de Spanjaarden bijgehouden door Hendrick Hoevenaar 29 april 1602 tot 14 oktober 1602 (2009)
141 Familie-Album Jaspers, Bakel-Milheeze (2009)
142 Van Den Otter tot Jongenotter (2010)
143 Klijnstra familie in de U.S.A. (2010)
144 Het geslacht Koezen te Dalfsen 1738-2011 (2011)
145 Stamboom van Jacob Jans Kollen, overleden op 84-jarige leeftijd 04-02-1816 te Giethoorn (2010)
148 Afstammelingen van De Ligny, De Lignij en De Lignie in Nederland (2009)
149 The May Genealogy 1694-2009 (2009)

151 Genealogische kwartierstaat waarin opgenomen de families Van Tintelen, Geursen, Von Lindheim (en Lindheimer), Brunet de Rochebrune (2010)
153 Herinneringen van Anna Vermeer van 1929 tot en met 1963 (2010)
154 Genealogie van een Gouds geslacht 1543-1909 (2009)
155 Kwartierstaat van Cornelis Verwoerd, geboren Wilnis 3 januari 1935 (2010)
156 Familie Veuger en aanverwante families (no year of publication)
157 Genealogie van een Vlielander familie Visser ca. 1635-2004 (2008)
158 Genealogieën Reveljon - Reiveillo - Reveillon en De Wekker (2009)
162 Kwartierstaat van Harm Jan Wieringa (2009)
163 Een vigilante familie. Het geslacht Van Beuningen in Amsterdam en Utrecht (2013)
165 Het geslacht Buijs uit Hoorn, van Hedde tot Sjoerd (2013)
166 Het landbouwersgeslacht Halsema uit Kloosterburen. Een familiegeschiedenis van ca. 1700 tot 2011 (2011)
167 Familiegeschiedenis van Johan Frans Cornelis Nekrui (1900-1957) en Eliza Nicolina Whijte (1898-1979) (2012)
168 Het voor- en nageslacht van Samuel MacDonald (1828-1877) (2010)
169 Eilardus de Ruiter. Een aan lager wal geraakt lid 'van eene fatzoenlijke familie' (2013)
170 De familie Sangster in Nederland (2012)
171 Van bollenboeren en notabelen. Schohaus. Het geslacht Schoehuijs 1640-2012. Schoehuizen (2012)
172 Vier eeuwen Verhoef(f). Een geslacht uit de Krimpenerwaard (2013)
174 De Chemmenfamilie. De geschiedenis van de familie Van Adrichem-Sanders (2010)
176 Genealogie van de Rotterdamse tak van het Rooms-Katholieke geslacht Bal uit Zeeland (2010)
177 Genealogie familie Band - Bandt – Bant (2011)
180 'Claas Sijmons Beschop. Een boerenfamilie uit de waarden (2011)
181 Chronologie Van Berchem 1400-1500 (2010)
182 Genealogie Betgen, Bedgen en Betgem (2011)
183 De voorouders in kwartierstaten van Kornelia (Korrie) Bisschop, geb. Nieuweschans 6 dec. 1945 (2009)
184 Aantekeningen van Dirk-Jan en Willem Jansen (2010)
185 Anna de Kanter getekend door Alida de Kanter. Een biografie (2010)

187 De familie van Anna Keizer (2008)
188 Bakborsje of het zorgvuldige leven van Tini van Keulen-van der Vegte (2010)
190 Genealogie van het geslacht Kosters (2011)
191 Het leven zoals het gelopen is. Het levensverhaal van Tien Kramer-Hoogewerf (2011)
192 Genealogie Johannes Petrus Joseph de Leeuw, 1360-1929 (2004)
193 225 jaar familie Lelieveld / Lelivelt / Lelijveld. Van Loosduinen naar Poeldijk (1775-2010) (2011)
195 Verwanten van Manten. Cornelis Manten (geb.12 juni 1829) en de nakomelingen uit zijn eerste huwelijk (2009)
197 Het nageslacht van Thomas Geraerts van Nerven, 'laeckencooper en tavenier te Tilburg' (2009)
198 Genealogie Van Nerven. 'De oudst bekende generatie' (2011)
199 De nakomelingen van Cornelis Gheritsz van Nerven (2011)
200 Het nageslacht van Thomas Lenaertsz van Nerven '(familie)verband verbonden' (2011)
203 Beiträge zur Geschichte der Familien Olearius / von Olearius und verwandter Familien. Nrs. 1-2 (2011, 2013)
205 50 brieven in en rond de Tweede Wereldoorlog hoofdzakelijk geschreven vanuit de Delistraat in Den Haag (2011)
207 De familie Polter. Een internetgenealogie (2010)
209 Boeijinga / Boeijenga. Genealogie van een Sneker familie in zes generaties (2012)

Works Cited

Aasman, Susan, *Ritueel van huiselijk geluk. Een cultuurhistorische verkenning van de familiefilm* (Amsterdam: Het Spinhuis, 2004).

Anderson, Benedict, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London & New York: Verso, 2006 [1983]).

Antaki, Charles (ed.), *Analysing Everyday Explanation: A Casebook of Methods* (London: Sage, 1988).

Arendt, Hannah, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1973).

Ashplant, Timothy G., *Fractured Loyalties: Masculinity, Class and Politics in Britain, 1900-1930* (London: Rivers Oram Press, 2007).

Assmann, Aleida, 'Transformations between History and Memory', *Social Research: An International Quarterly*, 75:1 (2008), 49-72.

Assmann, Aleida, 'Re-Framing Memory. Between Individual and Collective Forms of Constructing the Past', in *Performing the Past: Memory, History, and Identity in Modern Europe,* ed. by Karin Tilmans et al. (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010), 35-50.

Backscheider, Paula R., *Reflections on Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

Baker, Nicholson, 'Annals of Scholarship: Discards', *New Yorker*, 70:7 (1994), 64-86.

Bal, Mieke, *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017 [1985]).

Barjesteh van Waalwijk van Doorn, Leo, *Zonen van Adam in Nederland. Genetische genealogie. Een zoektocht in ons DNA-Archief* (Rotterdam: Barjesteh van Waalwijk van Doorn & Co's, 2008).

Baricco, Alessandro, *The Game* (Amsterdam: De Bezige Bij, 2019).

Barnwell, Ashley, 'The Genealogy Craze: Authoring an Authentic Identity through Family History Research', *Life Writing*, vol. 10:3 (2013), 261-275.

Basu, Paul, 'My Own Island Home – The Orkney Homecoming', *Journal of Material Culture* 9:1 (2004), 27-42.

Basu, Paul, 'Macpherson Country: Genealogical Identities, Spatial Histories and Diasporic Clanscape', *Cultural Geographies* 12:2 (2005), 123-150.

Bikson, Tora K., and Erik J. Frinking, *Preserving the Present: Toward Viable Electronic Records* (The Hague: Sdu Publishers, 1994)

Billig, Michael, *Talking of the Royal Family* (New York and London: Routledge, 2002).
Bosch, Mineke, *Het geslacht van de wetenschap* (Amsterdam: SUA, 1994).
Bosch, Mineke, 'Looking at Laboratory Life. Writing a Scientific Persona: Marianne van Herwerden's Travel Letters from the United States, 1920', *L'Homme* 29:1 (2018), 15-34.
Bouquet, Mary, 'Family Trees and their Affinities: The Visual Imperative of the Genealogical Diagram', *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute,* 2:1 (1996), 43-66.
Bourdieu, Pierre, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge, Mass.: Cambridge University Press, 1977).
Boym, Svetlana, *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York: Basic Books, 2001).
Boym, Svetlana, 'Nostalgia and its Discontents', *The Hedgehog Review*, 9:2 (2007), 7-18.
Bridle, James, *New Dark Age. Technology and the End of the Future* (London/ Brooklyn N.Y: Verso, (2019 [2018]).
Brunner, José, *Mütterliche Macht und väterliche Autorität. Elternbilder im deutschen Diskurs* (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2008).
Cannell, Fenella, 'The Blood of Abraham: Mormon Redemptive Physicality and American Idioms of Kinship', *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute,* 19 (2013), S77-S94.
Cannell, Fenella, 'English Ancestors: The Moral Possibilities of Popular Genealogy', *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 17:3 (2011), 462-480.
Carsten, Janet, *After Kinship* (Cambridge, Mass.: Cambridge University Press, 2004).
Carsten, Janet, 'Connections and disconnections of memory and kinship in narratives of adoption reunions in Scotland. In Janet Carsten, (ed.) *Ghosts of memory: essays on remembrance and relatedness* (Malden, MA: Blackwell), 83-104.
Carsten, Janet (ed.) Ghosts of memory: essays on remembrance and relatedness (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2007).
Clarke, Alison, Kathrina Danki, Tena Mimica, Lukasz Nieradzik, Margot Schindler, Karin Schneider, Elisabeth Timm (eds.), *Familienmacher, Ausstellungsmachen. Katalog zur Ausstelling im Österreichischen Museum für Volkskunde in Wien* (Vienna: Verlag für Moderne Kunst, 2012).
Cohen, Jaap, *De onontkoombare afkomst van Eli d'Oliveira. Een Portugees-Joodse familiegeschiedenis* (Amsterdam: Querido, 2015).

Cook, Terry, 'What is Past is Prologue: A History of Archival Ideas since 1898, and the Future Paradigm Shift', *Archivaria*, 43 (Spring 1997), 17-63.

Cook, Terry, 'Evidence, Memory, Identity, and Community: Four Shifting Archival Paradigms', *Archival Science*, 13:2-3 (2013), 95-120.

Darlu, Pierre, Gerrit Bloothooft, Alessio Boattini, et al., 'The Family Name as Socio-Cultural Feature and Genetic Metaphor: From Concepts to Methods', *Human Biology*, 84:2 (2012), 169-214.

De Groot, Jerome, *Consuming History: Historians and Heritage in Contemporary Popular Culture* (London: Routledge, 2009).

De Waal, Edmund, *The Hare with the Amber Eyes: A Hidden Inheritance* (London: Chatto & Windus, 2010).

Dobbelaar, Tanny, *Familieverhalen. De kunst van het schrijven over je naasten* (Amsterdam: Ambo, 2011).

Dobbelaar, Tanny, 'Schrijven over je naasten', *Schrijven Magazine*, 15:5 (2011), 10-12.

Dobbelaar, Tanny, 'Vier overwegingen bij het schrijven van een familiegeschiedenis', in *Jaarboek van het Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie 2013* (The Hague: CBG, 2013), 154-172.

Dobbelaar, Tanny, 'Familiegeschiedenis als zelf-interpretatie', *Tijdschrift voor biografie*, 2:4 (2014), 4-15.

Duparc, Frederik Jules, and Willem Albertus Es, *Een eeuw strijd voor Nederlands cultureel erfgoed. Ter herdenking van een eeuw rijksbeleid ten aanzien van musea, oudheidkundig bodemonderzoek en archieven 1875-1975* (The Hague: Staatsuitgeverij, 1975).

Eakin, Paul John (ed.), *The Ethics of Life Writing* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2004).

Ebeling, Rudolf, Voor- en familienamen in Nederland. Geschiedenis, verspreiding, vorm en gebruik. (The Hague: Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie, 1993).

Erben, Michael, 'Genealogy and Sociology: A Preliminary Set of Statements and Speculations', *Sociology*, 25:2 (1991), 275-292.

Foucault, Michel, 'Nietzsche, Genealogy, History', in *Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978), 139-164.

Foucault, Michel, (ed. by Daniel Defert, François Ewald, and Jacques Lagrange), *Dits et écrits, (1954-1988), Part III: 1976-1979* (Paris: Gallimard, 1994).

Freud, Sigmund, 'Family Romances', in *Jensen's 'Gradiva' and Other Works. The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume IX* (1906-1908) (Oxford: Macmillan, 1959), 235-242.

Fruin Th.Anz, Robert, 'Het wetenschappelijke karakter van maandblad van "De Nederlandsche Leeuw"', in *Nederlandsch Archievenblad*, 29 (1920/1922), 100.
Gelber, Steven M., *Hobbies: Leisure and the Culture of Work in America* (Columbia: Columbia University Press, 1999).
Gillis, John R., *A World of their Own Making: Myth, Ritual, and the Quest for Family Values* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997).
Ginzburg, Carlo, 'Family Resemblances and Family Trees: Two Cognitive Metaphors', *Critical Inquiry*, 30:3 (2004), 537-556.
Gitelman Lisa, *Paper Knowledge: Toward a Media History of Documents* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014).
Gould, Stephen Jay, *The Mismeasure of Man* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company (1996 [1981]).
Hackstaff, Karla B., 'Family Genealogy: A Sociological Imagination Reveals Intersectional Relations', *Sociology Compass*, 4:8 (2010), 658-672.
Halbertsma, Marlite, Alex van Stipriaan, and Patricia van Ulzen, *The Heritage Theatre: Globalization and Cultural Heritage* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2011).
Halbwachs, Maurice, *On Collective Memory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).
Haraway, Donna Jeanne, *'Modest-Witness@ Second-Millennium. Femaleman [Copyright]-Meets-Oncomouse [Trademark]: Feminism and Technoscience'* (Abingdon: Psychology Press, 1997).
Henderson, Isabella Ferguson, William Dawson Henderson, and John Henry Kenneth, *A Dictionary of Biological Terms* (Edinburgh and London: Oliver & Boyd, 1963).
Henkes, Barbara, *Uit liefde voor het volk. Volkskundigen op zoek naar de Nederlandse identiteit 1918-1948* (Amsterdam: Athenaeum-Polak & Van Gennep, 2005).
Hofman, Hans, 'De digitale archivaris: een nieuwe wereld. De invloed van informatietechnologie op het vak' in Peter Horsman, Peter, Eric Ketelaar, and Theo Thomassen, *Paradigma. Naar een nieuw paradigma in de archivistiek* (The Hague: Stichting Archiefpublicaties, 1999), 211- 224.
Horsman, Peter and Eric Ketelaar, *Context. Interpretatiekaders in de archivistiek* (The Hague: Stichting Archiefpublicaties, 2000).
Horsman, Peter, Eric Ketelaar, and Theo Thomassen, P*aradigma. Naar een nieuw paradigma in de archivistiek* (The Hague: Stichting Archiefpublicaties, 1999).
Jenkins, Henry, 'Interactive Audiences?', in *Fans, Bloggers, and Gamers: Exploring Participatory Culture* (New York: New York University Press, 2006), 134-151.

Jenkins, Henry, 'Rethinking "Rethinking Convergence/Culture"', *Cultural Studies,* 28:2, (2014), 267-297.

Jeurgens, Charles, 'The Scent of the Digital Archive: Dilemmas with Archive Digitisation', *BMGN-Low Countries Historical Review,* 128:4 (2013), 30-54.

Jeurgens, Charles, 'Threats of the Data-Flood: An Accountability Perspective in the Era of Ubiquitous Computing' in *Archives in Liquid Times* (The Hague: Stichting Archiefpublicaties, 2017), 196-210.

Jones, Keith S., 'What is an Affordance?', *Ecological Psychology*, 15:2 (2003), 107-114.

Jong, Loe de, *Het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden in de Tweede Wereldoorlog, Dl. 10b, Het laatste jaar II: tweede helft* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1982).

Jørgensen, Marianne W. and Louise Phillips, *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method* (London: Sage, 2002).

Keen, Andrew, *The Cult of the Amateur: How Blogs, MySpace, YouTube and the Rest of Today's User Generated Media are Killing our Culture and Economy* (London and New York: Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2011).

Kemman, Max, Martijn Kleppe, and Stef Scagliola, 'Just Google it - Digital Research Practices of Humanities Scholars', *arXiv: 1309.2434* [cd.DL], (accessed August 26, 2019).

Ketelaar, Eric, 'Muller, Feith and Fruin', in: Eric Ketelaar and Yvonne Bos-Rops, *The Archival Image: Collected Essays* (Hilversum: Verloren, 1997), 49-53.

Ketelaar, Eric, Yvonne Bos-Rops, *The Archival Image: Collected Essays* (Hilversum: Verloren, 1997).

Klapisch-Zuber, Christiane, 'The Genesis of the Family Tree', *I Tatti Studies in the Italian Renaissance,* 4 (1991), 105-129.

Kramer, Anne-Marie, 'Mediatizing Memory: History, Affect and Identity in Who do You Think You are?', *European Journal of Cultural Studies,* 14:4 (2011), 428-445.

Kramer, Anne-Marie, 'Kinship, Affinity and Connectedness: Exploring the Role of Genealogy in Personal Lives', *Sociology*, 45:3 (2011), 379-395.

Kuhn, Thomas, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: Chicago University Press 2012 [1962]).

Lambert, Ronald D., 'Reclaiming the Ancestral Past: Narrative, Rhetoric and the "convict Stain"', *Journal of Sociology,* 38:2 (2002), 111-127.

Landsberg, Alison, P*rosthetic Memory: The Transformation of American Remembrance in the Age of Mass Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004).

Larmuseau, Maarten, Joost Vanoverbeke, Anneleen Van Geystelen, et al., 'Low Historical Rates of Cuckoldry in a Western European Human Population Traced by Y-Chromosome and Genealogical Data', *Proceedings. Biological Sciences / The Royal Society,* 280:1772 (2013), 20132400.

Latour, Bruno, *The Pasteurization of France* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993).

Latour, Bruno, *We have Never been Modern* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2012).

Latour, Bruno, 'On Actor-Network Theory: A Few Clarifications', *Soziale Welt,* 47:4 (1996), 369-381.

Latour, Bruno, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

Leach, Edmund, 'Two Essays Concerning the Symbolic Representation of Time', *Rethinking Anthropology*, 124136 (1961).

Leach, James, *Creative Land: Place and Procreation on the Rai Coast of Papua New Guinea* (New York and London: Berghahn Books, 2004).

Leadbeater, Charles, and Paul Miller, *The Pro-Am Revolution: How Enthusiasts are Changing our Society and Economy* (London: Demos, 2004).

Lessa, William Armand, and Evon Zartman Vogt, *Reader in Comparative Religion: An Anthropological Approach* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972).

Lever, Bert, *Kroniek Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie* 1945-1995 (The Hague: Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie, 1995).

Linde, Charlotte, *Life Stories: The Creation of Coherence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

Looper, Bert and Bert de Vries, 'Contextuele toegankelijkheid: panoptische utopie of realiteit?' in *Context. Interpretatiekaders in de archivistiek* (The Hague: Stichting Archiefpublicaties, 2000), 245-256.

Lowenthal, David, *Possessed by the Past: The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History* (New York: The Free Press, 1996).

Mak, Geertje, *Huishouden in Nederlands Nieuw-Guinea: geschiedenis van geslacht op geslacht* (inaugural address, University of Amsterdam, 2017).

Malkki, Liisa, 'National Geographic: The Rooting of Peoples and the Territorialization of National Identity among Scholars and Refugees', *Cultural Anthropology,* 7:1 (1992), 24-44.

Manoff, Marlene, 'The Materiality of Digital Collections: Theoretical and Historical Perspectives'. *Portal: Libraries and the Academy*, 6:3 (2006), 311-325, doi:10.1353/pla.2006.0042

Manoff, Marlene, 'Archive and Database as Metaphor: Theorizing the Historical Record', *Portal: Libraries and the Academy*, 10:4 (2010), 385-398, doi:10.1353/pla.2010.0005.

Manovich, Lev, *The Language of New Media* (Cambridge Mass: MIT Press, 2001).

Markus, M. Lynne and Mark S. Silver, 'A Foundation for the Study of IT Effects: A New Look at DeSanctis and Poole's Concepts of Structural Features and Spirit', *Journal of the Association for Information Systems* 9:10 (2008), 5.

Mason, Jennifer, 'Tangible Affinities and the Real Life Fascination of Kinship', *Sociology*, 42:1 (2008), 29-45.

Mathijsen, Marita, *Historiezucht. De obsessie met het verleden in de negentiende eeuw* (Nijmegen: Vantilt, 2013).

McClintock, Anne, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (New York: Routledge, 1995).

M'charek, Amade, *The Human Genome Diversity Project: An Ethnography of Scientific Practice* (Cambridge, Mass.: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

McKemmish, Sue, 'Placing Records Continuum Theory and Practice', *Archival Science*, 1:4 (2001), 333-359.

Medin, Douglas L., and Scott Atran, *Folkbiology* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1999).

Meethan, Kevin, 'Remaking Time and Space: The Internet, Digital Archives and Genealogy', in Dallen Timothy, and Jeanne Kay Guelke (eds.), *Geography and Genealogy: Locating Personal Pasts*, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 99-115.

Merriman, Brenda Dougall, *Genealogical Standards of Evidence: A Guide for Family Historians* (Toronto: Dundurn, 2010).

Midgley, Mary, *Evolution as a Religion: Strange Hopes and Stranger Fears* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003 [1985]).

Mol, Annemarie, *The Body Multiple* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002).

Mol, Annemarie, 'Actor-Network Theory: Sensitive Terms and Enduring Tensions', *Köllner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie. Sonderheft*, 50 (2010), 253-269.

Morrison, Aimée, 'Facebook and Coaxed Affordances', in Anna Poletti and Julie Rak (eds.), *Identity Technologies: Constructing the Self Online* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2014), 112-131.

Morton, Timothy, 'Victorian Hyperobjects', *Nineteenth-Century Contexts* 36:5 (2014), 489-500.

Motrescu-Mayes, Annamaria, and Susan Aasman, *Amateur Media and Participatory Cultures: Film, Video, and Digital Media* (London and New York: Routledge, 2019).

Mountain, David C., and Jeanne Kay Guelke, 'Genetics, Genealogy, and Geography', in Dallen Timothy and Jeanne Kay Guelke (eds.), *Geography and Genealogy: Locating Personal Pasts* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 153-174.

Nash, Catherine, 'Genealogical Identities', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space,* 20:1 (2002), 27-52.

Nash, Catherine, 'Geographies of Relatedness', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 30:4 (2005), 449-462.

Nash, Catherine, *Genetic Geographies: The Trouble with Ancestry* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015).

Nietzsche, Friedrich, *On the Advantage and Disadvantage of History for Life: Part II of Thoughts Out of Season*, (Indiana Polis and Cambridge, Mass.: Hackett Publishing, 1980).

Nora, Pierre, 'Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire', *Representations*, 26 (1989), 7-24.

Odin, Roger, 'Le film de famille dans l'institution familiale', in Roger Odin (ed.) *Le film de famille. Usage privé, usage public* (Paris: Méridiens Klincksieck, 1995).

Parkin, Robert, and Linda Stone (eds.), *Kinship and Family: An Anthropological Reader* (Malden, MA.: Blackwell, 2004).

Poletti, Anna, and Julie Rak, (eds). *Identity Technologies: Constructing the Self Online*. (Madison: Wisconsin Press, 2014).

Portelli, Alessandro, *The Battle of Valle Giulia: Oral History and the Art of Dialogue* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1997).

Potter, Jonathan, 'Discourse Analysis and Constructionist Approaches: Theoretical Background', in John Richardson (ed.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods for Psychology and the Social Sciences*. (Leicester: British Psychological Society, 1996).

Povinelli, Elizabeth A., 'Notes on Gridlock: Genealogy, Intimacy, Sexuality', *Public Culture*, 14:1 (2002), 215-238.

Radcliffe-Brown, Alfred R., 'The Study of Kinship Systems. In Alfred Readcliffe-Brown *Structure and Function in Primitive Society: Essays and Addresses*. (New York: Free Press, 1965), 49-89.

Richardson, John T. E., *Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods for Psychology and the Social Sciences* (Leicester: British Psychological Society, 1996).

Rietveld, Erik and Julian Kiverstein, 'A Rich Landscape of Affordances', *Ecological Psychology* 26:4 (2014), 325-352.

Rivers, William H., 'The Genealogical Method of Anthropological Inquiry', *The Sociological Review*, 3:1 (1910), 1-12.

Rothstein, Marian, 'Etymology, Genealogy, and the Immutability of Origins', *Renaissance Quarterly,* 43:2 (1990), 332-347.

Saar, Martin, 'Genealogy and Subjectivity', *European Journal of Philosophy*, 10:2 (2002), 231-245.

Sahlins, Marshall David, *What Kinship is - and is Not* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013).

Scheffler, Samuel, *Death and the Afterlife* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

Schneider, David Murray, 'What is Kinship All About', *Kinship Studies in the Morgan Centennial,* 21:3 (1972), 32-63, reprinted in: Robert Parkin and Linda Stone, *Kinship and Family: An Anthropological Reader* (Malden, MA.: Blackwell, 2004), 257-274.

Schneider, David Murray, *A Critique of the Study of Kinship* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1984).

Segalen, Martine and Claude Michelat, 'L'amour de la généalogie', in Martine Segalen (ed.), *Jeux de famille* (Paris: Editions du CNRS, 2002), 193–208.

Shapin, Steven and Simon Schaffer, *Leviathan and the Air-Pump: Hobbes, Boyle and the experimental life* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985).

Sharpe, Michael, Family Matters: A History of Genealogy (Barnsley: Pen & Sword *Family History,* 2011).

Shryock, Andrew, 'It's This, Not That: How Marshall Sahlins Solves Kinship', *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory*, 3:2 (2013), 271-279.

Sinha, Mrinalini, *Gender and Nation* (Washington: American Historical Association, 2006).

Sloterdijk, Peter, *Zur Welt kommen, zur Sprache kommen. Frankfurter Vorlesungen* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1988).

Smith, Sidonie, and Julia Watson, *Getting a Life: Everyday Uses of Autobiography* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).

Smith, Sidonie, and Julia Watson, *Life Writing in the Long Run: A Smith & Watson Autobiography Studies Reader* (Ann Arbor: Maize Books, 2017), http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/mpub.9739969 (accessed August 26, 2019).

Smith, Sidonie, and Julia Watson, *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Life Narratives,* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010 [2001]).

Solomon, Elena, 'Homemade and Hell Raising through Craft, Activism, and Do-It-Yourself Culture', *PsychNology Journal,* 11:1 (2013), 11-20.
Spork, René, 'Ketelaar' in *Archiefblad*, mei 2009, 33.
Stebbins, Robert A., *Amateurs, Professionals and Serious Leisure* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992).
Stoler, Ann Laura, and Karen Strassler, 'Castings for the Colonial: Memory Work in "New Order" Java', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 42:01 (2000), 4.
Strathern, Marilyn, *After Nature: English Kinship in the Late Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, Mass.: Cambridge University Press, 1992).
Sykes, Bryan, *The Seven Daughters of Eve: The Science that Reveals our Genetic Ancestry* (London: Bantam Press, 2001).
Taylor, Charles, *The Ethics of Authenticity* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992).
Taylor, Charles, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989).
Tebbe, Jason, 'Landscapes of Remembrance: Home and Memory in the Nineteenth-Century Bürgertum', *Journal of Family History,* 33:2 (2008), 195-215.
Tebbe, Jason, 'From Memory to Research: German Popular Genealogy in the Early Twentieth Century', *Central European History*, 41:2 (2008), 205.
Thornton, Robert, *Unimagined Community: Sex, Networks, and AIDS in Uganda and South Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008).
Tilmans, Karin, Frank van Vree, and Jay Winter, *Performing the Past* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010).
Timm, Elisabeth, '"Meine Familie": Ontologien und Utopien von Verwandtschaft in der populären Genealogie', *Zeitschrift für Volkskunde*, 109:2 (2013), 161-180.
Timm, Elisabeth, 'Grounding the Family: Locality and its Discontents in Popular Genealogy', *Ethnologia Europaea*. 42:2 (2012), 36-50.
Timm, Elisabeth, 'Reference and Reverence: Two Modes of Popular Genealogy in Europe Since the 19th Century' (unpublished paper, presented at the 13th Meertens Ethnology Lecture of the Meertens Instituut Amsterdam, 21 June 2012).
Thomassen, Theo, *Archiefwetenschap, erfgoed en politisering* (inaugural address, University of Amsterdam, 2011)
Timothy, Dallen J., and Jeanne Kay Guelke, *Geography and Genealogy: Locating Personal Pasts* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008).

Tolstoy, Leo, *Anna Karenina* (Minneapolis: Lerner Publishing Group, 2018).

Tucker, Susan Norris, *The Most Public of all History: Family History and Heritage Albums in the Transmission of Records* (PhD thesis, University of Amsterdam, 2009).

Upward, Frank, 'Modelling the Continuum as Paradigm Shift in Record-keeping and Archiving Processes, and Beyond: A Personal Reflection', *Records Management Journal*, 10:3 (2000), 115-139. https://doi.org/10.1108/EUM0000000007259

Van den Borne, Jos, 'Dichter bij gewone mensen. De popularisering van de genealogiebeoefening in Nederland vanaf 1930', in *Jaarboek van het Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie* 2005 (The Hague: CBG, 2005), 228-232.

Van Dijck, José, 'Mediated Memories: Personal Cultural Memory as Object of Cultural Analysis', *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies,* 18:2 (2004), 261-277.

Van Dijck, José, *Mediated Memories in the Digital Age* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007).

Van Dijck, José, 'Search Engines and the Production of Academic Knowledge', *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 13:6 (2010), 574-592.

Van Dijck, José, Thomas Poell, and Martijn de Waal, *The Platform Society: Public Values in a Connective World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

Van Drie, Rob, and Maarten van Bourgondiën, *Stamboomboek* (Zwolle: Waanders, 2010).

Van Poppel, Frans, 'De familie Doorsnee tegen het licht. Anderhalve eeuw veranderingen in de Nederlandse familiestructuur' (inaugural address, Utrecht University, 2012).

Van Stipriaan, Alex, 'Testing Roots: A Heritage Project of Body and Soul', *The Heritage Theatre. Globalization and Cultural Heritage* (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011), 165-187.

Verdery, Katherine, *The Political Lives of Dead Bodies: Reburial and Postsocialist Change* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013).

Voss-Hubbard, Anke, '"No Documents—No History": Mary Ritter Beard and the Early History of Women's Archives', *The American Archivist,* 58:1 (1995), 16-30.

Watson, Julia, 'Ordering the Family: Genealogy as Autobiographical Pedigree', in Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson. *Getting a Life: Everyday Uses of Autobiography* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 297-323.

Watson, Julia, 'A Personal Introduction to Life Writing in the Long Run', in Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson. *Life Writing in the Long Run: A Smith & Watson Autobiography Studies Reader* (Ann Arbor: Maize Books, 2017), http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/mpub.9739969.

Wetherell, Margaret, and Jonathan Potter, 'Discourse Analysis and the Identification of Interpretative Repertoires', in Charles Antaki (ed.), *Analysing Everyday Explanation: A Casebook of Methods* (London: Sage, 1988).

White, Hayden, 'The Value of Narrativity in the Representation of Reality', *Critical Inquiry,* 7:1 (1980), 5-27.

Wilson, Robert A., 'Kinship Past, Kinship Present: Bio-Essentialism in the Study of Kinship', *American Anthropologist*, 118:3 (2016), 570-584.

Wilson, Stephen, *The Means of Naming: A Social and Cultural History of Personal Naming in Western Europe* (London: UCL Press, 1998).

Wittgenstein, Ludwig, *Philosophical Investigations* (Oxford: Blackwell, (1978 [1958]).

Wittgenstein, Ludwig, 'Bemerkungen über Frazers *The Golden Bough', Synthese*, 17:1 (1967), 233-253.

Yin, Robert K., *Case Study Research: Design and Methods* (Los Angeles: SAGE, 2009).

Zarri, Gabriella, *'Die Tridentinische Ehe',* in: Paolo Prodi and Wolfgang Reinhard (eds.), Das Konzil von Trient und die Moderne (Berlin: Duncker und Humblot, 2001).

Zerubavel, Eviatar, *Ancestors and Relatives: Genealogy, Identity, and Community* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

Zerubavel, Eviatar, *Social Mindscapes: An Invitation to Cognitive Sociology* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997).

Zerubavel, Eviatar, *Time Maps: Collective Memory and the Social Shape of the Past* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003).

Zimmermann, Patricia, 'Democracy and Cinema: A History of Amateur Film', in Mancy Kapstein (ed.) *Rencontres autour des inédits. Essays on Amateur Film* (Charleroi: Association Europeenne Inedits, 1997), 73-81.

CV

Tanny Dobbelaar received her master's degree in Philosophy at Utrecht University. Earlier work includes two books in Dutch, one on the essayist Montaigne (*Schrijven met Montaigne*, Ambo, 2005), the other on the ethics of family stories (*Familieverhalen. De kunst van het schrijven over je naasten*, Ambo, 2011).She also published two artist books: *Heftig Vel* with photographer Adrienne Norman (Elsevier, 2002) and *Herzien* with artist Jan Swart (2018).

How are the concepts of ‘me’, ‘my relatives’ and ‘family’ shaped in the specific historical practice of contemporary family histories, written by family historians about their own relatives? Object of this study is a corpus of more than 120 contemporary histories, selected at the CBG (Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie), a national desk that facilitates genealogical research in The Netherlands. The analysis of this corpus covers templates of timelines, digital influences, concepts of family, and repertoires of family historians as writers. The intertwining of classical concepts and software-terms, and the intimate relations between individuals and their technological, digital artifacts is studied here in the tradition of Bruno Latour’s Actor-Network Theory (ANT). This study discloses the conceptual juggling with concepts needed in our descriptions of the past of our relatives.