

# Frisian Family Names Borne by Jews Only<sup>1</sup>

GEART B. DROEGE

IN THE FAMILY-NAME GEOGRAPHY of the Frisian lands that follow the outline of the North Sea coast roughly from north of Amsterdam and the North Sea Canal to the German-Danish borderland, there is a core area where family names are marked as unmistakably Frisian by their *a*-endings. That inner Frisian area is made up of 1) Friesland in the Netherlands, the stronghold of Frisian in Europe and the world, and 2) the formerly Frisian-speaking northern half of the Netherlands Province of Groningen (according to Miedema) as well as the North of East Friesland.<sup>2</sup> East Friesland, once also Frisian in speech, is an administrative subunit of the German Federal Republic as a prime administrative unit of the *Land* of Lower Saxony. Like Friesland in the Netherlands, Bavaria and Texas, East Friesland has a sense of identity that is more common to the nation state than to a constituent part thereof.

According to unwritten tradition the first Jews in Ljouwert or Leeuwarden, the capital of Friesland, came from Emden in East Friesland, the seat of a Jewish religious community since the beginning of the fourteenth century. The first rabbi in Ljouwert came from Emden

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<sup>1</sup> With not a few modifications, the article here presented has grown into an expanded version of a talk I gave, on December 29, 1974, at the Twenty-Second Annual Meeting of the American Name Society in New York City.

<sup>2</sup> On p. 479 of *De Nederlandsche geslachtsnamen in oorsprong, geschiedenis en beteekenis* (Haarlem: H.D. Tjeenk Willink, [1885]) Johan Winkler points out that in the major portion of (Netherlands) Friesland family names with *a*-endings most assuredly constitute over half of all family names, whereas in the Frisian North of Groningen Province such names make up no more than a fourth of the family names there. Farther east yet, across the Dutch-German political frontier "on the Ems" in East Friesland, such forms are proportionately still less numerous: Adolf Bach, *Die deutschen Personennamen in geschichtlicher, geographischer, soziologischer und psychologischer Betrachtung*, Bd. II of *Die deutschen Personennamen*, Bd. I of *Deutsche Namenkunde* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter Universitätsverlag, 1953), p. 160. For the latest word on *a* family names in the Netherlands Province of Groningen see pp. 6-8 and 11 of H.T.J. Miedema, *Groningen*, deel III of *Nederlands repertorium van familienamen*, ed. P.J. Meertens (Assen: Van Gorcum & Comp. N.V./Dr. H.J. Prakke & H.M.G. Prakke, 1964).

in 1714, and the Jewish congregations of Emden and Ljouwert were closely intertwined into the nineteenth century.<sup>3</sup> Burial grounds had already been set aside for Jews in the Frisian capital in 1670.<sup>4</sup> By 1854 there were 1,282 Jews in Ljouwert<sup>5</sup> and by 1879 2,203 in Friesland as a whole, of whom 318 lived in the port of Harns or Harlingen.<sup>6</sup>

In the eighteenth century, Frisian Jews still preferred to speak Yiddish among themselves. Those who lived in Ljouwert, Harns and other large urban centers where Dutch town dialects sprang up on Frisian substrata in the sixteenth century, spoke such a dialect as well. Their country cousins and fellow town Jews in the port of Hynljippen or Hindelopen (in its distinctive Frisian dialect called Hylpen) also spoke Frisian.<sup>7</sup> A Jewish congregation already existed in "Hylpen" well before 1665.<sup>8</sup> Around 1890, Yiddish in Ljouwert, except among the very old, lost out to the town dialect as the language of the more intimate spheres of life in the Jewish community and the *sjoel* or synagogue.<sup>9</sup>

It is the so-called "High German" Jews who came to Friesland speaking Yiddish who will now claim our attention, not the less numerous "Portuguese Israelites." The latter had by and large fixed given and family names when such were required by the French in 1811. The High German or Ashkenazic Jews, like most of the inhabitants of Friesland, were wont to make use of patronymics before 1811.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>3</sup> H. Beem, *De Joden van Leeuwarden: Geschiedenis van een Joods cultuurcentrum* (Assen: Van Gorcum & Comp., 1974), pp. 72, 87. On p. 72 Beem writes that a Jewish religious community was already established in Emden in the Middle Ages. Max Markrich is more explicit in his article on "Emden" in *Aachen-Luzern, Halbband I of Von 1238 bis zur Mitte des 14. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Zvi Avneri, Bd. II of *Germanica Judaica* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck]), 1968. From him we learn that unwritten tradition has it that the Jewish congregation of Emden reaches back to the start of the fourteenth century.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1; and "Joden: Joodse gemeente Lwd.," *Encyclopedie van Friesland*, ed. J.H. Brouwer (Amsterdam/Brussels: Elsevier, 1965). This fact is already mentioned by H.J. Koenen in his *Geschiedenis der Joden in Nederland* (Utrecht: C. van der Post, 1843), pp. 199-200, n.3.

<sup>5</sup> Beem, *Joden van Leeuwarden*, p. 228.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 230; and H. B[eem], "Joden," *Encyclopedie van Friesland*..

<sup>7</sup> Beem, *Joden van Leeuwarden*, pp. 62-64, 164-165.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 329; J.F. van Agt, "De synagogen in Leeuwarden en elders in Friesland," pp. 294-329, 353-57.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 217, 219.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 120-121; H. Beem "Joodse namen en namen van Joden," *Studia Rosenthaliana*, 3 (January 1969), p. 85; Winkler, *Nederlandsche geslachtsnamen*, pp. 526, 531; Johan Winkler, *Een en ander over Friesche eigennamen* (1896-1879; rpt. as book with continuous pagination from *De Vrije Fries* 13 and 14, [Haarlem: privately printed, 1879], p. 158; Geart B. Droege, "Frisian Family and Place Names," *Names* 3:2 (June, 1955), 93: "Family naming as the rule in the Frieslands became fixed in Land Wursten (between Bremer- and Cuxhaven) in the sixteenth century, in North Friesland after 1771, and elsewhere after 1811"; and P. Sipma, *Foar- en*

Family names they took that are markedly Frisian and at the same time only borne by them, will be sought out and discussed where there is something to say. As late as 1805, there was no heavy concentration of Ljouwert Jewry living around the *sjoel* (Yiddish *shul* in Dutch spelling) or synagogue, some 40 percent of the Jews of the Frisian capital living outside the neighborhood of the *sjoel* in 1849.<sup>11</sup> This means that the Jewish community, relatively unisolated, must have become fully aware by 1811 of the rules and intricacies of Frisian naming practices. Elsewhere in Friesland, the same low degree of “aparthood” (apartheid) likewise brought Frisian Jewry into a rather direct contact learning situation with the cultures of their non-Jewish neighbors.<sup>12</sup>

In 1885, Johan Winkler reckoned the following as exclusively Jewish among family names Frisian in form: *Leefsma*, *Drielsma* and *Drilisma*, *Dwingersma*, *Van Biema*, *Turksma* and *Fryda*.<sup>13</sup>

As to *Leefsma*, Winkler remarks that *Levisma* would have run

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*Skaeinammen*, diel I of *Fryske Nammekunde* (Drachten: Drukkerij Lavenman N.V., 1952), p. 75, who has the adoption of patronymics in Friesland as the preliminary stage before the increasing use of family names.

<sup>11</sup> Carolus Reijnders, *Van “Joodse natiën” tot Joodse Nederlanders: Een onderzoek naar getto- en assimilatieverschijnselen tussen 1600 en 1942 / From “Jewish Nations” to Jewish Netherlanders: A research about ghetto- and assimilationphenomena between 1600 and 1942 (with a summary in English)*, Diss. Utrecht (Amsterdam: Offsetdrukkerij Joko, 1969), p. 133.

<sup>12</sup> There were few Jews who were prosperous enough to be able to afford, if they so chose, to minimize their contacts with the non-Jewish world outside. Speaking of nineteenth-century Frisian Jews of Snits or Sneek, H. Beem on p. 36 of *De Joodse gemeente te Sneek* (Bolsward: A.J. Osinga B.V., 1973), puts their situation very well, even in my translation: “The Jewish congregation had, as practically everywhere in the Netherlands outside of the big cities, only a few well-to-do and was made up almost wholly of little people who tried to eke out an oftentimes meager existence as butchers, in hawking or, especially, as pedlars to farmers.” By 1892 there were 141 Jews in Snits (*idem.*). A family name that loomed to prominence in Snits after 1813 was borne by Joseph Aron, Aron, Mozes and Abraham “Frijda”; when the latter became an M.D. in 1835, there were no job prospects for him in Snits in his profession, so he moved to Ljouwert to serve the congregation there as physician to the Jewish poor (*ibid.*, pp. 25-27, 38).

<sup>13</sup> Winkler, *Nederlandsche geslachtsnamen*, p. 530. In the article on “Joodse namen” in the *Encyclopedie van Friesland* an attempt is made to list Frisian and Frisian-sounding last names of Friesland Jews, as of 1811: “Benima, Benninga, Daitsma, Drensma, Drilisma, Feitsma, Friesema, Guda, Haasema, Hoornstra, Leefsma, Oostra, Ruda, Turksma, Woudstra, Van Warkum, Van Staveren.” In spite of the last two names containing, in Dutch form, the Frisian southwest-coast place-names *Warkum* and *Starum*, I would exclude them on formal grounds. In a letter written to me, dated November 24, 1974, H. Beem says of the list that *Frijda* could be added and that a typographical error is to be found in *Haaxma*, spelled with an *x*. Back to p. 530 of Winkler’s 1885 work, *Woudsma* and *Dykstra* can also be added. In the Netherlands national census of May 31, 1947, the latter, given in its Dutch form (*Dijkstra*), emerges as the third most numerous family name of Friesland: H. Buitenhuis, *Friesland*, deel (Vol.) II of *Nederlands repertorium van familienamen*, ed. P.J. Meertens (Assen: Van Gorcum and Comp. N.V. / Dr. H.J. Prakke & H.M.G. Prakke, 1964), p. 8.

counter to the spirit of the Frisian language, that in this regard the form *Leefsma* is flawless, especially if the *f* is not pronounced too "sharp" but approximately like *Leevsma*.<sup>14</sup> After telling readers in 1969 that the Leefsmas are Levites, which makes the Jewish background of the name apparent,<sup>15</sup> H. Beem goes on to say that the Leefsmas came from De Gerdyk (Dutch Goredijk),<sup>16</sup> a fen colony in Southeastern Friesland. A synagogue was built there in 1807.<sup>17</sup>

Winkler in 1898 differentiates between *Drielsma* and *Drilsma* on the basis of *Drilsma* being a Groningen alteration of *Drielsma*, a fact recognized by the Drilsmas themselves (writes Winkler).<sup>18</sup> Beem in 1974 observes that on both 1811 Jewish name lists of Ljouwert, the official one and the one of the Jewish congregation, *Drilsma* is how the name is spelled but that *Drielsma* comes to prevail.<sup>19</sup> We learn that the *Drielsmas* were known in Ljouwert as plain *Drielst* as early as 1767.<sup>20</sup> Beem notes<sup>21</sup> that in a graveyard in Groningen there appears in Hebrew letters on a gravestone of the year 1812: *Simon Driebls* from Emden. He rightly sees this as a possible indication of an origin for the name other than the one assumed (by the *Drielsma* family, among most others).

In a private communication dated November 24, 1974,<sup>22</sup> H. Beem writes that the members of the *Drielsma* family derive their name from *Drylts* (Dutch *IJist*). *Drylts* lies four kilometers southwest of Snits or Sneek in the west of Friesland. Beem adds that Professor H.A. *Drielsma* has, with the help of the writer himself, been conducting research on his name but that up till now nothing has come of it. "So I have been told," Winkler begins as he gives the same name derivation in 1876, and then goes on to say that the *Drielsma* and *Drilsma* "families" are supposed to have once dwelt in the small town of *Drylts*.<sup>23</sup> In one of

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 130; and Winkler, *Een en ander*, p. 155.

<sup>15</sup> Beem, "Joodse namen," p. 90. The same information is repeated on p. 124 of Beem, *Joden van Leeuwarden*. See also: Sipma, *Foar- en Skaeinammen*, p. 114; Johan Winkler, *Friesche Naamlijst (Onomastion friscum)*, deel IV of Waling Dijkstra, *Friesch woordenboek* (Leeuwarden: Meijer & Schaafsma, 1898); Winkler, *Nederlandsche geslachtsnamen*, pp. 130, 529-530, 548; and Winkler, *Een en ander*, p. 155.

<sup>16</sup> Beem, "Joodse namen," p. 90; repeated in Beem, *Joden van Leeuwarden*, p. 124.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 314.

<sup>18</sup> Winkler, *Friesche Naamlijst*.

<sup>19</sup> Beem, *Joden van Leeuwarden*, pp. 123-125.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 341, n.23.

<sup>22</sup> See n. 13 above.

<sup>23</sup> Winkler, *Een en ander*, p. 156. As to Du. *IJlst* versus Fris. *Drylts*, *Drylst*, the *Dr-* of the Frisian name of the town arose from dative constructions like *yn der Ilts*, *fan der Ilst* according

two lectures held before the Committee on Names of the Royal Dutch Academy of Sciences on October 24, 1964, Professor Jelle Hendriks Brouwer, expounding on the subject of “Friese familienamen, afgeleid van toponiemen” (Frisian family names derived from place-names), raises the question of the Dutch rather than the Frisian forms of place-names in so many Frisian family names—but not in “Drielsma (IJst, Frisian: Dryls), T(e)unstra (Tirns, Frisian: Turns), Boonstra (Oldeboorn, Frisian: Boarn), Terhenne (Terhorne, Frisian: Terherne).”<sup>24</sup> *Drielsma*, a Jewish Frisian family name, was the first example this eminent student of Frisian names thought of in connection with Frisian family names the place-name element of which is in Frisian and not in Dutch (in spite of the Dutch spelling).

Back to Winkler in 1876, *Dwingersma* is linked to the name of the *Wabbe-Wisses-Dwinger* (dial. *Wisjedwinger*), a neighborhood in Ljouwert where the original bearer of the name *Dwingersma* lived when he adopted it in 1811.<sup>25</sup> Winkler reflects that family names that hark back to place-names, as in *Drielsma*, *Dwingersma* and *Turksma* are at variance with the essence of the Frisian language, ending as they do in *-sma* instead of properly in *-stra*. Winkler also cites *Dragtsma*, a Frisian family name borne by non-Jews, as another such bad example.<sup>26</sup> I am

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to P. Sipma, *Haedstikken út de Fryske toponymy*, diel II of *Fryske Nammekunde* (Drachten: Drukkerij en Utjowerij Laverman N.V., 1966), p. 21. In their own local dialect of Frisian the townfolk call their town [*drilts*] and themselves [*driltsas*]: see p. 268 of Vol I (*Texten*) of K. Boelens and G. van der Woude, *Dialect-atlas van Friesland (Nederlandse en Friese dialecten)*, which is the fifteenth volume of the *Reeks Nederlandse Dialect-atlassen*, ed. E. Blancquaert and W. Pée (Antwerp: De Sikkel, 1955); [*drils*] is a common Frisian pronunciation of the name.

<sup>24</sup> J.H. Brouwer and H.T.J. Miedema, *Studies over Friese en Groningse familienamen*, Anthroponymica, ed. H.J. van de Wijer and K. Roelandts, *Onomastica Neerlandica* (Louvain: Instituut voor Naamkunde, 1965), p. 13. Earlier on p. 27 of J.H. Brouwer, *Fryske foarnammen en skaeinammen*, diel 5 of *Bûnte liuwen: lân en folk yn wurd en byld* (Ljouwert: N. Miedema & Co., 1963), p. 27, the deviation of *Drielsma*, from “Drylst” is affixed with a question mark.

<sup>25</sup> Winkler, *Een en ander*, p. 156 (and Winkler, *Friesche Naamlijst: Dwinger*). The ultimate source of the family name is the Frisian word *dwinger* in the meaning of “bastion” (=the projecting section of a rampart in the form of an irregular pentagon). In olden days there were various *dwingers* in the wall surrounding Ljouwert. One of these, the *Wabbe-Wisses-dwinger*, had early been built over with houses that now constituted a neighborhood that called itself the *Wisjedwinger*, or more formally, the *Wabbe-Wisses-Dwinger*. Winkler contends that a man, living in this neighborhood in 1811, chose the family name *Dwingersma* for himself from this neighborhood. Twenty-two years later, Winkler (in his *Friesche Naamlijst*) qualifies this statement by saying that the *Dwinger-Dwingersma* connection is a matter of tradition. As to the *Dwingers* taking their name from a bastion in Ljouwert, note the question mark in Brouwer, *Fryske foarnammen en skaeinammen*, p. 27. In a published list of Jews of Ljouwert who perished at the hands of the Nazis there is not a single *Dwingersma*, but there are 15 *Dwingers*: Sal de Jong, *Joods leven in de Friese hoofdstad: 1920-1945 voltooid verleden tijd* (Leeuwarden: Miedema Pers, 1970), p. 111.

<sup>26</sup> Winkler, *Friesche Naamlijst*, pp. 74-75 (*Dwingersma*). *Dragstra* is the “approved” form.

inclined to go along with Sipma when he in 1952 sees *-sma* as a most productive name suffix that, as such, not unexpectedly expands semantically beyond its original confines; he states that it is believed to be a suffix separate from *-ma*, one often thought of as a genitive suffix.<sup>27</sup> This explains why it may be attached to place-names as a means of forming family names in Frisian—a living, changing language—without doing violence to that language. Brouwer rejects the Winklerian stand on *-sma* after place-names to form family names, on the grounds that 1) there are names like *Dragtsma* (and *Dwingersma*), with *Dragt* (and *Dwinger*) clearly going back to the name of a place, not a person, and 2) *-sma* / *stra* parallelism as in *Damsma* / *Damstra*, *Dragtsma* / *Dragtsma*, *Terpsma* / *Terpstra*, *Toornsma* / *Toornstra*, and many other examples cited.<sup>28</sup>

*Biema* prefixed by Dutch *van* becomes a hybrid Dutch-Frisian name borne by Jews only; *-ma*, following Sipma (1952), could here legitimately be supposed wholly to have the function of a genitive ending, even after a word that does not end in *-um*.<sup>29</sup> The prefix *van* reduplicates the genitive function in Dutch.

As to *Turksma*, Winkler in 1898 held the name to have been arbitrarily formed, and taken owing to the fact that the original bearer of the name, as a wanderer, came to Friesland from Turkey.<sup>30</sup> Beem wrote me on November 24, 1974 that he has not been able to discover where the byname *Turk* is from. Before 1811 there is no written evidence for the existence of *Turksma*, only of a precursor *Turk*, in Ljouwert as early as 1788.<sup>31</sup>

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The place-name involved is *Drachten*, according to Winkler, or perhaps a smaller *Dracht* somewhere in Friesland (Brouwer, *Studies*, pp. 8, 9, 17).

<sup>27</sup> Sipma, *Foar-en-Skaeinammen*, p. 83: This name category received support from family names ending in *a* which are formed with place-names that end in *-sum*, as in *Jelsum* + *a* = *Jelsma*: here, as is often the case with names of this kind, we cannot be sure that we are not dealing with an original given name (here *Jelle*) + *sma*. Brouwer, *Studies*, p. 8 tells us that by means of genealogical research it can probably still be determined whether the place-name *Jellum* or the given name *Jelle* went into the making of the family name *Jellema* / *Jelluma* in individual instances. The same ought to be true of the different *Jelsmas* as well. See discussion on *-ma* and *-sma* on pp. 19 and 20 of Brouwer, *Fryske foarnammen en skaeinammen*.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 8 and 11.

<sup>29</sup> Sipma, *Foar-en-Skaeinammen*, p. 80.

<sup>30</sup> Winkler, *Friesche Naamlijst*. In his earlier *Nederlandsche geslachtsnamen*, p. 187, he expresses himself somewhat differently (translation mine): “*Turksma*, the son of the Turk, certainly of a man who, for one reason or another, bore the nickname *the Turk*. . . .”

<sup>31</sup> Beem, *Joden van Leeuwarden*, p. 125. If *Turk-* in *Turksma*, as a personal name, is a hypocorism or form of endearment of “*Durk*,” the voicelessness of the beginning consonant can be accounted for; see K. Roelandts, “*Verscherping en geminatie*,” *Album Edgar Blancquaert: de gebuldigde aangeboden ter gelegenheid van zijn emeritaat door kollega’s vakgenoten*

*Turksma* is paralleled morphologically by *Turkstra*. The latter is a Frisian family name borne by Christians only.

The Frisian anthropomymist Jelle Brouwer, in Amsterdam in 1965, seems to be taking us by implication beyond the written evidence. Asked about typically Frisian names of Jewish families like *Drielsma* and *Turksma*, in connection with Frisian family names existing long before being adopted in 1811, Professor Brouwer, in reply, points to the very strong assimilation of Frisian Jews to their environment. The Jewish women, for example, wore the Frisian (folk) costume. In name-giving, Brouwer concludes, this led to names like *Drielsma* and *Turksma*.<sup>32</sup>

*Fryda*, which Beem spells in the Dutch way *Frijda* in his letter of November 24, he traces back to Frisian Jews of Snits and Ljouwert.

In its present form the name *Feitsma*, when borne by Frisian Jews, is the same as that borne by Frisian Gentiles. But the *Feitsma* of the Jews was also written *Veisma* in the name list of the Ljouwert congregation: *Philips Asser Veisma*.<sup>33</sup> Beem derives its name stem from *Feis*, a short form of Yiddish *Feiwesj*, which he equates with Philip on evidence like: *Feis ben Jouseif* / *Feiwesj ben Jouseif*, 1754 = *Philip Josephs*, 1787, but which etymologically is to be equated with *Phoebus*.<sup>34</sup> *Veisma* was a

*en oudleerlingen* (Tongeren: Drukkerij George Michiels N.V., 1958), pp. 60-61 / (reprinted as Bijlage 53, *Onomastica Neerlandica* (Louvain: Instituut voor Naamkunde, 1958), pp. 60-61 (1-7). A. Huizinga, *Encyclopedie van namen: Een vraagbaak over de afkomst van onze Nederlandse en Vlaamse familie- en geslachtsnamen* (Amsterdam: A.J.G. Strenght's Uitgeversmaatschappij N.V., 1955), pp. 69-70, suggests the possibility of *Turk(sma)* = *Durk*, *Dirk*. In speaking of forename borrowings in Frisian, Sipma, *Fryske Foar- en Skaeinammen*, p. 133 writes (in Frisian): "The most frequent is Dirk, Durk which has been in use for a long time but is not Frisian in origin: the Frisian form of this name is Tsjerk."

<sup>32</sup> Brouwer, *Studies*, p. 51. In the footnote on p. 157 of his *Een en ander Winkler* relates the Jewish religious precept that a married woman keep her hair covered, with wearing the Frisian *earizer* or *oorijzer* ("ear iron") which all Jewish women in Friesland, especially married ones, had worn 20 or 30 years earlier.

<sup>33</sup> Beem, *Joden van Leeuwarden*, p. 124. The *v*- spelling may be an accommodation to Dutch: cf. supralocal Yiddish *fuks*, *fish*, *ful*, *fir*; supralocal Frisian *foks*, *fisk*, *fol*, *fjouwer*; and Dutch *vos*, *vis*, *vol*, *vier* (in English: fox, fish, full, four). Or it could, in addition, reflect a German spelling influence: see Heinrich Löwe, *Die Sprachen der Juden* (Cologne: Jüdischer Verlag, 1911), p. 60, who posits near universal knowledge of at least spoken German among the Jews of Britain, France, Scandinavia, Austria-Hungary and the Netherlands over against those of the Russian Empire, which might have been as relatively true in 1811 as in 1911. Frisian Jewish *Veisma*, 1811 finds a counterpart of sorts in the last name of *Natan des Feyfs sun*, Nuremberg, 1411, excerpted in Moritz Stern and Siegmund Salfeld, *Nürnberg im Mittelalter/ Quellen: Erste und zweite Abteilung*, 3, Die israelitische Bevölkerung der deutschen Städte, ed. Moritz Stern (Kiel: H. Fiencke, 1894-1896), p. 55.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 56 and 121. "Feiwesj. . .ben Jouseif vulgo Feis" (*ibid.*, p. 121) seems to establish the relationship of "*fays*" as a short form of "*fayvesh*." In early nineteenth-century Philippsburg, between Karlsruhe and Mannheim/Ludwigshafen, *Vebus* was said to have been a designa-

Frisian family name that was exclusively Jewish. As *Feitsma* it is completely assimilated to a name that contains an r-less child language form of *Frederick* or another two-stemmed Germanic form with *Fred.*<sup>3 5</sup>

And then there is *Daitsma*, an authentic Frisian equivalent of “Davidson,”<sup>3 6</sup> as well as *Ruda* and *Gudema*. *Daidsma* instead of *Daitsma* would in Ljouwert in 1811 have been less organically Frisian than the latter: cf. among Frisian Gentiles the family name *Deitsma*, formed with a hypocorism of a name with the stem that is the same as the English word “day,” Frisian “dei.”<sup>3 7</sup>

tion of the German Jewish family *Vaiß* for their last name: Erwin Manuel Dreifuß, *Die Familiennamen der Juden unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Verhältnisse in Baden zu Anfang des 19. Jahrhunderts: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Emanzipation* (Frankfurt am Main: J. Kauffmann Verlag, 1927), p. 7. Dreifuß sees *Vaiß* as the parent form of *Vehus* (*ibid.*) and derives *Vaiß*, normally spelled *Feis(t)*, from *Phoebus*, a given name of Greek origin (*ibid.*, p. 111 and n. 194 on p. 141). *Feiwešj* and *Vehus* are dissyllabic like “Phoebus,” making *Feis* more likely the derivative form. A form that is monosyllabic but with the old intervocalic consonant not fully assimilated is *Veifs* in Middle Latin *Veifs de Koln*, 1327 = *Veifis von Cöln*, 1338, a Jewish burgher of Nuremberg (Stern and Salfeld, pp. 209 and 19, 321, resp.). M.L. Sainéan, “Essai sur le judéo-allemand et spécialement sur le dialect parlé en Valachie,” *Mémoires de la Société de Linguistique de Paris*, 12 (1902), 67 says that *Phoebus* is a name found principally in Germany, where it is preserved in the forms “*Feiwisch (Fäwiš)*” and “*Feiweł (Fäwł)*.” According to Leopold Zunz, “Phöbus” is a given name of Jews in all epochs: see pp. 104-105 of his *Namen der Juden: Eine geschichtliche Untersuchung* (Leipzig: L. Fort, 1837) or pp. 71-72 of Bd. II of the *Gesammelte Schriften von Dr. Zunz* (Berlin: Louis Gerschel Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1876). In the third revised edition, by Eduard Brodführer, of Max Gottschald’s *Deutsche Namenkunde: Unsere Familiennamen nach ihrer Entstehung und Bedeutung* (Berlin: Verlag Walter de Gruyter, 1954), s.v. “(Phoibos Apollon)” for Jewish family names like *Phöbus*, *Feibisch*, *Fabisch*, *Feibusch* and *Feubus*.

A word on *Philip* for *Feis/Feiwešj*. When I read this paper, I was fortunate in sharing the speakers’ platform with Relle Israly Cohen who hopes “to do a lexicon of Jewish personal names as a dissertation” in Linguistics at the University of Chicago. She wrote me on May 30, 1977 that “Phillip is often the name chosen for Yiddish *foytl* and for Yiddish *foyvus* + (from *Phoebus*. . .)” (*Vitalis* is the source of *foytl*.) In Mainz in 1808 *Feist Lazarus* officially became *Philippe Vogel* and *Feist Loeb Philippe Wagner*; see Siegmund Salfeld, *Bilder aus der Vergangenheit der jüdischen Gemeinde Mainz* (Mainz: E. Herzog, 1903), p. 75. *Feist David*, however, became *Vite Engel* (*ibid.*, p. 73). Among Christian neighbors *Phoebus* was unknown as a given name, *Philip* was not. Beginning with the same consonant as *Phoebus* and its variants, and with two syllables to match those of a full form like *Feiwešj*, it was not unnatural for a name like *Philip* to become a substitute for one like *Phoebus*.

<sup>3 5</sup> J. van der Schaar, *Woordenboek van voornamen: Inventarisatie van de doop- en roepnamen met hun etymologie* (Utrecht/Antwerp: Het Spectrum, 1964), s.v. “Feie.” The putting together of the constituent parts of the *Feitsma* of the Frisian Gentiles can be done in at least two ways. If the *-s-* is assumed to be genitive, we can have *Feite* (*ibid.*) + *sma*; otherwise *Feitse* (*Feie* + Frisian diminutive ending *-tse*, Old Frisian *-tia*) + *ma* (Sipma, *Foar- en Skaeinammen*, pp. 96, 111). Old Frisian *-tja* or *-tia* was assimilated from an earlier *-teke*, see W. de Fries, *Friese persoonsnamen* (Assen: Van Gorcum & Comp. N.V. [G.A. Hak & Dr. H.J. Prakke], 1952), p. 185.

<sup>3 6</sup> Beem, *Joden van Leeuwarden*, p. 124.

<sup>3 7</sup> Winkler, *Friesche Naamlijst*, s.v. “*Deye*,” “*Deitse*” and “*Deitsma*.” *Deitsma* seems to be formed from “*Deye*” and the diminutive ending *tse* and *ma* (see n. 35 above).



In the 1970 work in Dutch of Sal de Jong on "Jewish Life in the Frisian Capital," again drawing from his list of Ljouwert's Jewish martyrs, the same family name occurs once as *Walg* and once as *Wallega*.<sup>38</sup> It should be found a third time, looking very Frisian as *Wallega*.<sup>39</sup> Quite literally the name means "Wallachian," a non-Romanian designation and here one that goes beyond English *Wallachian* to include any Romanian.<sup>40</sup> The "standard" form of this family name is borne by the American actor *Eli Wallach*. *Wallega* may not have coalesced with a variant of *Wallinga* (*Wallenga*),<sup>41</sup> in other words, *Wallega* may have morphological distinction as a Frisian family name borne by Jews only. The Frisian look of *Wallega* may at least in part be sheer coincidence, for in Amsterdam in 1811 we find variants like those in De Jong's book: *Walg* once, *Waleg* once, and *Wallega* once;<sup>42</sup> then in 1826 *Walling* six times.<sup>43</sup>

Between 1300 and 1500, Jews were driven out of Western and Central Europe, accounting for English and French names among German Jews, (German) Swiss names among Polish Jews; Italian names were Germanized in the European East and Germanic names were to return with Slavic trimmings.<sup>44</sup> Around 1350, Friesland was caught up

<sup>38</sup> Sal de Jong, *Joods leven*, p. 128.

<sup>39</sup> The omission of the name of *Herman Wallega* could be nothing but an oversight on the part of de heer De Jong, for he tells us on pp. 63 and 64 (*ibid.*) that the death of Herman Wallega was recorded at Auschwitz on August 13, 1942.

<sup>40</sup> Winkler, *Nederlandsche geslachtsnamen*, pp. 196-197.

<sup>41</sup> Winkler, *Friesche Naamlijst*, s.v. "Wallinga." *Wallega* is absent. As a given name see *Walle* and *Walling*, where Winkler calls the latter a patronymic form of *Walle* (*ibid.*). All these forms are reduplicated with a long stem vowel, indicated in spelling by one l; an interesting given and family name from "North Holland" (southwest of Friesland) is *Walig* (*ibid.*). Huizinga, makes *Wallega*, as a patronymic family name, almost a variant of *Walenga* (pp. 60, 63) and, with *Wal-* going back to an original meaning of "the walling in of a town by means of canals," a variant of *Wallenga* (p. 219). Genealogical evidence is needed to convince me that Huizinga is right. Huizinga derives *Walenga* from *Wal* (p. 63), *Wallinga* and *Wallega* from *Walle* (pp. 62 and 63 resp.), and *Walinga* from *Walig* (p. 62). All these efforts at differentiation come to naught when one is aware of the reason why in Old Frisian *Wala* and *Walla* were variants of each other, as *Wale* and *Walle* are today (Sipma, *Foar-en Skaeinammen*, p. 62). Jelle Brouwer, speaking of hypocoristic consonant lengthening, sees it as being preceded by an oftentimes originally long vowel becoming short. (I would omit "originally" in order to admit *Wale/Walle* as an example.) He adds that it goes without saying that a great many times it is hard to make out whether the lengthening is to be attributed to assimilation or is of hypocoristic nature (Brouwer, *Fryske foarnammen*, p. 10).

<sup>42</sup> *Nederlands Joods Familiearchief* (Amsterdam: Scheltema en Holkema NV en Polak & Van Gennep, 1967), pp. A46 and A48. The name stem of these examples and of *Wal(l)-* in Frisian (and other Germanic) patronymic family names have the same origin (albeit along different routes) in the name of a Continental Celtic tribe (Gottschald, *Deutsche Namenkunde*, s.v. "WALH").

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. A48.

<sup>44</sup> Zunz, *Namen der Juden*, pp. 80-81: *Gesammelte Schriften*, p. 51.

in the mood of this period, and traces of Jewish life of medieval Friesland were thus wiped out.<sup>45</sup> As has already been said, the cradleland of Jewish newcomers to Friesland was East Friesland. Family names like *Van Emden*, *Van No(o)rden*, *Van Leer* and *Van Geuns* (from and pronounced like East Frisian Low German *Gööns*, = German *Gödens*) attest East Frisian provenience, Jewish or non-Jewish, in the Netherlands.<sup>46</sup> Five *Van Leers* (seven with mates) are reckoned among Ljouwert's Jewish martyrs of the Nazis.<sup>47</sup>

In East Friesland, Jews had never been driven out. Nor had there been any nonsense about ritual murder as a Jewish practice. There was no discussion of a Jewish question until, at the turn of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth, the mighty North Sea port and Republic of Emden took the lead in an attempt to build a Calvinistic theocracy. In 1749, five years after Frederick the Great acquired East Friesland, more than theoretical discussion took place. The king put an end to the independence of Emden, main seat of East Frisian Jewry, and restrictive measures against Jews were introduced in East Friesland for the first time.<sup>48</sup>

Beem finds it odd that Jews in the capital of Friesland would choose to call themselves *De Vries*, which means "the Frisian" (in Dutch); what makes sense for him is the assumption of this family name by Jews from East Friesland while residing in the Netherlands between Friesland and East Friesland, and then coming to Friesland with the name.<sup>49</sup> I would go one step further to postulate that a long experience of good relations with Frisian Gentiles in East Friesland contributed to

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<sup>45</sup> Beem, "Joden," *Encyclopedie van Friesland*.

<sup>46</sup> Winkler, *Nederlandsche geslachtsnamen*, pp. 230-231, 528. There are Jewish and Mennonite *Van Geuns* (*ibid.*, p. 231). *Emden*, unprefixated by *van*, was a last name of eighteenth-century Ljouwert *sjoel* notables like Rabbi *Jacob ben Jonathan Emden*, one of ten committed to reorganize the congregation in 1754 (Beem, *Joden van Leeuwarden*, p. 72). Ten years later, far to the south on the Middle Rhine, there were three *Embdens* in the Jewish congregation of Mainz, one of whom was the widow of a *Samuel Embden* (Salfeld, p. 61).

<sup>47</sup> De Jong, *Joods leven*, pp. 119-120.

<sup>48</sup> Selma Stern, *Darstellung*, Abteilung I of *Die Zeit Friedrichs des Großen*, Teil (Vol.) 3 of *Der preußische Staat und die Juden* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1971), pp. 34-37. The Prussian monarch met hefty East Frisian opposition. A justice commission in Aurich, the capital of East Friesland, pronounced the judgment that lords of domains had no right to levy taxes on Jews (*ibid.*, p. 37). The Magistrate of Emden prohibited the "tyrannical" expulsion of native Jews and the collection of money for protection (*ibid.*, p. 38). No code of laws regulating relations with Jews was ever set up for East Friedland (*ibid.*, p. 93)!

<sup>49</sup> Beem, *Joodse namen*, p. 90. Koenen, p. 199, commenting on the lively trade engaged in with Emden by Jews on the opposite or Netherlands Groningerland shore in Delfzijl and "Appingedam" (in the Old Frisian Fivelgo), says that it was trade that brought Jews of Appingedam to Ljouwert and even more to Harns. The Ljouwert Jewish *Van Dams* take their name from *Appingedam* (Beem, *Joodse namen*, p. 90).

a Jewish openness to Frisian Gentiles and their culture (including forenaming and family naming) in Friesland. Those Jews of East Frisian background must have spread and strengthened pro-Frisian cultural openness throughout Friesland's Jewry.<sup>50</sup>

I shall now conclude with some comments on Jewish Frisian family name geography, followed by a word on forenames.

It has already been said that the *Leefsmas* hailed from De Gerdyk and that the *Frydas* or *Frijdas* made their home in Ljouwert and Snits. The *Van Biemas* claimed their abode outside of Friesland, namely in Amsterdam.<sup>51</sup> *Biema*, to which Meertens does not prefix *van*, "disappeared" as an Amsterdam family name "between 1939 and 1947."<sup>52</sup> If we bring in Frisian family names borne by Jews and non-Jews, then we have further the Jewish *Haaxmas* of Hylpen and the Jewish *Hoornstras* of Boalsert or Bolsward;<sup>53</sup> and then we note that Jewish *Woudsmas* and *Woudstras* lived in Groningen as well as Friesland; Winkler traces their names back to *de Wâlden* (Dutch *de Wouden*), literally "the woods," the region where the soil is composed of fen and sand (and that is virtually coterminous with the East of Friesland); and in the *Wâlden* he locates their place of origin as *De Gerdyk*.<sup>54</sup>

Two family names presumably un-Frisian (and un-Dutch) in their use of *-er*,<sup>55</sup> but which contain the name of an island of Friesland and of Friesland itself are *Amelander* and *Vrieslander*. They originated as names of Jewish families: the *Vrieslanders* resided in Amsterdam,<sup>56</sup> the *Amelanders* resided in eighteenth-century Amsterdam, Ljouwert

<sup>50</sup> East Frisian Jews reached Friesland from a land where they were not thought of as strangers. According to legend, the first Jews came to Emden after the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus; the soliders who served under him in a Frisian legion received their share of Jewish captives, whom they set ashore at Emden (Markrich, p. 208). Eggeric Beninga (1490-1562) relates how after the destruction of the First Temple a number of Jewish families settled on the North Sea coast of East Friesland (*ibid.*, pp. 208-209).

<sup>51</sup> Winkler, *Een en ander*, p. 155.

<sup>52</sup> P.J. Meertens, *Amsterdam*, deel VIII of *Nederlands repertorium van familienamen*, ed. P.J. Meertens and H. Buitenhuis (Assen: Van Gorcum & Comp. N.V./Dr. H.J. Prakke & H.M.G. Prakke, 1970), p. 9. *Biema* looks like a Frisianization of *Beem* ("Böhme"). See Addendum.

<sup>53</sup> Private letter from H. Beem, November 24, 1974.

<sup>54</sup> Winkler, *Een en ander*, pp. 155-156.

<sup>55</sup> Winkler, *Nederlandsche geslachtsnamen*, pp. 200, 528-529. (Winkler is writing about *Vrieslander*; nowhere does he mention *Amelander*.) But the use of *-er* is not un-Frisian or un-Dutch in names of like origin, as in *Vlielander*, taken from the name of another island of Friesland, or in (*De*)*Brabander* (*ibid.*, p. 201), taken from the name of *Brabant*, a territory like Friesland but in the midsouthern part of the Low Countries. (Frans *Debrabandere* is a contemporary West Flemish anthroponymist.)

<sup>56</sup> Winkler, *Een en ander*, pp. 155-156. In 1947 there was one *Vrieslander* living in Amsterdam: Meertens, s.v. "Vrieslander."

and Groningen, and Beem guesses that their family name was taken from the name of a street in Ljouwert.<sup>57</sup>

After World War II, a fraction of Dutch and Frisian Jews miraculously escaped death and returned to the Netherlands. From three books of a series that give the family names and the number of persons bearing them, for Amsterdam, Friesland and Groningen (city and province),<sup>58</sup> as worked up from the national census of the Netherlands, May 31, 1947, I have gleaned the following:

	FRIESLAND			GRONINGEN	
	<i>Amsterdam</i>	<i>Ljouwert</i>	<i>elsewhere</i>	<i>Groningen</i>	<i>Groningerland</i>
Drilisma	8				
Drielsma	66				
Frijda	4				
Leefsma	7		2		
Turksma	12		5	6	54
Turksema <sup>59</sup>			5	6	28
Wallega	3				

In 1947, there were remarkably fewer persons in Friesland with Frisian family names borne by Jews only than in Amsterdam or the Province of Groningen.

### Columbus, Ohio

<sup>57</sup> Beem, *Joden van Leeuwarden*, p. 57, where *Van Ameland* is given as a variant in the city of Groningen circa 1775 and the street name as "Amelandstraat"; and Beem, "Joodse namen," p. 91, n. 35, where the street name appears as "Amelanderstraat." In "Synagoge," *Encyclopedie van Friesland* we read that the oldest synagogue in Ljouwert was located around 1700 at the *Amelandspijp*.

<sup>58</sup> Meertens; Buitenhuis; and Miedema.

<sup>59</sup> Miedema (*ibid.*, pp. 8, 11) has found that a good many *-sema* names are typical of Groningen and are almost unknown in Friesland; *-sema* names make their home in the loamy coastal North of Groningen, particularly in Fivelgo (see n. 49 above). Of the Groningerland *Turksemas*, of whom there are about half as many as Groningerland *Turksmas*, only one lives outside of the *-sma* area, the others in Grijpskerk, near Friesland (*ibid.*, s.v. "Turksema" and "Turksma," and see folded back leaf). Although *-sema* is more prevalent in Northern Groningerland and *-sma* in Friesland, it is still true, as Sipma says in *Foar- en Skaeinammen*, p. 89, that *-sema* developed from (*e*)*sma* in both areas but differentially in quantity in each. A good discussion of this matter in terms of the Old Frisian of both areas, with something on *-sma* < *-sema* in Friesland, is offered by De Vries, pp. 26-28.

SJOEL (SYNAGOGUE) MAP OF FRIESLAND



showing old sjoel sites and some  
FRISIAN FAMILY NAMES  
BORNE BY JEWS

Addendum: Dr. mr. H.P. Schaap of Zierikzee (Zealand, Netherlands) wrote me on February 17, 1978, that VAN BIEMA is derived from the name of the bime or almemar ("Biema [of: almemor]"), the platform with a lectern in the middle of the synagogue.