

Jewish Brides, Rabbis and Sitters in Rembrandt's Prints

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ABSTRACT

The article sums up the results of studies of Rembrandt's prints related to Jewish themes: portraits, tronies, genre and narrative subjects alike. Particular attention is paid to the clothes in which Rembrandt dresses his heroes. The traditional view that he borrowed the costumes of Jews in the streets turns out to be unfounded. He began dressing figures in costume that is conventionally called that of Ashkenazi Jews while he was still in Leiden, where there were no Jews at the time. The Sephardi Jews with whom Rembrandt did have contact will have dressed like other wealthy Amsterdam burghers. The clothing he gives to his beggars is more like that of Dutch street figures or older prints rather than of poor Amsterdam Ashkenazim.

KEYWORDS

Rembrandt, prints, Jews, Ashkenazim, Sephardim, dress, costume

Depictions of Jews as participants in Old and New Testament episodes constantly alternate in Rembrandt's works with depictions of his own contemporaries. In essence, both forms exist in the single realm of Rembrandt's artistic world, where there was no place for the archaeologically precise reproduction of costumes from a given historical era.

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Rembrandt, "The Great Jewish Bride," 163[5?]
Etching, engraving and drypoint, 21.9 × 16.8 cm

Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum
(RP-P-OB-724)

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69
Rembrandt,
Christ Before Pilate:
Large Plate, 1635–36
Etching, drypoint, engraving,
54.9 × 44.7 cm

Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum
(RP-P-1961-1198A; De Bruijn-
van der Leeuw Bequest)

Rembrandt, whom people are fond of calling a great “realist,” let his personages migrate freely from seventeenth-century Holland to first-century Palestine or even the other way around.

The artist places a young man wearing seventeenth-century Dutch costume, whom he invests with his own facial features, on a square in Jerusalem in the first century CE, where Christ has been brought before Pontius Pilate. As far as the record goes, no early viewer of the enormous print of *Christ Before Pilate*¹ let that bother them in the least. Equally, no one minded that Rembrandt dressed the Roman nobleman Pilate, procurator of the province of Judea, in a long Eastern-style robe, giving him a beard and an Oriental turban. None of Rembrandt’s contemporaries were surprised that the artist kitted Roman legionnaires out in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Western European armor, both in the early *Christ Before Pilate* (1635–36) and in the late *Christ Presented to the People: Oblong Plate* (1655) (figs. 69 and 70).²

“Direct” reference to the text of Scripture was clearly a matter of highly selective choice. (An example of how this operated in the instance of *Adam and Eve* was dissected in detail by Christian Tümpel in the catalogue of a 1996 exhibition.³) As has been

70
 Rembrandt, *Christ Presented to the People: Oblong Plate*,
 1655
 Etching and drypoint,
 38.3 x 45.5 cm

Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum
 (RP-P-1975-1; purchased
 with the support of the
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 van de Belangen van het
 Rijksmuseum)



shown by our predecessors and colleagues—J.L.A.A.M. van Rijckevorsel, Christian Tümpel, Thomas Campbell, B.P.J. Broos and Peter van der Coelen, to mention but a few—in the great majority of cases Rembrandt was guided not by the biblical text but by previous artistic tradition, embodied chiefly in prints.

When it came to markers of Jewishness in dress, Rembrandt indulged in ambiguity from the very outset of his career as a printmaker. Take the etching now known as *The Little Tobit* (fig. 71).⁴ The latest catalogue raisonné of Rembrandt prints, from 2013, puts the date of its creation as “circa 1629,” that is, in the latter years of the artist’s Leiden period. In the first catalogue of Rembrandt’s etchings, by Edmé-François Gersaint, published posthumously in 1751, the work is called *Aveugle, vu par le dos* (G. 146; *Blind Man Seen from Behind*). The author made no connection between the subject of the print and the Book of Tobit, although he did identify the figure as a Jew—“il représente un Vieillard, dans l’habillement d’un Juif” (it represents an old man, dressed as a Jew). While noting all the features that identify the subject as Tobit—(1) an elderly man, (2) blind, (3) in ragged clothing, indicative of poverty, (4) moving by touch towards a door—Gersaint stopped one step short of the presently accepted interpretation. Ignoring these signifiers, he included the print not in the Old Testament section of his catalogue, but among the genre pieces.

To produce what one might term an “Old Testament atmosphere” (let us recall how highly the artist Philips Angel rated his colleague Rembrandt’s ability to engender the



71

Rembrandt, *The Blindness of Tobit: A Sketch*, ca. 1629
Etching, engraving and
drypoint, 54.9 x 44.7 cm

Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum
(SK-A-4050; bequest of
Mr. and Mrs. de Bruijn-
van der Leeuw, Muri,
Switzerland, 1961)

“spirit” of the Old Testament in his pictures),⁵ in the late 1620s Rembrandt, still living in his native Leiden, used a costume like those in which he clad beggars in his prints of these years.⁶

What, we may ask, is the significance of blind Tobit’s tall cap in Rembrandt’s etching? Where did he take it from? From the costume worn by Ashkenazim that he saw in Amsterdam? (In Leiden he would not have seen any Jews in the street. The first documented presence of Jewish immigrants in Rembrandt’s home city comes from much later.) Insofar as Tobit’s clothing was taken from men Rembrandt could see in the street, it is more likely to have been worn by impoverished tramps of the kind who wandered the roads of the United Provinces. Another no less probable source is in graphic imagery, of which *Two Beggars* by Rembrandt’s older contemporary Jacques Callot (1592–1635) is often cited.⁷

In Rembrandt’s 1632 genre print *The Rat Catcher*,⁸ the gestures of the main personages—the master of the house and a hawker of rat poison—create the inescapable impression that what we are looking at is a slightly disguised parody of Michelangelo’s famous Sistine Chapel fresco (1508–12), a play on the motif of two open male hands extended towards each other (fig. 72). The coarse humor of the scene, with two live rats perching on the peddler’s shoulder and his cage, next to the dangling bodies of their



72
 Rembrandt, *The Rat Catcher*,
 1632
 Etching, 14.0 x 12.5 cm

Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum
 (RP-P-1962-59)

less fortunate fellows, is somewhat obscured by the discrepancy between the costumes and what is taking place. Judging by the landscape backdrop, the setting for the print is a Dutch village or urban outskirts. The rat catcher and his assistant conform fully to the “dress code” for Dutch tramps, strolling musicians and beggars, but the clothing of the man with whom they are talking (asking for alms?)—a turban and some loose-fitting garment resembling a Roman toga—is entirely out of place for Holland in the seventeenth century. This personage would be more suitable for a Gospel or Old Testament composition.⁹

Another Rembrandt print traditionally associated with Jewishness is the so-called *Great Jewish Bride* (fig. 68).¹⁰ The absence of any text, apart from the artist’s signature, leaves us uncertain as to the subject, which is true of some of Rembrandt’s history paintings as well. Consequently, most catalogues of Rembrandt prints to this day accept the conventional nickname under which it appeared in auction catalogues from the



73
 Rembrandt, *St. Catherine*
 ("The Little Jewish Bride"),
 1638
 Etching and drypoint,
 11 × 7.8 cm

Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum
 (RP-P-OB-729)

mid-1700s, without asking what it meant to the creator of the print and his contemporaries. At least one art historian, Madlyn Kahr, thinks they conceived of it as a history subject from the biblical Book of Esther. "This personage in royal robes represents Queen Esther. She holds a copy of the decree setting the date for the slaying of the Jews, which Mordecai had sent her, as she gravely ponders the action she must take (Esther 4:8)."¹¹ Whichever theory concerning the subject of this remarkable print we favor, however, there remains the apparent fact that the model was Rembrandt's wife, Saskia van Uylenburgh, who came from an influential Frisian family and, as far as we can tell, had no Jewish ancestry whatsoever.¹² This underlines once again the ambivalent nature of the link between the pictures that Rembrandt produced on historical subjects (if we accept Kahr's hypothesis) and the way the artist modeled (depicted) the personages in his prints (and paintings, as well, of course). Indeed, Rembrandt sometimes gave historical personages the features of people recognizable to his contemporaries as his relatives, and even himself. Saskia's readily recognizable features can also be detected in paintings by Rembrandt that are today considered representations of a sibyl, a classical goddess (Flora, Athena) or an Old Testament figure (Esther, Bathsheba).

Astonishingly, in the eighteenth century, an age of great connoisseurs of graphic art, the titles (and thus the subjects) of several Rembrandt prints became lost. In a land of victorious Catholicism, the kingdom of France, the etching of 1638 known today

74
 Rembrandt, *Three Oriental
 Figures (Jacob and Laban?)*,
 1641
 Etching and drypoint,
 14.4 × 11.4 cm

Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum
 (RP-P-OB-206)



as *St. Catherine*—on the basis of the attribute of that martyr, an execution wheel, that Rembrandt included in the lower right-hand corner—was listed in the 1751 Gersaint catalogue as “La Petite Mariée, Juive” (The Little Bride, a Jewish Woman) (fig. 73).¹³ The grounds for such an identification of the subject were evidently the woman’s hairstyle and adornments—long hair hanging loose over the shoulders and the circlet of pearls(?) around her head, since we find those same figurative motifs in the *Great Jewish Bride* (fig. 68).

The earliest identification of the model of the latter etching as a Jew dates from 1731, in the handwritten catalogue of works owned by the Dutch art collector Valerius Röver—“5 waaronder het Jooden bruijtje, heel en half opgemaakt” (Five [etchings], including The Jewish bride [in a diminutive form], [one] completed and [one] half-finished).¹⁴ The next time we come across this title is in the 1740s, in the inventory of prints connected with Peter Schenk, where we read of “Mahl Juden doctor und Seine Braut” (“2 [prints] Jewish Doctor and his bride”).¹⁵ Most probably “Jewish Doctor” referred to the portrait print of Ephraim Bueno of 1647.¹⁶ Its mention in that list is another written source connecting it with the Jewish legacy seen to reside in Rembrandt’s printmaking.

In 1751, Gersaint alludes directly to a Dutch tradition connecting this female portrait with a Jewish wedding rite—“Le Portrait d’une Femme, appelée en Hollande, la

Grande Mariée, Juive” (The portrait of a woman, called in Holland the Great Bride, a Jewish woman).¹⁷ The catalogue published in The Hague in 1775 for the auction of Amadé de Burgy’s collection¹⁸ (the largest in terms of the number of impressions that any private individual has ever assembled) does indeed call the print *Jewish Bride*, (“La Fiancée Juive (de Joode Bruid)”) no longer connecting it with the portrait of Doctor Bueno. An attribute that none of the interpretations so far published, including the conventional *Great Jewish Bride*, explains satisfactorily is the floor globe that Rembrandt placed to the left behind the seated figure. The same can be said of the books and the scroll hanging off the table in the same part of the picture.

No less mysterious with regard to its subject is a print created in 1641 that since 1751 has been known by the not entirely accurate title of “Trois Figures Orientales” (Three Oriental Figures; B. 118; in point of fact, four personages are shown) (fig. 74).¹⁹ Gersaint correctly noted that the three figures on the right (or at least two of them—the men on either side of the group) are placed in front of the house “in the Flemish manner.”²⁰ We seem to be faced with a clash of figurative conventions whose nature remains unclear, a situation reminiscent of the issue with *The Rat Catcher*, but the other way around, since now the man inside the house is dressed in Dutch, rather than exotic costume. Leaning on the bottom half of a front door split horizontally in a way typical of the Low Countries, he is obviously set off against the three personages on the right, whose attire is indistinguishable from how Rembrandt dressed his biblical characters. The question arises as to how we should construe this contrast in costumes. Was Rembrandt envisioning an Old Testament scene into which he inserted a Dutch house of his own day and a man whom one might have met on an Amsterdam street in the 1640s? Or are we looking at an encounter between a seventeenth-century Dutchman and three Sephardi Jews (which I find less plausible)? One way or the other, we have to admit that we have no unequivocal explanation of what the artist had in mind.

Uncertainty regarding what (or who) is depicted also applies to the portrait print of 1636 that Gersaint described in his 1751 catalogue (G. 249) as “Le Portrait du Juif Manassé, Ben-Israel” (The Portrait of the Jew Manassé Ben-Israel) (see fig. 124).²¹ His identification of the sitter as the most influential Jew in the political world of seventeenth-century Europe was based on Dutch oral tradition. The print is known in two states that are today acknowledged to be by Rembrandt himself.²² The catalogues of public collections at present contain four impressions belonging to the first state and twenty of the second. The thirty-nine copies of a third “posthumous state” argue against this having been a commissioned representational likeness of the same kind as the portraits of the physician Ephraim Bueno or the artist’s patron Jan Six. The standard practice in seventeenth-century Holland was for the plate of a portrait to remain in the hands of the client who paid for it, as is well indicated by the statistics of the number of impressions of Rembrandt’s commissioned portrait prints that have come down to us.²³

At present, there is no consensus on the correctness of Gersaint’s identification of the subject of this etching. In the 1990s, the traditional interpretation began to be called into doubt, despite what is in my opinion an obvious resemblance between the man in the Rembrandt print and the depiction in the 1642 portrait of Menasseh by the Jewish engraver from Mantua called Salom (also Shalom or Salomon) Italia, who worked in

75
Rembrandt, *Ephraim Bueno*,
1647
Etching, 24.4 × 17.7 cm

Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum
(RP-P-1961-1154; bequest
of Mr. and Mrs. de Bruijn-
van der Leeuw, Muri,
Switzerland, 1961)



Amsterdam in the 1640s.²⁴ The latest catalogue raisonné of Rembrandt's prints lists the etching under number 156 as "Menasseh ben Israel," remarking rightly that the grounds put forward by various authors in recent times for different candidates as Rembrandt's subject are no more persuasive than the historical identification.²⁵

In the absence of text on the print or other written sources, one might turn to costume as a basis for determining who is depicted in Rembrandt's 1636 etching, but here we encounter all but insurmountable difficulties. The members of the Sephardi community in seventeenth-century Amsterdam, whose interaction with Rembrandt is documented in a variety of ways, were hard to distinguish from other wealthy inhabitants of the city by their dress.²⁶ This leaves us with very little to go on when it comes to identifying portrait sitters not named in a caption. (Salom Italia's likeness of Menasseh is provided with an inscription that leaves no doubt about who is depicted.) The dress of the Sephardi elite recorded in paintings by Emanuel de Witte and in drawings and prints by Romeyn de Hooghe provides clear visual evidence of this. In depictions of the Portuguese Synagogue in Amsterdam it is possible to distinguish the Sephardim who have come there to worship from curious locals only by the the tallithot (prayer shawls) thrown over their broad-brimmed European hats.²⁷ In all other aspects of their dress, Jewish and Christian Dutchmen are identical.



76
Rembrandt, *Abraham
Entertaining the Angels*, 1656
Etching, 15.9 × 13.1 cm

Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum
(RP-P-OB-55)

The portrait of the Sephardi physician Ephraim Bueno (signed and dated 1647)²⁸ is one of the rare instances when the identity of a Jewish portrait sitter is not in doubt (fig. 75). Two impressions made in the artist's lifetime, out of the fifty-five known, carry inscriptions confirming the identity of the sitter: a French text "Buono, docteur juif" on a print bearing the signature of the dealer and connoisseur Pierre Mariette—*P. Mariette 1684* (L. 1789), now in Florence, and another in the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum with the Dutch inscription "portugeese docter." Both impressions are of the second (and final) state of the print.

The unusual dynamic quality in the composition of this portrait can only be compared to the painted depiction of Jan Six in the Six Collection in Amsterdam. Statistical analysis of the impressions that have come down to us in public collections confirms that this was a commissioned work. That is to say, the plate probably became the prop-

erty of the client rather than remaining in Rembrandt's hands. Not a single surviving impression of this work would today be considered "posthumous."²⁹ The number of impressions produced in the artist's lifetime accords fully with the presently known size of the print runs for the majority of Rembrandt's other portrait prints. (Of Rembrandt's two etchings of Saskia's cousin-in-law, the Calvinist preacher Jan Cornelisz Sylvius, forty-eight lifetime impressions of the earlier one are known [1633]³⁰ and fifty-three of the posthumous portrait [1646],³¹ while of that of his son Petrus Sylvius there are sixty-one [1637].³² There are forty-seven lifetime impressions of the Remonstrant preacher Johannes Wtenbogaert [1635],³³ thirty-seven of the Mennonite preacher Cornelis]Anslo [1641],³⁴ fifty of Rembrandt's fellow artist Jan Asselyn [ca. 1647],³⁵ and sixty of the depiction of Rembrandt's patron Jan Six [1647].³⁶ The list could be continued.)

In contrast to the portrait of Ephraim Bueno, *Jews in the Synagogue*, signed and dated 1648, again poses an unresolved problem concerning the identification of the subject (see fig. 127). In 1731 Valerius Röver termed the subject "de joden tempel" (The Jewish Temple), in which he was followed in 1751 by Gersaint (G. 122; "Synagogue des Juifs"). However, the implication of this time-sanctioned title that the print shows contemporary Jews in a real-life synagogue does not stand up to criticism, either with regard to the clothing (there is not a single tallith in the picture) or the architecture. In terms of mid-seventeenth-century conventions for costuming Jews, the artist brought together in one space Sephardim (wearing berets) and Ashkenazim (with pointed caps). Nor was there a synagogue in Rembrandt's Amsterdam with an interior like this. As we see in Jan Veenhuijzen's depiction of the synagogue of the Sephardi Talmud Torah congregation, the largest synagogue at the time (see fig. 27), the interior bore no resemblance to Rembrandt's print. In this instance, the question of understanding what is depicted is closely bound up with determining the genre—just what do we have here? The curators of the 2006 exhibition in the Jewish Museum of Amsterdam prefer the historicizing title given in 1679 to a printing plate that in all likelihood was that for this print: *Pharisees in the Temple*. The interpretation of the scene put forward by Ludwig Münz in 1939³⁷—as the repentance of Judas Iscariot, who has been spurned by his fellow Jews—remains to this day the best argued, although not accepted by any later writer on the print.

A no less ingenious hypothesis regarding Rembrandt's last print of an Old Testament subject—*Abraham Entertaining the Angels* (1656, B. 29, NHD 295)—has also failed to gain acceptance from Rembrandt scholars (fig. 76). Nonetheless, it currently provides the only explanation for the incredibly strange appearance of the Angels of the Lord who visited the patriarch. This is a theory published in 1977 by Emanuel Winternitz, a Jewish immigrant from Austria who became the first curator of musical instruments in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.³⁸

Whereas Scripture speaks of Abraham receiving three guests in a tent by the oaks of Mamre, Rembrandt follows iconographic tradition by placing the scene outside a masonry house. The heavenly travelers are characterized in different ways in the Old Testament translations of different confessions. It has long since been noted that in this work the artist took his inspiration from the *Statenbijbel*, the Dutch translation published in 1637, in which one of the three guests is referred to as the *HEERE*, the Lord, in capital

letters. Despite this, Rembrandt's Dutch contemporaries, like the rest of their European colleagues, continued to depict Abraham's three visitors as beautiful and youthful angels. He took his leave from that convention in the 1656 print, giving one of the visitors—an elderly man, unwinged, with a long, broad, white beard—the appearance of God. This has prompted the speculation that the figure is actually a portrait of a real-life Amsterdam Jew, specifically Rabbi Menasseh ben Israel.

What we have here is one more example of a “heterogeneous” (unintegrated) pictorial environment in a Rembrandt work, in which the artist combines the seemingly incompatible—a biblical subject with possible suggestions of the depiction of actual contemporaries (the two angels of the Lord also look like portraits), liberties taken with the scriptural text (a solid house instead of a tent), with an entirely real-life object used daily in Dutch households, the metal wine jug with a long spout. That jug features in many works by Low Countries artists, beginning with the van Eycks in their *Ghent Altarpiece*, the Monogrammist HB (1525–50) and Joachim Beuckelaer (1570) through to Joachim Wtewael (1605), Willem Buytewech (1620s), Jan Steen (1663, 1665, 1668), Gerrit Dou (1646), Frans van Mieris the Elder (1658–59), Adriaen van Ostade (1670), and many others.

The “illogicality” in the interactions of the personages, their costume, objects and attributes within what one might call the artistic world of the Rembrandt print requires further study. Perhaps at some point we shall be able to put this jigsaw together and find the inner pattern, the reasoning behind the creation of all these images, however strange they might seem to us today.

NOTES

- 1 B. 77, NHD 155. Catalogues of Rembrandt etchings are here abbreviated. G=Gersaint; B = Bartsch; NHD=*The New Hollstein Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts, 1450–1700*. (Rembrandt, part 1).
- 2 B. 78, NHD 290.
- 3 See Tümpel 1996.
- 4 B. 153, NHD 31.
- 5 Regarding Angel's address, see Angel 1996.
- 6 For instance, the costume of the itinerant (and apparently blind) musician playing the hurdy-gurdy in *The Strolling Musicians* (B. 119, NHD 141, ca. 1635). The same combination of a tall cap and long clothing is found in *Beggar with a Stick, Walking to the Left* (B. 167, NHD 108w, ca. 1631); *A Peasant in a High Cap, Standing Leaning on a Stick* (B. 133, NHD 178, 1639); and even the dress of the aged man in the left background of the portrait of Johannes Wtenbogaert, called *The Goldweaver* (B. 281, NHD 172, 1639). Compare, too, the clothing of male beggars of the early 1630s: *Old Man Seen From Behind, Profile to Right: Half-figure* (B. 143, NHD 33a); *Beggar in a High Cap, Standing and Leaning on a Stick* (B. 162, NHD 41); *Beggar Man and Beggar Woman Conversing* (B. 164, NHD 45); *Beggar with a Crippled Hand Leaning on a Stick* (B. 166, NHD 39); *Beggar Seated Warming His Hands at a Chafing Dish* (B. 173, NHD 44); *Head of a Man in a High Cap* (B. 302, NHD 38). Similar figures in drawings are *Beggar Couple with a Dog* (Benesch 22); *Standing Beggar* (Benesch 30); and *Old Beggar in a Long Cloak and High Cap* (Benesch 32), all dated to the late 1620s.
- 7 From *Les Gueux* (Lieure 487–1(2)). Etching and drypoint, 13.9 × 9.1 cm. An impression in the Rijksmuseum is kept under number RP-P-OB-20.918. This Callot print, like several Rembrandt etchings from the 1620s and 1630s (e.g., *The Strolling Musicians*, B. 119), depicts a pair of itinerant beggars, one of whom is blind. Another source of the high headgear worn by Rembrandt's

beggars can be found in the well-known engraving by his countryman Lucas van Leyden, *The Triumph of Mordechai* (1515), which was one of the sources of Rembrandt's own work on the same subject. (The fourth male figure from the left in the background of the engraving wears a high hat that looks like that of Rembrandt's rat-catcher.)

- 8 B. 121; NHD 111.
- 9 There are, admittedly, exceptions—certain individuals dressed similarly to this figure (turban, beard, a long garment over a white undershirt) do appear in works such as Emanuel de Witte's *Interior of the Church in Delft with the Tomb of William the Silent* (1656, oil on canvas, 97 × 85 cm, Lille) or *Courtyard of the Beurs in Amsterdam* (1653, oil on panel, 49 × 47.5 cm, Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen), where they are placed in distinctly peripheral positions, marking them out as exotic exceptions. It must be stated that we see the same costume semiotics—turban, beard and long clothing—in an exceptionally rare depiction of Jews on the Purim scroll of the Book of Esther produced for the Sephardim of Amsterdam in Rembrandt's day by the Italian-born Jewish artist Salom (Shalom) Italia in 1640–41. See Sabar 2012 and Knotter, p. 30 and fig. 12.
- 10 B. 340, NHD 154.
- 11 Kahr 1966, 241.
- 12 In 1859 Charles Blanc, the author of another Rembrandt catalogue raisonné, identified the woman depicted as Saskia (Blanc 1859–61, vol. 2, 126–30, no. 199). In Charles Middleton's 1878 catalogue, it is no. 108, dated to 1634 and captioned "Study of Saskia; called 'The Great Jewish Bride' (*La femme de Rembrandt*)."
- 13 B. 342, NHD 169. In the English translation of Gersaint of 1752 with the title "*The Little Jewish Bride*."
- 14 Van Gelder and van Gelder-Schrijver 1938, 12.
- 15 Dittrich 1971, 68.
- 16 B. 278, NHD 237.
- 17 G. 311, p. 244. In the English translation of 1752: "*The Great Jewish Bride*."
- 18 *Catalogue de l'incomparable et la seule complete collection des estampes de Rembrandt, avec toutes leurs variations, gravées par sa propre main. Contenant 257 portraits, 161 histoires, 152 figures, et 85 paysages: faisant ensemble 655 estampes, entre lesquelles sont 165 pièces qu'on n'a pas trouvées ailleurs. Toutes des plus anciennes, belles, & mieux conditionnées épreuves. Recueilli depuis l'an 1728 jusqu'à présent, par M. Amadé de Burgy. Dont la vente publique se fera dans sa maison à La Haye, lundi le 16 juin 1755.* The Hague (Pierre Gérard van Baalen) 1755.
- 19 B. 118, NHD 190. The French title is from Gersaint's 1751 catalogue (G. 114).
- 20 "On voit à la gauche de l'Estampe, une maison à la Flamande; [...] il y a trois Figures habillées à la manière Orientale." G. 114, p. 101.
- 21 Regarding the iconography of this important figure, see Behr 1955–59.
- 22 Hinterding and Rutgers 2013, vol. 2, 2–4, cat. no. 156.
- 23 The general pattern is for only a few posthumous impressions to have survived. The reason is that the plate was kept within the family and did not fall after Rembrandt's bankruptcy and death into the possession of publishers who continued to pull copies from the plate. Take, for instance, the portrait of the Remonstrant minister Johannes Wtenbogaert (1635, B. 279, NHD 153), of which there are forty-seven catalogued impressions made during the artist's lifetime compared to only four posthumous ones. That of the younger Sylvius, Petrus (1637, B. 268) has sixty-one catalogued lifetime impressions and not a single posthumous one. For the second portrait of the older Jan Cornelisz Sylvius (1646, B. 280), made after his death, the corresponding figures are fifty-three and zero; for that of Ephraim Bueno (1647, B. 278), fifty-four and zero; for the portrait of Jan Six (1647, B. 285) sixty and, once again, zero. A significant exception is the early portrait of Jan Cornelisz Sylvius (1633, B. 266), of which the forty-eight lifetime impressions in public collections are opposed to twenty-nine later, posthumous, ones. See the observations about the plates for Rembrandt's print portraits in van Gelder and van Gelder-Schrijver 1938, 4.
- 24 Salom (Shalom) Italia, *Menasseh ben Israel*, 1642. Engraving, 18.8 × 12.9 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum (RP-P-1882-A-5911).
- 25 Hinterding and Rutgers 2013, vol. 2, 3.
- 26 In keeping both with Christian fears that their society would be infiltrated by Jews and with the Jewish practice of dressing differently than the people among whom they lived, in the early seven-

teenth-century Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, both the Christian ecclesiastical authorities and “rabbinical circles,” “in particular R[abbi Moshe ben Israel] Isserles,” were concerned that many Polish Jews did not differ in appearance from the Christians. While from the Middle Ages onwards, there had been church-made rules requiring Jews and Muslims to wear special distinguishing badges on their clothing (we shall leave aside here the question of the degree to which they were observed; the important thing is that they are recorded in documents), the *Wa’ad Arba’ Aratzot*, the central body of Jewish authority in the country, also passed a special resolution in 1607 banning both men and women from wearing non-Jewish clothing. See Machalova 2016, 111.)

- 27 Emanuel de Witte, *Interior of the Portuguese Synagogue in Amsterdam*, ca. 1680. Oil on canvas, 100 × 99 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (SK-A-3738); Romeyn de Hooghe, *Inauguration of the Portuguese Synagogue in Amsterdam*, 1675. Brush on parchment, 55.5 × 68.5 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum (RP-T-00-381).
- 28 B. 278, NHD 237.
- 29 Public collections contain three impressions of the first state (referred to in Röver’s inventory as “with a black ring”) and fifty-two impressions of the second state (“with a white ring”). The watermarks on the paper clearly indicate that the printing runs of the two states followed directly one after the other. The paper is the same, belonging to just two sorts—*Basilisk, A’.a.* and *Strasbourg lily, C’.a* or *Strasbourg lily, D.c.*, all dating from around the year 1647. No posthumous states showing work done on the plate by anyone other than Rembrandt have come down to us.
- 30 B. 266
- 31 B. 280.
- 32 B. 268.
- 33 B. 279.
- 34 B. 271.
- 35 B. 277.
- 36 B. 285.
- 37 Münz 1939–40.
- 38 Winternitz 1977.

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