

Prophecy and profit: Nicolaes van Rensselaer, Charles II and the conversion of the Jews

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This essay deals with themes which have a special place in Jan van den Berg's historical interest: millenarianism, prophecy, and the relations between Jews and Christians in the seventeenth century. Furthermore, the story told below is connected with the field of Anglo(American)-Dutch relations, which has always stirred the interest of the 'Anglophile' Van den Berg. This article is offered to him as a small token of gratitude for the stimulating way in which he has introduced me to these objects of investigation, which in the last few decades have received renewed scholarly attention from historians and theologians alike.

In November 1658 the exiled king Charles II was visited by a young man from Amsterdam by the name of Nicolaes Van Rensselaer, who had some good news to tell him: within a year and a half the king would be restored to his father's throne, his restoration being requested by the English people. Furthermore, Van Rensselaer also prophesied that Charles Stuart's, or his son's, reign would be so glorious that under it the conversion of the Jews would take place.

In the seventeenth century kings and other national leaders were often considered destined to fulfil a messianic task: Gustav II and Charles X of Sweden, Oliver Cromwell, Louis XIII and Louis XIV of France, João IV of Portugal, William III, alternatively or simultaneously were seen to be of great importance in ushering in the messianic kingdom and bringing the Jews to Palestine. Well-known theologians and millenarians such as the Bohemian Bishop Jan Amos Comenius, the Frenchman Isaac La Peyrère, the Portuguese Jesuit Antonio de Vieira and the Dane Oliger Paulli, each put their hopes on one or more of those kings.¹ Charles II was also believed to be a suited candidate for such a messianic role. Among such Royalist millenarians were the Welsh tailor Arise Evans, Walter Gostelow, and John Sanders, who during the fifties were looking forward to the exiled king as 'the means appointed by God . . . for the conversion of the Jews', he being the one whom the Jews would call their Messiah, and under whose banner they would return to Jerusalem.² Evans tried to persuade Menasseh ben Israel, whose sympathies were more with Oliver Cromwell, the Swedish king and most of all with the King of France, of his own messianic theory.³ Thus Nicolaes Van Rensselaer was not the only one to look

towards Charles II for the restoration of the Jews.

Van Rensselaer's prophecy concerning Charles's glorious return to England only became more widely known in the spring of 1660, when to all appearances his prevision seemed to have been right. Suddenly interest was aroused in his prophetic words, especially among the members of the Hartlib circle both in England and the Low Countries, such as Samuel Hartlib himself, John Durie, Henry Jessey, and Petrus Serrarius. The news about Van Rensselaer's revelation was spread by Serrarius, who was an intimate friend of Durie, Jessey, Menasseh ben Israel, and a regular correspondent of Hartlib.⁴ In May 1660 Serrarius wrote to the London Baptist preacher Henry Jessey about this messianic prophecy, and Jessey in his turn sent the letter on to Hartlib.⁵ Durie was also informed by Serrarius. The name of the prophet was not revealed in these letters — which were published in 1728 in W. Kennett's *Register and Chronicle Ecclesiastical and Civil*.⁶

'I can not but make known unto you', Serrarius wrote to Jessey on 7 May 1660, 'that there is heere a young man, aged about 21 years, of a very good family, a scholler, who hath been in October 1658 with ye king at Brussels, and told him yt it was revealed unto him, yt ye King should come upon his throne in ye eleventh year of his exile, a year and a half after yt time when this young man was with him, and that his people should call him, and joyn their hands together, yt they may have him for their King'.⁷ Serrarius had heard about this vision some time ago, but at that moment he had not thought it worthwile paying any attention to it. Times had changed, however, since it now seemed that Van Rensselaer had been very close to the mark: in May 1660 Charles II was preparing to return to England, being summoned by Parliament 'to take the government of the kingdom upon his shoulders', just as Van Rensselaer had prophesied. On 23 May 1660, after great festivities in The Hague and elsewhere, the king left Holland and he entered London six days later.

So, at the moment Serrarius was writing to Jessey Van Rensselaer's prophetic words appeared indeed to have had a great deal of truth in them and Serrarius' interest was now aroused. He sought contact with the young man, who then told him 'yt it was so, yt he was 3 weekes at Brussel in October 1658 and spoke to ye King twice per interpretem one of ye Kings chaplains', for the young student spoke neither English nor French, but Latin. He had kept his plans to visit Charles II to himself, because his family and friends, who found him foolish, or rather mad, would certainly have stopped him from going. Clearly, Serrarius had not been the only one who had had his doubts about those revelations. But Van Rensselaer could not be at rest until he had got it off his chest. Serrarius had asked him 'whether he had this in a vision or dream', and he had replied 'noe, but by such strong injections and inspirations yt he could not be at rest'. Furthermore, Van Rensselaer had said that 'he did as firmly believe it then, when neither man nor divel could imagine it, yt if ye King should have layd him in prison, giving him water and bread till it was done, he should most willingly have undergone it'. Charles, however, had done nothing of the sort: he had told him to come back to him if his prophecy would be fulfilled, in order to be

thanked accordingly. Van Rensselaer would visit Serrarius again to talk about his other prophecy 'that this King or his sonne shall be so glorious yt under him ye Jews shall be converted'. 'Sir, I most earnestly intreat you not to publish this as yett, although it be very true, what I write', Serrarius ended his letter to Jessey, 'the friends of this young man are of very good quality and well known to me, but they will not have yt any man speake of it, and heare not willingly of it'.⁸

However, Van Rensselaer's prophecy was published soon, though not by Jessey, but by Durie, to whom Serrarius had written about the Amsterdam student's revelations on 20 May 1660.⁹ They were mentioned by Durie, who was apparently impressed by Van Rensselaer's fortunate prevision, in the second edition of Thomas Thorowgood's missionary tract, *Jews in America*, which was dedicated, appropriately, to the newly restored king. In the Dedication, dated 27 June 1660 and signed by Edward Reynolds, Edmund Calamy, John Durie, and Simeon Ashe, Van Rensselaer's prophecy was referred to, emphasizing the latter part of it concerning Charles's role in the conversion of the Jews. Now that the first part had proven to be true, confidence was growing that the latter part might also be fulfilled:

If the Jews be in *America*, as is probable, because certainly that indeleble character, the Judaical badge of circumcision is found upon them, we will hope the illumination (or what else will it be called) of that young Student in Divinity of *Amsterdam*, shall be verified, who was taught in *October 1657*, *That in the year 1660 God would establish the Kingdom of England, and that Charles the second should in that year sit in the Throne of his Father*: This, by the goodness of God, and to his everlasting praise, we have seen, and wait for the rest, *your greater honor and Majesty than ever any of your Predecessors enjoyed, and . . . that your Family should be instrumental to the conversion of the Jews*.¹⁰

Through the medium of Thorowgood's well-known tract Van Rensselaer's prophecy became known to a wider public.

In August 1661 rumour had it that Van Rensselaer had had new visions concerning Charles II, as Durie wrote to Hartlib: the king would not long enjoy his life on the throne, since within three years he would be put to death because of his conversion to Roman-Catholicism. In order to enquire after this revelation Durie went to visit the young prophet, who told him, however, that it was 'a mear fiction' and that he would like Durie and his friends to contradict this report. He had added that he believed not 'yt the King would ever owny any other Religion but the Protestant Religion wherin his father dyed'.¹¹

Who was this young man, who was styled 'the prophet of the king of England'? He was born into 'a very good family' indeed, being the son of the wealthy Amsterdam merchant, Kiliaen Van Rensselaer, and Anna Van Wely, a well-to-do merchant's daughter.¹² Besides a large house on the Keizersgracht, called 'Het Gekruiste Hert' (the 'Crossed Heart'), the Van Rensselaers owned several estates, such as 'Crailo' near the village of Naarden in the province of Utrecht. It was there that Durie went to visit Nicolaes in 1661. Kiliaen Van Rensselaer,

one of the directors of the West India Company, became particularly well-known as the founder or first 'patroon' of the colony of Rensselaerswyck on the Hudson River in New Netherland, about 200 km from New Amsterdam.¹³ Rensselaerswyck was a kind of miniature feudal state, the patroon possessing many privileges. Its feudalism, based on rules laid down by Van Rensselaer, was contrary to the common land system in New Netherland and it was no wonder that Van Rensselaer's privileges gave rise to controversies, for example with the governor of New Amsterdam, Peter Stuyvesant.¹⁴ Eventually Rensselaerswyck would be the only successful patroonship, becoming one of the four largest manors in colonial New York. When in 1664 New Netherland was captured by the English, the claim of the Van Rensselaers to Fort Orange, the second major town of the province which belonged to them, was rejected by Governor Nicolls, who wanted to reduce the feudal patroonship of the Van Rensselaers; Fort Orange became an independent town, called Albany. Moreover, in 1665 their traditional right to appoint and maintain a local court was taken from them. As Charles II had made the newly conquered territory a gift to his brother James, the Van Rensselaers had to take the oath of allegiance to the king and the Duke of York. During the following years they hoped that through the good connections of Nicolaes with the royal household their colonial affairs might be arranged in a pleasant and profitable way.¹⁵

Nicolaes Van Rensselaer was born in September 1636. Like his brothers, he received a business education, but he preferred to study theology. His studies, however, were interrupted by periods in which he worked in trade. In December 1656 his mother wrote to his brother Jeremias, then director of Rensselaerswyck, that Nicolaes had given up his studies and that she had him apprenticed in a shop on the Warmoes street to Servaes Auxbrebis, a wholesale spice merchant.¹⁶ A year later, in December 1657 — just after his inward stirrings about Charles II — Nicolaes wrote to Jeremias that he was living on the Nieuwe Dijk, in 'De Twee Groene Lakens' ('The Two Green Cloths'), at the house of Willem Brughman, a wholesale cloth merchant, 'as against my will I had to give up studying, for if I had been allowed to follow my inclination I would have persevered therein, in order that thus I might have reached a desired goal, about which I am sorry'.¹⁷ In June 1658 he left Brughman to pursue his studies once again.

An interesting report of Nicolaes and his visit to Brussels, which took place in November 1658, is given in a letter by his younger brother Richard, written on 30 November 1658 to Jeremias in Rensselaerswyck.¹⁸ Richard informed his brother that Nicolaes had gone to Brussels 'to see the king of Scotland, who granted him an audience'. Nicolaes had delivered his letters and writings, which the king had examined. As to his prophecy: 'many of those [present] believed it and others doubted it'. As Jeremias might wonder what business their brother had to see the king about, Richard would tell him. During his apprenticeship to Brughman Nicolaes had said all the time that he wished to go to England. He had kept this up for some weeks and then had left his master. Having gone home to his mother, 'he became so devout that he never [missed] a sermon,

whether on a week day or on Sunday, and always said that he wished to resume his studies, for that God called him to become a minister and if mother would not let him, he would wait until he was of age and then use his patrimony to study'.¹⁹ Having nothing to do, Nicolaes had written some small books, which he had showed to a cousin, whose comment had been that it was 'nothing but foolishness and that there was no sense to it'.²⁰ In the midst of all this devotion Nicolaes had kept saying that he wanted to go to Antwerp to speak to the king of Scotland, which he would have done long ago but for the fact that he had no money. At last, having obtained some money from various sources — but apparently not from his wealthy relatives — he had gone, at the beginning of November, to Brussels by way of Rotterdam. From what he says and does, Richard told his brother, 'we notice that he is a good deal of a Quaker, for he claims that he has the spirit of truth, that in his dreams he sees many visions . . .'. Now, Quakerism to the Van Rensselaer family meant so much as insanity: 'We fear that he is half crazy'.²¹ Jeremias was asked to write to Nicolaes about 'this foolishness' and to advise him to leave these things alone.²² After Nicolaes had returned from his royal visit he had said that, if it pleased God, he would go to Brussels to see the king again within two or three months. His family hoped to talk him out of this. Probably they succeeded: nothing is known of a second visit by Nicolaes to Charles Stuart in Brussels.

After it had turned out that Nicolaes had not been all that crazy in predicting Charles' restoration, the happy prophet went to England to remind the king of his prediction.²³ He had kissed the king's hand and as a token of his gratitude the king had given him a snuffbox, with his own miniature on the lid.²⁴ Somehow this course of things seemed to bring about a change of mind among his relatives concerning Nicolaes' madness. As Jan Baptist, another brother, wrote to Jeremias, 'What will come of it, time will show. We have heretofore always laughed at him'.²⁵ Something indeed would come of it for the Van Rensselaer family in due time, as we will see below.

Presumably Nicolaes continued his theological studies. In October 1662 he was received in the Classis of Amsterdam. On 19 March 1663 one of his relatives, the Reverend Johannes Carolinus, minister of the Dutch Reformed Church at Nijkerk, wrote to Jeremias to congratulate him

on the passing of the preparatory examination, and consequently the first fruit of his studies and the first step upwards, of your brother Nicolaus, at whose examination I was present to my entire satisfaction and who preached his first sermon, namely, a trial sermon before the administration of Holy Communion, in my stead, here at Nieukerk, to the great satisfaction of our congregation. May the Great Pastor of His flock grant him a double measure of His [spirit] and an able and lawful calling to the highly important office of prophesying.²⁶

In September 1663 Jeremias wrote to his mother that he hoped that Nicolaes would come to Rensselaerswyck, in order that he himself could make a journey to Amsterdam.²⁷ Nicolaes did not cross the Atlantic Ocean, however, but went to England instead. He was appointed chaplain to the embassy of the newly appointed Dutch ambassador Michiel van Gogh, who left for England in the

spring of 1664 to remain there till January 1666.²⁸ Undoubtedly Nicolaes was acquainted with his secretaries, among whom was Petrus Cunaeus.²⁹ Nicolaes seems to have stayed in England during the whole of the second Anglo-Dutch war. He was favoured by the king, who gave him a license to preach to the Dutch congregation at Westminster. Furthermore, he was ordained a deacon of the Church of England by the Bishop of Salisbury and was appointed lecturer at St. Mary's, Lothbury, London. His ordination in the Anglican Church, however, was to cause him trouble in later years.

'That brother Nicolaes has become chaplain to the honorable Ambassador van Gogh in England and intends to stay there, might, it seems to me, be quite convenient if there should be war between his Majesty of England and the Sovereign States in obtaining a patent from his royal majesty . . .', thus wrote Jeremias to Jan Baptist in April 1665.³⁰ The Van Rensselaers hoped that their brother's relations with the British monarchy might be of some help to alleviate the difficult circumstances in the domain of Rensselaerswyck, caused by the British victory in New England. In order to achieve a good arrangement for their colony, they appealed to the king and the Duke of York, referring to Nicolaes' prediction. It was hoped that their connections with the Duke of York through Nicolaes would make it easier to obtain a patent from the king, which the colony needed in case a war between England and Holland would break out; then the king would confiscate all property of Dutch subjects, whereas if the patent was entered in the name of one of the Van Rensselaers and he was the king's subject, according to the oath of allegiance, the Van Rensselaers would retain the colony.³¹

In the summer of 1667, however, nothing had been heard as yet about a patent for Rensselaerswyck and the governor of New York was still waiting for the Duke of York's decision concerning this Dutch colony. 'If our brother Nicolaes on that side has obtained anything that is good, our prospects will be fine . . .', Jeremias wrote.³² In 1670 the Van Rensselaers still had no royal patent from the Duke of York.³³ In 1674 Nicolaes and Richard went to England together to seek to obtain the patent from the Duke of York, hoping to secure their property rights and jurisdictional privileges not only in Rensselaerswyck but also over the town of Albany.³⁴ In July 1674 the Duke gave orders to the new governor in New York, Sir Edmund Andros, to take the matter in hand and to make a report thereof 'as favourably for them as justice and the laws will allow'.³⁵ Finally, in 1678, the Duke warranted Andros to issue a patent for the colony of Rensselaerswyck, in which nearly all claims of the Van Rensselaers were accepted, including their claim to Albany. 'This is an evident mark of his great favor toward us and inviolable justice is shown in the passing of a just judgement after the long lapse of 26 years in a matter which could not be righted in so many years. *Sic tandem justa et bene causa triumphat*', was Nicolaes' comment.³⁶

Nicolaes' prophetic activities had not stopped in 1657 with his vision of Charles Stuart's restoration. During 1665 and 1666 some other revelations which he had

received appeared in print, one of the pamphlets becoming so popular that it ran to four editions at least. In these Dutch pamphlets he showed himself to be a prophet of penitence in the manner of Old Testament prophets, uttering in biblical phrases his warnings for the severe divine judgements to come.³⁷ He addressed himself again to Charles II as well as to all inhabitants of England, but he did not spare his own countrymen either. Since he apparently saw no differences between the sinfulness and fleshly strivings of the British and the Dutch, he thought the same wording could be used, with some slight adaptations. His call to repentance was particularly directed to his native town Amsterdam; this apple of the Lord's eye, which had been exalted by Him like her sister Jerusalem, would surely undergo the same fate of destruction as the Holy City, if it did not hasten to turn away from its lustful ways.³⁸ He also predicted the conversion of the Turks, pagans, and the Jews.³⁹ Clearly, with the fateful year 1666 approaching and even beginning — the year in which 'Babylon' would fall and the millennium would begin — it seemed the perfect moment to publish these revelations.

There have also been preserved three poems, dating from 1666, presumably in Nicolaes' own handwriting, which deal with Dutch political affairs. The subject of the first poem was the restoration of young William, Prince of Orange. Nicolaes predicted that in 1666 William would save his country from the hands of its enemies. If, however, in that year the young hero would not be restored, then the Dutch Republic would speedily go downhill, only to end in nothing less than utter ruin.⁴⁰ In one of the other poems, he sketched the situation of contemporary Europe in a few phrases, urging the Dutch to turn their back on the French and to make peace with the English. The Dutch Republic was the bride with whom all kings would like to dance, but only the devil would marry the French.⁴¹

It is not known when Van Rensselaer returned from England to the Low Countries. In a letter which he wrote some time between 1667 and 1670 he complained about having been confined by his family, first in Amsterdam, then in Delft, because of supposed madness.⁴² However this may be, in 1670 he matriculated at Leiden University as 'Verbum Divini Minister'.⁴³ Clearly, he intended to move to America, for in the following year Jeremias was asked to enquire in New York after a vacancy for him.⁴⁴ On 4 April 1672 he was accepted by the Classis of Amsterdam as 'Expectant for Foreign Churches', after having delivered a sermon and shown his certificates from some members of the German (Dutch) Church in London, as well as from the Leiden Consistory, as to his doctrine and life.⁴⁵

In 1674 he went over to New England, accompanying the new governor Andros. After a period of fourteen months of Dutch rule New Netherland had just been restored to England by the Treaty of Westminster and Charles II had just given a new patent to the Duke of York. In 1675 Nicolaes became director of Rensselaerswyck.⁴⁶ He married Alida Schuyler, daughter of the manorial landowner Philip Pietersen Schuyler, a powerful figure in local and Indian affairs.⁴⁷ Nicolaes was also appointed minister of the Dutch Reformed Church

at Albany and at Rensselaerswyck, an appointment which was achieved through the support of the Duke of York. His Royal Highness had written an unusual letter of recommendation for him to governor Andros — which showed how much the Duke favoured the Van Rensselaers — saying that he would like to signify to the parishioners that he would look upon their compliance in this matter of providing Van Rensselaer with a post 'as a mark of their respect and good inclination towards him'.⁴⁸

Nevertheless, soon serious difficulties arose, because one of Nicolaes' colleagues in New York, domine William Van Nieuwenhuysen, questioned the lawfulness of his ministry, since he had been ordained in the Church of England. According to Van Nieuwenhuysen, someone ordained in England had no ministerial status in the Dutch Church, unless he could show a certificate of the Classis of Amsterdam. The question at stake, 'whether a Minister ordained in England by a Bishop, coming here and having Certificate thereof, bee not sufficient ordination to preach and Administer ye Sacraments in ye Dutch here or no', was considered to be of great importance, even more so since governor Andros tried to impose Episcopacy upon the Dutch against their will. Van Nieuwenhuysen forbade Nicolaes to baptize any children, because 'Domine Renselaer was no Minister, and his ordinacon [sic] not good'.⁴⁹ Nicolaes complained to the court about Van Nieuwenhuysen's contemptuous words. Van Nieuwenhuysen then put down in writing the conditions under which an Episcopal Minister might be acknowledged in a Dutch Church, that is that he promised to conduct himself in his services conformably to the Confession, Catechism and Mode of Government of the Dutch Reformed Church. This requirement clearly appeared, Van Nieuwenhuysen argued, from the 53rd Article of the Constitution or the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands. The case was solved when Nicolaes promised to conform to the public Church Service and discipline of the Dutch Church.⁵⁰

This case barely out of the way, a new one presented itself. In September 1676, Nicolaes was confined in his house by the magistrates of Albany because of 'some dubious words spoken by the said Do in his Sermon or Doctrine', which seemed to refer to an unorthodox interpretation of the doctrine of original sin.⁵¹ He was soon released, however, on the orders of the governor. The complaints against him had been made by Jacob Leisler, a rich merchant, characterized as an obstinate, narrow-minded man, and his son-in-law, Jacob Milborne. Van Rensselaer's colleague at Albany, Reverend Gideon Schaats, had also accused him of disorderly preaching, to which Nicolaes had replied that this was a false lie.⁵² The dispute between the two ministers was solved, the court deciding that 'Parties shall both forgive and forget as it becomes Preachers of the Reformed Religion to do', adding that also 'all previous variances, church differences and disagreements and provocations shall be consumed in the fire of Love, a perpetual silence and forbearance being imposed on each respectively, to live together as Brothers for an example to the worthy Congregation, for edification to the Reformed Religion and further for the removal and banishment of all scandals . . .'.⁵³

There also came about a reconciliation between Van Rensselaer on the one hand and Leisler and Milborne on the other, but when it came to the question who had to pay the court costs peace was soon over. Finally, after governor Andros had sided with Van Rensselaer, Leisler and Milborne had to give in. They were ordered to pay the whole charge. More than a decade later their names became widely known, as they figured prominently in 'Leisler's Rebellion' (1689-1691), an anti-Stuart and anti-Catholic revolution, sparked by the Glorious Revolution. The political struggle between manorial proprietors such as the Van Rensselaers and the Schuylers, who had been favoured by the governors, and rich merchants who had no land, such as Leisler and Milborne, was an important factor in this rebellion. Leisler, supported by his son-in-law, appointed himself governor of New York, being convinced that the new governor to be sent from the England by William and Mary would applaud his actions. The end of it was that both Leisler and Milborne were hanged on the same day.⁵⁴

Obviously Van Rensselaer's career as domine was not a successful one, ending, in September 1677, with his deposition from the ministry by governor Andros, on account of his bad and offensive life, as his opponents had it.⁵⁵ He died in November 1678. It was reported that he possessed the gift of prevision until his death. Feeling that he would die within a short time he had asked for a solicitor. When his young secretary, Robert Livingston, son of a Scottish divine, who within a short time made a very successful career in the colony, had entered the room Nicolaes had said, 'Send that young man away', telling his wife that he would have nothing to do with him, because this young man would be her second husband. Within a year Alida Schuyler was indeed married to Livingston, who in the next few decades would become a powerful figure in New England.⁵⁶

Nicolaes Van Rensselaer's inward stirrings concerning the restoration of Charles II were to be of greater consequence to himself as well as his family than presumably he — or his relatives, for that matter — could ever have imagined. The revelations by this 'Quaker' turned out to bring them political advantages in later years. Thanks to the good relations with the British monarchy, established by Nicolaes, the Van Rensselaers eventually secured their position in New England. Domine Nicolaes himself also enjoyed the support of the Duke of York and the English governor of New York during his last years in Rensselaerswyck. Furthermore, the interference by governor Andros in the controversy with Leisler and Milborne over his theological ideas was one of the major incidents that gradually brought about a schism in the ranks of the New York elite. The confrontation in the case of Nicolaes Van Rensselaer of the two factions, that of the manorial proprietors and that of the rich merchants, led to a schism which largely determined the character and complexion of the Leisler Rebellion.⁵⁷

The government of Charles II was marked by a tolerant attitude towards the Jews. Under his rule the Jewish community increased and flourished. Recogni-

tion of the religious status of the Jews was granted in 1673. While in exile he had promised certain Royalist Jews in Amsterdam toleration in return for a loan. When, soon after the Restoration, he was petitioned to expel the newly formed Jewish community, this appeal was rejected, the king issuing a written statement in which it was said that 'they [the Jews] should not look towards any protector other than his Majesty: during the continuance of whose lifetime they need feel no trepidation because of any sect that might oppose them, inasmuch as he himself would be their advocate and assist them with all his power'. Although they probably will have applauded such words, for the Royalist millenarians it was a far cry from the role they had ascribed to their British Messiah as the one who would lead the Jews to Palestine. That part of Van Rensselaer's prophecy was not to be fulfilled. Its other part, however, had brought the once youthful prophet and his family more profit than they could ever have expected.

Notes

1. I thank Dr. C.W. Schoneveld (Leiden) for the correction of the English text. For 'messianic nationalism', see David S. Katz, *Philo-Semitism and the Readmission of the Jews to England 1603-1655*, Oxford 1982, 123-124; R.H. Popkin, 'Menasseh ben Israel and Isaac la Peyrere. II', *Studia Rosenthaliana XVIII* (1984), 12-20.
2. Christopher Hill, *Antichrist in Seventeenth-Century England*, London 1971, 114-115; idem, *Change and Continuity in Seventeenth-Century England*, London 1974, 48-77; Katz, *Philo-Semitism*, 121-124; Popkin, 'Menasseh ben Israel', 14-20.
3. Popkin, 'Menasseh ben Israel', 16, quoting Menasseh's words according to Evans: 'that . . . he [Menasseh] could not believe that ever King Charles should rise again and be restored to his Empire; but . . . *Oliver Protector*, or the King of Swedland is more liker to do it than he, and specially the King of *France* is the most liker to be our Messiah'. Menasseh would have just about adopted La Peyrère's French nationalist Messianism.
4. For Petrus Serrarius, see E.G.E. van der Wall, *De mystieke chiliast Petrus Serrarius (1600-1669) en zijn wereld*, Leiden 1987 (diss.); idem, 'The Amsterdam Millenarian Petrus Serrarius and the Circle of Anglo-Dutch Philo-Judaists', in: J. van den Berg & Ernestine G.E. van der Wall (eds.), *Jewish-Christian Relations in the Seventeenth Century. Studies and Documents* (forthcoming).
5. There is a copy of Serrarius' letter to Jessey in Hartlib's handwriting, MS Sloane 648, f. 45 (BL London).
6. White Kennett, *A Register and Chronicle Ecclesiastical and Civil I*, London 1728, 137-139. Both letters seem to have been preserved among John Worthington's papers.
7. MS Sloane 648, f. 45. This is a copy of this passage from Serrarius' letter to Jessey in Hartlib's handwriting. The same passage, with slight differences, is published in Kennett, *A Register*, 137-138.
8. *Ibidem*.
9. *Ibidem*.
10. 'To the King's Most Excellent Majesty', in: Thomas Thorowgood, *Jews in America or Probabilities that those Indians are Judaical made more Probable by Some Additionals to the Former Conjectures*, London 1660, pp. VI-VII. On p. VII there is a reference to a 'Letter of P. Serario to Mr. Jo. Dury and Mr. H.J.. May 4, 1660'. See also R.H. Popkin, 'The Rise and Fall of the Jewish Indian Theory' (forthcoming).
11. Durie to Hartlib, 19.VIII.1661, MS Sloane 648, f. 44v.
12. For Nicolaes Van Rensselaer (1636-1678), see *Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography* VI, 251; *The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography* VII, 524; *Dictionary of American*

Biography XIX, 209-210; Lawrence H. Leder, 'The Unorthodox Domine: Nicholas Van Rensselaer', *New York History* XXXV (1954), 166-176. On 25.IX.1636 his father wrote to a relative: 'My wife is in childbed of a young son, whom I have named after my uncle *Claes van Rensselaer*, deceased'.

13. For Kiliaen Van Rensselaer (c. 1580-1646) and the colony of Rensselaerswyck, see *NNBW* VII, 1043-1044; J.S.C. Jessurun, *Kiliaen van Rensselaer van 1623 tot 1636*, 's-Gravenhage 1917 (diss.); E.B. O'Callaghan, *The Documentary History of the State of New York* IV, Albany 1851, 15-17; Samuel G. Nissenson, *The Patroon's Domain*, New York 1937; S.E. Morrison, *The Oxford History of the American People*, New York 1965, 75-77; John E. Pomfret, *Founding the American Colonies 1583-1660*, New York etc. 1970, 285 ff.; Sung Bok Kim, *Landlord and Tenant in Colonial New York. Manorial Society, 1664-1775*, 1978, 10-12, 19-20, 32-35 and *passim*. During the first period Rensselaerswyck was owned by five families, Kiliaen Van Rensselaer and his heirs (a two-fifths share); the geographer, theologian, linguist Jan De Laet, director of the Dutch West Indian Company and its first historian (one-fifth); Toussain Muysart (one-fifth); and Samuel Blommaert and Adam Bessels (together one-fifth). The Van Rensselaers took sole management of the domain. The partnership was liquidated in 1685 (see Bok Kim, *Landlord and Tenant*, 11 n. 20).
14. In 1664 the relations between Stuyvesant and the Van Rensselaers were not so bad that they did not want to buy a negro (400 guilders) and negress (350 guilders) from him for the colony. See A.J.F. Van Laer (tr. & ed.), *Correspondence of Jeremias Van Rensselaer 1651-1674*, Albany 1932, 364-365.
15. See Bok Kim, *Landlord and Tenant*, 10-12.
16. Van Laer, *Correspondence of Jeremias Van Rensselaer*, 35-36. Servaex Auxbrebis (1611-1669) was married to Anna Broen, a daughter of one of the directors of the Dutch West India Company.
17. Van Laer, *Correspondence of Jeremias Van Rensselaer*, 67.
18. Van Laer, *Correspondence of Jeremias Van Rensselaer*, 116-117.
19. Van Laer, *Correspondence of Jeremias Van Rensselaer*, 116.
20. Van Laer, *Correspondence of Jeremias Van Rensselaer*, 117.
21. *Ibidem*.
22. *Ibidem*.
23. Jan Baptist Van Rensselaer to Jeremias, 7.IX.1660, see Van Laer, *Correspondence of Jeremias Van Rensselaer*, 233.
24. This royal gift is still in the possession of the Van Rensselaers.
25. Van Laer, *Correspondence of Jeremias Van Rensselaer*, 234.
26. Van Laer, *Correspondence of Jeremias Van Rensselaer*, 311.
27. Van Laer, *Correspondence of Jeremias Van Rensselaer*, 329.
28. For Michiel Van Gogh (1602/3-1668), see O. Schutte, *Repertorium der Nederlandse vertegenwoordigers, residerende in het buitenland 1584-1810*, 's-Gravenhage 1976, 101 no. 64. On 28.IV.1664 he was appointed ambassador. In September 1665 he was in Winchester and Salisbury; in November in Oxford. He left England c.3.I.1666. In 1664 Van Gogh had to deal with Charles II about the conquest of New Netherland by the English.
29. Petrus Cunaeus, son of the Leiden Professor Petrus Cunaeus, was taken prisoner in July 1665 and was only to be released in January 1666 (in exchange for Oudart). See Schutte, *Repertorium*, 102.
30. Van Laer, *Correspondence of Jeremias Van Rensselaer*, 375.
31. Van Laer, *Correspondence of Jeremias Van Rensselaer*, 366.
32. Van Laer, *Correspondence of Jeremias Van Rensselaer*, 391.
33. Van Laer, *Correspondence of Jeremias Van Rensselaer*, 427.
34. Van Laer, *Correspondence of Jeremias Van Rensselaer*, 465. See also Bok Kim, *Landlord and Tenant*, 19-20.
35. Quoted by Bok Kim, *Landlord and Tenant*, 19.
36. A.J.F. Van Laer, *Correspondence of Maria Van Rensselaer 1669-1689*, Albany 1935, 24.
37. The titles of these pamphlets are:

Eenige seer aenmerckelijcke ende wonderlijcke voorseggingen van het gene geopenbaert en

vertoont is aen Nicolaes Rensenlaer, rakende dese jegenwoordigen en toekomende tijden. Zynde een trouwhertige waerschouwinge ende op-weckinge tot ware boete en bekeeringe, desen vierden druck, na den copye van Amsterdam, gedrukt voor Joris Claessen van Kemp, 1665 (copy in Royal Library, The Hague, Knuttel 9211).

De openbaringe van des conincks propheet van Engelandt/genaemt Nicolaes Rensenlaer . . ., s.l.s.a. (copy in Bibliotheca Thysiana, Leiden, Pamphlet 8025).

Eenige openbaringen uyt de Copie van 't geene Nicolaes Rensenlaer op getekent heeft/dat hem geopenbaert is, s.l.s.a. (copy in Bibliotheca Thysiana, Pamphlet 6984). It has a short preface by a certain 'W.G.', who warns the reader not to show contempt for this prophecy, since its author predicted the restoration of the King of England in a time in which it was not apparent at all that Charles Stuart would ever be restored. The first two pages are similar to Pamphlet 8025, except for a few slight alterations, e.g., 'England' has been replaced by 'united land'; 'English town' by 'united town'.

38. *Eenige openbaringen*, 3.

39. *De openbaringe*.

40. 'Een gedicht van voorseggingen op de herstellinge van de Prins van Orangien' (Bibliotheca Thysiana, Pamphlet 7943):

Noch van dit selfde jaer
Godt weet of t'niet is waer
Sal der Oranjen Spruijt
Sijn taeken breijden uijt.

Voor dees' Seeven landen
En rucken onsen Staet
Uijt het gedreijghde quaet
En uijt der boosen handen

Doch soo dien jongen Heldt
Van 't jaer niet wort herstelt
Soo raeckt den Staet en landt

In kommer en in Schandt
In d'uijterste ruijnen
Sal 't landt en Staet verdwijnen.

41. 'Een ander vers' (Bibliotheca Thysiana, Pamphlet 7943):

't Scheynt Neerlandt is de Bruijt daer Koningen om danssen,
Maect Vreede met Eng'landt, de Duyvel trouwt de Franssen.

42. Leder, 'The Unorthodox Domine', 168.

43. His matriculation took place on 19.XI.1670; his name was spelt 'Van Rentzelaer'.

44. Van Laer, *Correspondence of Jeremias Van Rensselaer*, 445.

45. Hugh Hastings, *Ecclesiastical Records State of New York I*, Albany 1901, 623-624.

46. See E.B. O'Callaghan (ed.), *Calendar of Historical Manuscripts II*, Albany 1886, 39.

47. For the Schuyler family, see i.a. Bok Kim, *Landlord and Tenant, passim*.

48. Hastings, *Ecclesiastical Records I*, 652; Duke of York to Governor Andros: 'Nichalaus [sic] Van Rensselaer having made his humble request unto me, that I would recommend him to be Minister of one of the Dutch churches in New York or New Albany when a vacancy shall happen; whereunto I have consented. I do hereby desire you to signify the same unto the parishioners at yt (place) wherein I shall looke upon their compliance as a mark of their respect and good inclination towards me'. See also Bok Kim, *Landlord and Tenant*, 19.

49. For this affair, see Leder, 'The Unorthodox Domine'. See also E.B. O'Callaghan, *The Documentary History of the State of New York III*, Albany 1850, 526-530; Hastings, *Ecclesiastical Records I*, 678-682; E.T. Corwin, *A Manual of the Reformed Church in America 1628-1902*, New York 1902⁴, 51.

50. Hastings, *Ecclesiastical Records I*, 681-682. See also the letter by Van Nieuwenhuysen to the Classis of Amsterdam, 30.V.1676 (pp. 684-688).
51. See Leder, 'The Unorthodox Domine', 169-173. See also O'Callaghan, *Documentary History III*, 527; Hastings, *Ecclesiastical Records I*, 689-691.
52. Hastings, *Ecclesiastical Records I*, 676-677.
53. O'Callaghan, *Documentary History III*, 529; Hastings, *Ecclesiastical Records I*, 691.
54. Leder, 'The Unorthodox Domine', 173-174; Bok Kim, *Landlord and Tenant*, 44 ff.
55. Hastings, *Ecclesiastical Records I*, 702.
56. See Maunsell Van Rensselaer, *Annals of the Van Rensselaers in the United States*, Albany 1888, 21-22. For Robert Livingston, see Bok Kim, *Landlord and Tenant*, 34 and *passim*.
57. Leder, 'The Unorthodox Domine', 173.