

Chymia:
Science and Nature in Medieval
and Early Modern Europe

Edited by

Miguel López Pérez, Didier Kahn
and Mar Rey Bueno

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P U B L I S H I N G

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ISAAC HOLLANDUS REVISITED

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There have been times when ‘Isaac Hollandus’ and his supposed son (or brother) ‘Johannes Isaaci’ were among the most famous alchemists of Europe. Kunckel spoke of ‘the incomparable Isaac Hollandus’, who ‘had more knowledge in his little finger than Van Helmont in his whole body’; Morin in his *Astrologica Gallica* wished to imitate ‘Alkimiae Principem sapientissimum Isaacum Hollandum’, and Hartprecht presented him, on the title page of his edition (1659) as ‘highly enlightened, profound and famous for his great experience’.¹ Isaac Hollandus partly owed his former great fame to the idea that he (or they) lived in the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries. Paracelsus would have read and used his (their) works, though he never mentions his (their) name. ‘They’ fell out of grace at the beginning of the twentieth century, when ‘they’ were exposed as postparacelsians.

In this paper I will discuss some old and new myths, the present state of the question and future perspectives. This will take us back in time from scholarly and creative publications of the twentieth century to successively the printed editions, the early manuscript reception in German, and the earliest Dutch manuscripts.

The Hollandus myth

The myth that Isaac Hollandus would have inspired Paracelsus came up early; it was caused by a number of similarities between their works, which made their readers suppose a direct relation. In his *Tractatus varii* (1594), Bernard G. Penot (ca. 1520-1617) says that Paracelsus derived many ideas from earlier authorities and took his *tria prima* from the work of Isaac Hollandus.² As early as 1582, Penot had selected and published a fragment from Isaac’s theory which might support this view (see *infra*, note 28). In his *De Denario medico* (1608) he goes farther: nothing that Paracelsus ever wrote was of his own invention, except the rudeness; if only all the works of the great Isaac Hollandus and his brilliant son

Joannes could be found and published, those of Paracelsus could be thrown away. When Paracelsus predicted the advent of the prophet Elias Artista, who would reveal all secrets, he really meant that Isaac's works would become public in the future.³

In his dedication of the Latin edition of the *Opera Mineralia* (1600) to Georg Eberhard count of Solms, a certain L.D. had already presented the idea that Paracelsus depended on Isaac Hollandus as a truth universally accepted, adding that Paracelsus certainly would not grudge Isaac his due praise.⁴ As nobody ever seems to have met (one, or either) Hollandus in flesh and blood, he was tentatively dated somewhere between Arnaldus de Villanova, as his most recent source, and Paracelsus. This was generally believed and repeated till about 1900.

The Hollandus debate in the early 20th century

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the old myth was challenged, and eventually reversed.⁵ The discussion was launched in 1908, by a letter from Sudhoff to E. O. von Lippmann. Von Lippman had mentioned Isaac Hollandus in a publication on potassium, innocently stating that Isaac lived about 1450.⁶ Sudhoff pointed out that there was no material evidence at all that these works would be anything but postparacelsian. Von Lippmann was converted to Sudhoff's opinion; in 1916 he wrote that Ben Jonson's play *The Alchemist* (printed in 1610) supported a late date, and in 1919 he gave a detailed discussion of all the evidence that Hollandus was a postparacelsian.⁷ Holgen (1917) and Diergart (1919) supported his point of view;⁸ Schelenz (1917), Jorissen (1917-1918) and Moerman (1932) tried to maintain an earlier date for Isaac Hollandus,⁹ but their opponents argued that their reasons were entirely unconvincing.¹⁰ Sudhoff 1934 can be seen as the last voice in the debate.¹¹ From then on, the question: 'When did Isaac Hollandus live?', invariably followed by two options: 'Before or after Paracelsus?' was decided in favour of 'After Paracelsus'.

A by-product of the Hollandus-discussion was a work of fiction: the novel *Isaac Hollandus, de alchemist van Stolwijk* (Zeist, De Torentrens, 1937) by the chemist-pharmacist dr. Marius Wagenaar. Combining a modern view on date with an earlier myth on place, the author takes 1608-1610 as the time of action, located in Stolwijk. Boerhaave was the first to mention Stolk or Stolwijk, near Gouda, as the place of origin of the Hollandi; later works usually take this over as a fact, though Boerhaave never tells us where he found his information.¹² Now Borel, in his

Bibliotheca Chimica, mentions ‘Isaac pater & filius, chymici sunt ex Stolcio & sequentia composuerunt opera’, followed by a list of titles.¹³ Apparently Boerhaave has mistaken this reference, possibly via a note ‘ex Stolic.’ If so, Isaac did not come from Stolwijk, but from a work by Daniel Stolicus which Borel consulted for his bibliography. We will see later that it is not even very likely that Isaac really was a Hollandus.

Wagenaar describes the last years of Isaac’s life, when he and his son Johannes had settled in Stolwijk. The illiterate and superstitious natives of Stolwijk do not trust the alchemists; Isaac is even tried for witchcraft. Isaac is eager to find the philosophers’ stone before his death; his son Johannes secretly tries to make the elixir of life to restore his old father’s poor health. It will hardly surprise the reader that eventually both Isaac and Johannes are disappointed: the stone does not work and the elixir is the equally ineffective, or even worse than useless.

Wagenaar freely mixes fact and fiction, as is usual in this sort of book.¹⁴ Others sometimes present speculations on the Hollandi as hard facts. One of these myths is the idea that they were Jewish (as the works are liberally sprinkled with the Holy Trinity, Jesus Christ, etc., this is obviously untrue), and that Isaac was a diamond cutter and Johannes a physician.¹⁵ Isaac’s leadership of a kind of proto-Rosicrucian society is equally mythological.¹⁶

The late dating of Hollandus had consequences for the explanation of the fact that Paracelsus and Hollandus never refer to each other, though there are similarities between their works that have inspired a (possibly mistaken) belief that one of them must be plagiarizing the other. Diergart¹⁷ had called Isaac Hollandus a ‘falsification’, and his point of view is summarized by Curtis Schuh as follows:

It has now been established that Hollandus wrote after Paracelsus but wanted to pretend that he antedated his writings. He therefore omitted any mention of sixteenth century authorities, because Paracelsus died in 1541.¹⁸

This view explains why Hollandus’ reputation was so much damaged: he is not only later than tradition had it, but he assumed a fake personality, deliberately pretending that he was earlier than he actually was to cover the fact that he plagiarized Paracelsus.

The status quaestionis

We owe the latest summary of the status questionis concerning ‘Hollandus’ to Julian Paulus (1998).¹⁹ Paulus rightly points out that there

is no reliable biographical evidence about the 'Hollandi' at all. Some of the works current under these names show Paracelsian influence, and therefore must have been written in the sixteenth century or later. The earliest manuscripts are from about 1560. Because of the name 'Hollandus' they have been supposed to be from Holland, but this is quite uncertain; little or no research has been done on the content and reception of their works.

This is quite true: there is a great silence around 'Hollandus' in scholarly literature about alchemy since the second half of the twentieth century.²⁰ This probably has to do with the lack of information on his (or their) person(s) and life and the date, place and language of origin of his (or their) works. The huge quantity of manuscripts and printed editions is rather discouraging, and if the author (or authors) is supposed to be plagiarizing Paracelsus, he is hardly a person from whom great honour can be derived.

Yet, from a historical point of view, 'Hollandus' was a very important and influential author (or firm?). Could anybody ever have got so famous as an alchemist as he did, by just copying phrases and ideas from Paracelsus? It is interesting that Angelo Sala calls Raymundus and Arnaldus, Paracelsus and Isaac Hollandus the four best alchemists ever known;²¹ Raymundus and Arnaldus certainly belong to Isaac's favourite authorities.

The many works in manuscript and print associated with this author (or these authors) are usually and conveniently classed as mineral, vegetable and animal works. The mineral work usually opens with a prologue which explains why the mineral work is a lot safer than the vegetable or the animal work, advising the reader, addressed as 'my child', to start on the mineral work.²² This is followed by a series of varied 'works of the ancients', by recipes for elixirs from aquaforts and procedures to prepare the salts and oils of the metals. The order of other treatises belonging to the mineral work can vary; these include a treatise on how to make the philosophers' stone from the two luminaries (sol and luna), the three orders of the elixir, a basic work of twelve months on gold, silver and mercury, a treatise on projection, and a number of shorter recipes. The procedures are usually described in full detail; theoretical speculations are often introduced by 'Now my child might ask', and closed by 'Now we will go back to our work.' 'This is what the ancients really meant, when they said...' is the standard opening of some short references to alchemical allegories.

To the vegetable work belong general theories about nature and the elements. The practical part discusses two different ways to prepare the

quintessence of herbs, followed by the work on wine. The vegetable work also includes treatises on the quintessence of sugar, chelidony and sundew, and the famous work on lead (*Opus Saturni*),²³ the reason given for this is that the vegetable stone from Saturn is an excellent medicine.²⁴ Works on glass and enamel were also among the vegetable work, probably because the potassium needed for this was made from plants.

The animal work includes preparations of the quintessences of honey and of human blood, and several works on urine. The works usually include pious considerations, moral exhortations ('praise God and be generous to the poor') and urgent demands to reserve the more special secrets for the worthy only.

The Hollandus' original tongue

As a start, I can do little more than just explore some points concerning the language and date of origin of the works ascribed to 'Hollandus', or the 'Hollandi'. In his *Symbolum aureae Mensae*, Michael Maier mentions two Hollandi, father and son, both named Isaac. Isaac junior wrote in the vernacular, 'vernaculo, *Belgico* idiomate'; the mineral work was printed in Latin, and the vegetable work is available in plenty 'in manuscripto teutonico'.²⁵ I understand this as referring to Dutch as the original language, since *Belgica* at the time is a general name for the Low Countries. The meaning of 'teutonico' is very much context dependent; Maier probably means German, though there is some confusion about this word and Diets, Duuts, Duits, Deutsch and Dutch (in old French: thiose), which in a broad sense all mean 'the language of the people'.

Melchior Adam, in his short account of the life of Paracelsus, mentions a 'Jacobus Isaacus Hollandus', who wrote excellent works *linguâ vernaculâ*.²⁶ Adam does not tell us in which vernacular, but according to Gabriel Naudé, who quotes Penot 1608 as well, Adam says that the learned 'Isaac Hollandois' wrote in German.²⁷

Now Penot was the first who ever published any 'Hollandus' material (1582),²⁸ but he does not tell us who translated these texts into Latin, and from which language they were translated. Some of the later editions of Hollandus offer information on this point, though the terms used may be confusing. The title page of the Latin edition of the *Opera Mineralia* (Middelburg 1600) states that the book was faithfully translated from the best Teutonic manuscripts, which certainly means: from the Dutch. In the Low Countries, the words *Teutonice* and *Germanice* were not synonymous, but were used to differentiate between Dutch and German; the first Dutch-French-Latin dictionary, printed by Plantin in Antwerp

(1573), is called *Thesaurus Theutonicae linguae, Schat der Nederduytxher Spraken*. ‘Nederduits’ may mean (and now means) Low German, but in the past it usually just meant Dutch, as opposed to ‘Hoogduits’ (German). In English, ‘High Dutch’ definitely meant German, but just ‘Dutch’ could also mean German.

Johann Hartprecht, in his edition of the *Opus Vegetabile* (Amsterdam 1659), clearly states that he translated the work from Dutch to German (see *supra*, n. 1). This is also the case for two of the three Hollandus editions published by Thomas Matthias Götz in Frankfurt am Main: *Das Dritte Theil des Mineral-Wercks* (1666) and *Die Hand der Philosophen* (1667), both translated by an anonymous ‘experienced lover of Hermetic philosophy’.²⁹ This translator wrote that he had no time to translate the mineral work, and wished that somebody else would do this.³⁰ *De Lapide Philosophico oder vom Stein der Weisen* (1669) has a dedication to Helvetius signed by the publisher Götz, who almost apologizes for publishing this text; friends put him under pressure.³¹ Though he does not explicitly say so, I feel sure that he printed a long-existing German translation.³² The *Curieuse und Rare Chymische Operationen* of 1714 are in the same line, even more so.³³ The editor, a certain R.H.C., believes that he is publishing an autograph, which must mean that he thought that Isaac wrote in a (rather odd) kind of German, and there are reasons to believe that he did use a very early manuscript. I will come back on this issue when speaking of the earliest manuscript in Dutch.

A considerable part of the printed texts claims to be translated from the Dutch, which seems to support a Dutch origin of ‘Hollandus’. Now most of these editions were published much later than the texts in manuscripts, and there are very few manuscripts in Dutch, and many in German.³⁴ We will have to go back to an earlier stage of the tradition for better evidence. I will discuss some details in the ‘Hollandus’ reception to argue that at least some of the works ascribed to ‘either’ Hollandus were originally written in Dutch. The words ‘amaus’ and ‘begort’ are clues.

Dutch origin

In his commentary on Neri’s *Art of Glass*, translated from the Italian (*De Arte Vetraria*, 1612) and published in 1662, Christopher Merrett explains the word ‘amausa’ as follows:

‘The chymists have invented a peculiar though barbarous name for these pasts, and no where extant but amongst themselves. They call them *Amausa*, so Libav[ius and] Joan[nes] Isaac, but Glauber *Amausae*, which, whether derived from *Musaicum* (not *Mosaicum* as Vossius in his

Glossary, proves at large) I determine not, though this *Etymon* be very probable.³⁵

Between 1602 and 1609, the Italian priest-chemist Antonio Neri (1576-1614) spent seven years in Antwerp, where he and his host, the rich merchant Emanuel Ximenes, experimented with alchemy and glass making.³⁶ Neri mentions Isaac Hollandus in his *De Arte Vetraria* (1612); his words have been taken as a proof that Isaac was living in Antwerp at the time, though the phrase he uses would rather mean that he ‘took’ some excellent procedures for making *amausa* from Isaac Hollandus, than that he ‘got’ them.³⁷ As his host had a splendid library and owned both printed books and manuscripts with Hollandus texts, it is most likely that Neri used these writings.³⁸

It was Neri who introduced the word ‘amausa’ into the international glass-makers’ vocabulary, and he derived it from the writings of Hollandus. ‘Amaus’, plural ‘amausen’, is a good Middle Dutch word of uncertain origin; the *Middelnederlandsch Woordenboek* mentions French *émaux*, but there have been other suggestions.³⁹ Before the sixteenth century, an ‘amaus’ is usually a heraldic badge or some other enamelled object, usually of precious metal and made by a goldsmith; later, it became a word for enamel. Now Isaac ‘Hollandus’ was famous for his knowledge of amausen and imitation gemstones. The *Mineral Work* refers to detailed instructions on the subject, extant in Isaac’s vegetable work. This full treatment was, as far as I know, never printed, but I still hope to find it somewhere in manuscript. The passage in the mineral work describes an amaus as a half-finished product of vitrified metallic oxides, sold by the weight (per ounce, or in the crude per pound), and used to decorate objects (possibly golden or silver cups and so) and to make artificial gemstones.⁴⁰

Ganzenmüller has pointed out that a manuscript *Kunstbuch* (Heidelberg, Cpg 220)⁴¹ contains an excerpt from the *Opera Mineralia* of Hollandus concerning amausa, without any reference to a source or author.⁴² The recipes and procedures in this manuscript, written about 1576 or a bit later, were selected and copied from similar earlier collections by Guillaume Rascalon and Beringer von Kotzau. Ganzenmüller concludes that work by Hollandus was known in Germany from about the middle of the 16th century. He has a note on the origin of the word ‘amaus’ (232), without mentioning the variants of the word in the manuscript, which actually does not even contain the word ‘amaus’. The passage in question was copied twice (on f. 58v-59v and on f. 68r-69r), possibly from different sources or translations; the first speaks of ‘amatisten’ (‘how to make a nice green amatist of Venus’), the second calls them ‘amansen’. We also meet these

‘amansen’ in Voss. Chym. F 26 (see below), and in *Curieuse und rare chymische operationen* (1714). I think that the use and the distortion of the word ‘amaus’ is a proof that at least this part of the *Opera Mineralia* was originally written in Dutch.

Another detail which leads to the same conclusion for a different part is a quotation from Hermes, Morienus, and/or Geber: ‘Do not despise the ashes on the bottom, for in it is hidden the diadem of your heart, and, as Geber adds, a virgin who will conceive and produce a son, which conception will be caused by the ferment’. The Hollandus version has a diamond rather than a diadem and speaks of a virgin who will get ‘begort’: pregnant.⁴³ This word has confused his translators: in German we find someone or something that will be girdled, surrounded, or desired (‘umbgürtet’, ‘umgeben’ or ‘begehrt’).⁴⁴ By these and similar examples we can find out which parts of the corpus were translated from the Dutch; so we do need bad translations indeed to progress into the knowledge of the original Hollandus text (the worse, the better). Yet, unfortunately, this will not help to find out whether the original Dutch texts were all written by one and the same author.

A more important point is the attribution of texts. In the German *Aurora Philosophorum* (1569 or earlier), translated into Latin by Gerard Dorn and published by him in 1577 under the name of Paracelsus,⁴⁵ ‘Isaac’ is mentioned as a source in the processes on vitriol and antimony in the chapters 13 and 14. This is the case in both Heidelberg *Aurora* manuscripts (Universitätsbibliothek Ms. Cpg 600 and Cpg 303) and in the Kassel manuscript (Landesbibliothek, Quarto Ms. Chem 8, f. 1-27), all written before Dorn’s Latin text was printed. Isaac is also mentioned in the excerpts of the German *Aurora* (chapters 13 and 14) copied by Karl Widemann ca. 1588 (Leiden, Universiteitsbibliotheek, Cod. Voss. Chym. Q 17, f. 133r-137v). Of these four pre- or non-Dorn versions, only the Kassel manuscript (ca. 1574?) bears the name of Paracelsus; but the chapter on vitriol mentions Isaac, with a note in the margin (17r) stating that Paracelsus’ procedure is different! This chapter is very close to the theory and instructions concerning the oil of vitriol in ‘Hollandus’ *On the salts and oils of the metals* and it contains several other characteristic ‘Isaacian’ details.⁴⁶ Chapters 12 to 15 of the *Aurora* are also closely related to the treatises on the oil or tincture of vitriol and antimony later printed as Roger Bacon and Paracelsus⁴⁷; in the earliest manuscript of the *Aurora*, Heidelberg UB, cpg 600, these chapters seem a rather distorted abbreviation, and Dorn’s Latin text is a lot worse.⁴⁸

A note on the Dutch *Aurora* excerpts in the Justus a Balbian-manuscript (London, British Library, Ms. Sloane 1255) might be relevant. These were *copied* (not translated) ca. 1600 by Justus a Balbian and certainly go back to Dorn's Latin, but probably indirectly.⁴⁹ This version contains 8 chapters out of 20: the first six chapters are replaced by a short preface, in which Paracelsus is quoted (but not as the author of what follows).⁵⁰ The chapters 7-10 and 17-20 are given with some slight abridgments and several obvious errors of translation (Latin to Dutch), and also contain errors of transcription of more dubious origin. The reason why chapters 11-16 are skipped is very interesting. The preceding text advises against a long list of common errors in alchemy and of procedures which one should not follow. In the German and Latin texts, what follows (in the text copied by Balbian) is the end of Chapter 10:

Maer om dat ick compassie met u hebbe soo sal ick u gaen leeren dye drye principale particulaere Arcanen: te weten dat eerste door den *Arsenicum*, dat tweede door den *Vitriolum* ende dat derde door den *Anthimonium*, uyt dye welcke drye ick u sal leeren maecken de projectie op den mercurium ende op alle andere onperfecte metalen, ..

(But because I feel compassion for you I will teach you the three principal particular Arcana, namely, the first through Arsenic, the second through Vitriol and the third through Antimony, from which three I shall teach you to make projection upon mercury and on all other imperfect metals, ...)

But instead of giving the promised three arcana and their projection (chapter 11-16), the Balbian copy continues:

... hyer niet van noode meer te verhalen daer af of te leeren, want ic heb se u hier vooren leeren maecken... (f. 209v)

(... which need not be repeated or taught here anymore, because I have taught you to make them previously...)

and instantly jumps to chapter 17. This seems to mean that information on the subject has been given in Dutch, so these three arcana and their projection were apparently available in that language. This reminds me of a manuscript mentioned in the Ximenes-inventory of 1617: 'Johannes Isaac Opus minerale de arsenico, vitriol[o], antimonio'.⁵¹ This rather sounds like *Aurora Philosophorum*, chapters 11-16. This could be another, quite strong argument that the original 'Hollandus' tongue actually was Dutch.

New perspectives: early manuscripts in Dutch

Three manuscripts in Dutch are very relevant to the ‘Hollandus problem’.⁵² And they have one important detail in common: none of the three originally mentions the name ‘Hollandus’. The earliest of these manuscripts (Utrecht, Universiteitsbibliotheek, Ms. 708) is a convolute; the relevant unit was written ca. 1503, certainly not later than the first decade of the 16th century. It contains selected items from a series of recipes which was later copied and printed in Hollandus’ *Mineral Work*. The second (Leiden, UB, Voss. Chym. Q 37) was written ca. 1545-1550. Originally, this manuscript was anonymous; a different hand has added ‘Isaac Hollandus’.⁵³ Variants of a substantial part of the texts in this manuscript were printed in *Das Dritte Theil des Mineral-Werck* (1666).⁵⁴ The printed text is better and more complete; the manuscript shows signs of abridgement (there are many ‘etcetera’s’) and a limited interest in theory; the treatise on wine starts with the practice (in later versions this is preceded by a theoretical introduction).⁵⁵ Part of the text is inspired by Lullius’ *Epistola accurtationis*. The third manuscript is London, Wellcome Historical Medical Library, Ms. 359, catalogued as from 1563 but possibly a bit later.⁵⁶ It contains texts in Dutch, in ‘Germanized Dutch’ and in German (a note by one of the main scribes on f. III 102v shows that it was once in Cologne). Nine treatises in this manuscript are ascribed to a certain Isaac, with no other names. Some of these are also in the Leiden manuscript, and all but one of them were later printed, in Latin and in German, as either by Isaac Hollandus, or (usually) by Johannes Isaac Hollandus.⁵⁷ As this is a very messy manuscript it is not always clear where an Isaac treatise ends, but the beginnings are more or less systematically marked with small paper tabs. There is a tab but not a name at the beginning of the recipes that are also in the Utrecht manuscript. The burning question is now: were all the ‘Isaac’ texts in Wellcome 359 written by one and the same person, or not? And did this ‘Isaac’ also write the anonymous texts in the two earlier manuscripts?

There are textual clues that might help to solve this problem: some of the texts copied or printed under the name of ‘Isaac (Hollandus)’ and variants contain references to other, earlier texts that give more information on a certain subject. This subject is usually described, and now and then even a chapter number is mentioned. From these cross references it appears that most of mineral work was written at a moment when the vegetable work was completed, or at least had a ‘received’ chapter numbering. They also show that the vegetable work contained a lot of theoretical speculation on subjects like ‘the work of Nature’. The

highest chapter number that is mentioned is 312; Chapter 312 would give instructions on how to bring each of the elements to a crystal stone.⁵⁸ It must be this reference that has made posterity conclude that a lot of the vegetable work was lost.⁵⁹

There is one reference of this kind in the Utrecht manuscript. In the recipe for an oil to the red we are told that at a certain stage we will see many colours appear in the helmet. This is because the spirits rise in the helmet, and the colours are in the spirits. Later the body will absorb the spirits, and then the colours will be covered by the body, 'as is well taught in the vegetable works, where is taught about the colours; if you want a true understanding, look at the 93th chapter, where the colours are fully explained.'⁶⁰

A similar reference, though unfortunately without a chapter number, occurs in the *Opus Saturni*. The text tells us that all arsenic is red as blood inside, and can be turned inside out. The London manuscript (Wellcome 359) has 'as is well explained in the book on colours', adding that Saturn contains a red sulphur, which will show when he is turned inside out, as all colours are in the spirits (f. II 86v). If the *Opus Saturni* would refer to the same text and chapter as the Utrecht manuscript, this would mean that the work to which it refers is older than ca. 1503. It certainly seems promising to collect and check all similar references, and to try and find out what they refer to.

The two earliest manuscripts are both from the southern Low Countries, and judging from the dialect, probably from Brabant; they are anonymous. The name Isaac first appears in the London manuscript of ca. 1567.⁶¹ A manuscript of the *Mineral Work* of the same year is ascribed to 'Joh. Isaac Flander'.⁶² The German Leiden UB Voss. Chym. F 26, also of 1567, is partly anonymous and has 'Isaac the excellent philosopher' for the treatise on projection, the last item in the volume.⁶³ The scribe seems to have suspected that this Isaac also wrote the preceding work.⁶⁴ The first dated manuscript in German which has 'Isaac Hollandus' is the manuscript of 1572,⁶⁵ but as this is a copy the name was certainly in at least one earlier manuscript, and some undated sixteenth-century 'Isaac Hollandus'-manuscripts in German may also be earlier. Apparently, the surnames 'Flandrus' and 'Hollandus' were only acquired after export, and probably only mean that the texts were actually translated from the Dutch (people not living in the Low Countries would carelessly call anybody from there a Holländer, or a Fiamingo). For some texts this is very likely, as I hope to have shown. As we do not know and probably will never know the author's real name, I think we will find out very little about his biography, though there are some details in the texts that may be of help.⁶⁶

Some conclusions

I would like to propose to call our author *Isaac, and define him as ‘the artist whose works were written in Dutch and were translated, copied and printed under the name of either Isaac Hollandus, Isaac Flandrus, Johannes Isaac or Johannes Isaaci Hollandus, and who probably wrote all or a considerable part of the texts ascribed to Isaac in London, Ms. Wellcome 359’. Jorissen and Moerman have fruitlessly tried to sort out which of the texts were written by the father, and which by the son, on the only basis of the printed editions. As most of the texts by *Isaac in the London manuscript were later printed as Johannes Isaacus Hollandus⁶⁷, I see no reason to maintain the idea that the distinction is relevant. On the other hand, it is very improbable that the many texts copied and printed under these names were all written by the same person. Texts by *Isaac may have got mixed up with other material before or after they were translated. At least one item seems to have got in after translation to the German: a ‘recipe found in a wall’. This recipe is not in the London manuscript, nor in the Latin edition of 1600; it is in the German printed editions⁶⁸ but it had got into the German translation of the mineral work in or before 1567, as witnessed by Leiden, Voss. Chym. F 26, f. 212r-v. As it happens, Sudhoff and Jorissen have both seen this manuscript, but neither has recognized the work.⁶⁹

There are several characteristics of *Isaac that may help to identify texts written by him. He has some stock phrases but not everybody admires his style, so these traits can occasionally be removed by some copist, translator or editor (e.g. ‘My child shall know that...’ can be replaced by ‘Know that...’, and ‘Now my child might ask...’ by ‘Quaestio’). Moreover, it is not difficult to imitate. *Isaac probably invented the term ‘water of paradise’, but as he quotes Hermes on this water it is probably a translation of *aqua caelestis* (possibly because Dutch ‘hemelwater’ is a usual word for ‘rain’). He knows a limited number of *dicta* and has a few favourites, which he often uses. He uses a ‘*Turbaplus*’: he refers to ‘Morienus’ and ‘Geber’ ‘in *Turba*’. He often quotes a philosopher whose name appears as Daudin, Dantin, Dandin, Danthyn, Danthinus, Dondynus, etc. (not Dastin but possibly Daucim, an alias of Zosimos, mentioned in Morienus⁷⁰). He likes to use examples from everyday life to explain the great work and the principles of nature (the cook, the dyer). He uses the Hail Mary and the Lord’s Prayer as a unit of time (in the Utrecht manuscript, in the *Opus Saturni*, and in the *Work of twelve months*⁷¹), but this may have been imported from a source. He has certain preferences for matters, procedures, materials and even quantities.

He calls vitriol ‘the stone which God has given us *gratis*’. He has interesting ideas about eschatology and the resurrection of the bodies. He is fond of colours. He admires Geber, Arnaldus de Villanova and Lullius, and believes that the latter wrote Rupescissa’s *De consideratione quintae essentiae*. But of course it is questionable which of these characteristics are specific enough, and how many of these should occur in a text to make *Isaac the probable author.

A further survey and shifting of the *Isaacian corpus in manuscripts and printed editions is needed to find out more. Though this will truly be a work of Saturn, the perspectives look very promising. For the time being, I dare to suggest that *Isaac did not get so famous by copying Paracelsus, as the three earliest manuscripts in Dutch seem to indicate that *Isaac has never ever heard of him (but the reverse is probably equally true). There might be different, more, and better reasons why he was so much esteemed by many learned and famous persons. I will do my best to rediscover and restore a very interesting alchemist: (pseudo-?)Isaac pseudo-Hollandus.

Notes

My sincere thanks are due to Didier Kahn for his good help and valuable suggestions.

¹ Johann Kunckel von Löwenstern, *Collegium physico-chymicum experimentale, oder Laboratorium chymicum* [.]. Hamburg und Leipzig, Samuel Heyl, 1716, 668; 518. Joannes Baptista Morinus, *Astrologia Gallica principii et rationibus propriis stabilita atque in XXVI libros distributa*. Hagae-Comitis, Adriaan Vlacq, 1661, 678. [Johannes Isacus Hollandus], *Des hocherleuchteten, tiefsinnigen, und wegen unvergleichlicher experientz durch gantz Europam berühmten Philosophi, Physici und Medici, Domini Johannis Isaci Hollandi Opus Vegetabile* [...]. Auss Niederländischen Manuscriptis [...] verhochdeutsch [...] vom Sohn Sendivogii, genant J.F.S.H. Amsterdam, Henricus Betkius, 1659. Copy: Dresden, Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, <http://digital.slub-dresden.de/sammlungen/titeldaten/278468764/>.

See Joachim Telle, ‘Zum “Filius Sendivogii” Johann Hartprecht’. In: Christoph Meinel (ed.), *Die Alchemie in der europäischen Kultur- und Wissenschaftsgeschichte*. (Wolfenbüttler Forschungen, Bd. 32), Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz Verlag, 1986, 119-136.

² Bernardus G. Penotus (aut./ed.), *Tractatus varii de vera praeparatione et usu medicamentorum chymicorum* [...]. Francofurti, Joannes Feyrabend, 1594, 219. Copy: Dresden SLUB, <http://digital.slub-dresden.de/sammlungen/titeldaten/274711850/>.

³ Bernardus G. Penotus (aut./ed.), *De Denario medico, quo decem medicamentibus, omnibus morbis internis medendi Via docetur* [...]. Bernae, Joannes le Preux, 1608, 202-203. Copy: Lausanne, Bibliothèque Cantonale et Universitaire, digitized by

google. See also Antoine Faivre, 'Elie Artiste, ou le Messie des Philosophes de la Nature' I. In: *Aries* 2 (2002), 119-152, and II. In: *Aries* 3 (2003), 25-54, esI, 129-133.

⁴ Joannes Isaacus Hollandus, *Opera Mineralia, sive de lapide philosopho, omnia, duobus libri comprehensa. Nunquam antequam edita, ac nunc primum ex optimis manu-scriptis Teutonicis exemplaribus fidelissimè in Latinum sermonem translata*, à P.M.G. Middelburgo, Richardus Schilders, 1600. Copy: München, Bayrische Staatsbibliothek, digitized by google. See f. A5 r-v.

⁵ I want to thank Dr. Pieter Boer (De Bilt, Netherlands) for his kind and generous help, especially for his unpublished study of twentieth-century publications about Hollandus.

⁶ Edmund O. von Lippmann, 'Zur Geschichte der Pottasche und ihres Namens.' In: *Chemiker-Zeitung* 32 (1908), 977-978.

⁷ Edmund O. von Lippmann, 'Zur Geschichte der Pottasche und ihres Namens.' In: *Chemiker-Zeitung* 34 (1910), I, 1217-1219; II, 1226-1228; III, 1235-1237, esp. I; Edmund O. von Lippmann, 'Über das Zeitalter der Alchemisten J. I. und I. Hollandus.' In: *Chemiker-Zeitung* 40 (1916), 605 (also printed in his *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Naturwissenschaften und der Technik* I, Berlin, Verlag Julius Springer, 1923, 228-229). Edmund O. von Lippmann, 'Über die unter den Namen der "Hollandi" bekannten Alchemisten.' In: *Chemiker-Zeitung* 43 (1919), I, 265-267; II, 265-267; III, 301-301 (also in his *Beiträge* I, Berlin 1923, 229-250). The 'Jonson-argument' is questionable, as it depends on the interpretation of the lines 'The spirit (variant: spirits) of dead Holland, living Isaac / you'd swear, were in him', but this is said about someone who will be lucky in playing cards.

⁸ H. J. Holgen, 'Über das Zeitalter der beiden Alchemisten J.I. und Isaac Hollandus.' In: *Chemiker-Zeitung* 41 (1917), 643. Diergart, 'Die "Hollandus"-Schriften, eine Fälschung in der 2. Hälfte des 16. Jahrhunderts.' In: *Chemiker-Zeitung* 43 (1919), 201-202.

⁹ H. Schelenz, 'Wann lebten die Alchemisten Johann Isaak und Isaak Hollandus?' In: *Zeitschrift für angewandte Chemie* 30 (1917), Aufsatzteil, 195-196. W. Jorissen, 'Isaac de Hollander en Jan Isaacs. de Hollander' I. In: *Chemisch Weekblad* 14 (1917), 304-310; II, *ibid.* 897-903; III, In: *Chemisch Weekblad* 15 (1918), 1343-1351. J. D. Moerman, 'Uit alchemistische geschriften. Isaac en Johan Isaac Hollandus.' In: *Chemisch Weekblad* 29 (1932), 702-709.

¹⁰ Against Moerman 1932: Edmund O. von Lippmann, 'Zur Kenntnis der "Hollandi" genannten Alchemisten'. In: *Chemiker-Zeitung* 55 (1933), 233-234.

¹¹ Karl Sudhoff, 'Bibliographie Isaaks und Johanns Isaaks der "Holländer".' In: *Archiv für Geschichte der Medizin und der Naturwissenschaften* 27 (1934), 45-50.

¹² Hermannus Boerhaave, *Elementa Chemiae* [...]. Lugdunum Batavorum, Isaacus Severinus, 1732, Vol. 1, 18: 'Isaacus Hollandus, & Johannes Isaacus Hollandus, oriundi ex Stolk Hollandiae oppidulo'. Copy: Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek: vol. 1 <http://diglib.hab.de/drucke/nd-782-1/start.htm>.

¹³ Petrus Borellus, *Bibliotheca chimica, seu catalogus librorum philosophicorum hermeticorum* [...]. Heidelbergae, Samuel Brown, 1656, 119 (this is the second edition). Copy: München, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, digitized by google. Borel

refers to Stolcius in several other places (e.g. 69: 'Dantius, chemicus est, ex Stolcio'; 205 'Taphuntia virgo Arabs: ex Stolcio').

¹⁴ The date of the action, early seventeenth century, shows that Wagenaar takes over the recent view on Hollandus, against the old myth. In other matters, he is less critical: Isaac and Johannes have been in Erfurt where they have seen a manuscript of the great Basilius Valentinus, which was found in the cathedral, close to Basilius' grave!

¹⁵ Raphael Patai, *The Jewish Alchemists. A History and Source Book*. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1994, 289-292. Occasionally Isaac is confused with the physician Isaac Judaeus (9th-10th); some early references to a certain 'Isaac' which Moerman and others used to prove an early date for 'Isaac Hollandus' actually refer to Isaac Judaeus; see also von Lippmann 1933 (title supra, note 10). This is also the case for Glasgow University Library, MS Ferguson 209, catalogued as 'Johann Isaac Hollandus : De urinis. XVth century. MS. on vellum. 1. f3-39 Tractatus urinarum Isaac translatus a quonstantino africano [Constantinus Africanus] in latinam linguam.' (see <http://special.lib.gla.ac.uk/manuscripts/search/detaild.cfm?DID=42463>).

¹⁶ Semler mentions a *societas* of Isaacus Hollandus existing in 1592 and related to activities of Nicolas Barnaud; Johann Salomon Semler, *Unparteiische Samlungen zur Historie der Rosenkreuzer*. Leipzig, Georg Emanuel Beer, 1786, 115. See <https://amorc.nl/index.php?id=157&L=0&O=0> for clearly mythopoetic elaborations (Isaac lived in 1592 and was copied by Paracelsus!). Christoph Gottlieb von Murr, *Über den wahren Ursprung der Rosenkreuzer und des Freimaurerordens [...]*. Sulzbach, Johann Esaias Seidel, 1803, 11, rightly calls this *societas* fictitious ('fabelhaft'). Copy: München BSB, digitized by google.

¹⁷ See supra, note 8.

¹⁸ See <http://www.minrec.org/libdetail.asp?id=616>

¹⁹ Julian Paulus, 'Hollandus, Isaac und Johann Isaac, Alchemisten'. In: Claus Priesner & Karin Figala, *Alchemie; Lexikon einer hermetischen Wissenschaft*. München, Verlag C.H. Beck, 1998, 181.

²⁰ Only Joachim Telle has paid attention to related subjects: Hartprecht (Telle 1986; see note 1) and Telle, 'Die "Hand der Philosophen". Zu einem Lehrbild der frühneuzeitlichen Alchimia-picta-Tradition.' In: Richard Caron e.a (eds.), *Ésotérisme, Gnosés et Imaginaire Smbolique; Mélanges offerts à Antoine Faivre*. Louvain, Peeters, 2001, 165-198, esp. 174-175.

²¹ Angelus Sala, *Chrysologia, seu examen aurum chemicum [...]* Hamburg, impensis Henrici Carstens, 1622, Sectio II, Cap. VI, f. K1r. Copy: unknown library, digitized by google.

²² In the Latin edition of 1600, this prologue opens Liber II.

²³ Later copists and editors have interpreted Saturn as antimony, which is the reason why Johann Thölde published the work with Basilius Valentinus, *Triumphwagen Antimonii*, Leipzig, Jacob Apel, 1604, 465-510. In the same year, the text was published anonymously, as 'Tractatus, darinnen das gantz Secret der Alchemey von der Stein der Weisen', in *Aurei Velleris oder der Gulden Schatz-*

und Kunstkammer, *Tractatus Quintus et Ultimus*. Basel, Jacob Treuw, 1604, 38-54. I have reasons to believe that Isaac actually meant lead, as I will explain elsewhere.

²⁴ This implies that it is not prepared with corrosives but with organic solvents.

²⁵ Michael Maierus, *Symbola Aureae mensae duodecim nationum* [...]. Francofurti, Antonius Hummius, 1617 [reprint ed. Karl R.H. Frick, Graz, 1972], 263-264.

²⁶ Melchior Adam, *Vitae Germanorum Medicorum* [...]. Haidelbergae, Jonas Rosa, 1620, 34; available at the excellent site

<http://www.uni-mannheim.de/mateo/camenahdocs/camenaref.html>.

²⁷ Gabriel Naudé, *Instruction à la France sur la verité de l'histoire des freres de la Roze-Croix*, Paris, François Julliot, 1623, 47 (misprinted as 27).

²⁸ Paulus (see supra note 17) mentions the ghost edition Prague 1572, created by Jorissen 1917 (see supra note 9) I, 308. Jorissen mistook a reference to a manuscript in Copenhagen (Royal Library, Old Royal ms. 1762, copied in Prague in 1572 from a manuscript owned by Bartholomeus Scultetus from Görlitz) in Otakar Zachar, 'Die Bedeutung der Holländer in der ältesten Geschichte der Chemie'. In: *Janus* 17 (1912), 335-356 or Otakar Zachar, 'Die Bedeutung der Hollandi in der ältesten Geschichte der Chemie'. In: *Chemisch Weekblad* 10 (1913), 30-51 (same text). Bernadus G. Penotus (aut./ed.), [pseudo-]Philippus Aureolus Bombastus Paracelsus, *Centum quindecim curationes experimentaque* [...]. s.l. [Genève], Johannes Lertout, 1582. See Eugène Olivier, 'Bernard Gilles] Penot (Du Port), médecin et alchimiste' (ed. Didier Kahn). In: *Chrysopaëia* V (1992-1996), 571-667, esp. 645-647.

²⁹ Johannes Isac [*sic*] Hollandus, *Das Dritte Theil des Mineral-Wercks* [...]. Frankfurt, Thomas Matthias Götz, 1666. Copy: Dresden, SLUB, <http://digital.slub-dresden.de/sammlungen/titeldaten/278467016/>. Johannes Isacus Hollandus, *Die Hand der Philosophen mit ihren verborgen Zeichen. Wie auch desselben Opus Saturni mit Annotationibus. Item, Opera Vegetabilia* [...]. Frankfurt, Thomas Matthias Götz, 1667. Copy: Dresden, SLUB, <http://digital.slub-dresden.de/sammlungen/titeldaten/278463312/>. See about the Hand Telle 2001 (see supra, note 21), 174-175; I fully agree that the Hand-treatise is probably spurious (i.e., not written by the author of the 'Isaac'-treatises in ms. London, Wellcome 359; see infra).

³⁰ In his Vorrede for *Die Hand*, 4. Shuh (see supra, note 16) says he is Benedikt Nicolaus Petraeus, but this seems very unlikely to me.

³¹ Isaacus Hollandus, *De Lapide Philosophico oder vom Stein der Weisen*. Franckfurt, Thomas Matthias Götz, 1669. Copy: Dresden, SLUB, <http://digital.slub-dresden.de/sammlungen/titeldaten/278463932/>

³² Certain errors and additions indicate that the German translation which Götz printed was made more than a century earlier, as they also occur in (e.g.) Leiden, Cod. Voss. Chym. F. 26, ca. 1567 (see infra).

³³ Isaacus Hollandus, sonst auch Flandrus genannt, *Curieuse und Rare Chymische Operationen* [...]. Aus einem alten Autographo Manuscripto heraus gegeben von R.H.C. Leipzig und Gardeleben, Ernst Heinrich Campen, 1714. Copy: München, BSB, digitized by google.

³⁴ Also in Latin, French, Italian and Czech, but it is obvious that none of these languages is the original. I intend to publish a (long!) list of manuscripts when I shall have seen as many of them as I can; for the identification of the texts, I will use the printed versions, as these are more readable and more manageable, though they probably contain later and/or non-*Isaacian material.

³⁵ Antonio Neri, *The art of glass*. Translated into English by Christopher Merret. Reed. by Michael Cable. Sheffield, Society of Glass Technology, 2004, note on Book V, chapter 75, 322-324.

³⁶ See Pieter Boer and Paul Engle, 'Antonio Neri: an Annotated Bibliography of Primary References.' Forthcoming in *Journal of Glass Studies* 2010.

³⁷ As far as I know, Wiegleb was the first who assigned a late date to Isaac Hollandus because of this passage in Neri; Johann Christian Wiegleb, *Handbuch der allgemeine Chemie*, 2nd ed. Berlin und Stettin, Friedrich Nicolai, 1786, Bd. 1, 130. Copy: Lausanne, BCU, digitised by google.

³⁸ A detailed and absolutely fascinating inventory of Ximenes' large house at the Meir (including an alchemy room and a great library) was drawn at the death of his wife in 1617 and published in Erik Duverger, *Antwerpse kunstinventarissen uit de zeventiende eeuw* Vol. I: 1600-1617. Brussel, Koninklijke Academie voor Wetenschappen van België, 1984, 400-461. Detail: the books in German are catalogued as 'Germanici', those in Dutch as 'Teutonici'.

³⁹ 'Amaus', in: E. Verwijs en J. Verdam, *Middelnederlandsch Woordenboek*. Eerste deel. 's-Gravenhage 1885, 386-387.

⁴⁰ 'Modus purificando et separando materiam a fecibus'; Dutch in ms. London, Wellcome ms. 359, f. II 129r-135r, esp. 133r-134r. Printed in Latin in Hollandus, *Opera Mineralia* (see n. 4), Lib. II, cap. 81-95, 339-354; in German in Hollandus, *De Lapide* 1669 (see n. 31), 144-157 and Hollandus, *Operationen* 1714 (see n. 33), 110-125.

⁴¹ Online at <http://diglit.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/cpg220>

⁴² W. Ganzenmüller, 'Glastechnisches aus einem "Kunstbuch" des 16. Jahrhunderts.' In: *Glastechnische Berichte* 14 (1936), 321-326.

⁴³ Ms. London, Wellcome 359, f. III 17v: 'en versmaet die asche niet die onder staet/ want daer in is een costelycken diamant en maecht/ welke maecht sal begort worden met vruchten/ en dan sals voortbrengen den sone des levens. Dat sal wesen. Mijn kindt als men dat ferment sal mengen/ mit dese witte aerde soe ontfanct die eerde oft dat onvulkomen lichaem dat ferment. En dan wordt die maecht begort.' ('Do not despise the ashes at the bottom, because they contain a precious diamond and a virgin, which virgin will get pregnant with fruits, and then she will produce the son of life, which will be, my child, when the ferment will be mixed with this white earth, then the earth or the imperfect body will receive the ferment, and then the virgin gets pregnant.') Latin: *Opera Mineralia*, Middelburg 1600, II, cap. XXVI, 277.

⁴⁴ Voss Chym F. 26, f. 136r: '...ein macht/ welche macht soll umbgurtet werden mit fruchten' ; *De Lapide philos.* 1669, 49: '...eine Magd welche umgeben sol werden/ mit Früchten/ und sol bringen ein Sohn des Lebens.' *Curieuse und Rare Chymische Operationen*, 1714, 54-55: ' ... eine Macht, welche Macht soll

umgärttet werden mit Früchten, und darnach soll sie bringen einen Sohn des Lebens, das soll sein mein Kind. Als man das Ferment soll mengen mit der weissen Erden, so empfänget das imperfecte Corpus das Ferment, und dann wird die Macht begehrt'.

⁴⁵ My thanks are due to Didier Kahn for drawing my attention to Philipp Redl, 'Aurora Philosophorum; Zur Überlieferung eines pseudo-paracelsistischen Textes aus dem 16. Jahrhundert.' In: *Daphnis* 37 (2008), 689-712. But my point here with the *Aurora* is slightly different from Redl's conclusions.

⁴⁶ This part of the *Mineral Work* is found twice in Ms. Wellcome 359: in German (anonymous, without the prologue, abridged) on f. I 13v and (adjacent) II 1r-7v); in slightly germanized Dutch, ascribed to 'Isac', on f. 118v-128v. Printed in Latin in *Opera Mineralia* 1600, Lib. II, cap. 51-80, 313-339 (also in *Theatrum Chemicum*, vol. III). A different Latin translation was printed in *Alchymia Vera, Das ist: Der waren und von Gott hochgebenedeyten/ Naturgemessen Edlen Kunst Alchymia* [...]. (s.l.s.a., ca. 1604-1620; see Joachim Telle, 'Alchymia vera (1604).' In: H.-G. Roloff (ed.). *Die deutsche Literatur. Biographisches und bibliographisches Lexikon*. Reihe II: *Die deutsche Literatur zwischen 1450 und 1620*. Abt. A: *Autorenlexikon*. Vol. II. Bern, Peter Lang, 1991, 84-86); copy of the second edition in Halle, Universitätsbibliothek, <http://digital.bibliothek.uni-halle.de/hd/content/structure/293434146-183>.

Stahl admired the work and added the Latin translation from *Alchymia Vera* to a work of his own: Georg Ernst Stahl, *Fundamenta chymiae dogmaticae & experimentalis* [...]. *Annexus est ad Coronidis confirmationem Tractatus Isaaci Hollandi de Salibus et Oleis Metallorum*. Norimbergae, heirs of Wolfgang M. Endter, 1723, 237-255. Copy: München BSB, digitized by google; many later editions. Printed in German in Hollandus, *De Lapide Philosophorum* 1669, 125-144; *Curieuse und rare Operationen* 1714, 86-110, and anonymously in *Chrysopaia Schwartzzeriana* 1718 (see *infra*, n. 63), 153-163.

⁴⁷ The three 'Isaacian' pseudo-Roger Bacon treatises deal with the tinctures of gold, antimony and vitriol respectively. The first was first printed in Paul Hildenbrandt von Hildenbrandseck, *Auriferae artis Das ist, Der Goldkunst* [...]. Frankfurt am Main, Nicolaus Bassaeus, 1597, attributed to Roger Bacon. The treatise on antimony was first printed, with an attribution to Paracelsus, in Jonas Kitzkat, *Speculum Alchymistarum; darinnen eines erfarnen Laboranten Philosophische description lapidis* [...] Zum Hof, Matthaeus Pfeilschidt, 1583. The treatise on vitriol was first printed anonymously in *Aurei Velleris* V, 1604 (see *supra*, note 23), 73-88. Joachim Tancke was the first to print all three of them together, with some other (pseudo?)-Baconian texts, as Roger Bacon, *Medulla alchemica, das ist Vom Stein der Weisen / und von den vornembsten Tincturen des Goldes / Vitriols und Antimonii* [...]. Eisleben, Jacob Apel, 1608.

⁴⁸ At the moment I am inclined to think that the German *Aurora* quotes a 'pseudo-Roger Baconized' version of Isaac; I hope to find more details in some important manuscripts of the 'Isaacian' Roger Bacon-treatises.

⁴⁹ I hope to give elsewhere a more detailed account of the reasons why I think so.

⁵⁰ See Annelies van Gijzen, *Joos Balbian en de steen der wijzen; de alchemistische nalatenschap van een zestiende-eeuwse arts*. Leuven, Peeters, 2004, 121-130.

⁵¹ Duverger (see supra, n. 35), 458, in a list headed 'Manuscripta in genere'. So it is unclear whether this was a manuscript in Dutch, in Latin or in another language (though the attribution to Johannes Isaac suggests that it was in or from the Latin, as I will explain elsewhere).

⁵² I owe a great debt of gratitude to Ms. Drs. Noor Versélewel de Witt Hamer (Geldrop, Netherlands). A codicological description of London Wellcome ms. 359 was part of her unpublished master's thesis (Utrecht University, 2005) on the Dutch *Donum Dei* in this manuscript; it was a great help to me that she also scrutinized the Leiden and Utrecht manuscripts and supplied me with a description, transcriptions, and a dating based on the watermarks.

⁵³ Addition of an uncertain date, but definitely before 1716; see *Catalogus Librorum Tam Impressorum Quam Manuscriptorum Bibliothecae Publicae Universitatis Lugduno-Batavae*. Curâ et Operâ Wolferdi Senguerdii [...], Jacobi Gronovii [...], et Johannis Heyman [...]. Lugduni apud Batavos, Petrus Vander Aa, 1716, p. 365.

⁵⁴ This title is based on the division of Hollandus, *Opera mineralia*, Middelburg 1600, in two books.

⁵⁵ By error, f. 47v-48r (in a series of additions, on f. 45r-59v, to the preceding 'Elixir philosophorum, or lapis compositus') bear a header 'Quinta essenti/ vanden cruyden' ('Quintessence from herbs') which might refer to a theoretical part of the vegetable work, not copied in this manuscript.

⁵⁶ S.A.J. Moorat, *Catalogue of Western Manuscripts on Medicine and Science in the Wellcome Historical Medical Library*. Vol. I: *Manuscripts written before 1650 A.D.* London, 1963, 229 (the year 1563 occurs on f. III, 61v). A marginal note on f. II 129v mentions 1567.

⁵⁷ The very interesting exception is the 'Rupescissan' antimony treatise, Dutch in Leiden UB Voss. Chym, Q 37, f. 34r-36r and in London Wellcome 359, f. II 98r-102v as 'De Saturno philosophorum / opinor Isaac', which was printed in Latin and anonymously in Penot 1582 (see supra, n. 25), 76-80. The Dutch text is better, and is explicitly related to several other texts in the Leiden manuscript.

⁵⁸ Dutch in London, Wellcome 359, f. II 141v; Latin in *Opera Mineralia* 1600, Lib. II, cap. 111. The German text in Kassel, Landesbibliothek, Quarto Ms. Chem 8, (now) the second item (1574) in convolute, f. 29r has 'im Wercke Vegeta: das 3 und 12 Capittel'. Some variant titles of this treatise are 'The Foundation of the Art', 'The (or: A) Work of Twelve Months' and 'A process through the bodies of Sol, Luna and Mercurius'.

⁵⁹ See Hartprecht's preface in the *Opus Vegetabile*, 1659, 5 and the anonymous translator in the preface to the *Dritte Theil*, 1666, 4.

⁶⁰ Utrecht UB, ms. 708, f. 5v; London, Wellcome Ms. 359, f. II 108r; *Opera Mineralia* 1600, 304; *De Lapide philosophico* 1669, 124; *Curieuse und rare Operationen* 1714, 85.

⁶¹ Unfortunately, Moorat 1963 (see supra, n. 56) has catalogued the manuscript as 'Hollandus (Johann Isaac) [& others]' without mentioning the fact that this name was added by a later hand.

⁶² This is what Sudhoff 1934, 45 has; the manuscript is Copenhagen, Royal Library, Old Royal Ms. 241, which I have not yet seen; Adam McLean has 'Liber Isaaci Flandri [Hollandi] de mineralibus'. See

<http://www.levity.com/alchemy/copenhgn.html>. (The preceding Ms, Old Royal 240, has 'Isaac Holland' added in a later hand, but judging from the description in Bäcklund this is not Isaac but Ewald Vogelius alias Theobaldus de Hoghelande. See Jan Bäcklund, 'In the footsteps of Edward Kelley.' In: Stephen Clucas (ed.), *John Dee: Interdisciplinary Studies in English Renaissance Thought*. International Archives of the History of Ideas 193. Dordrecht, Springer, 2006, 295-330, 310.

⁶³ This manuscript, once owned by Sebald Schwärtzer (d. 1598), contains a very substantial part of the mineral work of *Isaac in German (f. 113-f. 269v), only it is anonymous, and this is followed by a treatise on projection by 'the excellent philosopher Isaac' and some other *Isaacian material (f. 270-318). Voss. Chym. F 11 was probably copied from this manuscript. Sebald was very fond of this text, witness *Chrysopæia Schwärtzeriana. Das ist: Sebaldi Schwärtzers, ehemahligen berühmten Churfürstl. Sächsischen Artisten und würcklichen Adeptt, Manuscripta, von der wahrhafften Bereitung des Philosophischen Steins, wie selbige vor diesem mit seiner eigenen Hand entworffen, und bey dem Chur-Fürstl. Sächsischen Hause in Originali verwalich aufbehalten worden, Nebst dem rechten zu solchen Manuscriptis gehörigen Schlüssel; Auch unterschiedlichen Abrissen der darzu dienlichen Ofen, aus einer unverfälschten durch viele Mühe und Unkosten erlangten Copia nunmehr jederman vor Augen geleget, und mit einigen nützlichen Anhängen von verschiedenen curieusen Processen vermehret*. Hamburg, Samuel Heil, 1718. Many of the procedures (especially those on 5-44) described by Sebald for Elector August of Saxony were taken from Isaac. Sebald was unaware of the fact, but mentions a 'special book' as his source, and respectfully refers to its author as 'the master'.

⁶⁴ In the anonymous part, the reader is referred to a treatise on projection; the scribe (not Sebald) notes: 'Might be the text which follows', f. 156v.

⁶⁵ Copenhagen Royal Library, Old Royal ms. 1762; see supra, note 25.

⁶⁶ Only the Vorrede of the *Dritte Theil* 1666, 5-6 gives some information on Hollandus' life and dates, but the anonymous spokesman who informed the equally anonymous translator is very vague and does not sound very reliable.

⁶⁷ Unfortunately, this made Moorat 1963, 229 ascribe all the Isaac texts in Wellcome 359 to 'Johannes Isaac Hollandus'.

⁶⁸ *De Lapide Philosophorum* 1669, 66-70; *Curieuse und Rare Chymische Operationen* 1714, 210-213.

⁶⁹ Karl Sudhoff, *Versuch einer Kritik der Echtheit der Paracelsischen Schriften*, Theil 2: *Paracelsus-Handschriften*, Bd. 1, 219, no. 75. Sudhoff decided that the texts in this ms. were certainly not written by Paracelsus.

⁷⁰ Lee Stavenhagen, *A Testament of Alchemy, being the revelations of Morienus [...] to Khalid [...]*. Hanover, New Hampshire, Brandeis University Press, 1974,

18 n. 21; cf. Laurentius Ventura, *De ratione conficiendi lapidis philosophorum*, in *Theatrum Chemicum*, ed. 1659, vol. 2, 233: ‘Daucim philosophus in Morien.’ Ruska assumes that the ‘Dantinus’ mentioned in the *Consilium Conjugii* is taken from Morienus; see Julius Ruska, *Turba Philosophorum. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Alchemie*. Berlin, Georg Reimer, 1931, 344.

⁷¹ Utrecht UB, ms. 708, f. 5 v (the temperature of the furnace will be fine if you can keep your hand inside for half a Hail Mary) ; London, Wellcome ms. 359 f. II 90r (distill until the time between two drops will be one or two Lord’s Prayers); *ibid.*, f. II 156v (increase your fire till you can just keep your finger in the ashes for a Hail Mary), f. II 159r (a temperature at which you can easily keep your hand in the furnace during a Lord’s Prayer- the abbreviation, ‘pr nr’ (for ‘pater noster’), has become ‘two hours’ in the translation in Kassel LB ms. Chem. Qu. 8, f. 44r).