

The Correspondence between Princess Elizabeth and Descartes Revisited: The Countess of Horne and the *Epistolae* edition*

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In 2010 I published an article on the circulation of manuscript copies of the correspondence between Descartes and Princess Elizabeth.¹ In the present article I address the subject again, discussing two vexed questions in the history of Descartes' correspondence. The first problem is the identity of Anna Maria, Countess of Horne, of whom it was recently claimed that she may have been responsible for the survival of the letters by Princess Elizabeth to Descartes. The second part of my article is devoted to the mystery of the Latin *Epistolae* edition (1668). Its importance as a source is evident, but its publishing history remains unclear. I provide new material for tracing its history, discussing the English chase for Descartes' unpublished letters to the Princess in view of a Latin edition of Descartes' correspondence. I will review the background of the *Epistolae* edition, investigating, among other things, the Amsterdam and the London issues of the first volume, which were published following different editorial principles. I will admit that, although progress is made, perhaps I rather multiplied the questions instead of answering any. {150}

1. The Rosendael Manuscript and the Countess of Horne

The twenty-six surviving letters by Princess Elizabeth to Descartes are known exclusively from a manuscript that formerly belonged to the library of the castle Rosendael near Arnhem in The Netherlands.² The Rosendael manuscript is furthermore the unique source for the letter by Queen Christina to the French philosopher dated 2 [12] December 1648. The provenance

* I would like to thank Noel Malcolm for drawing my attention to Henry More's letter to John Pell (2 June 1665) and Pell's note, and for generously sharing his transcription of them with me (cf. note 19). I am also much obliged to Theo Verbeek and Matthijs van Otegem for their helpful comments and suggestions.

¹ Erik-Jan Bos, 'Princess Elizabeth of Bohemia and Descartes' letters (1650–1665)', *Historia Mathematica*, 37 (2010), 485–502 (special issue of *Historia Mathematica* in honor of the specialist in the history of mathematics, Henk Bos).

² For a full description of the manuscript, see *The Correspondence of Descartes: 1643*, ed. by Theo Verbeek, Erik-Jan Bos, and Jeroen van de Ven, *Quaestiones Infnitae* vol. 45 (Utrecht: Department of Philosophy, Utrecht University, 2003), pp. xxiii–xxxvi.

of the manuscript, now safe kept by the Stichting Vrienden der Geldersche Kasteelen, is shrouded in mystery. The manuscript is an early eighteenth-century copy, probably from the first decade, written on Dutch paper, and therefore apparently transcribed in the Low Countries. The owner of the manuscript that served as the basis of the Rosendael copy is unknown, just like the person for whom the Rosendael manuscript was copied. The lord of Rosendael at the time was Johan van Arnhem (1636–1710), who held high public offices and composed pious poems, but also showed an interest in applied mathematics, especially the construction of sundials. However, it cannot be excluded that the manuscript entered the castle’s library at a later date. The margin of the manuscript shows references in the same hand to Clerselier’s edition of Descartes’ letters to Elizabeth; the castle’s library held a copy of the three-volume edition, among other seventeenth century *cartesiana*.³

Next to the letters by Princess Elizabeth, and the letter by Queen Christina already mentioned, the manuscript contains another letter by Christina dated 27 February 1654, in which she writes about her abdication. According to the manuscript Descartes would be the addressee, which is clearly impossible. The real addressee is Pierre Chanut (1601–62), French ambassador at the Swedish Court, and a friend of the French philosopher, who went to Stockholm in 1649, where he died few months later. After his death Chanut prepared an inventory of his papers, but did not include Elizabeth’s letters, which he sent back to her at {151} her request. Although Chanut assured the Princess that he had not opened them, he may nevertheless have copied them. The same could apply to the letter of Queen Christina to Descartes. If the provenance starts with Chanut, it would account for the presence of the two letters by Queen Christina. But there is no certainty here; moreover, there is still a gap of about 50 years between 1654 and the time the letters were transcribed.

Lisa Shapiro offers an alternative route, namely that the manuscript was prepared by someone associated with Elizabeth. In 1722, Petronella Wilhelmina van Hoorn (1698–1764) married the owner of the Rosendael estate (since 1721), Lubbert Adolf Torck (1687–1758), and she may have been related to Elizabeth’s close companion at the Imperial Abbey at Herford, Countess Anna Maria van Hoorn.⁴ Anna Maria was an intimate friend of Princess Elizabeth, and she exchanged letters with the English Quakers William Penn and Benjamin Furly. In his travel journal William Penn is impressed by the zealous piety of Anna Maria,

³ The library held nine works by Descartes, all printed before 1700, including a first edition of the *Passions de l’âme* (1649) and Clerselier’s edition of the correspondence. Works by De la Forge, Wittich and De Raey were present as well. *The Correspondence of Descartes: 1643*, xxxv.

⁴ Lisa Shapiro (ed.), *The Correspondence between Princess Elisabeth of Bohemia and René Descartes* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), p. 59.

and mentions the visit by a sister of hers.⁵ In Elizabeth's will, Anna Maria is remembered very generously. Shapiro's conjecture is, however, unfounded. The companion of Elizabeth was a countess, 'la Comtesse de Hornes', whereas the family of Petronella van Hoorn, although influential (and she herself fabulously wealthy), was not of noble origin.⁶ A county of Horn(e) existed, its name-giving village being situated in the north of today's province of Limburg in the Netherlands, on the left bank of the Meuse River. The most famous Count of Horne is Philip de Montmorency, who together with Lamoral, Count of Egmont, was beheaded by order of the Spanish governor of the Low Countries, the Duke of Alva, in Brussels in 1568, one of the momentous events at the beginning of the Eighty Years' War between the Dutch United Provinces and Spain. {152}

Philip de Montmorency was the last Count of Horne. After his death the county escheated to its liege lord, the Prince-Bishop of Liège. Philip de Montmorency was the step-child of the previous Count, Jan van Horne (d.1540), who himself childless had bequeathed the county to him. With Jan van Horne the main branch of the Van Horne family had died out. After 1568 several members of the extended Van Horne family claimed the title, including Willem-Adriaan van Horne (1580–1625), a descendant of a lateral branch of the Van Horne family, the Van Horne-Kessel branch. Willem-Adriaan's claim was acknowledged by the Dutch States-General, but rejected by the Prince-Bishop. Willem-Adriaan was Governor of Heusden, and general of the artillery in the States army. His son Johan Belgicus van Horne (c.1606–before 1664), who adopted the title Count of Horne, became governor of Grave, and in 1632 he married Johanna van Bronckhorst van Batenburg (1602–76). Older genealogical literature mentions at least two children, a son and a daughter: Willem-Adriaan, Count of Horne, who followed in the footsteps of his father and grandfather, and Anna Maria van Horne, Countess of Horne, canoness at the Imperial Abbey of Herford.⁷ The older literature is not always trustworthy, and unfortunately the wealth of information that can nowadays be found on genealogical websites is not much better, because references to sources are often absent. These online 'sources' on the Van Horne family list six children for Johan Belgicus van Horne, among whom, next to Willem-Adriaan and Anna Maria, a daughter named Agnes

⁵ William Penn, *An Account of W. Penn's Travails in Holland and Germany, Anno MDCLXXVII* (London: T. Sowle, 1694), esp. pp. 35, 37–38, 40–41, 44, 208–09, 216.

⁶ Her grandfather, Pieter Janszn van Hoorn, was a wealthy gunpowder manufacturer in Amsterdam. His son Johan (1653–1711), the father of Petronella, became Director-General of the Dutch East India Company (VOC). Petronella married Jan Trip (1691–1722), a son of the famous Amsterdam mayor Jan Trip (1664–1732), and after his death Lubbert Adolf Torck.

⁷ See F.-A. De La Chesnaye-Desbois, *Recueil de généalogies pour servir de suite ou de supplément au Dictionnaire de la noblesse*, Tome XIV, Second des suppléments (Paris: Badiéz, 1784), p. 345; F. Goethals, *Histoire généalogique de la maison de Hornes* (Brussels: Polack-Duvivier, 1848), p. 355.

Louise.⁸ Both the older and newer information regarding the daughters is confirmed by the records of the archives of the Abbey of Herford, mentioning the admittance of Anna Maria van Horne, Countess of Horne, in 1671, and presumably her sister, Agnes Louise van Horne, Countess of Horne-Batenburg, in 1685.⁹ In the case of Anna Maria, the admittance was not unproblematic; apparently there were doubts {153} whether she belonged to the high nobility of the Holy Roman Empire.¹⁰

The above suffices for the definitive identification of Anna Maria, Countess of Horne, Princess Elizabeth's companion at Herford. Anna Maria left the abbey to marry the widower Clamor von dem Bussche-Ippenburch (1640–1723) in 1687. Clamor von dem Bussche was chief magistrate of the County of Ravensberg, diplomat in the service of the Elector of Brandenburg, and a correspondent of Leibniz.¹¹ According to the entry in the *Neue Deutsche Biographie*, Anna Maria, Countess of Horn-Batenburg, was born in 1642 and died (in Bielefeld) in 1740.

Although it is clear that Anna Maria van Horne is not related in any way to Petronella van Hoorn, there might nevertheless be a link with the Van Arnhem family, albeit rather indirectly.¹² But family ties alone, either close or remote, will not solve the enigmatic provenance of the Rosendael manuscript. For that we need unambiguous indications, and as long as these are lacking, Chanut remains the most likely candidate for having transcribed Elizabeth's and Christina's letters before returning them, despite his denial. {154}

⁸ See Wikipedia, URL: https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johan_Belgicus_van_Horne; last consulted on 31 March 2019. And <https://www.stamboomonderzoek.com/luc1961/getperson.php?personID=I61299&tree=luc1961>; last consulted on 31 March 2019.

⁹ Landesarchiv Nord-Rhein-Westfalen, Abteilung Westfalen, Fürststabelei Herford, Landesarchiv - Akten, Signatur C 101, no. 274. Online accessible via http://www.archive.nrw.de/LAV_NRW/jsp/findbuch.jsp?archivNr=1&verzguid=00001Vz_62e8012a-1489-4f87-bfcd-286d4a986d7e; last consulted on 31 March 2019.

¹⁰ The question regarding Anna Maria's admittance was settled in 1680 only; see Landesarchiv Nord-Rhein-Westfalen, Abteilung Westfalen, Fürststabelei Herford, Landesarchiv - Akten, Nr. 865.

¹¹ See Hans Saring, 'Bussche-Ippenburch, Clamor von dem', *Neue Deutsche Biographie*, 3 (1957), p. 73. [Online-Version]; URL: <https://www.deutsche-biographie.de/gnd143146343.html#ndbcontent>. Some details regarding the pious character of Anna Maria can be found in Jan van de Kamp, *Deutsche Übersetzungen englischer und niederländischer reformierter Erbauungsliteratur 1667–1697 und die Rolle von Netzwerken* (doctoral thesis, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, 2011), pp. 270–71. In Leibniz's papers and correspondence there is no mention of Princess Elizabeth's letters to Descartes, but Leibniz knew William Penn's travel journal, see G. W. Leibniz, *Sämtlichen Schriften und Briefe*, Reihe VI, vol. 6 (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 2008), p. 339.

¹² The archive of Rosendael castle holds a copy of the testament of Anna Maria's mother, dated 1676, as well as an agreement on the partition of her estate between Anna Maria's brother Willem-Adriaan and her sister Johanna (1676). Johanna carries the title Barones van Heijden, and her husband (not mentioned in the inventory of the archive) may be related to Frederik Willem (Friedrich Willhelm) van Heyden zu Bruch (d.1690), the husband of Elizabeth van Arnhem (1637–1707), who was a cousin of Johan van Arnhem (Gelders Archief, Arnhem, 0525 Huis Rosendael, inv. nos. 1.1.3.8, 1.3.07).

2. The Mathematical Letters (1643) and a Latin Edition of Descartes' Correspondence

In my 2010 article I sketched the history of the manuscript copies of the two mathematical letters Descartes wrote to Elizabeth in 1643. In these letters, Descartes gave his solution to the problem of the three circles touched by a fourth (known as Apollonius' problem), and discussed, with admiration, Elizabeth's own attempt to solve it. The English mathematician John Pell owned two different sets of copies of these two letters, the first of which he presumably transcribed in the mid-1650s from the copies the German mathematician Rahn had received from the Princess herself through the mediation of John Hottinger, professor of theology at Heidelberg university. The second set was given to him by Thomas Haak, who had received them from Princess Elizabeth herself in the spring of 1665. Still, the letters available to Pell were incomplete: he was lacking one particular diagram, necessary to understand the demonstration. In the end however he managed to draw the correct diagram himself.¹³

The English attempt by way of Haak to retrieve both letters from Princess Elizabeth was part of a larger project that will be discussed now. Procuring the copies was not an end in itself, because the letters were meant to enrich a new edition of Descartes' correspondence. The idea of this new edition sprang from John Worthington (1618–71), academic at the university of Cambridge, who proposed the project in a letter to his friend Samuel Hartlib in October 1661. In my earlier article I omitted to quote the idea of an improved edition of the correspondence. The complete passage dealing with Descartes' correspondence reads thus:

I suppose you have seen or heard of Descartes his second volume of letters, wherein many or most of them are about matters betwixt him and Mersennus. They are all in French that are in this second volume;¹⁴ no letters to the Princess Elizabeth. I did {155} much rejoice when I heard of Mr. Dury's journey into Germany, for this (among other) reasons, that possibly he might visit that excellent princess. I have read in some of your papers an extract of a letter of hers,

¹³ See Bos, 'Princess Elizabeth of Bohemia', pp. 489, 493–97. The two letters, dated [17 November] and 29 November 1643, are edited in *The Correspondence of Descartes: 1643*, accompanied by an illuminating essay of Henk Bos (Appendix 3: 'Descartes, Elizabeth and Apollonius's Problem'), 202–11); AT supplies the texts as published by Clerselier (AT IV, 38–42, 45–50).

¹⁴ Claude Clerselier (ed.), *Lettres de Mr Descartes, où sont expliquées plusieurs belles difficultez touchant ses autres ouvrages*, volume two (Paris: Ch. Angot/H. le Gras, 1659). In this second volume every Latin letter was translated into French by Clerselier's son, which had been necessary, according to Clerselier, because the booksellers complained that the Latin in the first volume had discouraged people from buying it. This decision was in turn regretted by others, like Worthington, inducing Clerselier to print both the Latin and a translation in the third volume (Paris, 1667). The reprint of the second volume (Paris, 1666) was, however, not enriched with the original Latin texts.

wherein she mentions some letters of Descartes to herself, which are not in the first volume of his letters, and are more worthy to be printed than several others in that volume.¹⁵ She also thought that the methodizing and placing of the letters might have been to better advantage. If those letters unprinted might be imparted to the public, they would be a great ornament to the second edition of these epistles; for I have spoken with some to deal about it with one who is able to translate well out of French into Latin, that so the letters in French might be done into Latin, the language which would make them most generally useful. And whereas the publisher of the first volume of the letters (not being so well acquainted with Latin) did publish the contents of the Latin letters in French,¹⁶ all might be made more complete, and, if need be, better placed for the order according to the matter of them, besides the correcting of an infinite number of errata in the first edition. And both these volumes of letters put into one would make a handsome book.¹⁷

Worthington is dissatisfied with the second volume edited by Clerselier: the letters are all in French, even those that were originally written in Latin, and some unpublished letters to Elizabeth — the Princess wrote so herself — are not included. He hopes that John Dury can ask the Princess for copies of those letters. Worthington furthermore informs Hartlib of his plan to publish an edition completely in Latin, in fact, someone else is already looking for an able person who can translate the French letters into Latin. {156} In this new Latin edition of the correspondence the arrangement of the letters could be improved. He concludes his letter to Hartlib saying “I need not write to you of the both pleasure and profit in reading the epistles of worthy men.” Hartlib replied that he would write to Dury accordingly, wishing heartily that the new edition would be published.¹⁸

¹⁵ This extract of Elizabeth’s letter appears to be missing from the surviving Hartlib papers. The letter itself, presumably addressed to a member of the Hartlib circle, seems to be lost as well. Possibly Hartlib referred to Descartes’ letters, which at the indication of Princess Elizabeth were not in the first volume, in a letter to Worthington of 15 October 1660 (see James Crossley (ed.), *The Diary and Correspondence of Dr. John Worthington*, 2 vols in 3 pts (Manchester: by Ch. Simms for the Chetham Society, 1847–55), vol. I, p. 210).

¹⁶ Worthington presumably intended the second volume and not the ‘first volume’. See note 14.

¹⁷ Worthington to Hartlib, 7 October 1661 (Crossley, *The Diary and Correspondence of Dr. John Worthington*, II-1, 48–50).

¹⁸ ‘[I] shall write accordingly to Mr Dury of it, but [I] especially about the Princess Elizabeth, who lives for the present, as I take it, with the landgrave of Hesse. I wish heartily that both these volume of letters were put into one book and published.’ Hartlib to Worthington, [October 1661] (Crossley, *The Diary and Correspondence of Dr. John Worthington*, II-1, 57).

As it happened, Dury did not meet the Princess on his next journey to Germany, but a second attempt in March 1665, now by Theodore Haak was successful. Haak seems to have passed these letters on to Pell in April, probably with the request that Pell check the mathematics and rectify any errors introduced by the copyist.

Two months later, on 2 June 1665, Henry More wrote to Pell, introducing a certain *monsieur* interested in the letters:

I understood from Dr Worthington a whyle ago that you had two Algebraicall letters of Des Cartes sent to you out of Germany, wherewith you intended to enrich the designed Edition of Des Cartes his letters which shortly are to be printed. This affair the bearer hereof Monsieur Udè does superintend, who tooke the pains of translating all the French letters into Latine, and who therefore upon this account was desirous to wayt upon you and kiss your hand, to receive your commandes and directions touching these letters he seemes to be a good harmless studious person and has the showe of skill in the Mathematicks.

The letter shows an annotation by Pell:

Friday before noone Monsieur Udè brought me this letter; I lent him the coppies of the two letters of Monsieur Des Cartes which he said he would copy out & bringe them againe before he left London. [...] Saturday after-noone, Monsieur Udè brought me back those letters, saying he had transcribed y^m.¹⁹

More's letter informs us that a new edition of Descartes' letters is being 'designed' under the supervision of the bearer of the letter, a certain Monsieur Udè, and it is shortly to be printed. Given the term of address, Monsieur Udè was presumably a {157} Frenchman. In all likelihood both More and Pell misspelled his name, but my search for a 'Monsieur Udè' under any possible variant name did not yield any result. Would Monsieur Udè be a collaborator of Clerselier, the edition in question being the third volume of the correspondence, and is the presence of the two letters to the Princess in that volume thus explained? This seems doubtful, for More writes that Monsieur Udè translated all French letters into Latin, whereas in the third

¹⁹ British Library, MS Add. 4279, fo. 156r: Henry More to John Pell, from Christ's College, Cambridge, 23 May [1/2 June] 1665. I thank Noel Malcolm for generously sharing his transcription of the letter and Pell's note with me.

volume edited by Clerselier all Latin letters are accompanied by a French translation. It is more likely that the publication More refers to is the project Worthington outlined in his letter to Hartlib in 1661, in which case Monsieur Udè would be the person “able to translate well out of French into Latin”. If so, there could still be a connection with Clerselier, given that More and Clerselier corresponded on Descartes’ letters in 1654–55, and More may have renewed the contact in view of Worthington’s plans.²⁰ In any case, a Latin edition of the first two volumes of Descartes’ correspondence was published by Daniel Elzevier in Amsterdam three years later: *Renati Descartes Epistolae*. Given that the edition was also issued in London, we must now turn to that edition.

3. *Renati Descartes Epistolae Pars prima-secunda* (1668)

In the history of Cartesianism the Latin *Epistolae* edition has been important for the divulgation of Descartes’ philosophy. From a philological point of view the second volume is of particular interest, because it offers for the letters which Clerselier had translated into French a Latin text that does not appear to be a retranslation but Descartes’ very own words. Moreover, it supplies the date of various letters, absent in Clerselier’s edition.²¹

In the second volume Clerselier indicates that the texts of twenty-four letters are a *version*, a translation from the original Latin text.²² In case no other source for these letters is available {158} Adam and Tannery prefer the text offered in the *Epistolae* on the assumption that the edition was prepared by Johannes de Raey and Frans van Schooten, who could draw on manuscripts circulating in the United Provinces.²³ Louise Thijssen-Schoute has shown there is no evidence that De Raey and Van Schooten edited the *Epistolae*, and Matthijs van Otegem points out that the confusion may have been caused by the preface in the Elzevier edition of the *Opera philosophica* (Amsterdam, 1656), which mentions that De Raey and Van Schooten corrected the edition.²⁴ Indeed, neither one is referred to in the preface of the *Epistolae*, and, moreover, Van Schooten had died in 1660. Also the view of Adam and

²⁰ For the benefit of his edition of Descartes’ correspondence, Clerselier asked More for copies of the letters exchanged between Descartes and him; see AT v, 246–50, and the comments of Alan Gabbey, AT v, 636–40.

²¹ See AT I, xxvi.

²² Letters 3 to 24, letter 117, and Mersenne’s letter to Gisbertus Voetius of 13 December 1642 printed in the preliminaries. 1. According to Adam and Tannery, the letter to Plemp (no. 99) is likely to have been written in Latin as well, although Clerselier does not mark it a *version* (AT II, 343–345).

²³ See AT I, xxvi–xxvii.

²⁴ C. L. Thijssen-Schoute, *Nederlands cartesianisme* (Amsterdam: NHUM, 1954; repr. 1989, with introduction by Theo Verbeek), p. 135; M. van Otegem, *A Bibliography of the Works of Descartes (1637–1704)*, doctoral dissertation, *Quaestiones Infnitae* vol. 38, Department of Philosophy, Utrecht University, Utrecht, 2002, 2 vols, vol. II, p. 620.

Tannery that the editor(s) of the *Epistolae* made use of manuscript material circulating in the Dutch Republic is subject to doubt, because hard evidence is lacking, while on the contrary it is clear that in at least one case the Latin text in the *Epistolae* is a retranslation from the *version*, and not the original Latin letter.²⁵

A further complication is the fact that two letters bearing Clerselier's indication *version*, were presumably for the greater part if not completely written by Descartes in French. Adam and Tannery use the *Epistolae* texts for these letters, and conjecture the addressee may be the English ambassador in Holland, Sir William Boswell. Recently, Vlad Alexandrescu and Grigore Vida have studied these letters in detail, concluding that they are made up of fragments of numerous letters to various persons, that they were originally written in French, and that Adam and Tannery's preference for the *Epistolae* texts is mistaken.²⁶

Alexandrescu and Vida still assume that the editor of the *Epistolae* had "without a doubt" access to manuscript copies of Latin letters that circulated in the United Provinces, but "certainly not" {159} to the material in the possession of Clerselier. However, conclusive evidence that the editor used manuscripts present in the United Provinces is lacking. It is, moreover, not obvious why it would be impossible that the editor had no access to the material in the hands of Clerselier. In one case it can be shown that is actually very likely that the editor did, namely for Descartes' letter to the Louvain professor of medicine, Vopiscus Fortunatus Plempius, dated [3 October 1637]. Adam and Tannery prefer the manuscript copy (Leiden university library) to the text in the second volume of the *Epistolae*, and explain in a note:

La copie ms. donne cette indication: *Ad obiectiones clarissimi et doct. Viri D. Lib. Fromondi in Gallicum Lib. de Methodo eiusque aliquot speciminibus Responsio Authoris Cartesii*. Clerselier, tome II, lettre 8, p. 35–50, ne donne qu'une *version* avec ce titre: *Response de M^r Descartes à quelques objections de Monsieur Fromondus contre sa Methode, sa Dioptrique, et ses Meteores* (voir Lettre LXXXVII ci-avant, p. 409). L'édition latine, tome II, Ep. 8, p. 23–32, donne en tête: *Responsio Domini Cartesii ad quasdam animadversiones D. Fromondi in ejus Methodum, Dioptricam, et Meteora*, titre qui semble traduit mot pour mot de Clerselier, au lieu de reproduire celui de la copie ms. Pourtant le texte est bien celui de cette copie, sauf quelques variantes que nous donnons. (AT I, 412–13).

²⁵ Descartes to Van Buitendijck, [1642–49], *The Correspondence of Descartes: 1643*, 174–76 (AT IV, 62–65). It had been partly published by the Groningen professor Tobias Andreae in 1653.

²⁶ Vlad Alexandrescu and Grigore Vida, 'Sur les lettres CDLXXVI *ter et quater* d'AT', *Bulletin cartésien* 44, *Archives de philosophie*, 78 (2015), 174–82. Their path was already paved by Cornelis de Waard, see his *Correspondance de Marin Mersenne*, vol. II (Paris, 1936), pp. 602–23.

Despite the fact that the *Epistolae* heading of the letter “seems to be a literal translation” of the heading in Clerselier’s edition, Adam and Tannery maintain that the *Epistolae* text is the same as the text provided by the manuscript copy, “except for a few variants”. Most variants listed do indeed not raise doubts about Adam and Tannery’s claim, but two large omissions in the copy — duly noted in AT — are not explained away so easily (AT I, 423, line 6; 430, line 26). I take it that by the claim that the text in the *Epistolae* is the same as the text provided by the manuscript copy, Adam and Tannery intend to say that the *Epistolae* text does not appear to be a retranslation of the Clerselier’s French text, to which I agree. However, the more convincing explanation for the fact that the *Epistolae* text follows the Clerselier text both as to the heading of the letter and the two mentioned omissions, is that the Latin edition draws on the same material that served as the basis of Clerselier’s French edition of the letter, in other words, that Clerselier provided the Latin text at his disposal to the editor of the *Epistolae*. {160}

We cannot exclude the possibility that Clerselier initiated the *Epistolae* edition. His Paris printer Angot did not have the privilege to print Descartes’ works in Latin, which is why Nicolas Poisson had to translate the *Musicae compendium* into French before he could publish the text and his (Latin) commentary in 1668.²⁷ Furthermore, we know that Clerselier was not averse to publishing in Holland, as his contacts with an Amsterdam publisher in 1683 show.²⁸ Finally, although Daniel Elzevier is regrettably silent in his short preface about the genesis of the edition, he does announce that he will publish a Latin translation of Clerselier’s edition of *L’homme* with the elucidations by Louis de La Forge (Paris, 1664) shortly, as well as La Forge’s *L’esprit de l’homme* (Paris, 1666). De la Forge’s work saw the light at the Elzevier press the next year, *De mente humana*, but Elzevier’s edition of *De homine* was not published until 1677.²⁹ The latter edition is a translation of Clerselier’s publication of *L’homme* and *La description du corps humain* together with De la Forge’s remarks (Paris: Angot/Girard/Gras, 1664). These publications can hint at contacts between Elzevier and Clerselier. In sum, the possibility cannot be excluded that the Latin texts of the letters originally written in Latin but published only in a French translation drew on the manuscripts in possession of Clerselier. The only thing that needs to be explained is the fact that, if Clerselier was closely involved in the *Epistolae* edition, his prefaces to his Paris editions of the correspondence were not

²⁷ See Van Otegem, *Bibliography*, II, 445–46.

²⁸ See *La recherche de la vérité par la lumière naturelle de René Descartes*, ed. by Ettore Lojacono and Erik-Jan Bos (Milan: FrancoAngeli, 2002), pp. xlvii–xlviii.

²⁹ René Descartes, *Tractatus de Homine et de Formatione foetus, quorum prior notis perpetuis Ludovici de la Forge, M.D., illustratur* (Amsterdam: D. Elzevier, 1677).

included in the Latin edition — one would expect Clerselier would have insisted on the inclusion so as to put his mark on the enterprise. The third *Epistolae* volume (published by Blaeu in 1683) did add a Latin translation of Clerselier’s preface — had Elzevier ‘forgotten’ to do so in order to save paper, or is there no connection with Clerselier after all? This question we cannot answer. In its place, let us complicate matters by further investigating the possibility of an English connection. {161}

4. The London Edition of the *Epistolae*

For the (Latin) letters of Henry More to Descartes, the *Epistolae* edition did not simply adopt the texts published by Clerselier in the first volume; instead, the edition follows the texts as printed in More’s *A Collection of Several Philosophical Writings*.³⁰

The *Epistolae* edition appeared in Amsterdam as well as in London. The London imprint has a different title page, which instead of mentioning Elzevier reads “Impensis Joh. Dunmore, & Octaviani Pulleyn, ad insigne Regis, in vico Little Brittain dicto” (*At the expense of John Dunmore and Octavian Pullein, at the sign of the King, in the street called Little Britain*). The Elzevier vignette is replaced by one of the text illustrations. Until the publication of the Descartes bibliography of Matthijs van Otegem it was assumed that the London edition was a re-issue of the Amsterdam edition, with only the title page replaced. However, as Van Otegem shows, the first volume is a newly set reprint. The quire signatures in both editions are different: the leaves on which the prelims of the Amsterdam edition were printed are marked with an asterisk, indicating they were printed afterwards; the second quire starts with ‘A’. By contrast, the quire signature of prelims of the London edition is ‘A’, which indicates it is a reprint. The second volume of the London edition is a genuine re-issue of the Amsterdam edition.³¹

A striking difference between the two editions of volume I of the *Epistolae* is the placement of the illustrations. In the London edition they are not integrated with the text, as in the Amsterdam edition, but printed separately on fourteen additional leaves.³² Still, the same blocks are used in both the Amsterdam and London editions. Another feature that did not escape Van Otegem is the different arrangement of the letters. Van Otegem assumes that the

³⁰ Henry More, *A Collection of Several Philosophical Writings* (London: J. Fletcher for W. Morden, 1662). See the comments by Alan Gabbey, AT v, 640–41.

³¹ Van Otegem, *Bibliography*, II, 621–24.

³² The binding of the prints varies by copy. In some copies they are bound after the index of letters (leave A4), in others they are bound in at 14 different places, like the copy I consulted via the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek. Permalink: <http://www.mdz-nbn-resolving.de/urn/resolver.pl?urn=urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10352138-2>; last consulted 1 March 2017.

change was induced by the decision to print the illustrations {162} separately, and indeed the ordering of the letters starts to deviate with letter 55, the first letter that contains illustrations.³³ However, this is presumably a coincidence. The real reason for the change in the arrangement of the letters is found on page 224, where an editorial comment, not mentioned by Van Otegem, announces: “Sequentes Epistolae usque ad finem scriptae fuerant Latinae ab Authoribus ipsis” (*The next letters until the end of the book were written in Latin by the authors themselves*). Accordingly, the London edition indicates which letters were translated into Latin, and which letters were already written in Latin by their authors — information that is missing from the Amsterdam edition. The rearrangement of the letters is probably the reason why letter number 100 (Descartes’ defense of Balzac, AT I, 7–11) in the Amsterdam edition was forgotten in the London edition (which as a result contains 118 letters instead of 119).

But there are more differences between the Amsterdam and the London edition of the first *Epistolae* volume. Instead of being a line-by-line reprint, the London edition contains evidence of editorial interventions. Some differences I have noted, after a partial and cursory collation, are:

- 1) ‘DESCARTES’ in the running title and in signatures beneath letters in the Amsterdam edition is replaced by ‘DES-CARTES’ in the London edition.³⁴
- 2) The indications of the contents of the letters in the London edition differ in many cases, and are usually shorter. In both editions these indications are found in the index of the letters, printed in the prelims, and above each letter.
- 3) The London edition has a different punctuation.
- 4) The London edition uses diacritical signs more frequently.
- 5) On numerous instances the London edition provides a different text; here are a few examples — a systematic will collation undoubtedly yield many more. {163}

Amsterdam edition (letter, page, line number)	London edition (letter, page, line number)	AT (addressee, vol., page, line no., French text)
I, 3, 16: Et certè	I, 3, 19: & quidem	Christina, v, 85, 20–21
I, 3, 17: tranquillitatem	I, 3, 20: voluptatem	idem, v, 85, 21: satisfaction
II, 4, 4: existimem	II, 4, 4: credam	Chanut, v, 87, 3: ie croy

³³ Amsterdam edition: Epistola LV, p. 109 (Ciermans to Descartes, [March 1638], AT II, 55–62); this letter has number LXXXIII in the London edition, p. 225.

³⁴ The copy of the Amsterdam edition I consulted is from the Bibliothèque municipale de Lyon, shelf mark B 512203, and can be consulted online at Google Books.

III, 5, 2: habuerit	III, 5, 2: ceperit	Elizabeth, IV, 251, 4: i'ay eu
IV, 8, 18–19: Verùm rectus rationis usus, cùm veram boni cognitionem afferat, facit ne virtus nostra falsa sit;	IV, 8, 25–26: cùm contra rectus rationis usus veram boni cognitionem afferens faciat ne virtus nostra falsa sit;	idem, IV, 267, 9–12: au lieu que le droit usage de la raison, donnant une vraye connoissance du bien, empesche que la vertu ne soit fausse
XVII, 42, 6: Duci B. qui habitat WS.	XVII, 42, 22: Duci B, qui agit Ws.	idem, IV, 591, 16–17: à Monsieur le Duc de B. qui est à Ws.
XIX, 42, 4: se sub finem aestatis redituram	XIX, 43, 4–5: te sub finem aestatis redituram	idem, v, 15, 7: que vous retournerez [...] vers la fin de l'esté
XXII, 48, 11: Regius enim	XXII, 48, 31: cùm Regius	idem, IV, 627, 16
XXIV, 50, 1–2: si perlectis literis tuis ob morbum tuum dolere nequeam	XXIV, 51, 1–2: si ob morbum tuum dolere nequeam, postquam tuae mihi sunt redditae	idem, IV, 236, 3–4: si ie ne puis plaindre son indisposition, lors que i'ay l'honneur de recevoir de ses lettres
XXVIII, 57, 1: Stupui	XXVIII, 57, 1: Obstupui	idem, IV, 200, 1: I'ay esté [...] surpris

All these differences make it abundantly clear that the London edition is an entirely new setting under a different set of editorial principles. Granted, even a line-by-line reprint will show small differences, as errata may be corrected and new mistakes will occur, an odd comma may be removed or inserted, and so on, but the differences listed above show that there is more to it in the London edition. Most revealing are the variants. It is not really possible on the basis of this small number of variants to determine which edition provides the better translation, but the fact that even the texts themselves were changed above the level of mere typographical or grammatical corrections, indicates that the {164} London edition was printed on the basis of different editorial ideas. It raises the suspicion that the London edition was not prepared in Amsterdam at Elzevier's.

Independently from Van Otegem, the bibliographer and rare books dealer Roger Gaskell also reaches the conclusion that the first volume of the London edition is a reprint of the Amsterdam edition. In one of his catalogues he provides an elaborate description of the London edition, observing that the type is almost identical to the Amsterdam edition 'but not quite'.³⁵ Gaskell admits that he has been "unable to determine if the text of the London volume I was printed in London and the woodcut plates in Amsterdam; or all in London; or all

³⁵ Robert Gaskell, *Books from the Library of Walter Pagel (1896–1983)*, Part II, Catalogue 42 (Warboys (Cambridgeshire): R. Gaskell, 2010), item no. 45 (unpaginated).

in Amsterdam”, but, he continues, “the typography of the prelims, the use of the same initial letter P (Berghman, *Études sur la bibliographie Elzevirienne* no. 325)³⁶ and a text woodcut used as a titlepage device, strongly suggest that these leaves were set and printed in Amsterdam”. Here Gaskell is mistaken as to the ornamented initial letter *P*, which is actually in the prelims of the second volume. The identical initial letter *H* in the prelims of volume I of both the Amsterdam and London edition, is not in Berghman, but I have found it in another Elzevier imprint.³⁷ On the last page of the London prelims of volume I a fleuron is printed that was used by Elzevier, and that would suggest that that sheet was printed in Amsterdam.³⁸

The second ornamented initial letter in volume I of the Amsterdam edition differs from the one in the London edition. The initial *I* in the Amsterdam edition, on p. 1, leaf A (first page of the second quire) is in the same style as the initial *H* (and as both initials *P* and *C* of volume II), and I have encountered the same initial *I* in another imprint by Daniel Elzevier.³⁹ {165} The initial *I* in the London edition, on p. 1, leaf B (first page of the second quire), is less elegant and of a simpler design than the one in the Amsterdam edition. I found exactly the same initial *I* in a dozen English books, eleven of which were printed by the London printer Robert White⁴⁰ — the twelfth, not mentioning the typesetter, was presumably printed by him as well.⁴¹ White printed these works for various booksellers, among them John Dunmore and Octavian Pullein, who are mentioned on the title page of the London *Epistolae* edition. All works printed by White that show the ornamented initial *I* were produced between 1667 and 1674; White printed earlier and later editions of some of these works before and in

³⁶ Gustaf Berghman, *Études sur la bibliographie Elzevirienne [...] avec 470 figures reproduisant les vignettes, culs-de-lampe et lettres grises des Elzevier* (Stockholm: Haeggström, 1885).

³⁷ *Opus Epistolarum Petri Martyris* (Amsterdam: D. Elzevier, 1670), p. 52.

³⁸ Edouard Rahir, *Catalogue d'une collection unique de volumes imprimés par Les Elzevier et divers typographes hollandais du XVII^e siècle* (Paris: Morgand, 1896), p. 437, no. 102.

³⁹ Chr. Matthias, *Theatrum historicum theoretico-practicum* (Amsterdam: D. Elzevier, 1668), p. 1; *Opus Epistolarum Petri Martyris*, p. 87.

⁴⁰ Robert White, printer in London, 1639–still active in 1677. At the survey of the London press taken in 1668 he is returned as having three presses, three apprentices and seven workmen. See Henry R. Plomer, *A Dictionary of the Booksellers and Printers Who Were at Work in England, Scotland and Ireland from 1641 to 1667*, London: Bibliographical Society, 1907, p. 193, and *A Dictionary of the Booksellers and Printers [...] from 1668 to 1725*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1922, p. 310.

⁴¹ For my research I consulted *Early English Books Online*; I refer to that instrument for further details regarding these works, all printed by Robert White. Although it is in all cases the same ornamented initial, the size of the initial letter may vary; I could not take exact measurements. The page that shows the ornamented initial is given between brackets after the year of publication: S. Woodford, *A paraphrase upon the Psalms of David*, 1667 (p. (a)); J. Reynolds, *A discourse upon prodigious abstinence*, [1668] (p. 1); S. Patrick, *The parable of the pilgrim*, 1668 (p. 1); E. Stillingfleet, *Six sermons*, 1669 (p. 207); S. Patrick, *The parable of the pilgrim*, 1670 (p. 1); R. Baxter, *The character of a sound confirmed Christian*, 1669 (p. 1); S. Woodford, *A paraphrase upon the Psalms of David*, 1670 (no mention of the printer; initial on p. (a)); Th. Brooks, *Precious remedies against Satan's devices*, 1671 (p. [1]); J. Daille, *XLIX sermons upon the whole Epistle of the Apostle St. Paul to the Colossians*, 1672 (the initial upside down on leave A3); R. Baxter, *A Christian directory*, 1673 (p. 769); J. Flavel, *The fountain of life opened*, 1673 (leave A2); S. Shaw, *The voice of one crying in a wilderness*, 1674 (p. 1).

1667, and after 1674, but in these books he used a different initial *I*, so apparently he used the initial that is also found in the *Epistolae* edition from 1667 till c.1674.⁴² One of the dozen works that was also printed by another London printer in 1669, uses a different ornamented initial *I*.⁴³ The particular initial *I* being exclusively used by the London printer White would suggest that the London edition of volume I, except for the prelims and perhaps the illustrations, was produced by White. The illustrations being printed separately in Amsterdam {166} could explain their absence in the texts and the references to them instead. I am hesitant to draw any firmer conclusion, because the typography of volume one of the London *Epistolae* edition is unlike anything else White produced; if he did, he certainly succeeded in applying the Elzevier style. Before establishing with certainty who printed the bulk of volume one very precise bibliographic research is needed, including a study of the watermarks. To add one small but significant typographical feature possibly indicating that Elzevier did not print the remainder of volume one: in the London edition the initial *U* is used to mark the quire in-between quires *T* and *X*, whereas Elzevier uses the initial *V* in a standard way — White however the initial *U*.⁴⁴ Just as a reminder of the complexity of the situation: if the bulk of volume I was printed in London, and the prelims and the illustrations in Amsterdam, it is left to explain that the short indications of the contents of the letters given in the index in the prelims are the same as those in the heading to each letter elsewhere in the book.

Conclusion

I am afraid that although we now know more about the *Epistolae* edition, I may have opened Pandora's Box by uncovering the above material. The result is that we are looking at a very complicated situation. Even if hope exists that the identity of Monsieur Udè be disclosed someday, and the question be answered whether or not the London edition was partly printed in London, we would still be far from having a clear picture.

Worthington, Hartlib and Haak succeeded in acquiring Descartes' two mathematical letters which had not yet been published by Clerselier. Their intention was to have them enrich the upcoming edition of Descartes' correspondence. In 1661 Worthington talked about someone who could translate the letters into Latin. In 1665 More wrote Pell that a Latin edition was shortly to be printed, supervised by a certain Monsieur Udè, who *took* (note the

⁴² The editions of *The parable of the pilgrim* printed by White in 1665 and 1667; *A Christian directory*, 1678.

⁴³ Th. Brooks, *Precious remedies against Satan's devices* (London : Printed by H. Lloyd for John Hancock, 1669).

⁴⁴ Of fifteen books printed by White between 1667 and 1675, thirteen have the initial *U*, only two the initial *V*.

past tense) the pains of translating all the French letters into Latin. The *Epistolae* edition appeared in Amsterdam three years {167} later, but in his preface to the reader Daniel Elzevier did not say a word about the background of the edition. That the editor/translator drew on manuscripts circulating in the Low Countries is uncertain, whereas there are indications that he had access to the material in Clerselier's possession. If Monsieur Udè was a collaborator of Clerselier, it would explain the presence of the two mathematical letters to Princess Elizabeth in the third volume of the correspondence — the Latin translation of which was announced by Daniel Elzevier in his preface — but this provenance of the letters in the *Lettres* cannot be proven. And why was the first volume of the *Epistolae* reprinted the way it was? Did the booksellers Dunmore and Pullein become interested in the edition only after the first volume had been printed? And can the differences between the Amsterdam and London edition be explained as the interventions by Monsieur Udè, who tried to leave some mark on the edition, seeing his own publication plans been shattered by Elzevier's? Questions to which answers are lacking for now, as in the case of the provenance of the Rosendael manuscript. We do not know to whom we owe it that we have the pleasure and profit in reading these epistles of Descartes and Elizabeth.