

# **Johann Joachim Becher Encyclopedia Article**

## **Johann Joachim Becher**

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# Johann Joachim Becher

**1635-1682**

German chemist remembered primarily for his influence on Georg Stahl. Becher's *Physicae subterraneae* (1669) attempted to adapt traditional alchemical ideas to the growing body of chemical knowledge. He divided solids into three kinds of earth—*terra vitrescible*, *terra fluida*, and *terra pinguis*. Becher treated the latter substance, known as "fatty earth," as the principle of inflammability similar to the alchemical sulfur. Stahl later developed the *terra pinguis* concept into the phlogiston theory.