

lingual history of an early Christian text. The oldest Greek recension and its translations. The workshop programme is available at <https://www.manuscript-cultures.uni-hamburg.de/register_physiologus2018.html>.

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Traces on Ink. Experiences of Philology and Replication Bologna, 12 July 2018

The workshop 'Traces of Ink', which took place in Bologna on 12 July 2018, was the second of two joint workshops on the history of alchemy convened within the framework of the ERC Project *AlchemEast: Alchemy in the Making*.

Many ancient and premodern cultures, with the due differences, shared the reflection upon writing supports, the production of written artefacts with all the tools and substances involved in the action of leaving a clear impression of the written signs. A double path of traces can be followed in order to reconstruct the different writing practices and cultures: on the one side, the material objects connected to the act of writing, and the technical literature dealing with the art of writing on the other. The material and the textual aspects, however, do not exist in isolation; there rather are large areas of overlap, so that the different disciplines engaged in their study (codicology, palaeography, chemistry, archaeology, philology) can achieve better results in cooperation. This spirit has animated the programme of the workshop: its three sessions were chronologically arranged (Ancient Near East, Greek Late Antiquity and Arabo-Islamic Middle Ages) and, each of them saw two scholarly approaches together, one more focussed on the philological aspects, the other on the material and technical ones.

The first session (Ancient Near East), with Maddalena Rumor as discussant, included a joint presentation given by Michele Cammarosano and Katja Weirauch, who shared the results of their joint research on the use of wax tablets as writing support in the Mesopotamian and Hittite cultures.

With Lawrence Principe as discussant, the second session (Greek Late Antiquity) was opened by Miriam Blanco, who discussed the composition and use of red inks in the Greek magical papyri. Ira Rabin presented an overview of the technical analysis personally carried out on written artefacts from Antiquity well into the Middle Ages.

The third and last session (Arabo-Islamic Middle Ages), with Bink Halum in the role of discussant, started with Sara Fani sketching the literary dimension of the Arabic treatises on ink making, and was concluded by Claudia

Colini, who presented some experimental replications of Arabic recipes for black ink.

The programme is available at <https://alchemeast.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/2018_07_12_TracesOfInk.pdf>. The proceedings of the workshop, enriched by some additional related papers, will be published in the Nuncius Series, Studies and Sources in the Material and Visual History of Science (Brill).

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Gotha Manuscript Workshop: Alchemy in the Islamicate World **Gotha, 28–29 September 2018**

On 28 and 29 September 2018, the workshop ‘Alchemy in the Islamicate World’ was organized jointly by Regula Forster (University of Zurich/Freie Universität Berlin) and Gotha Research Library, within the framework of the project *Between Religion and Alchemy: The scholar Ibn Arfa‘ Ra’s (d. 593/1197) as a model for an integrative Arabic literary and cultural history* (University of Zurich).

Students of the history of sciences in the Islamic period need to review many unedited texts. This is especially true in the case of alchemy. 220 years after the modern beginning of research on alchemy in the Islamic period with De Sacy and his treatise published in 1799, many alchemical writings have still not been considered by research. The large numbers of Syriac, Hebrew, Arabic, and Persian alchemical manuscripts that have been written and copied between the seventh and the twentieth century are strong proof that alchemy was a well-known and significant part of knowledge in the pre-modern Islamicate world.

Fortunately, in recent years scholarship on the alchemical heritage of the Islamic period has increased significantly: now, scholars in Europe, the Middle East and North America are working on different aspects of the alchemical tradition. They try new approaches by using philological and literary-oriented, socio-historical approaches as well as the approach of the history of science. The material and codicological turn have led to a new interest in the manuscript evidence. Yet, while the interest in European alchemy has been steady over the years, the workshop ‘Alchemy in the Islamicate World’ was the first conference focused exclusively on this subject.

During the workshop, fifteen scholars discussed their research topics for two days and had the chance to consult Gotha’s Arabic alchemical manu-