

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-

scripts—a collection that deserves far more consideration, especially by researchers in the field of occult sciences in the Islamicate traditions.

The workshop opened with a short description of the history of the oriental collection in the Gotha library. Regula Forster explained that even though most Gotha manuscripts in the field of alchemy are relatively young (seventeenth-eighteenth century, some even from to the nineteenth century), they preserve rare texts and textual versions. In the first session, three scholars dealt with the Gotha collection. In the first lecture, Regula Forster introduced Ibn Arfa' Ra's and his biography and then discussed his works, especially the *Šudūr al-Dahab* ('The Splinters of Gold'), a collection of alchemical poems. She explained the stemmatological classification of more than 80 copies of the *Šudūr* with charts prepared by Svetlana Dolgusheva (Zurich). Forster also showed that without the Gotha manuscripts, the tradition of the alchemical *muwaššah* poem of Ibn Arfa' Ra's would be significantly reduced (by 40%). Richard Tod (Birmingham) presented the variety of commentaries on Ibn Arfa' Ra's's collection of alchemical poems with a stress on Gotha's copies. He explained several metaphors in *Šudūr al-Dahab* (such as the Dragon of resurrection) that were also used in western alchemy, asking whether the work might have had some influence in the West, even though it seems that *Šudūr* was never translated into western languages. The next speaker, Bink Hallum (London), started his discussion with Greek and Latin manuscripts of Zosimos of Panopolis' works (fl. c.300) and then shifted to the *Risāla fī Bayān Tafriq al-Adyān*, a text attributed to Zosimos in the Islamic period, e.g. in the *Aqālīm al-sab'a*, of which Gotha holds a splendid illustrated copy. He then compared Gotha's manuscript of the *Risāla al-Bayān* to a copy in the Topkapı Archeology museum, showing that the Gotha version is significant and probably cannot be considered to be a simple epitome. Focusing on alchemy and religious pluralism, Hallum explained why in this text the reader encounters a Hebrew Zosimos while in a ninth-century treatise on secret alphabets, he was called the third knowledge; furthermore, Brahmans and Jews discussing alchemy in Jerusalem fitted neatly with the picture of a poly-religious science.

The early period of Arabic alchemy was described by Marion Dapsens (Louvain-la-Neuve) and Thijs Delva (Leuven) in the second session. Dapsens discussed the alchemical works attributed to the Umayyad Prince Ḥālid b. Yazīd. She showed that the titles of these texts are varying since different titles in the *Kitāb al-Fihrist* by Ibn Nadīm and in Ibn Ḥalikān's *Wafayāt al-A'yān* can be found. She explained in detail which works by or attributed to Ḥālid are extant in manuscript form, evading however the most important question, which remained unanswered: Was the historical Ḥālid an alchemist? Delva presented new materials on the historicity of the figure of Ḡābir b. Ḥayyān

al-Ṭūsī. He stressed the relationship between Ḡābir's writings and the milieu of the extreme Shia (*ḡulāt*). In his opinion, this approach can offer a new perspective on the date of writing the *Corpus Ḡābirianum* as a collection. Taking into account the new research on Maslama al-Qurṭubī, author of *Picatrix*, he suggested to date the Ḡābirian corpus before 328/940.

The third session included four lectures on 'Decknamen, Terminology, and Codes'. Matteo Martelli (Bologna) discussed two Syriac lexicons on alchemy. He showed that alchemical words traveled between Byzantine and Islamic countries. Therefore, encyclopedias and symbols should be considered an important genre of text beyond cultural boundaries. In addition he investigated the sources of these lexicons too. He also explained how Greek works were received in Syriac, and stressed that Syriac alchemy largely is not earlier, but simultaneous with the Arabic. Godefroid de Callatay and Sébastien Moureau (both Louvain-la-Neuve) demonstrated the innovative character of Maslama al-Qurṭubī by examining his concept of 'code name' (code, *ramz*, pl. *rumūz*): they tried to show that Maslama developed his own, original approach by using allonyms as a form of disclosure of knowledge. Lutfallah Gari (Yanbu) clearly showed that we need to review many unpublished texts to decipher alchemical texts in the Arabic tradition as well as to understand Arabic alchemical terminology. In his lecture, he discussed some of these texts like as *al-Ḥudūd* and *al-Sirr al-Sār wa Sirr al-Asrār* by Ḡābir, the *Epistle of Buṭrus of Akhmīm to his son*, *al-Mudkhal al-ta'īmī* and *al-Asrār and Sirr al-Asrār* by Rāzī, *Maḡāṭih al-'ulūm* by Ḥwārizmī, and Tuḡrā'ī's works such as *Maḡāṭih al-rahma*. In his opinion, the *Epistle of Buṭrus of Akhmīm* (Panopolis) is a good example in this regard because the text offers an interesting combination of Late Antique, Christian, and Arabic elements. Salam Rassi (Oxford) introduced 'Abdīshō' bar Brīḥā (d. 718/1318), an East Syrian bishop of Singār (fl. thirteenth and fourteenth centuries), who allegedly translated a Pseudo-Aristotelian treatise from Syriac into Arabic. Rassi covered interesting points, for example the Iranian tradition of translating alchemical texts in the Sassanid period when Yazdin (a Christian minister of the Sassanid emperor) translated an alchemical work attributed to Aristotle for an Iranian king. Furthermore, he discussed the three principles of alchemy (soul, body, and spirit) and the tradition of manuscripts moving to Benghal and India.

The fourth session discussed alchemy as a practical art and science. Gabriele Ferrario (Baltimore) described Jewish tradition of alchemy in medieval Cairo. He showed that in the Cairo Genizah, we find 110 alchemical fragments and documents in Judeo-Arabic letters (about 300 pages). Now this collection is mostly available in the Cambridge University Library. During the lecture Ferrario reviewed some of them and presented new evidence of

theory and practice in these fragments. He emphasized that the Genizah documents are not only engaged with practical aspects—instead it seems like Jewish authors had access to the *Corpus Ġābirianum*. Christopher Braun (Zurich), starting from the *Kitāb Sidrat al-Muntahā* MS Gotha orient A 1162, discussed aspects of the recipe in Arabic alchemy. He compared alchemical recipes with those from magical treasure hunt books and used Gotha's collection to show how much genre expectations can be regarded as central. Malihe Karbassian (Bonn) focused on *Kitāb al-Aṣnām al-sab'a*, an astrological-alchemical work attributed to Apollonius of Tyana. She discussed the different names of this text and its content and also focused on the influence of this work on four fields in Persianate world: alchemical heritage in the Islamic period, Ismā'īlī cosmology, the allegorical and mystical literature, and occult sciences. Her contribution had two interesting points: (1) her discussion about differences between original and epitome versions of *Kitāb al-Aṣnām*, and (2) the Persian translations of the text dating to a time between the fourteenth and the nineteenth centuries. In the last lecture of this session, Lahouari Ghazzali (Yanbu) discussed his method and approach to establish a critical edition of the *Šudūr al-Dahab* as a classical text of Arabic alchemy (his edition just having been published in Beirut). He stressed that the editor of a poem must not only take different copies into consideration, but also pay attention to literary features. He explained that specialized alchemical knowledge and access to manuscripts is not enough for a critical edition and that the editor also needs a solid knowledge of metric and rhetoric. To illustrate his approach, Ghazzali compared the Leipzig, Madrid, and Tehran manuscripts; he also showed their differences in interesting charts.

The fifth session addressed alchemy as literature and visual art. Vicky Ziegler (Bonn) focused on the Andalusian alchemist Maslama ibn al-Qāsim al-Qurṭubī and his 'Garden of the Divine, Noble and Secret Art' and 'Boasting of Stones'. She tried to show, especially with reference to two texts from Gotha, how the dialogue genre used in her set of texts shaped the content of the texts, making these texts seem much more accessible and comprehensible than many other alchemical works. Finally, Juliane Müller (Zurich) focused on the alchemical symbols in the manuscripts of the 'Mirror of Wonders' (*Mir'āt al-aḡā'ib*) by an otherwise unknown author, Ibn al-Muḥṭār (fl. between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries). In this treatise, the narrator dreams of himself being in a desert and discovering the 'Mirror of Wonders' in a hidden room of a monastery. Müller compared its symbols in some less known manuscripts of the text from Hamburg, Oxford, Cairo, Hyderabad, Karachi, London, and Riyadh. Her interpretation of the symbols in these manuscripts showed how a textual complex can be traced through different works. She found nine sym-

bols for the different stages of the alchemical work. She also discussed the influence of Ḥālid ibn Yazīd and Ibn Umayl on this text. Finally, she showed how the design of the symbolism in *Kitāb al-Aqālīm al-sab‘a* by al-Sīmāwī is partly different from the original ‘Mirror of Wonders’.

The workshop showed that we have serious gaps in research on the alchemical heritage in the Islamic period: many manuscripts are not available, a comparative research on the alchemical terminology is necessary, and the discussion on alchemy as a practical art and alchemical knowledge in its social contexts needs to be furthered. It offered the opportunity to discuss key questions, not only between the specialists of alchemical heritage in the Islamic period, but also with representatives of the study of European alchemy. In particular, the publication of bilingual text editions in the *Sources of Alchemy and Chemistry* series (edited by Jennifer M. Rampling and Lawrence M. Principe) was encouraged.

An earlier version of this report has been published as ‘Tagungsbericht: Gotha Manuscript Workshop: Alchemy in the Islamicate World, 28.09.2018 – 29.09.2018 Gotha’, in *H-Soz-Kult*, 24.11.2018, <www.hsozkult.de/conferencereport/id/tagungsberichte-7962>.

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Twentieth International Conference of Ethiopian Studies Regional and Global Ethiopia – Interconnections and Identities Mekelle, 1–5 October 2018

(1) Past, Present and Future of Editing Ethiopian Texts

From 1 to 5 October 2018 Mekelle University hosted the twentieth International Conference of Ethiopian Studies (ICES20), bearing the title ‘Regional and Global Ethiopia – Interconnections and Identities’. The Conference was organized by the ICES20 Organizing Committee with kind support by the International Organizing Committee, the Institute of Ethiopian Studies, Frobenius Institute, Goethe Institute, French Centre of Ethiopian Studies, German Embassy, French Embassy, and other stakeholders. The host, Mekelle University, is an important academic institution in Ethiopia, which was ranked second among forty universities in Ethiopia in the academic year of 2017/2018. The announced programme of ICES20 contained over 700 papers grouped in 83 panels. Despite some unavoidable changes, the conference represented the range and variety of research topics related to Ethiopia, Eritrea, and the Horn of Africa, among which manuscript studies and philology were well represented. The relevant sessions included, among others, the panel ‘Past, Present