

CfP: Gotha manuscript workshop: Alchemy in the Islamicate world ? Gotha, 28./29.09.2018



Alchemy was a widespread practice in the Islamicate world that was taught from early on to the 19th/20th century. In spite of its popularity attested to by historical references as well as the wealth of alchemical manuscripts that have come down to us, the study of Arabo-Islamic alchemy has been neglected for the last decades. Only recently have we seen a renewed interest in the field, giving rise to a number of publications.

Among its extensive collection of Oriental manuscripts, Gotha Research Library also houses a significant number of alchemical manuscripts (for the Gotha alchemical manuscripts in Arabic see Siggel, *Katalog der arabischen alchemistischen Handschriften Deutschlands*, vol. 2, Berlin 1950). The workshop aims at bringing together established and younger scholars working on alchemy and providing them with the opportunity to engage directly with the alchemical manuscripts of the Gotha collection. The exploratory character of the workshop refers not only to the direct engagement with the Gotha collection, but also extends to the field of Arabo-Islamic alchemy more generally. Possible questions to be discussed are: Which aspects of alchemy have received significant attention, what aspects deserve to be addressed more in the future? Which theoretical assumptions and methods have guided the research on alchemy, what theories and methods are relevant for future research? What are the current challenges in studying the alchemy of the Islamicate world and how could they be overcome?

We invite papers from a variety of disciplines (for ex. philology, philosophy, history of science, history of religion, art history, paleography), on all aspects of alchemy, for example on

- the transmission of alchemical knowledge in different parts of the Islamicate world as well as between the Islamicate world and other regions
- the role of manuscripts for the transmission of alchemical knowledge
- codicological aspects of alchemical manuscripts
- questions of authorship and dating
- literary aspects of alchemical texts

To allow for a significant number of hands-on-sessions, preference will be given to papers dealing with Gotha manuscripts.

Please send a 400-word abstract to monika.hasenmueller@uni-erfurt.de not later than **August 31, 2017**.

The selected participants will be notified by October 30, 2017.

Costs for travel and accommodation will be covered, provided that external funding is granted.

The workshop is organized by the Gotha Research Library in collaboration with the project 'Between Religion and Alchemy. The scholar Ibn Arfa' Ra's (d. 1197) as a model for an integrative Arabic literary and cultural history', University of Zurich.

Conference Conveners:

Monika Hasenmüller, Gotha Research Library, University of Erfurt

Prof. Dr. Regula Forster, University of Zurich

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