

SESSION 5: ALCHEMY AS LITERATURE AND VISUAL ART

2.45 pm | **Literary aspects in “Garden of the Divine, Noble and Secret Art” and “Boasting of Stones” by the Andalusian alchemist Maslama b. Qāsim al-Qurṭubī**
Vicky Ziegler (Bonn)

3.30 pm | **The Alchemical Symbols in the Manuscripts of the “Mirror of Wonders” (Mir’āt al-‘ajā’ib)**
Juliane Müller (Zurich)

4.15 pm | **Final discussion**

The workshop is organized by 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, and is generously supported by German Research Foundation (DFG), the University of Erfurt, the Swiss National Science Foundation, the University of Zurich and the Freundeskreis der Forschungsbibliothek Gotha e.V.

To attend the workshop please register at:
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Image: Illuminated Arabic alchemical manuscript, Abū al-Qāsim al-‘Irāqī al-Simāwī (?), Kitāb al-aqālim al-sab‘a [Book of the seven climated], FB Gotha, Ms. orient. A 1261, Bl. 6b.



Gotha manuscript workshop

Alchemy in the Islamicate world

September 28–29, 2018 | Friedenstein Castle Gotha



Alchemy was a widespread practice in the Islamic 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 In spite of its popularity attested to by historical references as well as the wealth of alchemical manuscripts that have come down to us, the study of Arabo-Islamic alchemy has been neglected for several decades. Notwithstanding a renewed interest in the field in recent years, scholars are still struggling to come to terms with seminal alchemical texts and central aspects of Islamic alchemy like the terminology and codes used by alchemists, or alchemy as a practice and science in its social contexts.

The workshop, organized jointly by Prof Dr Regula Forster, University of Zurich/Freie Universität Berlin, and Gotha Research Library, aims to close some of these research gaps in the field by bringing together established and younger scholars working on alchemy and by providing them with the opportunity to engage directly with the alchemical manuscripts of the Gotha collection. The panels will focus on the Gotha collection, the foundations of Islamicate Alchemy, on Decknamen, Terminology, and Codes, on alchemy as a practical art and science, as well as on alchemy as literature and visual art. By addressing these topics we also hope to lay the foundations for future transregional research on alchemy.

PROGRAMME

Friday, September 28

- 9 am** | **Welcome**
Kathrin Paasch (Gotha)
- 9.15 am** | **Introduction**
Regula Forster (Zurich/Berlin)

SESSION 1: THE GOTHA COLLECTION – MANUSCRIPT SESSION

- 9.30 am** | **Ibn Arfa' Ra's in Gotha**
Svetlana Dolgusheva (Zurich),
Regula Forster (Zurich/Berlin),
Richard Todd (Birmingham)

- 10.15 am** | **Zosimos of Panopolis at the Forschungsbibliothek Gotha? Or The Alchemy of Religious Pluralism: Risāla fi Bayān Tafriq al-Adyān**
Bink Hallum (London)

- 11 am** | **coffee/tea break**

SESSION 2: THE FOUNDATIONS OF ISLAMICATE ALCHEMY

- 11.30 am** | **The works of the prince Khālid ibn Yazīd in light of the alchemical manuscripts**
Marion Dapsens (Louvain-la-Neuve)
- 12.15 pm** | **The Historicity of Jābir ibn Ḥayyān: An overview of the external sources**
Thijs Delva (Leuven)

- 1 pm** | **lunch break**

SESSION 3: DECKNAMEN, TERMINOLOGY, AND CODES

- 2.30 pm** | **Making sense of the alchemical terminology: Two Syriac dictionaries on alchemy**
Matteo Martelli (Bologna)
- 3.15 pm** | **In Code We Trust. The concept of rumūz in Andalusī alchemical literature and related texts**
Godefroid de Callataj, Sébastien Moureau (Louvain-la-Neuve)

- 4 pm** | **coffee/tea break**

- 4.30 pm** | **Deciphering Alchemical Texts: Medieval Arabic works on alchemical terminology**
Lutfallah Gari (Yanbu)

- 5.15 pm** | **Poetry as Code, Poetry as Epigraph: 'Izz al-Dīn Aydemir al-Jildakī and his commentaries on alchemical poetry**
Nicholas G. Harris (Newark)

- 6 pm** | **Visit to the library: Islamic Manuscripts, especially on alchemy**

Saturday, September 29

SESSION 4: ALCHEMY AS A PRACTICAL ART AND SCIENCE

- 9 am** | **From Sinjār to Istanbul: The Intellectual Context and Transmission of One Pseudo-Aristotelian Epistle on the Craft**
Salam Rassi (Collegeville/Oxford)
- 9.45 am** | **Alchemy in Medieval Cairo: New evidence of theory and practice in the Judaeo-Arabic fragments from the Cairo Genizah**
Gabriele Ferrario (Baltimore)

- 10.30 am** | **The Recipe in Arabic Alchemy: Some remarks on the alchemical composite manuscript Gotha orient. A 1162**
Christopher Braun (Zurich)

- 11.15 am** | **coffee/tea break**

- 11.45 am** | **The Microcosmos-Macrocosmos-Analogy and the Preparation of the Philosopher's Stone**
Natalia Bachour (Zurich)

- 12.30 pm** | **al-Aṣṅām al-Sab'a: its content and influence in Arabic and Persian alchemical heritage**
Malihe Karbassian (Bonn)

- 1.15 pm** | **lunch break**