

**The Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures (CSMC)
in cooperation with the Emmy Noether Research Group
'Patterns of Knowledge Circulation' (FU Berlin)**

cordially invites you to a workshop on

Recipes and Recipe Books Across Manuscript Cultures

Monday, 12 April 2021, 09:00 am–04:00 pm CET

Tuesday, 13 April 2021, 10:00 am–02:30 pm CET

Zoom-Meeting

Recipes are most generally associated with lists of ingredients, accompanied by a set of instructions for their use. They have recently experienced a surge of scholarly interest, particularly in the context of the changing epistemes of early modern Europe. Transformations in the modes of knowledge transmission in the European late medieval and early modern periods prompted a rise in the popularity of recipes and recipe compilations. Therefore, recipes and recipe compilations may serve as indicators of the premodern world's tendencies to record and transmit the experiential type of knowledge.

This workshop will zoom in on the handwritten recipes and recipe books as a textual and material format through which knowledge was made and often circulated across cultures. It considers recipes in a variety of knowledge contexts and with various foci: medicinal and pharmacological, artisanal and technical, alchemical, magical, culinary, and so forth. Furthermore, it will focus on the textual structure of recipes—understood both as generic formulas and specific prescriptions—in close connection with the materiality of the manuscripts in which they are contained, thus considering materiality as a crucial aspect in a cross-cultural analysis of practices of making and transmitting knowledge. The centre of our interest is the relation between the modes of knowledge transmission and the type of knowledge that is transmitted: what was the role of handwritten recipes in the epistemic shifts that occurred across various cultural milieus? Taking a comparative perspective, the workshop will look for possible common patterns in recipes and recipe collections across manuscript cultures.

Programme

Monday, 12 April 2021, 09 am–04 pm CET

- 09:00–09:20 Welcome and Introduction
- 09:20–10:50 Efraim Lev (Haifa): *Fresh Glance on Practical and Theoretical Medieval Arabic Medicine Based on the Study of Prescriptions and Recipes from the Cairo Geniza*
Thies Staack (Hamburg): *Collecting, Utilizing and Circulating Medical Knowledge in 19th and early 20th Century China: Towards a Typology of Recipe Manuscripts from the Unschuld Collection*
- 10:50–11:00 Coffee Break
- 11:00–11:45 Joachim Prackwieser and Nalini Kirk (Berlin): *Digitization and Data Analysis of Medical Recipes from Chinese Handwritten Volumes of the Late Imperial and Republican Period: Challenges and Lessons Learnt*
- 11:45–12:45 Lunch Break
- 12:45–02:15 Clare Griffin (Nur-Sultan): *The Word and the Words: Religious and Satirical Uses of the Medical Recipe Genre in Early Modern Russia*
Sylvie Neven (Paris): *Between the Lines or Outside the Text: Some Reflexions About the Nature and the Use(s) of Art-Technological Recipes*
- 02:15–02:30 Coffee Break
- 02:30–04:00 Agata Paluch and Andrea Gondos (Berlin): *Plagues, Fire, and Fear: Forms and Formats of (Practical) Kabbalistic Recipe Compilations in Early Modern East-Central Europe*
Elaine Leong (London/Berlin): *“In Parcels Transmitted”: Recipes and Paper Slips in Early Modern England*

Tuesday, 13 April 2021, 10:00 am–02:30 pm CET

- 10:00–11:30 Michael Kohs (Hamburg): *Jewish Magic Recipes and Recipe Books from the Cairo Geniza Revisited*
Eyob Derillo (London): *Magical Recipes and Recipe Books in the Ethiopian Collection of the British Library*
- 11:30–12:30 Lunch Break
- 12:30–02:00 Claudia Colini (Hamburg/Berlin): *Ink Making by the Book: Use and Transmission of Arabic Recipes*
Matteo Martelli (Bologna): *Alchemical Recipes between Syriac Zosimus and the Mappae Clavicula*
- 02:00–02.30 Wrap-up

Abstracts

Efraim Lev (Haifa)

Fresh Glance on Practical and Theoretical Medieval Arabic Medicine Based on the Study of Prescriptions and Recipes from the Cairo Geniza

The literature on medicine in medieval Muslim countries is vast and detailed. Yet study and assessment of the practical aspects of medicine in the Mediterranean society of the Middle Ages requires examination of authentic, practical medical knowledge. At present this can be extracted mainly from the prescriptions found in the Cairo Geniza; these unique and authentic sources of knowledge supply a valuable dimension, different to the pharmacopoeias that have formed the mainstay of the history of pharmacy in the Arab world hitherto.

The hundred and fifty prescriptions found so far in Geniza collections, mainly in the T-S collection in Cambridge, have been studied systematically supplying us with different and valuable historical dimensions. These include information and evidence regarding the practical use of medicinal substances; the relationship between medieval medical theory and practice; the languages used by the practitioners (Judaean-Arabic vs. Arabic) and a unique grammatical aspect (passivity as linguistic characteristic) of Arabic used by the Medieval Carriean Jewish physicians.

My presentation aims to provide a better understanding of everyday practical medicine in medieval Cairo as revealed by the Geniza's prescriptions, in comparison with the recipes found in the medical literature. I will conclude with a short explanation of the 'medical notebooks' found in the Cairo Geniza which represent the way that medieval pharmaceutical knowledge was transferred from theory to practice and vice versa.

Thies Staack (Hamburg)

Collecting, Utilizing and Circulating Medical Knowledge in 19th and early 20th Century China: Towards a Typology of Recipe Manuscripts from the Unschuld Collection

Recipe compilations were clearly the most popular form of medical literature in late imperial China. This is also confirmed by the largest collection of medical manuscripts outside China now housed at the State Library of Berlin. At least one third of the overall more than 1,000 manuscripts in the Unschuld collection mostly or only contain pharmaceutical recipes, forming by far the largest group. A closer look at these recipe manuscripts reveals a considerable heterogeneity with regard to both form and content, which is indicative of different functions and also suggests different groups of producers and users with varying motives, among them pharmacists, physicians as well as medical laymen.

Starting from the preliminary categorization of recipe manuscripts that is provided in the catalogue of the Unschuld collection and which mainly draws on content criteria, this paper will supplement earlier scholarship by considering additional aspects of recipe manuscripts. Drawing on features such as visual organization – including segmentation marks and navigation aids – and phenomena of 'layering', it will shed further light on who produced recipe manuscripts and for which purpose. With the help of some exemplary cases, it will attempt to establish a typology of recipe manuscripts that is centred on their functions. In doing so, the paper will illustrate some of the typical roles recipe manuscripts played for the collection, use and circulation of medical knowledge in 19th and early 20th century China.

Joachim Prackwieser and Nalini Kirk (Berlin)

Digitization and Data Analysis of Medical Recipes from Chinese Handwritten Volumes of the Late Imperial and Republican Period: Challenges and Lessons Learnt

Creating a database (Chinese Historical Healthcare Manuscripts Database – CHHM-DB) of traditional Chinese medical manuscripts based on the Unschuld Collection and making its contents accessible not only for historical, but also for modern biochemical research represents a multi-faceted cross-cultural process of knowledge transmission in itself. The first part of this paper will describe challenges and corresponding solutions for creating a standardized digital structure and terminology out of heterogeneous and often messy texts. Against this backdrop, the consequences of the inevitable interpretation (through standardization) of the historical material as well as persisting shortcomings will be touched upon.

The second part will introduce a methodology to make use of the recipes in the CHHM-DB within the framework of the BMBF-funded project “Patient-twin for inflammatory diseases”. When extracting pharmaceutical knowledge and practices from traditional manuscripts for biomedical basic research, the researcher must navigate between the perception, reasoning and language of different cultural and historical environments. This paper is a reflection on these processes.

Clare Griffin (Nur-Sultan)

The Word and the Words: Religious and Satirical Uses of the Medical Recipe Genre in Early Modern Russia

In early modern Russia, medical recipe books existed alongside two related but very different genres: satirical recipes, and religious recipes. The former took the format of medical recipes and created jokes about the ingredients involved. The latter similarly mimicked medical recipes, but used them instead to express the component parts of working towards spiritual fulfilment. These two genres are linked, not only because both mimic the same genre of text, but because early modern Russian Orthodox Christianity was a highly ascetic religion that saw fun and entertainment as irreligious. For early modern Russia, satire and humour were the opposite of religion. This paper will examine these non-medical medical recipes to see how and why two opposed cultural traditions came to draw on the same source.

Sylvie Neven (Paris)

Between the Lines or Outside the Text: Some Reflexions About the Nature and the Use(s) of Art-Technological Recipes

Artists’ recipe collections can often serve as sources for the study of historical artistic practices and materials. However, to date, the original function and the current relevance of this form of writing have not been clearly determined. Drawing on a corpus produced in Europe between the 14th and 17th century, this paper proposes a critical analysis of these sources which relies on the examination and interpretation of the various types of notes written alongside their texts. It investigates central questions related to the author- and readership behind these writings, and scrutinizes how they might have been consulted, organized and revised. This serves, on a variety of levels, to elucidate information about the former nature and use of art-technological recipes.

Agata Paluch and Andrea Gondos (Berlin)

Plagues, Fire, and Fear: Forms and Formats of (Practical) Kabbalistic Recipe Compilations in Early Modern East-Central Europe

Handwritten recipes in Hebrew and Yiddish find their place in separate recipe compilations, books of secrets, pharmacopoeias, herbals, medical textbooks, regimen guides, private notebooks, and as addenda in letters, memoirs, prayer-books, but also, in miscellaneous Jewish mystical and kabbalistic literatures. Our presentation surveys material genres in which Jewish recipes were contained, and their complex relationship to kabbalistic texts as they were organised, produced, and circulated in early modern East-Central Europe (Ashkenaz). Reflecting on the spectrum of relatedness of practical recipes of various thematic thrusts to kabbalistic traditions, considered in their textual and material formats, we will throw into sharp relief the practical angle with which kabbalistic texts were often produced and read. Furthermore, we will explore various levels of integration of kabbalistic rhetoric into compilations of recipes of all kinds and thus zoom in on kabbalistic knowledge as one of the strategies of authorising practical, empirically inclined knowledge in early modern Ashkenaz.

Elaine Leong (London/Berlin)

“In Parcels Transmitted”: Recipes and Paper Slips in Early Modern England

In recent years, early modern medical, culinary and household recipes have received considerable attention. Historians and literary scholars alike have used them to recover home-based practices of making and doing, and gendered cultures of knowledge production and exchange. While bound notebooks filled with recipes are now familiar historical artefacts, collections of loose paper slips inscribed with instructions to make various household products have not received similar attention. This talk examines the writing and exchange of loose recipe slips in early modern England. Focusing on the notebooks and paperwork of three late seventeenth-century English families, it shines light on paper slips as carriers and archives of recipe knowledge. In particular, it investigates the epistemic status of recipe knowledge stored on paper slips vis-à-vis that written into bound notebooks, and the dynamic relationship between knowledge stored in the two media.

Michael Kohs (Hamburg)

Jewish Magic Recipes and Recipe Books from the Cairo Geniza Revisited

Jewish Hebrew and Aramaic magical texts from the Cairo Geniza, including magic recipes, have been studied extensively over the course of the last decades. Although quite a number of magic recipe texts have been edited by various scholars, there is yet a significant amount of fragments that still remain to be published. In my talk I will discuss textual as well as codicological features of Geniza magic recipes and their collections in multiple text manuscripts. A focus will be laid on the pragmatic and epistemic aspects of magic recipes. Moreover, I will outline the differences to and commonalities with other text genres of Jewish magic from the Geniza, in order to map out the potential dynamics associated with magic recipes.

Eyob Derillo (London)

Magical Recipes and Recipe Books in the Ethiopian Collection of the British Library

The British Library holds a large collection of Ethiopian amulet scrolls and manuscripts relating to magic. As well containing spells, these manuscripts are adorned with rich illustrations. Ethiopian amulet scrolls and magical recipe books are a striking and very distinctive form of Ethiopian Christian material culture, yet they remain a relatively poorly understood and understudied topic. In this illustrated talk Eyob Derillo will discuss and explore the wider British Library collection of Ethiopian scrolls and handbooks.

Claudia Colini (Hamburg/Berlin)

Ink Making by the Book: Use and Transmission of Arabic Recipes

Due to the importance of writing in the Islamic world, treatises on the arts of the book and manuals for secretaries were fairly common. Inks are often the main subject of these volumes and lists of ink recipes can fill several pages and multiple chapters. But ink recipes can be found also as collections outside the frame of a structured text, or as single entries recorded on the empty spaces of a manuscript. In this presentation I will first give an overview of the main treatises on inks and their purpose as stated in the texts. I will, then, discuss the three forms in which recipes can be found and how the manuscripts in which they were recorded can hint at their use. In the end of the talk I will show how the replication of recipes does not only serve the purpose of assessing their feasibility but can also help in discovering errors in the texts and clarifying transmission practices.

Matteo Martelli (Bologna)

Alchemical Recipes between Syriac Zosimus and the Mappae Clavicula

The paper will present the results of a preliminary study of the twelve alchemical books transmitted in Syriac translation under the name of the Graeco-Egyptian alchemist Zosimus of Panopolis (3rd-4th century CE). After introducing the manuscript witnesses as well as the general structure of the books, particular attention will be devoted to the rich collection of recipes included in these writings. Since many recipes overlap with procedural texts preserved both in Greek alchemical papyri and in the Latin Medieval recipe book known as *Mappae clavicula*, a comparative analysis will be carried out, in order to shed new light on the formation and transmission of these technical compendia.