

CV / Dr Sergei Zotov / sergei.zotov@sas.ac.uk

RESEARCH INTERESTS

medieval studies, history of science, history of alchemy, visual epistemology, manuscript studies, renaissance studies, allegory, iconography, book culture.

ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT

2026-, Associate Fellow, Warburg Institute, University of London

2025-2026, Frances A. Yates Long-Term Fellowship, Warburg Institute, University of London

2024-2025, Early Career Fellowship at the Institute of Advanced Studies, University of Warwick

2020-2024, Fractional Teaching assistant at the University of Warwick

2017-2020, Junior researcher (Wissenschaftliche Hilfskraft), Herzog August Bibliothek (Wolfenbüttel). Projects: Stefan Laube, 'Bilder aus der Phiole Untersuchungen zur Bildsprache der Alchemie in der frühen Neuzeit'; Gia Toussaint, 'Private Gebetbücher aus niedersächsischen Frauenklöstern: Instrument und Interaktion'

2015-2017, Teaching assistant in Russian School of Anthropology, State University for the Humanities (Moscow)

EDUCATION

2020-2024, PhD in Renaissance Studies, University of Warwick (thesis 'Alchemical Iconography as a Mediator of Knowledge: Visualising Science in European Alchemical Manuscripts, 1400-1700')

2013-2015, MA with distinction (5.0 out of 5.0 overall) in Cultural Studies, Russian State University for the Humanities (Moscow),

2008-2013, BA, MA ('Specialist' degree, 4.62 out of 5.0 overall) in German Language, Translation, and Literature, Saratov State University (Saratov)

MAJOR FELLOWSHIPS / GRANTS / AWARDS

2025, Society for the History of Alchemy and Chemistry (SHAC) Subject Development Award

2024, Award of the Institute of Advanced Studies, University of Warwick for the conference organisation (Conference [Visita Interiora: ReImagining Allegory in Alchemical Tradition](#), in Venice, June 2025)

2024, 2023, 2021 three Society for the History of Alchemy and Chemistry (SHAC) Research Awards

2023, The Royal Society's Lisa Jardine Grant

2022, DFG grant to visit Glasgow University Library

2022, The main prize of the Russian non-fiction book award 'Alexander Belyaev Prize' (for the book 'Iconographical Mayhem')

2022, Warwick HRF Travel Grant to visit the Singleton Center at the Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore

2020-2024, Chancellor's International Scholarship for PhD Studies, University of Warwick

2019-2020, Fellowship of the Academic Foundation of the House of Representatives of Berlin

2019, Herzog-Ernst-Fellow of the Fritz Thyssen Foundation in Research Center Gotha

2018, The main prize of the Russian non-fiction book award 'Enlightener' (for the book 'Suffering in the Middle Ages')

2017-2018, DAAD Fellowship in Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel

2017, German Historical Institute's Fellowship in Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

2024-2025, Warburg Institute, University of London, Guest Lecturer (short course: Visual History of European Alchemy).

2022-2026, stradarium.ru, Course Convenor and Lecturer (online continuing education): Histories of Magic and Alchemy; Bodies, Sex and Eroticism in European Culture; Icons and Images: A History of Sacred Painting; Death and the Afterlife in the European Imagination; Hybrids and Monsters: Human-Animal Boundaries; Games, Cards and Tarot: Histories of Play and Divination; Secret Societies and Esoteric Networks.

2020-2024, University of Warwick, Fractional Teaching Assistant, Centre for the Study of the Renaissance. Designed and taught seminars for BA courses on Renaissance culture, Christianity, printing press, and the visual history of science. Delivered lectures and workshops on allegory, alchemy, icons, and manuscript culture. Supervised and assessed undergraduate essays. Contributed to curriculum design for the BA modules.

2015-2017, Russian State University for the Humanities, Teaching Assistant, Russian School of Anthropology. Taught seminars in cultural theory and the history of religious thought. Assisted in curriculum planning and student mentoring for the MA programme in Cultural Studies.

BOOKS (ACADEMIC)

Imagine Green Lion: Allegorical Iconography in European Alchemical Manuscripts (Chicago: University Press, Synthesis series) (accepted for publication, forthcoming in 2027)

PUBLISHED ARTICLES AND BOOK CHAPTERS

'Crucified upon Metals and Alphabets: Alchemical Iconography of the Sixteenth-Century Illustrated Treatises by Martin Sturtz', *The British Journal for the History of Science Themes*, ed. by Zoe Screti, 2025, pp. 1-19.

'Smelling Good While Conjuring the Spirits. Use of 'Perfumes' in Medieval and Early Modern Magic Books', in Stefan Laube (ed.), *Tracts of Action* (Leiden: Brill, 2024), pp. 237-268.

‘Sources of Alchemical Cryptography’, in Michelle Waldispühl and Beáta Megyesi (eds.), *Proceedings of the 7th International Conference on Historical Cryptology HistoCrypt 2024* (Tartu: D-Space, 2024), pp. 161—173 (co-authored by Sarah Lang and Megan Piorko)

‘Merian’s Juggling with Motifs – Juggling with Merian’s Motifs. Iconographical Borrowings in and from Merian’s Alchemical Works’, in Berit Wagner and Corinna Gannon (eds.), *Opus magnum. Matthäus Merian d.Ä. und die Bebilderung der Alchemie* (Heidelberg: ART-Books, 2024), pp. 219—233.

‘Allegorical Iconography of Alchemical Furnaces in 16th and 17th Century Manuscripts’, in Sarah Lang (ed.), *Alchemical Laboratories* (Graz: University Library Publishing, 2023), pp. 285–295.

‘Vial Movies - The Driving Forces of Nature and Their Visualisation’, *Nuncius. Journal of the Material and Visual History of Science*, 37 (2022), 1-41 (co-authored by Stefan Laube)

‘Pagan Otherness in the Christian Church Iconography of Ancient Philosophers and Intellectuals in Russia and the Balkans’, *IKON. Journal of Iconographic Studies*, 15 (2022), pp. 95-100.

‘Destillation und polare Vereinigung. Zur visuellen Übersetzung alchemischer Praktiken auf Titelbildern und Frontispizen’, in Petra Feuerstein-Herz, Ute Frietsch, eds., *Alchemie - Genealogie und Terminologie, Bilder, Techniken und Artefakte* (Wolfenbütteler Forschungen 166), Wolfenbüttel: Herzog August Bibliothek, 2021, pp. 191-235 (in German, co-authored by Stefan Laube)

BOOKS (FOR GENERAL AUDIENCE)

Wax Legs and Iron Eyes. Votive Practices from the Middle Ages to the Present Day (Moscow: SLOVO, 2022) (in Russian, co-authored by Mikhail Maizuls and Dmitry Antonov).

Medieval Magic. Visual history of Witches and Sorcerers (Moscow: AST, 2022) (in Russian, co-authored by Dilshat Kharman).

Iconographical Mayhem. The Unusual in the Orthodox Icon (Moscow: Bombora, 2021) (in Russian).

History of Alchemy. The Journey of the Philosopher’s Stone from the Bronze Age to the Atomic One (Moscow: AST, 2020) (in Russian).

Suffering in the Middle Ages. Paradoxes of Christian Iconography (Moscow: AST, 2018) (in Russian, co-authored by Mikhail Maizuls, Dilshat Kharman, reissued in 2019, 2021, 2022, 2023).

ARTICLES AND BOOK CHAPTERS IN PROGRESS

When Silence Speaks: (How) Can We Study Alchemical Image Series Without Texts?, *Ambix: The Journal for the History of Alchemy and Chemistry*, ed. by Sergei Zotov (Special Issue, 2027) (forthcoming, to be submitted, 9500 words)

Winged Hermes: How Arabic Iconography Influenced European Alchemical Manuscripts, *Annals of Science* (Special Issue, 2027), ed. by Jennifer Rampling (forthcoming, to be submitted, 9000 words)

Vomiting the Sea of Blood: Religious and Political Violence in DIY Alchemical Image Series, *Ambix: The Journal for the History of Alchemy and Chemistry*, ed. by Joshua Werett (Special Issue, 2026) (forthcoming, to be submitted, 7500 words)

Visualisation of Magic in Late Medieval Alchemical Manuscripts, *Arcana Naturae*, ed. by Tom Fischer and Sergei Zotov (7, 2026), (forthcoming, accepted, 10000 words)

‘Magic and How-To Books’, in *The Handbook of How-to Studies*, Literary and Cultural Studies series, ed. by Stefan Laube (Brill, 2026) (in press, 7150 words)

‘It is a Stone but Flesh: The Use of Animal and Human Ingredients in Alchemy’, in *Medieval Alchemy’s Medical Legacy: Elixirs, Healing Waters, and Precious Stones*, Palgrave Studies in Medieval and Early Modern Medicine series, ed. by Stefania Buosi-Moncunill and Lawrence Principe (Palgrave MacMillan-Springer, 2026) (in press, 9300 words)

‘Islamic Evangelists and Christian Acrobats: Reinterpretations of Religious Otherness in Arabic and European Alchemical Illumination’, in Philip Forness and Stanislaw Palau (eds.), *Interreligious Appropriations* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2025), pp. 178—201 (in press, 8270 words)

CONFERENCE AND SEMINAR ORGANISATION

Seminar ‘History of Alchemy and Chemistry’, Trinity Term 2026, Maison Française d’Oxford

Conference [“As stiffe twin compasses”: Allegory and Sciences, 1300-1700](#), in Warburg Institute, 24-25 October 2025, with keynote lectures by Sachiko Kusakawa (Cambridge) and Sophie Page (UCL)

Conference [Visita Interiora: ReImagining Allegory in Alchemical Tradition](#), in Warwick Centre in Venice, 16-17 June 2025, with the keynotes by Jennifer Rampling (Princeton) and Peter Forshaw (University of Amsterdam)

PUBLIC TALKS AND OUTREACH (FOR GENERAL AUDIENCE): more than 200 public talks, book presentations and interviews in the UK, US, Germany, Israel, Georgia, Ukraine, Russia, Montenegro, Latvia

EDITING

Alchemy between Science and Magic, *Arcana Naturae* (in press, 2026), co-editing with Tom Fischer

Visita Interiora: Reimagining Allegory in Alchemical Tradition, *Ambix* (forthcoming, special issue, 2027)

EXHIBITIONS

Allegory and Science – I curated small rare books display at the Archive of the Warburg Institute for my conference [“As stiffe twin compasses”](#) (2025)

LANGUAGE SKILLS

English and German – full professional proficiency

French, Latin, Ancient Greek – reading with dictionary proficiency

Russian – native proficiency

Ukrainian – reading/conversational proficiency