

## A Preliminary Inventory of the Arabic Hermetica

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\* = has been published

### Astrological

1. *Qaḍīb aḍ-ḍahab* (*The Rod of Gold*), translated into Arabic by 'Umar ibn al-Farruḥān aṭ-Ṭabarī
2. \**Kitāb Asrār an-nujūm* (*The Secrets of the Stars = Liber de stellis beibeniis*), on the characteristics of the natives born under the influence of specific fixed stars. Translated into Arabic from Middle Persian.
3. *Kitāb al-Asās wa-huwa llaḡī yusammā fī kutub an-nuḡūm al-ḥamsa wa-ṭ-ṭamānīn bāban* (*The Eighty-Five Chapters*). Al-Bīrūnī (d. 1048) lambasts Māshā'allāh (fl. 762-809) for using this work.
4. *Kitāb Munqalab sinī l-'ālam wa-mā fīhā min al-qaḍā'* (*The Revolution of the World-Year*). Claims to have been translated into Arabic in 743 CE (!).
5. *Kitāb fī Manāzil al-qamar* (on the lunar mansions and lunar astrology)
6. *Kitāb aṣ-Ṣi'rā l-yamānīya* (annual prognostications at the heliacal Rising of Sirius)
7. *Masā'il fī aḥkām an-nuḡūm min qawl Hirmis al-ḥakīm* (treatise on interrogational astrology)
8. *Kitāb al-Mawālīd li-Hirmis* (on genethliology)
9. Citations in various works of astral omens (*malḥama*-compilations) such as *Kitāb al-Sudā'* (translated from Syriac). Astral omens in the Babylonian and Aramaic tradition.
10. *Asrār kalām Hirmis al-muṭallaṭ bi-l-ḥikma wa-huwa... Dawānāy* (*Secrets of Hermes-Dawānāy*). Apparently the unfinished translation from Aramaic by Ibn Waḥṣīya (fl. 903-931), mentioned by him at the beginning of his *K. al-Filāḥa an-nabaṭīya*. (general astrology)

### Talismanic

11. Talismanic Pseudo-Aristotelian Hermetica
  - a. *al-Iṣṭamākhīs*
  - b. *al-Iṣṭamāṭīs*
  - c. *al-Uṣṭuwwaṭās*
  - d. *al-Madīṭīs*
  - e. *al-Hādīṭūs*
12. \*Arabic translation of the *Kyranis* (though the original reference to Hermes has disappeared in the translation). Recipes for 24 talismans according to the Greek alphabet. Translated into Arabic from Greek, possibly by way of a Syriac intermediary, in the ninth century.
13. *Kitāb al-Ḥarf* (*Book of the Letter*, a variety of remedies based on the invocation of angels and qur'ānic passages, to be used for various ailments, arranged alphabetically) [13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> cent.?)

### \**Kitāb Sirr al-khalīqa*

14. Written ca 813-833. Apollonius of Tyana reveals the teachings of Hermes in encyclopedic form.

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## Alchemical

15. \**Risālat as-sirr* (*Epistle of Hermes Būdashīr*). Alchemical revelation of ancient Egyptian wisdom, composed in Fāṭimid Egypt ca 1000.
16. \**ar-Risāla al-falakiya al-kubrā* (*Great Treatise of the Spheres*). Composed 10<sup>th</sup> cent.
17. *Kitāb al-Milāṭīs*
18. *Risāla li-bnihī Ṭāṭā* (*Hermes' Epistle to His son Tat*) [alchemy]. Composed ca 900.
19. *Risālat Hirmis al-Akbar li-Suqrāṭ* (*Treatise of the Greatest Hermes to Socrates*) [alchemy]
20. Poem (*urǧūza*) on Alchemy and Analysis (*šarḥ*) of the Poem both attributed to Hermes

## Wisdom

21. \**The Rebuke of the Soul* (*Kitāb Mu'ādhalat al-nafs*). Philosophical exhortations to the soul to pursue a life of restraint from the world and higher ethical and spiritual goals. Composed ca 1200, perhaps by Bābā Afḍal Kāshānī, who also translated it into Persian. Attributed early in the manuscript tradition to Plato as well as to Hermes; eventually also attributed to Aristotle and, in one manuscript, to Agathodaemon (but in most cases to Hermes)
22. \*Approximately 150 wise sayings (*ḥikam*) and exhortations (*mawā'iz*) attributed to Hermes, extant in numerous Arabic gnomologia, but derived almost entirely from two earlier gnomological collections:
  - a. *Ṣiwān al-ḥikma* (composed ca 1000)
  - b. *Mukhtār al-ḥikam*, composed 1048/9 by al-Mubashshir ibn Fātik
23. *Risāla fī l-Maw'iza al-laṭīfa wa-n-naṣā'ih aš-šarīfa* (*The Subtle Sermon and Noble Advice*) (composed after ca 1300).

## Miscellaneous

24. \**Snakes and Their Venoms* (*Sharḥ Kitāb Hirmis al-ḥakīm fī ma'rifat ṣifat al-ḥayyāt*). Probably translated from Greek in the 9<sup>th</sup> century. Has antecedent passages in the Greek Philoumenos' book *On Animal Poisons and Their Remedies* (3<sup>rd</sup> cent.). Includes interpolations from the Arabic translation of Galen's *To Piso on Theriac*.
25. *Kitāb Daḥīrat al-Iskandar* (*The Treasure of Alexander*) [a later medieval work; talismans, occult properties of substances, and alchemy]

## Texts wrongly reported as Hermetica in reference works

1. Treatise of Buṭrus of Akhmīm [not Hermes] for his son Sūris (date unknown) [alchemy]
2. \*al-Ġamrī (15<sup>th</sup>-century Iraqi alchemist) : *Qabas al-qābis* (*The Fire-Brand*) [alchemical instructions related through an allegorical story about Hermes; not a work by Hermes]