

# CHEMISTRY, MEDICINE AND CRIME

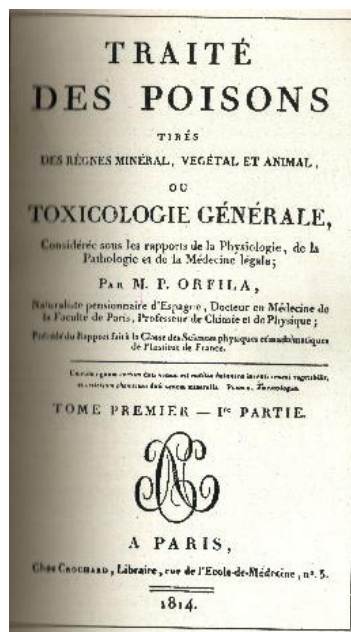
## MATEU J. B. ORFILA (1787-1853) AND HIS TIMES

*First circular*

*Maó, 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> March 2004*



The meeting "Orfila i la seva època" (Orfila and his times) will be held in Maó (Minorca) on the 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> March 2004. It aims to celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Mateu J. Bonaventura Orfila (1787-1853), a very relevant toxicologist and chemist, and the dean of the Faculty of Medicine of Paris from 1830 onwards. Born at Maó, he studied medicine at the University of Valencia and chemistry in Barcelona, to later follow his studies in Paris. Under the protection of the chemists Vauquelin and Thenard, Orfila became a private lecturer on chemistry in the French capital. In 1819 he was appointed professor of legal medicine, and four years later he succeeded Vauquelin as professor of chemistry at the Paris Faculty of Medicine. In 1830 he was nominated dean of that faculty, a powerful and influent position inside French medical community. He died, after a short illness, in Paris on the 12th of March 1853.



Orfila's chief publications are *Traité des poisons, or Toxicologie générale* (1813); *Eléments de chimie médicale* (1817); *Leçons de médecine légale* (1823); *Traité des exhumations juridiques* (1830); and *Recherches sur l'empoisonnement par l'acide arsenieux* (1841). He also wrote many valuable papers, chiefly on subjects connected with legal medicine.

Starting from Orfila's work, the meeting aims to build a broader and more ambitious collective enterprise on the intersections between chemistry and medicine during the first half of nineteenth century. For that purpose, in a two days format, including some brief visit at relevant places in the island, the meeting will be divided in three parts: (a) Orfila and his times; (b) Medical chemistry (c). Chemistry, Legal Medicine and Toxicology.

The cost of the conference (travel from Barcelona, breakfasts, dinners and accommodation) will be approximately 270 euros per person. Stipends will be available for Ph.D. students. Applications (with a brief CV and reasons for attending meeting) should be sent to José R. Bertomeu Sánchez (Jose.R.Bertomeu@uv.es).

Updated information about the meeting (inscriptions, fellowships, definitive programme) might be found at the meeting web page.



<http://www.uv.es/=bertomeu/orfila>.

**PROGRAMME**

**19<sup>th</sup> March**

*FIRST SESSION*

**9 h. Introduction: Orfila and his times.**

*Introduction:* Alvar Martínez-Vidal (University of Barcelona) and Josep Vidal (Institute of Menorque Studies)

*Orfila and his biographers:* Agustí Nieto-Galan (University of Barcelona) and José R. Bertomeu Sánchez (University of Valencia)

10 h. Coffee break

*Teaching chemistry for medical students: Public and private courses of chemistry in Paris during early nineteenth-century:* A. García Belmar (University of Alicante)

*Organic and Biological Chemistry in a Medical Context: The Research School of Adolphe Wurtz at the Faculty of Medicine, Paris (1853-1884) :* Ana Carneiro – New University of Lisboa.

13 h. Lunch

*SECOND SESSION*

**16 h. Medical chemistry in Paris during nineteenth-century.**

*Building a discipline: medical chemistry in early nineteenth century:* María José Ruiz Somavilla (University of Malaga)

*The disintegration of plant and animal chemistry and the formation of carbon chemistry around 1830 :* Ursula Klein - Max Planck Institut- Berlin.

18 h. Coffee break

*Mateu Orfila on the web: Paris Medical library and the digitalisation of Orfila's book:* Guy Cobolet (Paris Medical Faculty)

**20<sup>th</sup> March***THIRD SESSION***9 h. Chemistry, medicine and crime: Nineteenth-century Toxicology**

*The toxicology of Robert Christison: European influences and British practice in the early nineteenth century.* Brenda White & Anne Crowther (University of Glasgow)

*Bones of Contention: Orfila, Normal Arsenic, and British Toxicology.* Ian A. Burney (Wellcome Unit, Manchester).

11 h. Coffee break

*Mateu Orfila and the affaire Lafarge.* José R. Bertomeu Sánchez (University of Valencia).

*Orfila and French legal medicine during nineteenth-century.* Frédéric Chauvaud (University of Poitiers)

13 h. Lunch

**Additional information might be requested to the members of the organising committee:**

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