

De' secreti del reverendo signore Alessio Piemontese (1558)

as translated from the Dutch in Jo Kirby et al, *Natural Colorants for Dyeing and Lake Pigments: Practical Recipes and their Historical Sources* (Archetype, London, 2014), 37–38.

To dye silk carmine. First, you will rasp or scratch hard soap very finely, and let them [the soap shavings] dissolve in plain water; after that put your silk in a small bag made of linen or fine canvas, and put it in a kettle with the aforesaid soap and water. Let this boil for half an hour, moving it around regularly so it does not burn, then take it from the fire, wash it in salt water, and after that in sour water. Take also to every pound of silk a pound or more of rock alum dissolved in cold water, and be sure there is enough water; wherein you will put your silk without any bag, and let it lay therein without fire for eight hours. Then take it out, wash it in fresh water, then in salt water, and then again in fresh water, and do not let it dry but put it all wet into a kettle with the carmine well pestled and sieved, that is, three ounces for each pound of silk... And when it starts boiling then put in the silk prepared as above, and let it boil for a quarter of an hour. At last you will take it from the fire, and let it dry in the shade, and you will have a very excellent dyeing.

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