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sets of Roman medical instruments for the range of medical and surgical operations which might have been carried out during the period of their use, and the extent of specialization by Roman practitioners.

The second section, covering “women, children and sexuality”, is less extensive and wide ranging. It includes papers by Danielle Gourevitch, who draws attention to the instructions provided by ancient medical writers for the moulding and fashioning of the new-born baby by the nurse as part of the, essentially cultural, process of producing a properly formed human infant; Ann Ellis Hanson, who examines Hippocratic metaphors for conception, abortion and gestation, clearly illustrating the cultural coherence of metaphors that mixed, congealed and baked the parents’ seed in the oven of the womb; and Ernst Künzl, who argues that archaeological finds of medical instruments in Roman imperial graves of women designated as *medicae* or *iatrinae* (generally but not unproblematically translated as female physicians) help to distinguish them from midwives and give them a more specific existence as surgeons, dentists and other specialists.

A rather different dimension of ancient medicine is explored in the third section, which treats “religious and magic attitudes towards disease and healing” in both pagan and Christian contexts. All the contributors manage to keep the wider picture in view, however, and reflect, to a greater or lesser degree, the more complex, nuanced and integrated character of that picture, of relations between religion, magic and “rationality” within it, which has been emerging in more recent scholarship. Most noteworthy, perhaps, are Angelos Chaniotis’ discussion of pagan propitiatory inscriptions of imperial Lydia and Phrygia which commemorate expiations made for sins (usually religious offences) which had resulted in divine punishment in the form of illness, and Richard Gordon’s sophisticated scrutiny of the healing event in Graeco-Roman folk-medicine.

The fourth section, on “medicine as a science and its relation to philosophy”, is the second most substantial in these volumes,

ranging from Plato to Alexander of Aphrodisias and Galen, and passing through Aristotle and his school, Herophilus and Erasistratus on the way. It also covers both of the main points at which ancient philosophy and medicine intersected—around the conception of the medical art and its relation to other types of art and learning, where Katerina Ierodiakonou’s discussion of the views of Alexander of Aphrodisias on the subject is a welcome addition to existing scholarship, and around the zones of, methodological and substantive, doctrinal interaction and overlap, where James Longrigg’s examination of medicine and the Lyceum is particularly useful (though he overestimates the accuracy of *Anonymus Parisinus*’ testimony concerning Diocles’ notion of the *pneuma*).

“Linguistic and literary aspects of medical texts” are the subject matter for the fifth section, within which Heinrich von Staden discusses Galen’s theory of metaphor, a theory born out of an awareness of the treacherous but indispensable nature of science’s textuality, with his customary incisiveness and perspicacity. The collection concludes with a paper on technical medicine in Attic comedy which constitutes the sixth and final section.

A certain unevenness of quality, and perhaps more acutely of originality over repetition, is inevitable in a collection of such scope but this does not diminish its solid achievement in clearly revealing the real richness of ancient medicine as a field of study which has something to offer everyone who has either an interest in the ancient world or the history of medicine. That is a large group.

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Cristina Álvarez Millán (ed. and trans.), *Abū l-‘Alā’ Zuhri* (m. 525/1130): *Kitāb al-Muṣarrabāt* (*Libro de las experiencias médicas*), Fuentes Árabe-hispanas, 17, Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1994, pp. Spanish 312, Arabic 187, no price given (84-00-07455-6).

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Abū al-‘Alā’ Zuhr was one of a family of prominent Andalusian physicians and the father of the more famous physician known to Europe as Avenzoar (d. AD 1161–2). Abū al-‘Alā’ Zuhr’s Arabic treatise that is here edited and translated into Spanish is titled *Kitāb al-Mujarrabāt*, ‘The books of experiences’, and it reflects the working life of an urban and court physician in twelfth-century Islamic Spain. Following Abū al-‘Alā’ Zuhr’s death in Seville in AD 1130–1, his students compiled his therapeutic procedures and case histories and arranged them according to the part of the body in which the condition was centred, in order from head to foot. In the introduction to the edition, the editor discusses the biographical details of Abū al-‘Alā’ Zuhr and the nature of the *Mujarrabāt* literature. This volume by Cristina Álvarez Millán, originally prepared as a doctoral thesis, is the first major study of this type of Arabic therapeutic and clinical manual.

Álvarez Millán argues convincingly that historians have incorrectly defined the genre of medical literature designated as *Kutub al-Mujarrabāt* or ‘Books of experiences’. Recent historians have maintained that such a title was used exclusively for treatises that employed predominately magical remedies and fell within the realm of “empiric” rather than empirical or clinical medicine, the reason being that in such treatises instructions for procedures and remedies usually conclude with the final word *mujarrab*, “tried”, implying that its efficacy was confirmed through experience. Álvarez Millán argues that at least some of the *Mujarrabāt* treatises, such as this one, ought to be viewed as collections of true clinical cases and not compilations of magical and folkloric material. The treatise by Abū al-‘Alā’ Zuhr, for example, does not contain magical procedures, and the term *mujarrab* is not used in the entries even though the title of the treatise is *Kitāb al-Mujarrabāt*. The term *Kutub al-Khawāṣṣ*, ‘Books of occult properties’, is more appropriate for books with dominately magical material, and in fact, Abū al-‘Alā’ Zuhr also composed a treatise titled *Kitāb al-Khawāṣṣ* that is concerned with more

magical remedies. Sections of the latter treatise have been published and translated into Spanish by Luisa M Arvide Cambra (see p. 59 note 104 for full references; see also Cristina Álvarez Millán in *Asclepio*, 1994, 16: 151–73). The reviewer would like to have seen more comparisons made between these two treatises by Abū al-‘Alā’ Zuhr.

Two centuries earlier in Baghdad, Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn Zakariyā’ al-Rāzī, known to Europe as Rhazes, also wrote a treatise titled *Kitāb al-Khawāṣṣ* and a separate one titled *Kitāb al-Mujarrabāt* (or *Tajārib*). The latter treatise, like that of the same title by Abū al-‘Alā’ Zuhr, was compiled after his death by one of his students. Álvarez Millán is currently editing this treatise, and since it records al-Rāzī’s therapeutic procedures possibly employed in the important ‘Aḍudī hospital in Baghdad, its comparison with that by Abū al-‘Alā’ Zuhr will prove most interesting.

The edited Arabic version of Abū al-‘Alā’ Zuhr’s *Kitāb al-Mujarrabāt* is based upon two manuscript copies: an undated one in Rabat (Biblioteca Real MS. 1538) and one in the Escorial (MS. 844/3) which was finished by the copyist on 25 February 1166 (22 Rabī’ II 561). There are 310 individual therapeutic case histories that occur in both of these copies. Nineteen additional ones are found only in Escorial MS. 844/3 (presented in Appendix 1), and another eleven occur in Rabat MS. 1538 and in Rabat MS. 253 (presented in Appendix 2), bringing the total of recorded treatments to 340. In the Arabic section of the volume there are also four Arabic indexes covering simple remedies, compound remedies and foodstuffs, general medical terminology, and authorities cited in the text (pp. 149–87 of Arabic).

The annotated Spanish translation, pp. 87–212, is accompanied on pp. 215–42 by Spanish indexes to simple medicaments (keyed to the 340 numbered entries), compound remedies and foodstuffs, medical terms, and authorities. Pages 245–97 contain Spanish-Arabic glossaries of simples, compound remedies and foodstuffs, and general medical terms, as well as Arabic-Spanish glossaries of

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the same three categories. Bibliographies of manuscripts cited, edited original sources, and secondary literature complete the volume.

The clinical material recorded in Abū al-‘Alā’ Zuhīr’s treatise is deplorably short of the type of detail we should like to have. Details of name, background, and occupation are never given, and only occasionally is age or general physical condition stated. The formulation of the entries usually takes the form “he prescribed for someone whose eyelids became swollen when he shouted and his vision grew dark from vapours rising to this head . . . (no. 16)”, or “for a man in his 70s with a humid body [phlegmatic temperament?] suffering a cold in his head with a headache, phlegm in his stomach, and debilitated, he prescribed . . . (no. 314)”.

Some important questions arise when considering this and similar collections of therapeutic and clinical experiences which were straightforward records of cases and procedures with no discourses on medical theory. Why were they collected (in the case of both Abū al-‘Alā’ Zuhīr and al-Rāzī after the death of the author)? What purpose did they serve and who was the intended user of the volume? What subsequent influence did they have on medical practice? Are they to be viewed as precursors of the European *Consilia*, the collections of anecdotal cases and opinions of famous physicians?

Clearly on the basis of the text presented here, historians need to rethink the designation of *Kutub al-Mujarrabāt*. It would seem that medieval medical writers, as well as modern historians, used the term for different types of therapeutic manuals. Perhaps the *Kutub al-Khawāṣṣ* (‘Books of occult properties’) and the *Kutub al-Mujarrabāt* (‘Books of experiences’) could be viewed as the two ends of a continuum between which there were a range of therapeutic manuals, incorporating to differing degrees therapeutic magic and clinical case histories. This well-documented and carefully prepared translation and edition is a major contribution to our knowledge of the practical aspects of medieval Islamic medical care and should

serve as an impetus to examine other preserved medieval *Kutub al-Mujarrabāt* or ‘Books of [medical] experiences’.

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Shirley Guthrie, *Arab social life in the Middle Ages: an illustrated study*, London, Saqi Books, 1995, pp. 229, £40.00 (0-86356-043-1).

The *Maqāmāt* of the renowned Iraqi litterateur al-Ḥārīrī (d. 1122) is a classic of medieval Arabic literature, and after the Qur’ān, arguably the greatest masterpiece of the field. It consists of fifty tales that al-Ḥārīrī relates through a narrator named al-Ḥārīth, who in describing his travels and adventures in various parts of the Middle East keeps encountering a perfectly delightful rogue named Abū Zayd. The tales cover a wide range of themes, and the work as a whole quickly became very popular among the educated literate sector of Arab-Islamic society. In addition to being a much copied book in later times, the *Maqāmāt* attracted the attention of various artists, with the result that there survive today manuscripts of the work containing a total of some hundreds of illustrations, including many of spectacular quality.

These illustrations have been much studied from an artistic point of view, but Guthrie’s work, an abridged version of her 1991 PhD thesis at Edinburgh University, marks the first effort to assess them systematically as a reflection of Islamic society in Syria and Iraq in the thirteenth century, the era when the illustrators lived. Selecting thirty-eight pictures from six manuscripts currently held in libraries in Paris (especially the Bibliothèque Nationale’s renowned Ms. 5847), London, St Petersburg, and Istanbul, she uses each as the starting point for a detailed discussion of the subjects, motifs, details, and customs raised in the picture. Context is provided by other medieval Islamic literary works and