

Women, wealth and power in the Roman Empire. Acta Instituti Romani Finlandiae; vol. 25. Institutum Romanum Finlandiae, 2002.

Contents: Ria Berg, "Wearing wealth: *mundus mulieris* and *ornatus* as status markers for women in imperial Rome," 15-73; Riikka Hälikkää, "Discourses of body, gender and power in Tacitus," 75-104; Minerva Keltanen, "The public image of the four empresses: ideal wives, mothers and regents?," 105-146; Janne Pölönen, "The division of wealth between men and women in Roman succession (c.a. 50 BC-AD 250)," 147-179; Päivi Setälä, "Women and brick production—some new aspects," 181-201; Ville Vuolanto, "Women and the property of fatherless children in the Roman Empire," 203-243, and "Male and female euergetism in late antiquity: a study on Italian and Adriatic church floor mosaics," 245-302.

Woodford, Charlotte. *Nuns as historians in early modern Germany.* Oxford modern languages and literatures monographs. Clarendon Press, 2002.

Zika, Charles. *Exorcising our demons: magic, witchcraft and visual culture in early modern Europe.* Studies in medieval and Reformation thought; 91. Brill, 2003.

—Chris Africa, University of Iowa Libraries



BIBLIOGRAPHY: WOMEN AND MEDICINE

For earlier bibliography on Women and Medicine, see *Medieval Feminist Forum* (formerly, *Medieval Feminist Newsletter*) no. 10 (Fall 1990), pp. 23-24; no. 11 (Spring 1991), pp. 25-26; no. 13 (Spring 1992), pp. 32-34; no. 15 (Spring 1993), pp. 42-43; no. 19 (Spring 1995), pp. 39-42; no. 21 (Spring 1996), pp. 39-41; no. 26 (Fall 1998), pp. 8-11; no. 30 (Fall 2000), pp. 44-49; and no. 31 (Fall 2001), pp. 50-53.

Agrimi, Jole. "Autorità di una autrice e delegittimazione del suo sapere: Trotula," in Silvana Borutti, ed., *Scrittura e memoria della filosofia: Studi offerti a Fulvio Papi per il suo settantesimo compleanno* (Milan: Mimesis, 2000), pp. 147-56. Summarizing the findings of Benton and Green that have revised our understandings of the female healer Trota (or Trocta) and the composite work, the *Trotula*, Agrimi raises questions about the significance of these findings for a feminist history of women's healthcare and medical practice. (Note: This paper was presented at a conference in 1997 and was not, apparently, revised in light of more recent studies published prior to Agrimi's death in 1999.)

Aubaile-Sallenave, Françoise. "Les nourritures de l'accouchée dans le monde arabo-musulman méditerranéen," *Médiévales: Langue, Textes, Histoire* 33 (1997), 103-124. Surveys evidence for the special diet of women just before and during birth, and during the forty-day lying-in period after birth. Troubling is the fact that the author relies primarily on modern anthropological accounts of food practices, without problematizing how these may have been different in the past.

Barratt, Alexandra, ed. *The Knowing of Woman's Kind in Childing: A Middle English Version of Material Derived from the 'Trotula' and Other Sources*, *Medieval Women: Texts and Contexts*, 4 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2001). This very welcome critical edition of the earliest English translation of one of the so-called *Trotula* texts presents, in facing-page format, the two major versions of the text. *Knowing*, which dates, according to Barratt, from the early fifteenth century, is a much modified and adapted translation of an Anglo-Norman version of the *Liber de sinthomatibus mulierum* ("Book on the Conditions of Women"), together with material selected from two Latin texts, *Non omnes quidem* and the so-called *Gynaecia Cleopatre*. It is extant in five copies, making it the most widely-circulated of the five known Middle English translations of the *Trotula*. Of

particular importance for both the history of medicine and women's history is the fact that the text is explicitly addressed to a female audience; at least two of the five manuscripts, moreover, are likely to have been prepared for particular women readers.

Billier, Peter. "Applying Number to Men and Women in the Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries: An Enquiry into the Origins of the Idea of 'Sex Ratio,'" in Miri Rubin, ed., *The Work of Jacques le Goff and the Challenges of Medieval History* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1997), pp. 27-52. In this fascinating analysis, Billier surveys the development of a concept of "sex ratio," i.e., the number of male children born in relation to the number of females. Billier ranges widely across a variety of sources to show the impact of the newly-available Aristotelian *Generation of Animals*, with its notion of woman as defective male, in the mid-13th century. See also his splendid new book, *The Measure of Multitude: Population in Medieval Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

———. "A 'Scientific' View of Jews from Paris around 1300," *Micrologus* 9 (2001), 137-168. Explores further a topic already treated by Billier himself and by Resnick and Johnson (cf. *MFF* 30, Fall 2000), that is, the genesis of the belief that Jewish males menstruate. In a compelling analysis, Billier notices the coincidence of the growing influence of Aristotle's natural philosophical writings in various quodlibetal (random topic) questions debated among Parisian theologians with the series of expulsions of Jews from Gascony, England and France in the late 13th and early 14th century. He identifies three separate strands of thought, all deriving from the Arabic world: medical texts (that melancholy was associated with a flux of blood), astrological texts (that Jews were associated with melancholy and Saturn), and two texts coming out of the Crusader states (that Jews suffered a flux of blood). The three strands came together ca. 1300, later to be diffused through such texts as one of the commentary traditions on the pseudo-Albertus Magnus, *Secreta mulierum*. Billier includes in an appendix all the relevant texts.

Buck, R. A. "Women and Language in the Anglo-Saxon Leechbooks," *Women and Language* 23, 2 (Fall 2000): 41-50. Provides an intriguing analysis of the grammatical and semantic features of references to women in two 10th-century medical texts. Particularly useful is her analysis of the "voice" of the writer and how his address to the reader gives evidence of who he expected his readers to be. Buck finds that the patient is mostly spoken about rather than spoken to.

Caballero-Navas, Carmen. *The Book of Women's Love and Medieval Medical Hebrew Literature on Women*, Kegan Paul Library of Jewish Studies (London: Kegan Paul, 2002). From the publisher's promo: "The first part of this book presents a translation into English of the Hebrew compilation, *Sefer Abavat Nashim* ("The Book of Woman's Love"), compiled in the late Middle Ages and preserved in a single copy from Catalonia-Provence. Its contents are concerned with magic, sexuality, cosmetics and gynecology—areas of knowledge essentially, though not exclusively, related to women. The second part is a historical study of Jewish women's lives and experiences during the late Middle Ages in the Mediterranean West."

Cabré, Montserrat. "Cosmética y perfumería," in Luis García Ballester, ed., *Historia de la ciencia y de la técnica en la Corona de Castilla. II. Edad Media* (Salamanca: Junta de Castilla y León-Consejería de Educación y Cultura, 2002), pp. 773-779. A useful survey of cosmetics and perfumery texts and practices in Castille.

Cabré, Montserrat, trans. "Public Record of the Labour of Isabel de la Cavalleria. January 10, 1490, Zaragoza," *The Online Reference Book for Medieval Studies* <<http://orb.rhodes.edu/birthrecord.html>>. Cabré presents an English translation of an actual birth scene as it was recorded by a male notary. Isabel, recently become a widow, wished to have a public record made of the birth so that the posthumous child's inheritance would not be questioned. This is a rare and invaluable document for showing us both how a birth was conducted and what was at stake in insuring the legitimacy of children.

Cabré i Pairet, Montserrat, and Teresa Ortiz, eds. *Sanadoras, matronas y médicas en Europa, siglos XII-XX* (Barcelona: Icaria, 2001). This volume presents in Spanish essays that had originally appeared in English and Spanish in a special issue of *Dynamis: Acta*

Hispanica ad Medicinæ Scientiarumque Historiam Illustrandam 19 (1999). Essays on the medieval period include those by Cabré and Salmon on the trial of Jacoba Felicie, and Monica Green on the medical writers Trota of Salerno and Hildegard of Bingen.

Dangler, Jean. *Mediating Fictions: Literature, Women Healers, and the Go-Between in Medieval and Early Modern Iberia* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press; London: Associated University Presses, 2001). A study of the figure of the woman healer and/or go-between (*medianera*) in Jaume Roig's *Spill o Llibre de les dones* (1460); Fernando de Rojas's *La Celestina* (1499); and Francisco Delicado's *La Lozana andaluza* (1528). Dangler finds a shift in the 15th century away from the positive representation of women who functioned as intercessors to an increasingly derogatory representation, that saw such women as promoters of disease. She suggests that this shift, abetted by the three writers she studies (who either were or were closely associated with physicians), was prompted by efforts to raise the stature of professionalized male medical practitioners.

Fischer, Klaus-Dietrich. "Die pseudohippokratische *Epistula de virginibus*: Bemerkungen zu ihrer Textüberlieferung und zu ihrem Vokabular," *Les Études Classiques* 70 (2002), 101-22. Fischer describes here a late antique text, now extant in five copies dating from the 9th through 13th centuries, that prognosticates the future health of a woman (how many children she will bear, whether the labors will be difficult, how long she will live thereafter) depending on the age she begins to menstruate. The text is corrupt or lacunous in all five witnesses, but together they allow us to gather a sense of the unique perspectives of this text. Fischer includes as an appendix a critical edition of one version of the text. He will be publishing all three major versions soon, together with English translations.

Giladi, Avner. *Infants, Parents, and Wet Nurses: Medieval Islamic Views on Breast-feeding and Their Social Implications* (Leiden: Brill, 1999). Giladi surveys religious, legal, and medical sources for their views on "mercenary wet nursing" in the medieval Islamic world. Given the nature of the documents available, his focus is limited to prescriptive views. Particularly fascinating is the evidence he gives that women created "milk kinships" with men so that they could have unrestricted social access to them.

Green, Monica H. *The Trotula: An English Translation of the Medieval Compendium of Women's Medicine* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002). This is a slightly revised reprinting in paperback of Green's English translation of the standardized *Trotula* ensemble (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), here omitting the Latin edition.

Hülse-Esch, Andrea von. "Frauen an der Universität? Überlegungen anlässlich einer Gegenüberstellung von mittelalterlichen Bildzeugnissen und Texten," *Zeitschrift für historische Forschung* 24, no. 3 (1997), 315-46. Despite its hopeful title ("Women at the University? Reflections in Connection with a Comparison of Medieval Pictorial Evidence and Texts"), this piece in fact presents no new evidence for women's relations with universities other than an intriguing image of what seems to be a female student from the tomb of the jurist Cino da Pistoia. Rather, this lengthy essay is a rehearsal of mostly German- and (rather dated) English-language scholarship on "learned women" in medieval and early Renaissance Europe. For medical topics, readers will be better served by surveying the scholarship listed in previous issues of *MFF* over the last twelve years.

Kinzelbach, Annemarie. "Konstruktion und konkretes Handeln: Heilkundige Frauen im oderdeutschen Raum, 1450-1700," *Historische Anthropologie* 7, no. 2 (1999), 165-90. Not yet seen.

Lee, Becky R. "A Company of Women and Men: Men's Recollections of Childbirth in Medieval England," *Journal of Family History* 27, no. 2 (April 2002), 92-100. Lee analyzes records from 13th-15th century "proof-of-age inquests," legal proceedings during which male witnesses (fathers, neighbors, etc.) would recollect the circumstances of an heir's birth in order to establish his or her age. Lee uses these documents to construct a picture of how men, even though they rarely entered the birthing room, were aware of what went on inside. She also finds evidence of men visiting the new mother and child,

the exchange of gifts to “mark” the birth in people’s memories, and the involvement of fathers in the choice of a wetnurse. Readers might wish to contrast Lee’s findings with documents from southern France where it is women themselves who testify about the circumstances of a child’s birth; see Joseph Shatzmiller, *Médecine et justice en Provence médiévale: Documents de Manosque, 1262-1348* (Aix-en-Provence: Publications de l’Université de Provence, 1989), pp. 113-14.

Montero Cartelle, Enrique, and Pedro Conde Parrado. “Sobre nombres y funciones (‘testes, semen’): de la andrología a la ginecología,” *Medicina nei secoli* 13, no. 2 (2001), p. 373-399. Surveys the differential usage of terminology for analogous male and female organs or bodily fluids (*testes/testiculi, semen/sperma*) from Antiquity through the Renaissance. They find that while one or the other of the word pairs may be preferred at certain times, there is no gender differential in the usage. Around the beginning of the 14th century, they note, *sperma* tends to be used for the seminal contribution of the male, while *semen* is used for the female contribution. The distinction does not hold, however, and the earlier pattern remains. **Note:** this whole issue of *Medicina nei secoli* is devoted to the topic of andrology; other articles touching on the Middle Ages include one on seminal diseases in the Byzantine tradition and one of Hildegard’s views of semen.

Musacchio, Jacqueline M. “Weasels and Pregnancy in Renaissance Italy,” *Renaissance Studies* 15, no. 2 (June 2001), 172-187. Another installment of Musacchio’s lucid analyses of the symbolic meanings of art in pronatalist post-plague northern Italy. Musacchio finds that weasels, who had long had associations with miraculous birth, are used in early Renaissance art to imply or foreshadow pregnancy.

Pahta, Päivi. *Medieval Embryology in the Vernacular: The Case of ‘De spermate,’* Mémoires de la Société Néophilologique de Helsinki, LIII (Helsinki: Société Néophilologique, 1998). An important historical study and edition of a unique Middle English translation of the anonymous *De spermate*, a text that had been translated into Latin in the 11th or 12th century. It is an important source of lore on embryological development, and seems to have introduced to the West the idea that the human uterus had seven cells that gave rise to variously sexed males and females, as well as hermaphrodites. This is a model of rigorous philological scholarship.

Paxson, James J. “The Nether-Faced Devil and the Allegory of Parturition,” *Studies in Iconography* 19 (1998): 139-176. This is an intriguing (if often exasperating) application of post-modernist theory to medieval images of devils who have their sexual organs replaced by “nether faces.” Rejecting previous interpretations of these images (the oldest of which seems to be in Hildegard’s *Scivias*), Paxson suggests that instead these devils reflect the moment of birth when the infant emerges from the birth canal. Paxson writes: “This connection, so glaring in its obviousness (once one has made the visual connection, that is), invokes the quotidian experience—and the subculture—of midwifery.” This is an intriguing hypothesis, though one regrets that Paxson has not better researched the medical aspects of the thesis he is proposing. Paxson notes, for example, that what he calls a “Middle English *Trotula*” (which was shown more than 10 years ago not to be the *Trotula* but gynecological excerpts from Gilbertus Anglicus) “contains only stylized, cutaway views of the fetus *in utero*; never does the text illustrate actual parturition” (p. 164). This is true enough, but then *no* medieval gynecological text has such illustrations. The fetus-in-utero figures, meanwhile, are not original creations of this manuscript’s illuminator but remnants of a long iconographic tradition that can be traced back to late antiquity. Paxson suggests that since medieval men would have been universally excluded from the birthing room (though see the Cabré translation noted above), they would have no direct experience of seeing living versions of these “nether-faced” beings. The question this raises, though, is how we can explain why men would see this “creature” as uniformly monstrous while women (presumably, given their quotidian experience) would have seen it as quite ordinary.

Schäfer, Daniel. *Geburt aus dem Tod: Der Kaiserschnitt an Verstorbenen in der abendländischen Kultur* (Hürtgenwald: Guido Pressler, 1999). From the opening image—a hitherto unpublished early 14th-century depiction from a medical textbook of a male physician overseeing a midwife performing a caesarean section—this book offers a

useful new survey of evidence for the history of what he refers to as *sectio in mortua*, a better term perhaps than the modern “caesarean section” since it makes clear that this procedure was performed, probably beginning around the 13th century, not in order to save the life of either mother or fetus, but to allow the child to be “born” out of its dead mother so that it could be baptized and its soul saved. The definitive history of this procedure remains to be written, however, since there is still great need for systematic analysis of religious sources. Taglia’s work (cited below) offers an excellent guide.

Sherwood-Smith, Maria. “Forschung oder Vorurteil, Kultur oder Naturkunde? Zur Frage der Frauenfeindlichkeit in den deutschen und niederländischen Bearbeitungen der ‘Secreta Mulierum’ von Pseudo-Albertus Magnus,” in Alan Robertshaw and Gerhard Wolf, eds., *Natur und Kultur in der deutschen Literatur des Mittelalters. Colloquium Exeter 1997* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1999), pp. 163-74. Drawing on the earlier work of Margaret Schleissner, Sherwood-Smith assesses the degree of misogyny in four different Dutch and German translations of the pseudo-Albertus Magnus, *De secretis mulierum*. Not surprisingly, she finds that the different translations put different valences on the misogynistic character of the Latin original.

Taglia, Kathryn. “Delivering a Christian Identity: Midwives in Northern French Synodal Legislation, c. 1200-1500,” in Peter Biller and Joseph Ziegler, eds., *Religion and Medicine in the Middle Ages*, York Studies in Medieval Theology, 3 (York: York Medieval Press, 2001), pp. 77-90. Taglia provides concrete evidence for what will hopefully be a whole new conception of the history of midwives in the High and later Middle Ages. Surveying synodal and conciliar legislation from the four ecclesiastical provinces of Rouen, Tours, Sens, and Reims, Taglia points out the ways in which previous narratives of midwifery have relied on early modern sources to infer an earlier medieval past. When one looks at the medieval sources themselves, one finds that there was no explicit concern for midwives’ involvement in either witchcraft or abortion, nor is there any mention of midwives *per se* performing caesarean sections (to baptize the dying child, not to save its life). Rather, supervision of midwives by Church officials apparently arose solely out of concern for ensuring that they were properly trained in performing emergency baptisms when the need arose. This exemplary study shows both why studies on medieval women need to be interdisciplinary (in this case, the story lies in religious sources, not medical ones), and why research must be systematic in order to avoid the distortions of random sampling.

Van de Walle, Etienne. “‘Marvellous secrets’: Birth Control in European Short Fiction, 1150-1650,” *Population Studies* 54, no. 3 (Nov. 2000), 321-30. The author (who is a demographer) surveys a variety of literary genres in Latin and various vernacular languages to assess references to birth control, under which rubric he includes contraception, abortion, and concealment of pregnancies. He finds very little evidence of the former two methods, with concealment being the more frequent choice. None of these methods, he concludes, seem to have been widely used outside of the context of extra-marital liaisons.

—Monica Green, Arizona State University