

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; and no. 30 (Fall 2000), pp. 44–49.

Barratt, Alexandra. "In the Lowest Part of Our Need': Julian and Medieval Gynecological Writing." In Sandra J. McEntire, ed., *Julian of Norwich: A Book of Essays*. Garland Medieval Casebooks, 21 (New York: Garland, 1998). 239–56.

Barratt juxtaposes Julian's views on physical pain and sickness with those found in a Middle English gynecological treatise, *Knowing of Woman's Kind*. She notes that Julian's "detached and even admiring interest in the workings of the body [suggest] she might have been the kind of intelligent and informed laywoman for whom *The Knowing of Woman's Kind* was translated" (p. 254). Barratt's edition of this important medical work (which derives from the *Trotula* and other sources) is soon to be published by Brepols.

Baumgarten, Elisheva. "Thus Sayeth the Wise Midwives': Midwives and Midwifery in Thirteenth-Century Ashkenaz," *Zion* 65 (2000), 45–74.

In Hebrew. Baumgarten plans to bring out an English version in the near future; in the meantime, I quote in full the English summary: "Modern scholars' efforts to seek out everyday aspects of the lives of medieval women are constantly frustrated by the male character of the extant sources. Yet, when we are able to reach the voices of these women, we find that the effort pays off, not only by bringing us closer to medieval Jewish women, but by casting a wider light on medieval society as a whole. This article focuses on one aspect of medieval life that has been defined until lately in modern research as uniquely female and beyond the bounds of patriarchy: birth. One of the difficulties faced by scholars when examining birth has been the fact that all the texts studied to date portrayed the way men understood birth and did not allow a closer glimpse of the way women, the midwives, and other women dealt with birth. Recent scholarship has suggested that birth was part of the patriarchal system and was not as insular as previously thought, but that it embodies a rare opportunity to learn more about the everyday lives of medieval women and of gender relations in medieval society. A careful comparison of manuscripts shows that, in fact, we have a text through which these issues can be addressed. A Hebrew medical text from thirteenth-century Germany, found in a manuscript of *Sefer Asufot*, enables an examination of the work of midwives at that time. The text originates in Worms or Mainz and is an as-yet-unknown chapter of R. Gershom the Circumcisor's compendium *klalei haMilah*'. The text describes the ways in which midwives helped women during birth and cured other gynaecological and medical problems.

“The first part of the article situates the text in the general European and the specific German medical context, and suggests that this text is the earliest one known from Germany which describes the actual practice of medieval midwives. The second part of the article describes the place of this text in the context of medieval Jewish writing. After situating the manual in its textual contexts, the cures and remedies suggested in the manual are examined and compared with contemporary medical sources, chiefly with the medical writings of the Abbess Hildegard of Bingen (1098–1179) who lived in proximity to Worms and Mainz, the region in which the text was composed.

“The article outlines Jewish midwifery practices and their social implications, describing the status of midwives in Jewish society, their relationships with their clients on the one hand and with circumcisors as medical colleagues on the other hand. The cultural exchange that existed between Jewish and Christian medical practitioners in medieval society is also discussed.”

Conde Parrado, Pedro, Enrique Montero Cartelle, M. Cruz Herrero Ingelmo, eds. *Tractatus de conceptu; Tractatus de sterilitate mulierum*, Lingüística y filología, 37 (Valladolid: Universidad de Valladolid, 1999).

Two texts on sterility deriving from the medical school of Montpellier are edited here. Both date from the 14th century, and both focus primarily on sterility in women. The editors offer critical editions of the Latin texts, facing-page translations into Spanish, lexical indices, a glossary of *materia medica*, and a bibliography.

Demaitre, Luke. “Domesticity in Middle Dutch ‘Secrets of Men and Women’.” *Social History of Medicine*, 14 (2001), 1–25. From the abstract: “This is an introductory analysis of a group of Middle Dutch texts about the ‘Secrets’ of female health and procreation. Although at first sight little more than translations and adaptations of two Latin treatises widely known as *Trotula* and *Secreta mulierum*, the texts afford glimpses of their cultural context. . . . They addressed women and men, not only readers but also illiterate listeners, and they seemed particularly attuned to the household both in the practicality of gynaecological guidelines and in the earthiness of sexological information.” Note that all the references to the *Trotula* text that are cited as page numbers are in fact the *paragraph* numbers of Green’s edited text.

Elsackers, Marianne. “‘In Pain You Shall Bear Children’ (Gen. 3:16): Medieval Prayers for a Safe Delivery.” In *Women and Miracle Stories: A Multidisciplinary Exploration*. Ed. Anne-Marie Korte, Studies in the History of Religions (Leiden: Brill, 2001). 179–209.

In this wonderfully thoughtful and sophisticated essay, Elsackers suggests how the ubiquitous *peperit* charm (a Christian charm to aid childbirth) may have been used by both illiterate and semi-literate women within an oral tradition of birth practices.

Goehl, Konrad and Johannes Gottfried Mayer. "Signa mortui foetus—Das tote Kind im Mutterleib. Ein neuer Text zur mittelalterlichen Gynäkologie." *Sudhoffs Archiv* 84 (2000), 232–35.

Goehl and Mayer present an excerpt from a manuscript now in Kempen, Germany, concerning the signs of the dead fetus in utero. In another essay (co-authored with Gundolf Keil), "Ein gynäkologisch-kosmetisches Fragment aus der Mitte der 13. Jahrhunderts im Propsteiarhiv Kempen als Gegenstand der medizinhistorischen Forschung," in Hanns Peter Neuheuser, ed., *Die Handschriften des Propsteiarhivs Kempen: Interdisziplinäre Beiträge* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1999), pp. 59–76, the authors provide a more detailed description and full transcription of this manuscript fragment, which includes some gynecological as well as cosmetic material. In neither article is the text correctly identified. It is, in fact, not a "new" text at all but a fragment of the intermediate *Trotula* ensemble, ¶¶292–299a. See Monica H. Green, "The Development of the *Trotula*," *Revue d'Histoire des Textes* 26 (1996), 119–203 [repr. in Green, *Women's Healthcare in the Medieval West*], at pp. 161–63 and 200–201.

Green, Monica H., ed. and trans. *The 'Trotula': A Medieval Compendium of Women's Medicine* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001). Presents the first critical edition of the Latin *Trotula* standardized ensemble, together with a facing-page English translation. Green demonstrates that the *Trotula* (originally a title, not an author's name) is an assembly of three different texts that originated in 12th-century Salerno. Only the second of these texts can be attributed to a female author (a Salernitan woman named Trota), though all three texts show distinctive views on the nature of the female body and therapeutic objectives in treating and manipulating it. A paperback edition will be published in 2002, though *without* the Latin text.

Moulinier, Laurence. "Le corps des jeunes filles dans les traités médicaux du Moyen Âge." In *Le corps des jeunes filles de l'Antiquité à nos jours*, eds. L. Bruit Zaidman, G. Houbre, C. Klapisch-Zuber, and P. Schmitt Pantel (Paris: Perrin, 2001). 80–109.

Moulinier surveys a variety of medical texts from the 11th through the 15th centuries. She argues that medical writers did not conceptualize the adolescent female body as a separate category. Topics covered include the difference between a puella and a virgo, the age of menarche, the dangers of sexual abstinence, and mechanisms to "restore" virginity.

———. "Hildegard ou Pseudo-Hildegard? Réflexions sur l'authenticité du traité *Cause et cure*." In Rainer Berndt, ed., *Im Angesicht Gottes suche der Mensch sich selbst': Hildegard von Bingen (1098–1179)* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2001). 115–46.

This superb essay will be critical to all future studies of Hildegard's medicine. Moulinier, as a preliminary study to her soon-to-be-published critical

edition of the *Cause et cure* (C&C), addresses several still puzzling aspects of H's medical and scientific work including its date and its original configuration, i.e., whether it was originally one work or two (the C&C and the *Physica*). She comes to the surprising but persuasive conclusion that the C&C is a compilation made soon after H's death in part out of materials written by H. The work is thus "Hildegardien," but not properly by Hildegard.

———. "Magie, médecine et maux de l'âme dans l'oeuvre scientifique de Hildegarde." In Rainer Berndt, ed., *Im Angesicht Gottes suche der Mensch sich selbst': Hildegard von Bingen (1098-1179)*. (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2001). 545–59.

Surveys H's views about magic, medicine, and "passions of the soul."

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