ON EDITING AND TRANSLATING MEDIEVAL
HEBREW MEDICAL TEXTS*

RON BARKAI, A History of Jewish Gynaecological Texts in the Middle Ages.

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This book offers critical editions in Hebrew and Judeo-Arabic with English
translations of six medieval Jewish gynaecological texts: (1) Dinah's book on
all that concerns the womb and its sicknesses; (2) a record of the diseases
occurring in the genital members; (3) Galen's book on the womb, called
Genicia; (4) the Hebrew translation of Liber de sinthomatibus mulierum, ver-

cision 3; (5) medicament for pregnancy, called the "head shield"; (6) the treatise
on procreation, called the Secret of Conception, divided into three parts.

The edition is preceded by an extensive Introduction into the history of
medieval Jewish medicine in general, covering different aspects of its Is-
lamic origin, the major Arabic and Judeo-Arabic texts, and the revival of
Hebrew as the major language of composition. This is followed by an anal-
ysis and survey of the fifteen extant gynaecological texts. By presenting texts
inaccessible until now, by translating and interpreting these texts and iden-
tifying a great number of substances, Barkai's book strikes out on new paths
in the field of medieval Jewish medicine in the West in general, and women's
medicine in particular. It furthers our knowledge in this field and is a wel-
come addition to his first monograph, Les infortunes de Dinah.

In this review I will discuss some of the major points of the Introduction,
to be followed by some remarks concerning spelling and transcription. But
most of my attention will go to a detailed discussion of the core of the book,
namely, the gynaecological texts.

Barkai's Introduction

As the author states in the Introduction (pp. 1–2), the study of medieval
Jewish medicine has suffered from long neglect, resulting in the lack of
critical editions of the major medical texts. But in spite of the author's pes-
simistic tone, there is reason for some optimism. A project has been set up

* I would like to thank the anonymous reviewers of JQR for their valuable com-
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to edit the major medical works of Maimonides in their original language, and recent studies discuss some of his medical theories in a novel way. The works of major physicians such as Moshe Narboni and Nathan ben Yo'el Falakvar have been rediscovered and have been the object of renewed interest. Recently, the late Haskell Issacs worked on the popular culture, religion, science, and medicine of the Jews living in North Africa and the Middle East during the Middle Ages. The growing interest in popular medieval Jewish science and medicine is also evident from the material being published from the Cairo Genizah and from some recent articles dealing with this topic.

Speaking of the motivation of the Hebrew translators (pp. 18–22), Barkai mentions cultural, "nationalistic," and even religious aspects, i.e., to prove to the gentiles that Hebrew was not inferior to Arabic or Latin and to prevent the Jews from consulting gentile physicians and taking impure medicines. An earlier and even more telling justification for this translating activity is provided by Isaac b. Shem Tov of Tortosa in the introduction to Sefer ha-Shimush, his translation of al-Zahrāwī's K. al-taqrīf, which he started in 1254. Isaac relates that he had studied medicine and practiced for twenty years; he had translated numerous works from Arabic into Hebrew for those who knew the Arabic language but not the Arabic script, when he noticed that Jews with insufficient knowledge in the medical art were going to Christian physicians every day and transgressing the words of the Sages who said

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1 At the Martin Beber Institute, University of Cologne, work on critical editions of his Book on Ashrama, Medical Aphorisms, and Commentary on Hippocrates' Aphorisms is in progress. For a first evaluation, see Bos, Maimonides' Medical Aphorisms: Towards a Critical Edition and Revised English Translation (Koretz, forthcoming).


4 Haskell Issacs, Medical and Para-Medical Manuscripts in the Cambridge Genizah Collections (Cambridge, 1994).


6 See Mizzamah Avoda Zarah 2.2: "We may allow them to heal us when the healing relates to money (i.e. one’s cattle), but not personal healing (one’s body)."

7 See MS Munich 80, fol. 18b–19a; M. Steinschneider, Die hebräischen Übersetzung des Mittelalters und die Juden als Dolmetscher (Berlin, 1893; repr. Graz, 1956), p. 742.

8 It was translated into Latin in 1124 by Constantine the African and into Hebrew three times, and not twice as Barkai remarks (pp. 25–26, n. 58); moreover, one of the surviving MSS is in Judeo-Arabic, another proof of its interest in Jewish circles; see Bos, Ibn al-Jazzār on Sexual Diseases and Their Treatment (London, 1997), pp. 9–12.

9 See Bos, Ibn al-Jazzār on Sexual Diseases, p. 8.

10 See Monica Green, The Transmission of Ancient Theories of Female Physiology and Disease through the Middle Ages (PhD Diss., Princeton University, 1985), pp. 278–290.
material from Jewish sources. An example is his discussion of Maimonides who, as Barkai has admitted himself, did not compose a special treatise devoted to gynaecology, but whose material on the subject was accumulated by an anonymous compiler and is only known from two late versions from the 14th and 15th centuries (pp. 64–67). Although I have not seen this anonymous compilation itself, a closer look at the gynaecological material in Book Sixteen of Maimonides' Medical Aphorisms shows that it is not a well-organized, balanced and coherent treatise on women's diseases, but a random compilation of dissimilar material. It is not the most "faithful and coordinated reflection" of the school of "Arabic Galenism" as asserted by Barkai (p. 67). It thus seems to me that its influence on the development of medieval Jewish gynaecological literature, which as Barkai himself asserts is of an outspoken practical nature, was not very great.

Another result of Barkai's neglect of Islamic material, and of a certain bias against it, is his negative assessment of the rigid organization of the material on male and female sexual diseases in the Islamic medical encyclopaedias. Barkai remarks that the discussion of women's diseases within this rigid organizational pattern is nothing but a "necessary complement to the treatment of afflictions of the male sexual organs—necessary, that is, for reasons of completeness which was, of course, the encyclopaedists' main goal" (p. 44). Yet he states that the fact that its first part dealing with diseases afflicting male genital members opens with impotence and only then discusses female sexual diseases proves that "medieval physicians did not believe that women alone were responsible for failure in conception" (p. 71). He even goes so far as to remark that such a fusion of male and female sexual diseases is "a rare phenomenon in medieval medicine," and that "by relating to both sexes in one treatise, the Hebrew author minimized the "peculiarity of women's medicine by his emphasis on the common aspects of the genital diseases suffered by both genders" (p. 77).

Discussing the gynaecological text entitled Magen ha-Rosh, Barkai remarks that the text has some chapters on abortifacients and contraceptives which are very problematic from the point of view of Jewish halakhah which strictly forbids their application (p. 85). However, the problem can be solved if one is willing to allow for the heterogeneous character and origin of the material added in this treatise and consider an Islamic origin and Sitz im Leben of these particular practices, for the use of abortifacients and contraceptive as a way of birth control was permitted in Islamic society and was sanctioned by Islamic law. A parallel to the Magen ha-Rosh in this respect forms Hayyim Vital's treatise book entitled On Practical Kabbalah andAlchemy. The formula "tried and tested" found in Magen ha-Rosh is a commonplace in Arabic medical literature, following Greek models in the genres of mujarrabat (natural drugs which have been tested) and khowās (magical remedies).

In sum, it seems to me that the quality of the discussion of some of the issues raised in the Introduction is clearly affected by the sometimes superficial, partial and uneven treatment of a number of heterogeneous subjects, where fundamental secondary literature has neither been consulted nor referred to. In addition, the text of the Introduction suffers from many errors and inconsistencies in spelling, transcription and translation. A few striking examples are: p. 5, for Terufat/Terufat read Terufot; and for Mi-qeshiyye ha-ledah read Mi-qeshiyye ha-ledah (p. 23, for "The Collected Book of All the Fields" read "The Book which Collects (i.e., Includes) all the Fields"); and for Sefer Agor read Sefer Agor (after Prov 30:1); p. 54 et passim.  ג' read ג"; p. 69, "swaida" read "sawdawi".

Edition and translation of the gynaecological texts

(1) Dinah's book on all that concerns the womb

This treatise, a translation of Muscio's Pessaria has a parallel in Ibn al-Jazzār's Žāţa al-musāfīr, Book 6, Chapter 17 and in his Tibb al-fuqara wa-l-masākin (Medicine for the Poor and Destitute), which also survives in a late Hebrew translation and thus aroused some interest in Jewish circles. Both works consist of a list of contraceptives and/or abortifacients. The Tibb al-fuqara is especially characterized by the outspoken magical character of the material recommended by the author.

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11 See Bos, Maimonides' Medical Aphorisms. The work was not only translated by Nathan ha-Me'ati between 1279 and 1283 as mentioned by Barkai, but also by Zerahiah Ben Isaac Ben She'altel Hen of Rome in 1277.

12 Barkai bases this assessment on Green, Transmission, p. 83.

13 For a striking similarity in the organization of the material, cf. Ibn al-Jazzār's Žāţa al-musāfīr, Book 6: the first chapter starts with male impotence, to be followed by other afflictions affecting the male organs (Chs. 2–8), while the second part (Chs. 9–18) is devoted to women's diseases.

14 See Bos, Hayyim Vital's Kabbalah Ma'asit we-Akhimiyah, pp. 83–84, and relevant literature.


P. 101. "tue malki" (תע מלק; cf. קשלת) probably a corruption of sadhíh malki ( sadnesshih Malki), "wild rue"; a sufficient portions (sic): read "a portion each" (סאני). (cf. p. 104, II. 15–16).

P. 102. I. 1. "aspergilii" (גזרון): usually refers to "lancinol" and not to a plant as Barkai remarks (n. 36)15; II. 9, "inflammation": read "insufflation" (ותוסף); inflammation is שפוחה, see p. 99, I. II. 12–13, "take it out of the fire": rather translate, "take it from the fire"; I. 13, "fat": read "gander fat" (תא אמות); II. 15–16, "inflammation of the womb": read "insufflation of the womb" (תינוקת ומכוחה); I. 17, "bear fat": read "deer fat" (תא אמות). (סאני).

P. 103. II. 7, 14, "inflammation": read "sufflation" (ותוסף); I. 10, "green aspergilii" (גזרון אخضر): probably "lancinol" (see p. 102, I. 1); I. 11, "spikenard oil": read "nard oil" (דPasswordEncoder elektrikyy ש.), cf. ibid. 13 and p. 98, II. 7–820; I. 12, "aloe-castor" (Chrysanthemum balsamum): read "costus" (טוס), Saussurea Lappa Clarke and Var.);17, I. 14, "inflammation of the womb": read "insufflation of the womb" (תינוקת ומכוחה); cf. p. 102, II. 15–16; II. 20, 24, 26, "spikenard oil": read "nard oil" (דPasswordEncoder elektrikyy ש.), see p. 103, I. 11; I. 30, "and trebentine": read "and a little bit of trebentine" ((texアメリカיש א損害 חלבש).)

P. 104. "alsecost": read "costus" (cf. p. 103, I. 12); II. 13, 27, 31, "spikenard oil": read "nard oil" (דPasswordEncoder elektrikyy ש.), cf. p. 103, I. 11; I. 17, "and put into her bath water, which she should sit twice a day": read "and give it to her in between the baths which she takes twice a day" (הנותר מאחריה ישב במקצת פעמים ומאחריה, ישבו פעמים ומאחריה, ישבו פעמים ומאחריה). I. 23, "litholytic stone" (ספרושן סופר): faulty transcription of the Arabic جرس al-captas (garish magnet) which is a corruption of the Hebrew גרש (Garsh). (antron).18, I. 31, "green aspergilii": probably "lancinol" (cf. remark to p. 102, I. 1).

P. 105. I. 10, "spikenard oil": read "nard oil" (דPasswordEncoder elektrikyy ש.), cf. p. 103, I. 11; I. 14, "myrrh": delete: I. 17, 'to dry the cold uterine tumors" (טא אמש תינוקת וה(fr): the term שפוחה should not be understood as the Hebrew שפוחה (to dry) but as the Arabic שפוחה (to dry); meaning "to cause a tumor to subside"; I. 19, "celery": add "bishop's weed" (קשקשק = קשקשק); I. 20, "nard": read "spikenard" (צדרון), cf. p. 103, I. 11; ibid., "and a handful of dates": read "and a sufficient amount of dates" (בפרט).19


19 Cf. Bos, Ibn al-Jazzär on Sexual Diseases, p. 168, i. 863.

20 Cf. p. 105, I. 8 where "spikenard" is used for "sunbul" (p. 99, I. 27).

21 Cf. p. 105, I. 8 where qat is translated as "cistus" (= costus) and p. 121: "kust"; see Dietrich, Dioscorides Triumphans, I. 13.

22 See J. Ruska, Das Steinbuch des Aristoteles (Heldelberg, 1912), p. 16.
l. 21, “and the sperm itself, all or part of it, may be thin, or scorched. Sometimes the genital organs may be affected by an itch”; read “or sharpness of sperm, or large quantity, or friction with itching or without itching in the genital organs” (חיסר כותך... ואינו בוגר צלי עמרעת). The term חיסר refers to the second part of the sentence and should be emended to חיסרש (friction), a common symptom in the relevant literature (see next item); l. 26, “that the cause is an excess of desire during coitus”: read “that the cause is the friction because the coitus is with excessive sexual desire” (בישוב חיסר שעה שלמה והרורים תקנו תבונה).

P. 124, ll. 5–6, “In this last case, the recommended treatment is blood-letting”: there is no equivalent for this in the Hebrew text; l. 9, “narrow”; read “gourds and cucumbers” (דילופים ואבובים); l. 11, “fewer” (סומק): read “heat” (i.e., an excess of bodily heat); ll. 25, 29: atriplex (אטריפל): read “tryphera”: the Hebrew term is a transcription of the Arabic أطرفيرة, an especially popular in pharmacological literature; l. 30: “constrictive oils” (חצרים קצרים): though kofit can mean “constrictive” the common term used in pharmacological literature is “astringent.”

P. 125, l. 18: “spinal column” (כסף): read “navel” (סומק); cf. l. 35, 12–14; l. 25, “purgative”: read “hiera” (חארא): derived from Greek ιερα: it is used for a number of compound medicines, the most common (and probably intended by the author) is the “hiera pica” with its main component aloes; l. 28, “them” and “and he should eat sour things” (חטב והיה跟他): l. 31, “the cause may be one of the four humors”: read “the cause may be a surplus of one of the four humors” (חטב והיה跟他 ארבע איברים העניים).

P. 127, ll. 6, “salthorfe”: read “aloes” (אלאס): cf. p. 198, l. 6 and p. 210, l. 14; l. 10: “aloes”: read “alum” (חומצן): see p. 148, l. 8 and p. 165, l. 6; l. 13, “and it will disappear”: read “applied in a bandage” ( kzברח): l. 21, “white collyrium”: in the present context of an ailment in the genital members this term refers to a suppository and not to an eyewash (cf. Barkai, n. 90); l. 23, “take out the burned brown humor”: read “expel the heat, the hot humor” (חטב והיה跟他 kokh ל,” ביצוף).

31 See Ullmann, ibid., p. 296.
33 See Menahem, ibid., p. 198.
34 See Shimon Shemesh, шם השם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשםוהם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשם והשםוהם והשם והשםוהם והשם והשםוהם והשם והשםוהם והשםוהם והשםוהם והשםוהם והשםוהםוהם והשםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםוהםו
P. 128, l. 9, “hyacinth”: the Hebrew equivalent is ניטשל which is a transcription of ניטשל and not of ניטשל (cf. Barkai, no. 95); it thus means “sesame oil” (cf. p. 131, l. 6); l. 17, “an organ tumor”: read “a tumor (abscess?) in the penis” (or מים).  

P. 129, l. 7, “you should let blood even if his general condition is feeble”: read “you should let blood and do not need to be on your guard against it” (תפוח אט הערץ מיום ההנה). l. 8, “but give him”: read “but give him constantly” (לעומת הייסמים). l. 21, “myrtle”: read “Iran”; the equivalent term in Hebrew is מַטָּל בַּשָּׁל (כְּסַרְתּוֹ). l. 23, “inflation of the scrotum”: read “swelling of the scrotum” (שְׁבִילוֹ). l. 24, “the separation of the scrotum”: read “the rupture of the scrotum” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ). l. 25–27, “flesh inflation”: read “swelling of the flesh” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ). l. 28, “break of peritoneum”: read “rupture of the peritoneum” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ).  

P. 130, l. 1, “The scrotal hernia”: read “A fall of intestines” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ). l. 7, “the tumor moves”: read “towards the other half of the scrotum” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ). l. 7–9, “When the tumor is windy the signs are a separation and a noise; sometimes it moves and at other times it is motionless; this has no parallel in the Hebrew text” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ). l. 9–10, “The scrotal hernia may be diagnosed by touch, and is noisy when pushed or pressed”: read “The fall of an intestine may be diagnosed by touch, it makes a sound when one pushes or presses it” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ). l. 12, “rust”: read “costus” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ).  

P. 131, l. 5, “and oils”: not in Hebrew text; l. 12, “colica mesion”: read “after the rupture” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ). l. 19, “combined medicaments”: read “astringent medicaments” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ). l. 20, “sulfuric acid”: read “aloes” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ). see p. 127, l. 6 where the same word has been translated as “sawdust.”  

P. 132, l. 4–5, “or even its complete absence despite medical treatment. If the cause is”: read “or even its complete absence as is often the case. The medical treatment for when the cause is” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ). l. 11, “coldness”: add “and this is often so” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ). l. 12, “and warm oil, as mentioned before”: read “and warm oils, as we will yet mention” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ). l. 17, “purging”: read “hiera” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ). l. 25, “ibid.”, “ginger”: read “sagapenum” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ). l. 26–27, “scrap of elephant skin”: read “fittings of
tusks” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ). the corrupt text should be corrected by reading “scrap of tusk” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ). l. 28, “by virtue”: read “by magical power” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ).  

P. 133, l. 4, “during her purification period”: read “when she is free from menstruation” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ). l. 5, “a useful virtue”: read “a useful [magical] remedy” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ). l. 10, “fennel”: read “sagapenum” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ). see p. 132, l. 17; p. 133, n. 132.  

P. 134, l. 1, “as in giving birth”: read “as contractions of a woman who gives birth” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ). l. 2, “water”: add “and sometimes the cause is the narrowing of the uterus and the expulsion of the painful matter which then leaves the body” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ). l. 11, “an ecstatic liqueur”: read “an ecstatic liqueur” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ). l. 12, “and baths, such as”: read “and lavations, such as” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ). l. 19, “an ecstatic liqueur”: read “an ecstatic liqueur” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ). l. 20–21, “fennel seeds”: read “oxtymel prepared with seed extract” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ). l. 25, “the laxative pastille”: read “the Logiadon electuary” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ). l. 27, “compress”: read “pastille” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ). see p. 140, l. 19–20, and n. 206.  

P. 135, l. 14, “spice”: add “and in each of these cases her giving birth is accompanied by frightening” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ). l. 16, “to bathe herself”: read “constantly” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ). l. 18–19, “wallflower”: read “the same plant features as "gillyflower" on pp. 121–122, l. 19, “gilt”: add “dissolved” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ).  

P. 136, l. 2, “her back”: read “her belly” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ). l. 8, “with pounded saffron”: read “by pulling gently” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ). l. 17, “you should bathe her”: add “if this suits her” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ). l. 19, “the water of the pills”: read “juice of fenula” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ). l. 20, “the Hebrew is a transcription of "ferulas" and not of "pilloras" (cf. Barkai, no. 158) ; the specific kind of fenula the author has in mind is possibly Ferula tingitana, supplier of gum ammoniac which was used as an abortificient (cf. p. 22, “presentation of the fetus”: read “disposition of the fetus” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ). l. 23, “the midwife must remove it”: read “the midwife should restore it” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ). l. 26, “[...]: dirhems ginger”: read “two dirhems ginger” (כְּסַרְתּוֹ). l. 27, p. 137, l. 1 (nn. 163, 164); l. 26–27, “Another drink: four dirhems the soft part of bread”: no parallel in the Hebrew text.

34 See Maimonides, Glossary, no. 100.
35 Cf. Ibn al-Jazzār on Sexual Diseases, Ch. 8.
36 See Bos, ibid., for a clear description of this ailment.
37 Cf. Maimonides, Glossary, no. 280.
P. 137, ll. 20–21, “The cause... is the remains of sperm... or menstrual blood from both, [causing] a poisonous vapor to ascend”: read “The cause of this illness is retained sperm... or menstrual blood, and from both a poisonous vapor arises” (ס⨍ב ⍉יוו ⍋כי ⍬___ ⎯ ⍮___ ⎯ ⍬___ ⎯ ⍬___). It is obvious that this clause (and from both) introduces the next part of the clause; cf. p. 141, l. 15, “on the retention of menstrual blood” (ט___ ⍩___ ⍬___ ⍬___). For a similar formulation see Bos, Ibn al-Jazzār on Sexual Diseases, Ch. 11.

P. 138, l. 14, “galia” (ג___): “a sort of perfume; a certain compound of perfumes; musk mixed or boiled [with other perfumes]; or a perfume composed of musk and ambergris and camphor and oil of ben (E. W. Lane, Arabic-English Lexicon [London, 1863–1872], 6: 2289); cf. p. 139, l. 15; p. 141, l. 13; l. 17, “anise oil”: read “aneth oil” (�___ ⍬�ף___). Anise is Hebrew meaning (כ___ ⍩___ | ⎮___ ⍬___). See p. 136, l. 19.

P. 139, l. 2, “she should apply drying things”: read “she should constantly apply drying things” (יו___ ⍬___ ⎮___ ⍬___). See p. 140, l. 6, l. 15, “ebony oil”: read “dwarf elder oil” (�___ ⍬___). See p. 139, l. 15; l. 16, “laniya, cowpea”: read “wood of aloe” (ט___ ⍬___ ⍬___ | ⍬___ ⍬___). See p. 127, l. 10.

P. 140, l. 6–7, “constraining medicaments”: read “stringent medicaments” (ל___ ⍬___ ⍬___ ⍬___). See p. 124, l. 10; l. 131, l. 19, l. 1, “constraining things”: read “stringent things” (ל___ ⍬___ ⍬___). See p. 127, l. 15; l. 16, “alum”: read “alum” (ל___ | ⍬___). See p. 127, l. 10.

P. 141, l. 12, “pomegranate”: read “and gall-nuts” (ל___ | ⍬___). See p. 139, l. 13, “ebony oil”: read “dwarf elder oil” (�___ ⍬___ | ⍬___). See p. 139, l. 12, l. 14, “laniya, cowpea”: read “with wood of aloe” (ט___ ⍬___). See p. 139, l. 16.

P. 142, l. 3, “Those women resemble men”: read “a little bit” (ל___). See p. 139, l. 12, l. 14, “dwarf elder oil” (�___ ⍬___). See p. 139, l. 12.

P. 143, l. 3, “(menstrual flow)”: read “and not that it would stop completely” (ס___ ⍬___ ⍬___ | ⍬___). See p. 136, l. 19; l. 3–4, “so the woman has to be continuously treated with thick [materials] like...”: read “so the fat woman should be treated continuously with...” (ס___ ⍬___ ⍬___ | ⍬___). See p. 139, l. 7, “pills”: read “ferula” (ל___ | ⍬___ | ⍬___). See p. 136, l. 19; l. 10, “ebony oil”: read “dwarf elder oil” (�___ ⍬___ | ⍬___ | ⍬___). See p. 139, l. 12.

43 Sambucus ebulus; cf. Maimonides, Glossary, no. 57; Dietrich, Dioscorides Triumphant 4: 163, esp. n. 2: “kat. ébul, ebuls.”
44 This is already the case with Dioscorides, cf. ed. Wellmann, 4: 173.

P. 144, l. 2, “and coldness emerges from inside” : read “and coldness from deep down inside” (ל___ ⍬___ | ⍬___ | ⍬___). See p. 136, l. 19; l. 5, “dirty matter”: read “thick mud-like matter” (ל___ | ⍬___). See p. 136, l. 19; l. 6, “Her urine loses its red color” [sic]: delete “[sic]”; a red color of the urine is a common symptom of abnormal bodily heat according to medieval medicine.45 l. 7, “At times those humors are mixed with breath”: read “At times those humors are dissolved into pneuma, i.e., vapor” (ל___ | ⍬___). See p. 136, l. 19; see “which occurs in those organs which are filled with pneuma” (ל___ | ⍬___).46 l. 12, “black humor”: add “in the uterus” (ל___ | ⍬___). See p. 136, l. 15, “they feel pain, difficulty and a spreading sensation coming from their depths”: read “they have a sensation of pain and heaviness in the back spreading from deep down” (ל___ | ⍬___). See p. 136, l. 19; the “spreading” is a sensation of its own, but a definition of the “pain and heaviness”; add “of wind and noise in the uterus” (ל___ | ⍬___). See p. 136, l. 19, “panic”: read “apathy” (ל___ | ⍬___). See p. 136, l. 19.47

46 See Krooer, Zur Terminologie, pp. 10, 16, 38.
47 Ibid., pp. 25, 36.
48 Ibn al-Jazzār on Sexual Diseases, Ch. 11.
P. 163, l. 5, “inflation”: read “tumor.” The Hebrew term כָּנָף (kannaf) not only means “inflation” (see n. 317), but also “tumor” after the Arabic مَلْعَظْ (mal‘aţ). It seems that the disease discussed by the author is a tumorous womb 526; l. 24, “pimpeln”; read “acorn” (Barkai, n. 335). 527

P. 164, ll. 16–17, “When the humor of the womb descends into the womb”...: read “‘When the humor of the womb descends into the vulva’ (ראות יד הדק;): although ווֹמָב generally means “womb” (see Barkai, n. 335), already in rabbinc literature it also has the meaning of “vagina” or “vulva” 528; see as well II. 27–28, “Another treatment for a humor descending from the womb and the belly”: l. 21, “sprinkle [her] with that”: read “immerse [her] in that” (ר‘ז). For “sprinkling” the author uses the term מְכָנָה 529; add “in the evening” (ר‘ז).

P. 165, l. 6, “rue”: read “wild rue” (רַע (רַע) (רַע) (רַע) (רַע); lit. “desert rue”); “alum”: the text reads: read “inflammation” or “inflamed tumor”; l. 17, “hardness of the belly”: read “a hard swelling (or tumor) in the belly” (תְּנָבִים): idem, “urine bladder”: read “inflammation” (ר‘ז); l. 19, “caused by an acid tumor or by a red one”: read “caused by an acid tumor or by a yellow one” (see p. 144, l. 23); l. 20, “rigidity of the belly”: read “constipation of the belly” (ר‘ז); l. 22, “in the temples”: no parallel in the Hebrew text.

P. 166, l. 1, “darkened eyes”...: read “diminished eyesight” (ר‘ז; cf. Sefer ha-Nisyonot, ר‘ז); l. 3, “diers”: read “trehtebine” (ר‘ז).

P. 167, l. 8, “sinapism”: read “mustard pastes”; l. 20, “nut”: read “almond” (ר‘ז); p. 199, l. 11.

P. 168, l. 4, “you find the womb open”: read “you find the womb swollen” (ר‘ז): l. 10, “and her belly becomes feeble”: read “so that her belly feels full” (ר‘ז): l. 12, “the inflation . . . of the womb”: read “the contraction . . . of the womb” (ר‘ז): l. 15, “retention”: read “obstruction” (ר‘ז).

P. 170, l. 2, “womb rigidity”: read “obstruction of the womb” (ר‘ז), see p. 168, l. 15; l. 18, “nightshade” (ר‘ז; סֻלְּטָן): the same term is translated as “winter-cherry,” a variety of the black nightshade 530 on p. 148, l. 10, “white wax”: add “lupine” (ר‘ז): l. 21, “amine”: read “aluminum” (ר‘ז): l. 23, “and mix [them] with egg whites and apply it to her. You may also use egg whites with vinegar, mixed with well-pounded rose powder”: read “and mix them with egg whites and vinegar and (or?) with well-pounded rose powder (and apply this to her)” (ר‘ז) 532; l. 25, “cooked in a frying pan”: read “fried in a frying pan” (ר‘ז): l. 25, “fries birds”: read “desert doves” (ר‘ז); l. 31, “she becomes, lean, disgusted”: read “she becomes lean and suffers from feebleness” or “she becomes lean and suffers from fainting” (ר‘ז).

P. 171, l. 10, “her belly is expanded and she seems pregnant”: read “her belly is expanded so much that she seems pregnant” (ר‘ז; סֻלְּטָן): the Hebrew clearly indicates a causal connection between the expansion and the impression of pregnancy.

P. 172, l. 10, “lesions”: probably read “ulcers” (ר‘ז): cf. p. 170, l. 22; l. 13, “she feels disgust”: read “she suffers from feebleness” (see p. 162, ll. 1–2; p. 171, l. 10); l. 23, “she always has to rest”: add “there” (ר‘ז).

P. 173, l. 3, “flea-wort”: add “put all these ingredients in a suppository for her” (ר‘ז): l. 10, “and tenderly”: add “and they will be beneficial” (ר‘ז): l. 20, “aloe”: read “alum” (ר‘ז): p. 127, l. 10; l. 13, “caniglara”: read “caniglara niqitra” 533; add “fleabane” (ר‘ז): l. 15, “tamarisk”: add “manna” (ר‘ז): l. 24, “lettuce”: read “soft lettuce” (ר‘ז); l. 24–25, “cooked in a frying pan”: read “fried in a frying pan” (ר‘ז): l. 25, “fries birds”: read “desert doves” (ר‘ז); l. 31, “she becomes, lean, disgusted”: read “she becomes lean and suffers from feebleness” or “she becomes lean and suffers from fainting” (ר‘ז).

P. 174, l. 2, “lesions”: probably read “ulcers” (ר‘ז): cf. p. 170, l. 22 and p. 172, l. 10; l. 4, “bruising”: probably read “ulcer” (ר‘ז): l. 5–6, “according to the physician’s ability”: read “according to what the physician thinks should be done” (ר‘ז); l. 7, “One more useful treatment”...: read “Another beneficial treatment is” (ר‘ז): l. 9, “pound them all”: add “into a powder” (ר‘ז); l. 13, “lesion”: read “ulcer” (ר‘ז): l. 16, “lesions”: probably read “ulcers” (ר‘ז): add and correct p. 157, l. 2, “[a] . . . to [the]”: l. 18, “If the sickness is chronic”: add “or ephemeral” (ר‘ז): l. 21–22, “either the woman is not receptive inside”: add “and (thus) does not become pregnant” (ר‘ז): l. 29, “and ejaculates too much”: add “and when he sleeps with a woman, it (i.e., his sperm) is weak and powerless” (ר‘ז).

P. 175, l. 4, “when they do not purify [themselves] properly”: add “by means of their menstruation” (ר‘ז); l. 9, “Each has its proper treatment”:

526 See Mainzner, Glossary, no. 201: “Winter-cherry: it is a type of culinary black nightshade.”

527 This term should be explained.
read “Everyone of the men has his proper treatment [which should be applied to him]” (לב אחת מפפ אשת תפז עימה המברך נשים כאשר נפשו ח-commit) (ibid., “according to the cause”: no parallel in the Hebrew text; I. 12, “For the women”: read “Similarly, the women” (דומת פפ אשת תפז עימה המברך נשים (יבד) (ספוק) (I. 20–21, “If the womb sies” (ספוק): read “If the womb inclines backwards” (ים ספוק אשת תפז עימה המברך נשים (יבד) (I. 22, “If the womb prolapses towards the anus”: read “If the womb prolapses towards the urethra” (ים ספוק אשת תפז עימה המברך נשים) (I. 12); the author discusses two cases: in the first case the womb inclines backwards towards the anus causing defecation with strong winds, and in the second it prolapses towards the urethra causing pain on the pubes.

P. 176, l. 4, “rigidity”: read “obstruction” (בּוֹדָה), see pp. 168, l. 15, 170, l. 2): l. 8, “they are always disgusted”: read “they always suffer from feebleness/fainting” (רְחָקְתָה) (לְפָלַל), see p. 173, l. 31; l. 12, “and she aborts in the second or third month”: add “of her pregnancy” (וּלְפָלֵב וּלְפָלֵב), I. 13, “while the foetus is very thin yet alive”: read “while the foetus is very thin and yet not yet alive” (רְחָקְתָה וּלְפָלֵב יַעֲבֹר וּלְפָלֵב) (דומת); the author’s statement is according to the widespread view that the foetus only receives a soul (נֶפֶשׁ), i.e., “life” or “animation”) from 40 days on in case of a male, and 80 days in case of a female. Thus, before this time limit it was not considered to be alive; II. 15–16, “for the feebleness of the womb and its bleeding”: read “for the flow of blood from the womb” (וּלְפָלֵב וּלְפָלֵב), I. 18, “it is proper to order them to work and to play music” (הָסַּלְל וּלְפָלֵב), read “it is proper to order them to work and exert themselves” (לְפָלֵב וּלְפָלֵב), II. 22, “orifice”: add “The treatment” (חִיָּה) (דומת).

P. 177, l. 14, “we treat uterine fever”: read “as we mentioned for uterine fever” (נַפָּר וּלְפָלֵב), I. 15, “We will then treat the pain, and if she still has an abundance of blood we will put medicines there which will stop it”: read “And when, once the pain has gone, she still has an abundance of blood, we select medicines for it which will stop it” (לְפָלֵב וּלְפָלֵב), II. 16–17, “and pulverize [the hæmorrhoids] with the powder”: read “and powder it with” (וּלְפָלֵב וּלְפָלֵב), I. 19, “womb”: add “and this was so from the beginning” (לְפָלֵב וּלְפָלֵב).

P. 178, l. 5, “should be treated”: read “should be purified” (לְפָלֵב וּלְפָלֵב), I. 8, “honey”: read “pure honey” (דומת), I. 19, “If all these medicines”(לְפָלֵב וּלְפָלֵב); read “if a persistent use of all these medications” (לְפָלֵב וּלְפָלֵב), I. 21, “Take pollen which is barley flour”: read “polenta” (לְפָלֵב וּלְפָלֵב), I. 24, “lavender”: read “hellebore” (לְפָלֵב וּלְפָלֵב).

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58 Cf. Bos, Ibn al-Jazzar on Sexual Diseases, Ch. 11: symptoms of the prolapse of the uterus are amongst other lacks of appetite, coldness and fainting.

hardly walk") read “who give birth painfully and with great hardship”; this reading is based upon the emendation of "to walk" (to give birth).

P. 188, l. 1, “their bodies are very feeble”: read “their bodies are bent” or "contracted" (ך"פ) cf. p. 184: "a contraction of the body" (ך"פ); l. 14, “she should scratch herself well”: read “she should be well massaged” (ך"פ); f. 26, “absinthe”: add “or frankincense” (ך"פ).

P. 189, l. 10, “frankincense”: The Hebrew reads ‘אש והותי (abhinath and (ד)]: l. 11, “and rub her pubes”: read “and put it around her pubes” (ך"פ); l. 13, “on her thighs”: read “on her thighs” (ך"פ); l. 19, “and mix”: add “one ounce” (ך"פ); l. 20, “Also give her potions”: read “Or give her powder of mallow seed with hot water” (ך"פ). (раו אל חי רומ אבר סנס מסמק חם מים)

P. 190, l. 7, “which is easily digested and enlarges the members” (ך"פ): read “which is quickly digested in the organs”; l. 17, “to cook the organs”: read “to cook, i.e., to be digested in the organs”; l. 8, “fish”: read “finned fish” (ך"פ); l. 12, “with”: add “an indefinite quantity” (ך"פ); l. 18, “anise oil”: read “aneth oil” (ך"פ); l. 20, “galingale” (ך"פ): l. 21, “She has to be fumigated in her mouth with something that has a good odor”: it seems that the text is corrupt and should read “She has to be fumigated in her mouth with something that has a bad odor,” the rationale behind it being that this will ease childbirth since the fetus will move down freeing the bad odor. In Ibn al-Jazzar,66 we find a similar treatment in the case of hysterical suffocation.

(5) Medicament for pregnancy called the head shield

P. 196, l. 6, סַבָּיו: read "savin" (ך"פ).

F. 199, l. 1, "triangular" (ך"פ): possibly identical with "ianus triangularius" which is either Cyperus rotundus or Cyperus esculentus67: l. 4, "stock": read "clove" (ך"פ); cf. p. 196, l. 23, p. 207, l. 14, and p. 217, l. 1568; l. 9, "vessels": add "for conservation" (ך"פ); l. 11, "nut": read "almond" (ך"פ); cf. p. 216, n. 7, l. 18, “drink”: add “half a glass” (ך"פ); l. 28, “nut”: read “almond” (ך"פ), cf. p. 216, n. 7.

P. 200, l. 24: “grey truffle”: read "trifera magna" (ך"פ); l. 23, "trefoil": read "trifera magna" (ך"פ).69

66 Or Sexual Diseases, Ch. 11.
67 See Mensching, La sinonima, p. 93, 17–18; p. 260.
"saffron-colored alum" (ライオンズオーマー, alumen album jactmini), cf. Sefer ha-Nisyonot, 1. 23, "colocynthis": read "pulp of colocynthis" (ライオンズオーマー). P. 207. 2–3, "watermint": read "calamin" (ライオンズオーマー), cf. p. 205, 1. 36; 1. 31, "egg": add "It has been tested" (ライオンズオーマー).

P. 208. 1. 16, "Put the smoke against the womb": read "Put it on the [whole] spinal column opposite the uterus; (סֵפֶלָהִים רֹדְעִים אֵיבִי אָדָם מַעַלִּים כְּלָלֵי הַמַּעֲבָדָה" cf. ll. 28–29, "and put it on her back, on the spinal column": l. 26, "colica, absinthi": read "Armenian balsam" (ライオンズオーマー), cf. Sefer ha-Nisyonot, 1. 30, "confused intestines": read "upset stomach" (ライオンズオーマー), cf. p. 206, 1. 7.

P. 209. 1. 20, "pisit navalis" (ペシトナバーリス): Latin: "picis navalis", genitive of "pipis navalis" ("ships' tar"). 83

P. 210. 1. 11, "as musk": read "as in an alembic" (ライオンズオーマー); l. 17, "consumed nipples": read "nipples consumed by cancer" (ライオンズオーマー); the Hebrew term מַסְכֵּל is probably a loan-translation of the Arabic مَصْكَلٌ 84; l. 20, "cloths": add "for nipples consumed by cancer" (ライオンズオーマー); ibid., "or": delete; l. 21, "Armenian vinegar": read "Armenian balsam" (ライオンズオーマー); cf. p. 208, 1. 26; ibid., "laurel": read "aloe" (ライオンズオーマー), cf. p. 127, 1. 6; add "roses" (ライオンズオーマー); l. 29, "anise oil": add "laurel oil, castor oil" (ライオンズオーマー).

P. 211. 1. 3, "muscles": read "nerves" (ｲﾝフレーム): l. 5, "humorously": read "completely humorously" (ライオンズオーマー); l. 7, "espinasse": add "which is not in the whole body, but only in one limb": l. 7, "muscle": read "nerve" (ライオンズオーマー); l. 8, "do not bend": read "do not bend" (ライオンズオーマー); l. 13, "they are simply straight": read "they are static with an equal tension" (ライオンズオーマー).

(6) The treatise on procreation called the secret of conception

P. 215. 1. short and excellent treatise": read "a very short and concise treatise" (ライオンズオーマー). P. 216. 1. 2–3, "your temperate soul": probably read "your eminent soul" (ライオンズオーマー); l. 10, "on the virtues attributed to different ingredients": by the greatest ancient physicians": read "on the relevant remi-
Hebrew vo (p. 215) should be emended to רַגְּרָה; 1. 22, "drinks it": add "with a mouthful of" (רַגְּרָה).

Summarizing my review of the edition of the texts, I have to conclude that it is marred by many inaccuracies. Part of the blame for this should be put on the editors of the Series and the publishers, E. J. Brill, for failing to check the edition properly and for not following the proper procedure of having it checked by a professional reader.