

ceramics was treated in *Raqqa I*, it would have been interesting to see what the location of finds told us about life in the buildings excavated, as indeed the distribution of finds in the excavations of the 1950s by Saliby, even if not directly addressed in that publication, was very informative. Finally, there is a drawing together of the threads on the architecture and planning of the buildings. The work is excellently illustrated, with 105 figures, 60 plates, and five foldout plans in a pocket.

It is a pity that the work is essentially an excavation report on the four sites excavated, with the remainder being secondary, rather than a balanced overall evaluation of the caliphal settlement. The building identified as the caliphal palace is hardly mentioned at all, no doubt because only one sondage was excavated there in 1944 before the site was destroyed by the incoming settlers. The Syrian excavations published by Saliby likewise receive only a summary mention in this volume, although they are of fascinating historical importance as one or more of them should be the residence of the Barmakids, the viziral family from Balkh, of such political importance in the early reign of Hārūn. The racecourse is not mentioned at all – Siegel had already published an article on it in 2010 (“The racecourse at ar-Raqqa/ar-Rafīqa (Syria)”, *Zeitschrift für Orient-Archäologie* 3, 2010, 130–41) – but one would have expected a short chapter to make the treatment of the settlement more comprehensive.

The greater problem, which is only approached to a small degree, is: how did the settlement function? There are zoning maps (Taf. 11–12) but these are not very detailed. What was the purpose of all the buildings which are not obviously residences? Very little is said about the buildings which were not excavated. It is unfortunate that a larger body of comparable material at Samarra was only published while Siegel’s manuscript was going to press (A. Northedge and D. Kennet, *Archaeological Atlas of Samarra, Samarra Studies II*, British Institute for Studies of Iraq/Oxbow Books, 2015). But even using that material, the question remains a problem – there are many plans whose functions are not replicated later in Islamic times.

The value of the work lies in its direct address to the subject of Hārūn’s residence at Raqqa. It might not have happened otherwise than through a PhD, and the author is to be applauded for that. Caliphal settlements and their organization have not been well evaluated, as few preserve their plans on the surface, and they are too big to excavate more than the palace, e.g. Madīnat al-Zahra’.

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THE NEAR AND MIDDLE EAST

OLIVER KAHL (with GERRIT BOS):

‘*Uбайдاللّٰه ابن بۇھتīšū*’ on Apparent Death: *The Kitāb Tahrīm dafn al-aḥyā*, Arabic edition and English Translation

(with a Hebrew Supplement by Gerrit Bos). (Islamic Philosophy, Theology, and Science: Texts and Studies.) xiii, 340 pp. Leiden: Brill, 2017. ISBN 978 90 04 37231 3.

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Oliver Kahl is a well-known historian of medicine and Graeco-Arabic philologist. His earlier publications in Brill’s IPTS series include *The Sanskrit, Syriac and*

Persian Sources in the Comprehensive Book of Rhazes (ITPS Volume 93). His latest study (hereafter *UAD*) is an Arabic edition, translation, and study of ‘Ubaidallāh ibn Buḥtīšū’s commentary on the pseudo-Galenic treatise *Book on the Prohibition to Bury the Living* (*Kitāb Tahrim dafn al-ahyā*). Included, too, are English–Arabic and Arabic–English indexes of medical and pharmacological terms, an index of titles of books cited, an index of miscellaneous terms, an index of botanical names, and an Appendix. The Appendix has critical editions of two different recensions of the pseudo-Galenic text, and a Hebrew translation of the pseudo-Galenic treatise by Judah ben Solomon Alharizi (d. 1165–1225). Kahl’s latest book will be a valuable reference for historians of medicine, Graeco-Arabists, and Arabo-Islamic intellectual historians.

Kahl begins by reviewing the life of ‘Ubaidallāh. He observes that for most of his professional career ‘Ubaidallāh lived and practised medicine far from the centres of power in tenth- and eleventh-century Baghdad. The fact that he was remote from the caliph’s court, centres of learning, and from patrons appears to have adversely affected the reception of ‘Ubaidallāh’s writings and medical legacy (*UAD* 2).

Kahl also assesses the “scientific content” of ‘Ubaidallāh’s commentary. He notes that while ‘Ubaidallāh wrote on apparent death in the form of a commentary, Kahl insists that, in spite of its exegetical format, the commentary propounds a number of original medical doctrines. Kahl claims, in effect, that ‘Ubaidallāh’s medical vision is modern in the sense that he sought to “liberate the theory and practice of medicine from the conceptual paradigms imposed upon it by philosophy” (*UAD* 22). Kahl overstates the originality of ‘Ubaidallāh’s anti-philosophical, anti-speculative sentiments, however. Such lines of thinking are visible in, for example, the Hippocratic *On Ancient Medicine*. Kahl also exaggerates when he says that ‘Ubaidallāh “single-handedly” introduced psychosomatic medicine into the Arabic medical tradition. In fact the reciprocal relationship between the body and soul is a pillar of the ancient Greek medical anthropology.

A long list of august medieval, nineteenth-, twentieth-, and contemporary scholars agree that the Galen did not write *The Book on the Prohibition to Bury the Living*. Indeed, Kahl records the intriguing suggestion that the Arabic is not even based on a Greek original (p. 11, n. 48). In fact there is internal evidence that corroborates this conclusion. In the midst of speaking about apparent death that is brought about by “heart pain” (*waja’ al-qalb* =? *waja’ al-fu’ād* =? καρδιαλγία) pseudo-Galen says:

فإذا تثبت في هذه العلامة فوجه علاجه أن تنظر إلى ظهر قدميه أو جبهته موضع السجود أو الصدغين، أي هذه المواضع رأيت فيه عرقا دارا متلويا أو غير ملتويا فشقه شفا طويلا فإن الدم ينبع منه...
(*UAD*, §79)

If one has ascertained this symptom the way to treat it is to look at the bottoms of his feet or at his forehead, **the place of prostration**, or at the temples – in whichever of these locations you see a vessel that is flowing copiously, whether it winds or does not wind, you should make a straight cut, for blood will flow from it. . . .

Of course other religious sects perform prostrations as a part of worship. The prostration on the forehead, however, recalls the specific posture adopted by Muslims. Unlike at other junctures in the text where common Islamic phrases

appear, it is less easy to dismiss this as a later scribe's gloss. At the very least this evidence suggests to me that the suspicions voiced by de Jong and Goeje might have been taken more seriously.

'Ubaidallāh's treatise is divided into five parts. The first is a long introduction in which 'Ubaidallāh discusses the traditional "headings" (*ru'ūs*, κεφαλαία) that traditionally accompany commentaries in the Classical Arabic scientific tradition. Thereafter the text divides into four parts. The first deals with apparent death that results from losing consciousness or apoplexy (*ighmā'*, *sakta*, *afūlukhsīya*, Kahl translates this as *coma*, or *stroke*, p. 27); from heart pain (*waja' al-qalb*, translated as heart attack, p. 27); from excessive sorrow or joy; or from a "soporific narcotic drugs and deep sleep". Each class of apparent death is described, Hippocratic and Galenic views surveyed, the aetiology of the condition discussed, the symptoms identified, various forms of therapy prescribed, and compound drug mixtures listed.

Kahl's edition of the text is carefully done. He gives an admirable description of the manuscript, the scribe's orthography, and the text's morphological peculiarities. Kahl has done a great service, too, by not silently "correcting" syntactical "errors" in the text. Recognizing these features not as aberrations but as instances of the historical evolution of Arabic, he preserves them for their "documentary value" (p. 17).

In general the English translation is satisfactory. Kahl's experience with Arabic pharmacopeia is invaluable where recipes for drugs, poultices, and other therapies are listed. There are, however, places where the translation strikes me as problematic. For example, when speaking about the reasons why the body stops moving and the patient appears to be dead, pseduo-Galen says:

وإنما بطلت الحركة لسكون القوة التي تصل إلى النفس من فقار الظهر الخامس فلما لم تكن لحرارة القلب نافخة تحركها خمدت حرارة القلب واستكنت في باطنه، فظن الجاهل من العامة والأطباء لما رأى المريض على تلك الحال أنه ميت لا محالة فدفنوه.

Which Kahl translates as:

... movement only stops because the facultative current which is linked to respiration (and departs) from the fifth spinal vertebra ceases (to flow); and as there is no air-pump to fan the heat, it dies down and shelters inside the heart. However, when ignorant laymen and (ill-informed) doctors see a patient in this state, they think he is dead, no doubt, and bury him.

There are a number of mistakes here. One, "*al-quwwa allatī taṣīlu ilā l-nafasī*", certainly does not mean "facultative current that is linked to respiration". Kahl's translation should have linked "*min*" to the verb, thus: "*baṭūlati l-ḥarakatu ... min faqāri l-zahri l-khāmisi*". In other words 'Ubaidallāh designates the location where the patient's body no longer moves, namely, at the fifth (thoracic) vertebra. Further, the addition of "and departs" has no basis in the text; "ceases" has no parallel in the Arabic, nor the added gloss "to flow"; "air-pump" as a translation of *nāfikhha* is wide of the mark; and translating *istakanat* as *shelters* is incorrect. The passage should read as follows:

Movement stops at the fifth vertebra of the back owing to the fact that the faculty that is connected to breathing has diminished. Hence when there is nothing that rouses motion in the heat of the heart, the heat in the heart dies

down and withdraws inside the heart. Consequently when ignorant laymen and physicians see the patient in this condition they suppose that he is certainly dead, whereupon they bury him.

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GEORG LEUBE:

Kinda in der frühislamischen Geschichte. Eine prosopographische Studie auf der Basis der frühen und klassischen arabisch–islamischen Geschichtsschreibung.

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In his study *Kinda in der frühislamischen Geschichte. Eine prosopographische Studie auf der Basis der frühen und klassischen arabisch–islamischen Geschichtsschreibung*, Georg Leube shows that there is indeed a way to make sense of the great complexities of early Islamic history and historiography: a close analysis of the prosopographic material contained in the sources. The great value of prosopography, defined as the study of individuals insofar as they belong to groups, had already been highlighted by Patricia Crone (most notably in her *Slaves on Horses*, Cambridge, 1980) and Fred Donner, and has most recently gained considerable ground in the study of early Islam (Lecker 2006, Asad 2011, Bernheimer 2013, Robinson 2014). As any student of the history of early Islam will know, the Arabic literary sources contain a great deal of prosopographic data, that is, information on a person's tribal and family affiliations, as well as affiliations of place. This information is thought to be relatively reliable because it presumably lies outside the religious and political debates that shaped the historiographical tradition. Leube has now shown how it is formed and reformed in the historiographic process of early Islam.

Leube's main concern is methodological. He argues that the Arabic source material, which in its extant form dates to the third and fourth century hijri, must be understood as one entity (*Gesamtkosmos*). To untangle the dynamics of factual and salvation history, clear selection criteria must be applied to the vast corpus of material – too often arguments on the veracity, reliability and interpretation of early Islam are based on a selective reading of the sources. His selection criterion is the Arab tribe (*qabila*) of Kinda, or more precisely all prosopography relating to the Kinda in the first three generations of Islam. This covers roughly the seventh century, ending with the famous uprising of the Kindite Ibn al-Ash'ath against the Umayyad caliph 'Abd al-Malik in c. 80–83 hijri/699–702 CE.

Leube analyses his material from three main angles: narrativity, centrality, and tribality (*Narrativität*, *Zentralität*, and *Tribalität*). The section on narrativity, perhaps the central part of the book, highlights the dynamics of the formative process through a close discussion of fixed and un-fixed material. Building on the work of Noth, Donner and others, Leube emphasizes the use of motives (*Motifkerne*) and *topoi* to embellish the narration; often these recurring themes are not relevant to