

Book Reviews

S. H. NASR, *An annotated bibliography of Islamic science*, with the collaboration of W. C. Chittick, Teheran, Imperial Iranian Academy of Philosophy (publication no. 1), 1975, vol. 1, pp. lxiv, 432, 1–9 in Persian [no price stated].

Dr. Nasr is the author of many original books and papers on medieval Islamic science. This comprehensive annotated bibliography is the first of five projected volumes which are intended to list the best part of printed material in this field. Volume one is devoted to publications in Western (non-Islamic) languages from the eighteenth century to 1970. Works printed in other languages used in the world of Islam (Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Urdu, Bengali, etc.) will appear in subsequent volumes. This bibliography covers “a period of a millennium of human history and within a geographical area extending from Spain to eastern Asia”. Its scope is the published works related to “the sciences of nature and mathematics” in the so-called “intellectual sciences of Islam”. Nasr devised a successful system of classification, one which does “justice to the structure of Islamic science as well as the needs of such an extensive bibliography”, thus enabling the reader to have easy access to articles in his field of specialization from the vast amount of material presented in this bibliography. Further, Nasr provides brief annotations, in English and Persian, describing the contents of some major works listed.

Section one includes references to general bibliographical works; manuscript-catalogues and papers on works in manuscript form: general encyclopaedic works; dictionaries and glossaries, etc.; papers dealing with assessment of the state of Islamic sciences; material on the general history, culture, scientific, intellectual and social backgrounds of Islam; and theological education at the Madrasah. Section two lists bibliographical and biographical notes on famous men of the Islamic world, arranged alphabetically, with adequate references to selected standard works under each name. This is followed by another short list of Muslim sages and works published on each. The bibliography ends with a detailed ‘Index of writers’, followed by a Persian version of the author’s introduction. The lists of sources are so varied that this bibliography will remain an essential tool of research in the diverse fields of the intellectual sciences in Islam.

RAINER REICHE, *Ein rheinisches Schulbuch aus dem 11. Jahrhundert*, Münchener Beiträge zur Mediävistik und Renaissance-Forschung, Munich, Arbo-Gesellschaft, 1976, 8vo, pp. xi, 487, illus., DM.38.

This is an extremely interesting text and study of a scholar’s notebook, probably used for teaching purposes towards the end of the eleventh century. The original manuscript, now preserved at Bonn, had previously served as a quarry for philologists interested in the old German language, and it is only now, from this complete transcription, that one can appreciate the true character of the book. Fundamentally, it is a series of passages relevant to the teaching of the seven liberal arts, and as such is a valuable guide to the methods and scope of medieval education. A considerable number of the sections are devoted to medicine and it is to these that readers of this journal will be most attracted. They deal with medicinal herbs, remedies for various diseases, phlebotomy, diet, uroscopy, signs of death, obstetrics and the usual mixture of incantations and charms. A large proportion of this material is not of compelling

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interest, based as it is on the writings of Quintus Serenus, Pseudo-Apuleius and Sextus Placitus. But there are several unusual items rarely encountered elsewhere, such as the fascinating ceremonies for the cure of falling-sickness, for counteracting spells cast on people by means of wax images, and for preventing mice from destroying the grain harvest. On the whole the editor has treated the text with meticulous care and prodigious industry, but there are a number of places where more accuracy and attempts at emendation would have been desirable. What, for instance, do *diu sapen* (p. 108), *elevictus*, *eregarium*, *cappalatas* and *caba licit* mean? Since most of the text is written in intelligible Latin, one suspects that the transcription is at fault. This is certainly the case in the following instances: *eiusci* (p. 106) for *evisci*; *fleotorum* (p. 107) for *fleotomorum*; *suama* (p. 115) for *spuma*; *reilit* (p. 169) for *resilit*; *cuna* (p. 169) for *eunti*; *vocatur* (p. 186) for *vocatus*; *camas* (p. 188) for *cimas*; *Qua formicarum* (p. 193) for *ova formicarum*. And there are several others. On the whole, however, the editor has acquitted himself well in a complicated and difficult task, and he deserves high praise for undertaking it. The final result is well worth the labour he has expended on it.

ARNOLD THACKRAY and EVERETT MENDELSON (editors), *Science and values. Patterns of tradition and change*, New York, Humanities Press, 1974, 8vo, pp. viii, 251, illus., \$11.00.

The editors have planned this collection of essays by eight scholars as “. . . a modest beginning towards the task of understanding natural knowledge as a cultural enterprise . . .”. Dr. Thackray discusses ‘The Industrial Revolution and the image of science’; Charles Rosenberg, ‘Science and social values in nineteenth-century America: a case study in the growth of scientific institutions’; Roy MacLeod, ‘The Ayrton incident. A commentary on the relations of science and government in England, 1870–73’; D. V. A. Segre, ‘Social marginality and political legitimacy in nineteenth-century Madagascar’; James Bartholomew, ‘Japanese culture and the problem of modern science’; Peter Buck, ‘Western science in Republican China: ideology and institution building’; Charles Weiner, ‘Institutional settings for scientific change: episodes from the history of nuclear physics’; and Yaron Ezrahi, ‘The authority of science in politics’.

The cultural dimensions of science are now widely acknowledged, although there are still many social scientists and historians of ideas who do not recognize them. In order to illustrate them a variety of approaches are required and those employed here are but a part of the total number. Only by this method can the wide and complex canvas be tackled, for the object of the approach is to understand the various roles played by natural knowledge in different cultures and periods. The common link between the contributors is the use of the comparative method in their historical studies of natural knowledge, and it is fascinating, for example, to learn from the reception of western science by the non-western cultures. Each presents a scholarly article, adequately researched and annotated; unfortunately there is no index.

The editors and their collaborators deserve high praise for an excellent book that contributes importantly to an essential, yet under-studied, aspect of the history of science and medicine. Others may be inspired by it to tackle other aspects of a very large problem.