



Medieval Islamic Medicine

By Peter E. Pormann, Emilie Savage-Smith

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The medical tradition that developed in the lands of Islam during the medieval period (c. 650-1500) has, like few others, influenced the fates and fortunes of countless human beings. It is a story of contact and cultural exchange across countries and creeds, affecting many people from kings to the common crowd. This tradition formed the roots from which modern Western medicine arose. Contrary to the stereotypical picture, medieval Islamic medicine was not simply a conduit for Greek ideas, but a venue for innovation and change.

Medieval Islamic Medicine is organized around five topics: the emergence of medieval Islamic medicine and its intense crosspollination with other cultures; the theoretical medical framework; the function of physicians within the larger society; medical care as seen through preserved case histories; and the role of magic and devout religious invocations in scholarly as well as everyday medicine. A concluding chapter on the "afterlife" concerns the impact of this tradition on modern European medical practices, and its continued practice today. The book includes an index of persons and their books; a timeline of developments in East and West; and a section on further reading.

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About the Author

Peter E. Pormann is a Wellcome Trust Lecturer in the Department of Classics and Ancient History at the University of Warwick. He is the author of *The Oriental Tradition of Paul of Aegina's 'Pragmateia'* and *Al-Kindi's Philosophical Works*.

Emilie Savage-Smith is professor of the History of Islamic Science at the Oriental Institute and a senior research fellow of St. Cross College, both at the University of Oxford. She is the author of *Magic and Divination in Early Islam* and *Science, Tools, and Magic*.

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