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Second Volume of Maimonides Series Continues to Illuminate Ancient Medicine

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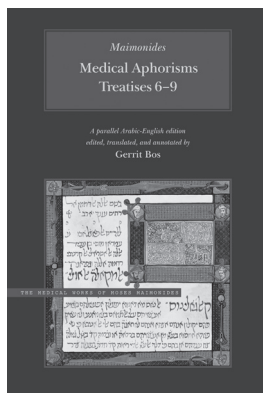
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Second Volume of Maimonides Series Continues to Illuminate Ancient Medicine



With the publication of *Medical Aphorisms: Treatises 6–9*, the second volume of the Medical Works of Moses Maimonides series, the Middle Eastern Texts Initiative (METI) at the Maxwell Institute continues its project of bringing to light original texts and translations from the sci-

entific, philosophical, and theological traditions of the three great religious civilizations that trace their ancestry to Abraham: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Now with added funding from the Library of Congress, METI continues to actively edit and prepare for publication works in all three of these branches of faith-oriented learning.

“We hope that as more people become aware that these three traditions grew up, as it were, in the same house together,” said D. Morgan Davis, managing editor of the series, “and were once in dialogue about a great many things of interest to all, we can renew our own commitment to similar kinds of dialogue in our times about our mutual interests and concerns. There is much of value that we have to offer one another, beginning with the respect and confidence that comes when we truly practice our shared values of compassion, forgiveness, and love of God and our fellow man.”


Moshe ben Maimon, or Abū Imrān Mūsā ibn Ubayd Allāh, better known as Moses Maimonides, is among the most celebrated rabbis in the history of Judaism and the author of works on many subjects. His writings include influential philosophical and medical treatises in Arabic and two of the most important works on Jewish law. He is perhaps best known for his effort to reconcile Aristotelian philosophy with biblical teaching. Born in 1138 in Córdoba, Spain, Maimonides eventually settled in Egypt, where he practiced medicine. He died in 1204.

Medical Aphorisms is undoubtedly the best known and most compendious of Maimonides’ medical works. It consists of about 1,500 aphorisms culled mainly from the treatises of Galen, either as

direct quotations or as summaries, and arranged into 25 treatises. Most of the traditional medieval medical subspecialties are represented in this work, including anatomy, physiology, gynecology, hygiene, and diet. In addition, Maimonides includes a section addressing unusual cases from Galen, and another containing his own criticisms of Galen’s theories.

Medical Aphorisms: Treatises 6–9 is the second volume of a new critical edition of the *Medical Aphorisms*, with a fresh, annotated English translation. The central subjects of the treatises in this volume are prognosis, aetiology, therapy, and pathology. Most of these aphorisms are based on the works of Galen. Because the source texts from which several of them were derived are no longer extant, these aphorisms provide tantalizing clues about aspects of Galen’s thought that are otherwise unknown. They thus serve as a window onto the ancient medical theories of Galen as well as on the medieval practice of Maimonides.

The Medical Works of Moses Maimonides is a series edited by Gerrit Bos of the University of Cologne. Professor Bos is chair of the Martin Buber Institute for Jewish Studies at the University of Cologne. He is widely published in the fields of Jewish studies, Islamic studies, Judaeo-Arabic texts, and medieval Islamic science and medicine, having many books and articles to his credit. He recently received the Maurice Amado award for his work on Maimonides’ medical texts.

Medical Aphorisms: Treatises 6–9 is available from the BYU Bookstore (www.byubookstore.com). 

From Other Publishers

Muhammad: Prophet of God, by Daniel C. Peterson (Eerdmans, 2007), is a concise biography of Islam’s founder, one of the most influential men in history. “The best scholarly text on the prophet Muhammad written by a Christian,” writes Professor Parviz Morewedge of New York City. “A must-read, especially for non-Muslims who are interested in a solid, compassionate treatment of Muhammad’s vision and accomplishments.” “An admirable book,” San Diego State’s Khaleel Mohammed says in the foreword, “written in a clear, fluid style that makes it suitable for both scholars and nonscholars.” Available in bookstores including the BYU Bookstore.