6. HISTORICAL ITEMS: Antiquity to 1750
(materials written in, and/or concerned with, this period)

KINDLY NOTE (once again...) The annotations given below must not be regarded as a substitute for reading the actual works listed! The views of textual commentators cannot substitute for the original texts on which they are commenting! All translations should be regarded with some caution!

For the present Internet version, many accents and diacritical marks have been omitted, as they still tend to be misrepresented either by the available coding systems or by differences of screen or print software across the world.

Detailed, well referenced review of disabilities in Jewish texts from c. 1000 BC to the 7th century CE, with insights into how these were understood in their period and how interpretations developed. The material is approached with little trace of dogmatism or of effort retrospectively to 'correct' earlier understandings in the light of modern views. Comparisons with surrounding societies and cultures (e.g. pp. 104-112) are based on secondary literature.

The biography of the blind poet, savant and freethinker Abu'l `Ala al-Ma`arri (973-1057) occupies pp. xi - xliii. He tasted the literary and cultural life of Baghdad, but after some quarrels and humiliations returned to his native city. There he developed an ascetic lifestyle and became well-known and influential. Al-Ma`arri's prolific correspondence may provide more insights into the man and his times, than the florid and often convoluted poetical and theological writings.

Influential 10th century physician and medical encyclopedist. Surgical section of his Kitab at-Tasrif has some disability applications. See e.g. cautery for palsy, epilepsy, hare lip, hunchback (pp. 36, 38, 60, 128); bonesetting pp. 676-836.

ADAMSON PB (1978) Terrorism and mutilation in countries of the ancient Middle East, with particular reference to Palestine. Medicina nei Secoli 15: 401-422.
Detailed consideration, from up to 3500 years past, of lethal practices, e.g. flaying, scalping,
impalement, crucifixion; of other tortures, not necessarily lethal but disabling, e.g. amputations, mutilations, disfigurement, branding, castration; and of large-scale population mistreatment causing terror and severe psychosocial disruption, e.g. destruction of habitations and cultural property, semi-starvation, enslavement, deportation, etc, leading to lengthy or permanent devastation of territory and civilisation. Adamson incidentally notes some Akkadian terms in personal names, “hazimu, hazmu = having mutilated ears (also huzzmu); huppudu (hubbudu) = with destroyed eyes; kussusu = having a bodily defect, possibly being a cripple without a hand” (pp. 419-420).

[See previous entry.]

[Based on Arabic dissertation, University of Cairo]


Dated before 2500 BC, the proverb collections appear in Volume I in roman transliteration and probable English translation (where known). Volume II provides commentary, glossary and 133 plates. Excluding various duplicates (unless their commentary includes additional points), the proverbs including clear reference to disability are serial numbered: 1.66 lame, halt, (comments in II: pp. 347-348); 2.61, bad hearing (II: 366); 2.120, lame, halt (II: 373); 5.57, deaf; 10.11, paralyzed; 11.85, lame; 12 Sec.C9, paralyzed; 13.22 - 13.25, lame (II: 429); 15 Sec.B6, halt (II: 433); 17 Sec.B3, paralyzed (II: 436); UET 6/2 339 (p. 322), deaf; MDP 27,111, lame, paralyzed (II: 480). Nine of these concern physical disability, though in two cases the point of the proverb is not at all obvious. Three involve deafness or impaired hearing, but in two the hearing problem is incidental to the proverb. There are some proverbs concerning fools (not listed here). Proverbs where a reference to disability is less clear, but may be deduced or appears conjecturally in the commentary, are: 1.29, blind (II: 344); 2.43, maimed, voice problem (II: 364); 3.142, eye problem (II: 390); 5.50, possibly lame (II: 402-403); 8 Sec.B11, blind? (II: 414); 8 Sec.B35, eye problem (II: 416-417); 21 Sec.A16, club foot? (II: 443-444); 21 Sec.D3, temporary mental confusion? (II: 444). Some of these conjectural meanings make up for the curious lack of blindness proverbs in the initial batch. The first of those listed above (1.66: “In the city of the lame, the halt are couriers”), is known in many languages by the equivalent, “In the land of the blind, the one-eyed man is king”.

AMIN, Rida (1964) La paralysie infantile aux temps des pharaons. Cahiers d'Alexandrie, second series, No. 4. 69-77.
Based on archaeological evidence from before the Hellenistic period.


Often known as the “1001 Nights”, many stories in this collection probably originate in India or Persia, and are associated with the story-teller Scheherazade beguiling Sultan Schahriar in order to save her own life and those of many other young women, possibly in the 9th century. The stories are well embedded in the ethics and morality of Middle Eastern life, with features of Islam prominent, but also a few Jewish and Christian characters. Some disabled people appear incidentally; a few are more noticeable, e.g. the disfigured Amine (pp. 66-80); the Little Hunchback (222-228) leading to tales of people with hands severed, and then to the hunchback Bacbouc, his toothless brother Backbarah, blind brother Bacbac, and brother Schacabac with a hare lip (229-306); and the blind man, Baba Abdalla (729-736). (HAJ, q.v., p. 39, reviewing Richard Burton's multi-volume translation of the *Arabian Nights*, details “fourteen different references to the blind”, and over 2000 references to people blind in one eye).

The two Arabic disease terms *yudam* and *baras* (shown with diacriticals in the original) are tracked through about 25 medieval to modern Arabic lexicons and medical works, collecting a range of meanings, which are then discussed. The significance of the terms in the context of Maliki legal rulings is examined. People believed to have the diseases named may have reduced legal capacity, e.g. to enter into contracts, which has consequences for marriage, divorce, sale of slaves, under Islamic law.

Briefly mentions some features of the Hittite civilisation, and refers to papers by Soysal and Arik-An-Soysal (q.v.) for information on blind and deaf people in those times.

In his “On the causes and symptoms of chronic diseases”, Book I, chapter 4, (Adams' translation, pp. 296-297), Aretaeus left a useful description of the symptoms, phenomena, and social stigma of epilepsy. [His locator, “the Cappadocian”, places Aretaeus in the Middle East, though to acquire the name he must have left his native region. His work apparently dates from the early to middle 2nd century CE.]

Discusses various sources for information on blindness and blind people in Hittite antiquity.
Arikan collects examples of the main word in use for 'blind', IGI.NU.GAL, in Hittite documents, and gives transliteration and translation of many of them, with some discussion. Blind people were found among prisoners of war, and were also put to work in the mills. They might have some curious roles in religious ceremonies. Several blind prisoners are identified by personal name and city of origin.


d’ARVIEUX, Laurent (1735) Mémoire du Chevalier d’Arvieux, Envoye Extraordinnaire du Roi à la Porte, consul d’Alep, d’Alger, de Tripoli, & d’autres eechelles du Levant: contenant ses voyages à Constantinople, dans l’Asie, la Palestine, l’Egypte etc. Paris. Volume II, pp. 35-36. In Palestine in 1659, d’Arvieux and other French dignitaries met the Ottoman Pacha, with his mute. Over the next two days, the party journeyed with the Pacha, from Rama to Gaza. [See also BOBOVIUS; BON; BRAGADIN; DALLAM; DAMER; DOMENICO; ERIZZO; EVLIYA; LEWIS; LORICHS; MILES 2000; ÖGÜT & ÖZCAN; RICAUT.]

Lewd and humorous 16th century Turkish tale of a magistrate overcome by lust for a lovely boy; interesting for its graphic depiction of the ghastly state of leprosy sufferers in a colony to which the magistrate is lured, who are tricked into believing that he is one of them.


Describes a possible early connection between the lame or achondroplasic Egyptian gods Ptah-Pataikos and Bes and the lame Greek god Hephaestus (patron of metal workers), and examines a more recent suggestion that changes in smelting techniques exposed metal-workers to chronic lead or arsenic poisoning, with impairments eventually showing up in depictions of the deities.

This detailed, scholarly study on the martyred saint Zoticos gives a provenance of the sole manuscript (probably 11th century) of his Vita; the available Greek text with French translation; points of philological interest and some detailed textual comparison between the Vita and a later source; and a discussion of the significance of the text in historical and hagiological context. The story begins in the time of Constantine (c. 274-337 CE), whose noble reign reportedly had one blemish: a decree ordering the banishment and destruction of people with leprosy and those combatting the disease. Zoticos had been given responsibilities in the new capital at Byzantium, and enjoyed Constantine's confidence. To by-pass this decree, Zoticos requested and received gold to buy “precious stones” for the benefit of the
emperor; but used the gold to ransom leprosy-disabled people who were being taken to their
destruction, and to set up an encampment where they were cared for. The scheme was
denounced by courtiers when Constantine died and his son Constant[ius] (who favoured
Arianism) took power; but Zoticos invited the new emperor to come and see the “precious
stones”. Constant was greeted by a congregation of lepers, among them being his own
daughter, who had been expelled under the decree, and rescued by Zoticos. Unamused by this
ploy, Constant had Zoticos tied and dragged by wild mules until his body fell in pieces.
Miraculous events followed. Constant repented of his errors and founded the “Zoticos
Hospital” to continue the saint's work.

This foundation seems to have been destroyed and rebuilt a number of times over the
centuries (according to Synaxarion, Dec. 30, it was rebuilt, after an earthquake, by Romanus
III (1028-1034)). Historicity of the Zoticos vita cannot easily be substantiated, but he is
mentioned independently in 472, as one who cared for orphans. A tradition of care for the
poor, sick or suffering from leprosy continued to the time of the Emperor Michael IV (1034-
41), when the extant manuscript originated. Indeed, Michael IV (see Psellus, Fourteen
Byzantine Rulers) suffered from epilepsy; and the Vita concludes with a celebration of this
emperor's care for leprosy sufferers, bathing their wounds with his own hands. M. Aubineau
speculates on the concepts and writings of Byzantine and earlier hagiographers, tracing back
the idea of money given by rulers for building a palace, but actually spent on the poor.
Parallels can be found as far back as the story of the apostle Thomas and King Gundaphor (or
Gundaphor and other transliterations) in the apocryphal Acts of the Apostles (Acts of
Thomas, Second Act, 17-24; translation available online).

[ NB. Aubineau's journal article on Zoticos is correctly titled as shown. That article
was drawn to the attention of recent 'disability studies' and commented on in interesting
fashion by the philosopher and disability-historian Henri-Jacques Stiker, in his Corps
English translated by W Sayers, 1997, as A History of Disability, Ann Arbor: University of
Michigan Press. In both Stiker's original notes (pp. 88-91, 229), and the English version of
his revised book (pp. 73-76, 215), the title of Aubineau's article appears as “Biographie, vertu
et martyre de notre saint Père Zotikos, nourricier des pauvres.” That title is in fact a free
translation (Greek to French) of the heading of the Vita text, as shown on p. 71 of the
Analecta Bollandia article (but Aubineau has “vertus”, not “vertu”). The Greek can be
transliterated: Bios kai politeia kai marturion, tou en hagiois patros hEmOn ZOtikou tou
ptOchotrophou. The use of vertus for politeia might be an interpretative move. Aubineau
comments (p. 86) on the technical term ptOchotrophos.]

119-121.
Useful review of STOL 1993 (q.v.)

Eiesland & DE Saliers (eds) Human Disability and the Service of God: reassessing religious
Reviews some features of ancient liturgical practice concerned with healing, in
Mesopotamian and Eastern Mediterranean religions, comparing e.g. the locus (home or
hospital), and use of animals, icons, drugs or music in the ancient settings with the mostly
different practices in modern American liturgies.

AVALOS H, MELCHER, Sarah J & SCHIPPER, Jeremy (eds) (2007) This Abled Body. Rethinking disabilities and Biblical studies. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature. ix + 244 pp. This collection reads back into 'biblical studies' some elements of modern 'disability politics' and personalised interpretations, and suggests, with some plausibility, an imminent rise in studies of this kind (at least, in the anglophone world). Several chapters are based in scholarly work in Middle Eastern antiquity. See e.g. WALLS, below.


AL-BAGHAWI (revised by at-Tibrizi). Mishkat al-masabih. English translation with explanatory notes, by James Robson, 2 volumes, reprint 1990/1994, Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf. xx + 1453 pp. Al-Baghawi's selection of hadiths (11th century CE) became popular after Tibrizi's 14th century revision. Some sayings or involvement of the prophet Muhammad concerning disability and treatment are reported: e.g. blindness and eye problems (pp. 36, 138, 217, 221, 231, 397-399, 405, 532, 663, 708-709, 745, 878, 889, 935, 945-954, 1035, 1133, 1296-97, 1302, 1342); 'leprosy' (pp. 98, 397-399, 526, 619, 955-956, 1221, 1379); epilepsy, idiocy, possession (pp. 329, 526, 638, 697, 931, 1033, 1220, 1260, 1291); various conditions, causes and remedies (pp. 5-6, 36, 313, 508, 582, 664, 689, 763, 925, 934, 945-954, 997, 1274, 1345). The usual divisions are observed, between hadiths considered perfectly reliable; those considered good but not in the first class; and those considered weak (but not completely worthless). In his introduction (pp. i - xx), Robson discusses issues of hadith transmission and selection, as well as matters of text and various earlier translations. [Any translation of an important work of Islam, by a non-Muslim, is likely to be regarded with some doubt by Muslims, and to be scrutinised closely for possible defects and distortions. Robson's work was chosen for reprinting and publication at Lahore, during a period when Pakistan was taking seriously its identity as an Islamic republic and more tools were being produced for religious uplift, in parallel with the Islamic resurgence across the Middle East. That does not guarantee the detailed acceptability of Robson's efforts; but it appears that nothing overtly obnoxious to Muslims was found in his translation and interpretation, which primarily required a strong knowledge of medieval Arabic and modern English.]


BECKMAN, Gary (2007) A Hittite ritual for depression (CTH 432). In: D Groddek & M Zorman (eds) Tabularia Hethaeorum: Hethitologische Beiträge Silvin Kosak zum 65. Geburtstag, 69-81. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz. Beckman gives transliteration of KUB 4.47 with KBo 45.193, in pp. 69-74, and translation with technical notes (74-78). With some abbreviation, the problem is described thus: “If a god or goddess is [angry(?)] with a person, so that his mind is ever spinning(?) ... everything is difficult for him ... cannot sleep ... always in a foul mood ... bad dreams ... always irritated ...” (74) Discussing the contents (78-81), Beckman goes beyond an earlier interpretation (“Rituel contre l’insomnie”, E Laroche), finding insomnia merely one among several symptoms of clinical depression (comparing a modern American definition), and noting the combination of therapeutic regime and religious invocation to address the affliction. (The invocation involves confession of sin, offence, outrage, with penitence and plea for
forgiveness; curiously, it is in Akkadian). The text seems to belong to the Hittite capital in the 13th century BC, while drawing on Mesopotamian tradition.

The traveller William Biddulph remarked c.1600 that the Turks had various ways of naming one another, sometimes by personal appearance (p. 268). “But if Nature have marked them either with goggle eyes, bunch backs, lame legs, or any other infirmitie or deformitie, as they are knowne by it, so they are content to bee called by it.” (p. 269) He also commented on the tolerance shown to “fooles, dumbe men, and mad men” (pp. 263-264).

This brief material, perhaps from the Persian period and apparently extracted from a long text, seems to concern the prediction of abnormality (izbu) at birth, involving astrological indications.


This 'electronic corpus' provides access to an accumulation of edited texts, transliterations and translations of Sumerian cuneiform materials, from possibly 3000 to 4000 years ago with provision for keyword searching. The English term 'blind' appears in 6 paragraphs; crazy (1 paragraph), cripple (10), deformed (3), deaf (4), disfigured (1), dolt (1), freak (1), fool (20), idiot (2), paralyse (7), weak (38). [See also note in General Introduction, under 'Search, Access & Supply'.]

In context, some impairment or disability terms were being used as insults, e.g. “His face is disfigured, his judgement is muddled, ... a smitten man who makes himself important. He is negligent, a cripple, the son of a hound. A madman, crazy...” (and further undesirable attributes, in Diatribe C, t.5.4.12), suggesting that impairments and disabilities were as unwelcome in Sumer as in any other known civilisation. The position of the “leprous man” (in “Gilgamesh, Enkidu and the nether world”, c.1.8.1.4), is striking. In a list of 'Did you see (this or that ill-fated or badly damaged person)?' questions occur: “Did you see the leprous man? -- I saw him. -- How does he fare? -- His food is set apart, his water is set apart, he eats the food offered (?) to him, he drinks the water offered (?) to him. He lives outside the city.” However, the story of Enki and Ninmah, in English translation t.1.1.2, provides a possible counterbalance on the positive side, containing the idea that disabled people should find, or be provided with, appropriate means to earn their bread and take up useful roles in society. (See more detailed account in annotation to BOTTÉRO & KRAMER 1989, below).


Includes a description in the 17th century of the 'mutes' in the seraglio, the deaf male servants who customarily served the Sultan (and deaf women serving in the harem), whose sign language became a common means of communication in the palace, probably from the middle of the 16th century. Bobovius notes that sign language was taught by older deaf people to the younger, at a specific location, and it was sufficient for communicating matters of any complexity, including the holy texts and the prophets of Islam. (pp. 33-34).


Böck's doctoral dissertation (1996) gives a detailed review of the Babylonian-Assyrian “morphoscopic” and physiognomic literature, processing and translating a substantial amount of relevant text, and examining the body and 'shape' terms that were used.


Account of the mutes and dwarfs at the Ottoman court, including the signing system (IX: 328, 362-363, 374-375, 380, 385) and notes on deformities (IX: 369)

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The Preface (p. vii) states that the work here translated was composed by Mar Palladius [365-425], Bishop of Helenopolis, in Bythinia. Several of the monks whose lives are recounted had disabilities, e.g. Didymus the Blind (pp. 136-138); Paul the Simple (183-189); James the Lame (265-273, though nothing is said about his lameness); the sage who allowed other monks to think he was mad, while in fact he was taking care to remove evil from his mind (388-390).

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Reviewing texts on beggars and vagabonds in the earlier Arab world, details appear of those who pretended to suffer a variety of disabling conditions, e.g. volume I: x, 19-24, 36-47, 84-95, 99-100, 110. (Some details are obscene or scatological). Volume II contains texts, translations and notes.

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With an extensive introduction to the background of Mesopotamian cuneiform literature, religion and mythology (pp. 1-104), selected texts are presented in translation (to French) from Sumerian and Akkadian, illustrating cosmological beginnings. Stories of Enki (known in Akkadian as Ea) occupy pp. 151-202, including the brief tale of Enki and Ninmah (188-194) with commentary (194-198). The available materials, from the second millennium BC,
have suffered damage over the centuries, and the meaning of some words and phrases remain obscure, yet the Enki and Ninmah story as a whole is more or less comprehensible, and provides an interesting extension to the general run of cosmological accounts.

**Enki and Ninmah.** After the cosmos was set up, the lesser gods began grumbling about how much work they had to do. Prodded by Namma (the primeval mother goddess), the designer-engineer-fixer Enki made some midwife goddesses, so that mankind could be produced and put to work. Celebrating this manoeuvre, Enki and senior midwife Ninmah had some beer together. Ninmah reflected that their new line, mankind, could turn out good or bad, and boasted that it would depend on what fate she assigned to each. Enki, inventing the role of Vocational Rehabilitation Advisor, took up the challenge. Ninmah took clay and produced a man who could hold nothing in his enfeebled hands; but Enki assigned him to the King's service. Ninmah made one who was blind; Enki put him into the song and music line at court. Ninmah made a man with paralysed feet; Enki's solution here was not so clear - presumably a sedentary occupation, fortune telling? silver-working? [Another version has this third man created as an idiot; he would have been found a niche in the civil service.] The fourth man had a problem of keeping his sperm or his urine from flowing at the wrong time. Enki worked a cure by driving out a demon. The fifth was a woman who could not have children. This suited her for a place in the royal harem. The sixth person was made without sexual parts. Enki put this one among the eunuchs at court. [Compare some alternative translations, e.g. BLACK et al 1998-2006; JACOBSEN 1987; KLEIN 1997.] Having arranged some kind of self-sustaining role in life for these six examples of humans with abnormalities, Enki shaped up a profoundly disabled man [or baby?] and challenged Ninmah to find him a role in which he could earn his bread. Under some taunting from Enki, Ninmah could find no solution; yet the available text has deteriorated, so the endgame is unclear.

Possible clarifications are discussed by Bottéro & Kramer, e.g. the adroitness of Enki's vocational guidance to each disabled candidate. Perhaps the man who could hold nothing in his hand had the merit of being able neither to steal nor to 'palm' a bribe -- ironic comment on functionaries in all generations? With whatever nuances of interpretation, the story could be read as one of the world's earliest discussions of the need for social roles in which people with disabilities may play their part using other abilities. [It may be significant that another Enki cosmological story, involving the deity Ninhursag, has a herb-tasting session followed by a story listing body parts (head, hair, nose, mouth, throat, arms, sides, flanks), and their ailments, for each category of which a separate solution is created. (Bottéro & Kramer pp. 150-164, specifically pp. 157-159, commentary pp. 162-164). There seems to be a recognition of some difference between categories of 'disease' and of 'chronic disabling condition'.]


With relevance to the histories of signing by deaf people, see pp. 269-272, on “Du langage par gestes et signes chez les Arabes”, derived (with much abbreviation) from I GOLDZIHER (1886) Ueber Geberden- und Zeichensprache bei den Arabern. Zeitschrift für Völkerpsychologie 14: 369-386. While mainly on signing within the historical Arab world, there is some discussion of traditions embodying the finger and hand signs and gestures much used by the Prophet Muhammad, with explanations in commentaries. These are likely to have had some impact among Muslims across the Middle East.

**BRAGADIN, Pietro (1526) Sommario della relazione di Pietro Bragadin Bailo a...**
Bragadin was the Venetian Bailo (ambassador or senior diplomat) 1524-1526, at the court of Sultan Suleiman at Constantinople. He described the Grand Vizier Ibrahim, who was indispensable to Suleiman. Frequent communication between Suleiman and Ibrahim took place via the Sultan's mute servant / messenger (“ogni giorno il Signor li scrive qualche polizza di sua man, e la manda per il suo muto”, p. 103). Bragadin offered no explanation of “il suo muto”, which may suggest that, in the mid-1520s, it was already sufficiently well known (i.e. by the Venetian Senate, to whom he was reporting) that there were deaf and mute personal servants or message-carriers attending the Ottoman Sultan.


BRUNSCHVIG R (1949) Théorie générale de la capacité chez les hanafites médiévaux. Revue internationale des droits de l'antiquité 2: 157-172. Discusses the meanings of legal capacity and legal inhibition (hijr) understood by various early Hanifite sources, mentioning the cases of infants, pre-pubertal children and the safih (prodigal, or person lacking reason in the disposition of his affairs and belongings) for whom guardians were necessary. (See also FAHD & HAMMOUDI; LINANT DE BELLEFONDS; NASIR; PERREIMOND; SAFAI).


AL-BUKHARI. The translation of the Meanings of Sahih Al-Bukhari, Arabic-English. New Delhi: Kitab Bhavan. 9 volumes. Volume VII contains several hadiths pertinent to disability, e.g. No.s 555 (pp. 376-377, epilepsy); 557 (p. 377, blindness); 582 (p. 395, for every disease, Allah makes treatment available); 608 (pp.408-409, leprosy). Other major hadith collections contain further examples. See e.g. AL-BAGHAWI.


influences during the formative centuries of Arabic medicine. Mentions six standard 'specialist' fields of study, among which were oculist and “orthopedist (mujabbir, literally bone-setter)”. Discusses hadiths underlying Prophetic medicine, e.g. merit of patiently bearing epilepsy or blindness, using amulets against Evil Eye.

EL-BUSIRI. translated by JW Redhouse (1881) The “Burda,” i.e. The Poem of the Mantle, in praise of Muhammad, by El-Busiri. In: WA Clouston (ed) Arabian Poetry for English Readers, pp. 319-341. Glasgow. Redhouse provides preface and notes to his translation of this poem from the 13th century CE, which has been widely recited in time of sickness. It celebrates the Prophet's powers of healing (e.g. verse 85; see also v. 104). One legend tells that “the Poet was stricken with palsy, and obtained his recovery of God through the Prophet's intercession” (p. 322).

CAPPS, Edward, Jr. (1927) An ivory pyxis in the Museo Cristiano and a plaque from the Sancta Sanctorum. The Art Bulletin 9 (4, June) 330-340. These items from antiquity depict scenes from the life of Christ, with healing of people having severe disabilities. Capps locates them in the iconographic context of Coptic and Alexandrian schools of art, and dates them to the early sixth century CE.

CASSIN, Elena (1987) Le semblable et le différent: symbolismes du pouvoir dans le Proche-Orient ancien. Paris: Découverte. 373 pp. Two chapters discuss “Le droit et le tordu". The first (pp. 50-71) is on disability in the Jewish scriptures, with more focus on David and Meriba`al, and close consideration of Hebrew disability terms. The second (72-97) is titled “Handicapés et marginaux dans la Mésopotamie des IIe-Ier millénaires”. Apart from the need for constancy in prayer by the king, rewarded by the deity sustaining his non-trembling step and non-twisted tongue, the risk was foreseen (c. 14th century BC) that some rogue might use a mad, deaf, blind or otherwise disabled person as an unwitting agent to commit a sacrilegious act, so that the resultant curse should be diverted from the instigator (81-82, 92) (see also D MARCUS; and Z FALK, below). Many Akkadian disability terms, with overlapping semantic range and possible nuances, are discussed in detail with sources (82-91, 96-97). The (apparent) custom is noted of placing a simpleton 'substitute' on the throne for a limited period to divert and absorb some curse or threat to the king; the substitute either died, or was killed at the close of the period (94-95). (Cf KRASNOWOLSKA, below).

CERESKO, Anthony R (2001) The identity of “the blind and the lame” (‘iwwer upisseah) in 2 Samuel 5:8b. Catholic Biblical Quarterly 63: 23-30. Reviews various explanations of this curious and difficult passage. (See also CLEMENTS; WÄCHTER et al.)


CHARDIN, Jean [John Chardin] (1711) Voyage du Chevallier Chardin en Perse et autres Lieux de l'Orient. Nouvelle edition. Amsterdam. Jean Chardin (1643-1713) made several visits to Persia, in the 1660s and 1670s. In volume 5,
he noted the custom of rendering royal princes blind, to avoid contests over inheriting the throne (pp. 241-243). In volume VIII, pp. 47-48, three blind princes appear, and in pp. 54-59 there is a remarkable description of the blind prince Mirza Rezi and his two blind brothers, and of their lives, studies and activities. [There are various editions, with different volume numbers and pagination.]

http://www.didac.ehu.es/antropo/10/10-8/Charon.htm
Spina bifida was found in remains at Baharyia, Egypt, dating to around 1600 BC.


Begun c. 1921, the first two volumes of CAD were published in 1956. In 2008, the full set is almost complete. Individual .pdf files are online and are free to download:
http://oi.uchicago.edu/research/pubs/catalog/cad/
Numerous disability-related words, and words for bodily or mental abnormalities or some kind of affliction, are found throughout the dictionary, either as entries, or in illustrative texts for unrelated words, and with many variants. Some (more or less) equivalent Sumerograms are shown (in capitals, according to convention), where they were adopted in Akkadian. Examples (with diacriticals omitted): hummurru (crippled) KUD.KUD.(DU); hummusu (baldheaded); kubbulu (lame, paralysed, crippled); kubbusu (downtrodden); lilu (fool moron); lilutu (foolishness, weakness); pessu, (crippled, deformed) BA.AN.ZA; sukkuku (deaf, obtuse), with four (apparently) different kinds of meaning, U.HUB; and many more. (See HOLMA 1914, for many 'defect' words on the 'guttulu' pattern, more of which were elucidated in the period after 1914, and appear in the CAD).

The written language known as 'Demotic' is found in Egyptian texts from approximately the 7th century BC to the 5th century CE, representing a late stage in the development of the ancient Egyptian language, and a stage in which considerable quantities of 'ordinary, everyday' text is available, as well as text on more esoteric subjects. The present dictionary updates and extends W. Erichsen's Demotisches Glossar (1954), and is based mainly on texts published during the following 25 years (1955-1979), with previous and subsequent additional materials as available, and as extended by accumulating knowledge. The CDD's current electronic format is amply spaced on the page, providing the root (transcribed with roman characters plus a few necessary symbols and diacriticals), words formed on the root and variations, and (in English) parts of speech, definition, reference in Erichsen's Glossar,
other cross-references, relevant secondary literature, and (where available) a slightly enlarged photographic snippet of Demotic cursive script giving the word, with papyrus reference or other information.

Each letter is presented in its own volume, presently available (June 2008) as individual .pdf files. These were downloaded and each file was searched electronically for 'simple' disability terms (blind, deaf, dumb, mute, lame, dwarf, mad, fool, epilep.., mutilat..). Approximately 15 roots were found showing equivalence with these historical English disability terms, e.g. {3}bw, to be dumb; bl., bl{3}, blindness; ‘lw{3} to be mute; gnm, to be(com)e blind; gr’, lame; gl, lame; hshb., to mutilate; kmn, to be(com)e blind; kl{3}., (possibly) lame; lh, fool, foolish; nm(t), dwarf; shpe., ? blind; [some diacriticals omitted, or differently represented]. A similar number of derivatives, variants or conjectural translations showed up, with possible or probable equivalence. In some cases, adjacent or associated roots or terms suggest the semantic path to the disability usage, e.g. terms for 'cover', 'be hidden', adjacent to 'blind'; a term for 'necropolis' (graveyard) associated with 'deceased person, ghost', 'evil spirit', 'diviner', 'epileptic', 'possessed man'; an association of 'foolish, stupid' with 'hypocrite', 'wicked', impudent'.


To be of much use, the Dictionary of an ancient language that was discovered only a century ago on thousands of clay tablets, is bound to reproduce a good deal of text embodying and displaying the semantic range of the words, phrases, grammatical constructions and so forth, as there is no other reliable method to determine and display the meanings and mechanisms. As most of the available materials (roughly letters L to S) are searchable on the web, many terms related to disability or deafness can be found in quoted texts having little or nothing to do with the main dictionary entry. For example, in the L-N volume, marlahh-, marlahshke-, marlater, marleshshant-, represent: make foolish; become crazed, mad; fool, idiot; foolishness, idiocy, stupidity; foolish, idiotic, demented (pp. 191-192); whereas on p. 57a, a passage is quoted about the blind, deaf or lame man, while the entry itself is about a “categorical negative”, le-e. In the P volume, the 'deaf man' appears incidentally on pp. 26b-27a, 211b, 309a; someone who has been blinded, on pp. 125a, 290b; diseases of the foot attract some examples under pata (p. 233a); lame or crippled men appear under pesh(sh)iya (p. 320a) and piddai (p. 353ab). In the S (Sh)1 material, there is blind or deaf material on pp. 55, 65-66, 68, 73-75, 119a, 128a, 141b; and in Sh2, on pp. 217a, 258b.


Details are given of some new texts of Liptishtar's Laws, the first of which concerns "remarriage in case of disability of the first wife" (pp. 1-3). The latter text, compared with a similar provision in the Code of Hammurabi, has more disability detail: “If a man's first wife has lost her sight or has become paralytic, she shall not leave the house; (if) her husband takes a second wife, the later wife shall support the first wife. Variant: 'he shall support the later wife (and) the first wife." Discussion follows of the disability terms, the 'loss of sight' being partly conjectural. A further speculation is that, if the impairments were combined, the reference might be to leprosy, for which (in the similar text) a euphemism may have been used.

CLÈRE, Jacques Jean (1995) Les Chauves d'Hathor. Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta, 63. Leuven: Peeters. xvii + 257 pp. Baldness is seldom seen in ancient Egyptian graphic representations, both because it would tend to be hidden by wigs worn by people of some social standing, and because in formal representation “on a affaire à des figurations idéalisées des personnages où il ne convenait pas de montrer leurs imperfections physiques, pas plus leur calvitie qu'une mutilation ou une malformation corporelle.” (p. 5) Nevertheless, some exceptions exist. The phenomenon of baldness and its linguistic and iconographic representation are here studied in scholarly depth. In particular, a number of examples are examined, in which persons are represented in a religious context, asserting that they are “the bald of [this or that] deity” or the “the bald of [a named temple]”, having favoured status with that deity, and claiming to purvey the deity's favours to supplicants (e.g. pp. 164-170). [The work was assembled and published posthumously, with minimal editorial intervention; so while it is highly detailed and tackles interpretative complexities, it is not in the final form the author might have wished.]

COHEN, Mark R (2005) Poverty and Charity in the Jewish Community of Medieval Egypt. Princeton University Press. xiii + 288 pp. Cohen has collected years of work into a densely detailed study based in 890 documents from the Cairo Geniza, mostly from the Fatimid and Ayyubid periods, 969-1250 CE, with many comparative references to studies of poverty and its relief in other Middle Eastern and European situations. Disabilities, incapacities, infirmities and afflictions, described with many Arabic terms (shown and commented on), are well represented among reasons for poverty, and have major foci at pp. 58, 152-154, 169-172, 239-242, while also having some dispersed index entries (blind, deaf, paralysed, al-mubtala, beggars and beggary, alms, charity, illness, and 'named individuals' e.g. Abu Said, blind man, Bu Ali, blind man, David the porter (amputee), Moses the lame, Umm al-mafluj, mother of semi-paralyzed child, etc). [See GOITEIN, below.]

CONRAD, Lawrence I (1994) Did Al-Walid I found the first Islamic hospital? ARAM 6: 225-244. Examines evidence for claims that Al-Walid founded the first 'hospital' caring for lepers at Damascus, and some extensions crediting Al-Walid with instituting wider formal disability services. The 'hospital' claim and extensions are unlikely.


Substantial work covering especially sources from the tenth to twelfth centuries, detailing the hospitals, hospices, establishments for care of orphans, elderly and infirm people, homes for the poor, blind, epileptic, totally incapacitated, or otherwise disabled people, at Byzantium, the Eastern Mediterranean and other parts of the Empire. See pp. 10, 66, 76, 86, 98, 99, 118, 122, 128-29, 136, 138, 150, 152, 154, 155, 164-167, 179, 233, 235, 242, 244, 259, 263, 264, 275-276, and terms such as 'blind', 'cripple', 'epileptic', 'leprosy' in the index. Motivations and religious beliefs are taken into account. The author is less sceptical than some more recent historians, but nonetheless reviews sources carefully. Among the philanthropists, he also noted some whose “humane attitude was blackened by various acts of cruelty” (p. 134).

Excavations in 1913-1914 at the religious settlement at Wadi Sarga, some 15 miles south of Assyut, Egypt, found many ostraca and papyrus or parchment fragments of minor texts in Greek or Coptic, dating from the early 5th to early 7th century (pp. 5, 16, 29). Many of the ostraca, which can be dated between 550 and 650 CE (p. 16), are a kind of waybill, carried by the delivery man and handed over when he made delivery (p. 163). Several were written by a clerk named Horus, and one of these mentions “Enoch the Deaf” [EnOch p-kour] (p. 158, no. 207), as the person delivering a consignment of barley and wheat, on the 26th day of the month Mesore. Enoch was a fairly common name among Coptic Christians of the period - Crum & Bell index other ostraca bearing names such as Enoch the builder, brother Enoch, Apa Enoch, Enoch the steward, Enoch the less, Enoch the cameldriver; so it would not be surprising if anyone called Enoch might acquire some appropriate nickname, to distinguish him from the others.


In Book V, 5.5 to 5.24 (translated by Rolfe, I: 370-379), the Latin historian Quintus Curtius told the story of the hundreds of mutilated Greeks who had been released by their Persian captors, and met Alexander as he was about to fall on Persepolis in January 330 BC. They were one of the earliest and largest recorded groups of disabled people, and a debate is recorded among them, as to what they should ask Alexander for. Perhaps they were also the first such group to succeeded in changing a ruler's mind, when he had decided what kind of help they ought to have, and they persuaded him instead to give them what they really wanted.

See previous annotation. In Yardley's translation, the story is on pp. 103-105. See MILES 2003, below, for discussion of scholarly opinions about the historicity of the story.

DALLAM, Thomas. [Diary for 1599: Account of an Organ Carryed to the Grand Seignor
and Other Curious Matter]. In JT Bent (ed) (1893) Early Voyages and Travels in the Levant. I.- The Diary of Master Thomas Dallam, 1599-1600, etc. London: Hakluyt Society.Visiting the court of the Emperor Mehmet III at Constantinople (pp. 69-70), Dallam was amazed to see 100 dwarf attendants and 100 ‘deaf & dumb’ pages. The latter used sign language, and “lett me understande by there perfitt sins [signs] all thinges that they had sene the presente dow by its motions”. (The 'presente' to the Emperor was a musical organ which had mobile figures, e.g. a bush full of birds which sang & shook their wings.) See RICAUT's fuller description of these well-trained deaf attendants. See also Stanley Mayes (1956) An Organ for the Sultan. London: Putnam, pp. 58, 63, 201-204, based on Dallam's diary, with background from other sources.


DASEN, Véronique (1988) Dwarfism in Egypt and Classical Antiquity: iconography and medical history. Medical History 32: 253-276. Though links from Ancient Egypt to the Levantine Arab world seem distant, Dasen notes (pp. 273-274) realistic terracotta depictions of pathological defects, from Asia Minor cities with medical schools; those of “people affected by hypothyroidism are relatively numerous. The majority come from Egypt and Asia Minor.” (See next items).

DASEN V (1993) Dwarfs in Ancient Egypt and Greece. Oxford: Clarendon. xxix + 354 pp. + 80 plates. Revised D.Phil. thesis, heavily referenced, based on iconography and medical, archaeological and anthropological evidence. Dasen concludes (pp. 246-248) that positive attitudes towards dwarfs in Egypt during some 3000 years, and a much shorter period in Classical Greece, were followed by adverse views and behaviour in Hellenistic and Roman periods. While focusing on dwarfs and small stature, a significant amount of information, discussion and documentation appears on other kinds of physical abnormality, and also on its graphic depiction and interpretation. [This work also appears in Arabic, translated by AH Yassine (2004), Cairo: Dar el-Sharqiyat. Review: http://hebdo.ahram.org.eg/arab/ahram/2004/2/25/livr0.htm ]

DASEN V (2006) L’enfant qui ne grandit pas. Medicina nei secoli 18 (2) 431-457. Here Dasen reviews in some detail the lives of dwarfs in the later Hellenistic and Roman periods, with iconographic evidence casting some light on the diverse and ambiguous elements in public attitudes and responses. Influences of artistic representations from Alexandria and Asia Minor percolated through the Greek and Roman worlds. The association of dwarfs with wit, entertainment, dance and music, and a worthy social status, may also have spread from Egypt, along with some notions of religious significance and apotropaic power.

An anencephalic neonate with spina bifida found in the Touna el-Gebel graveyard, near Hermopolis, dated perhaps between 300 and 600 BC, provoked some curious interpretations in the 19th century, which the authors discuss from different points of view.


Differentiates members of normally short-statured ethnic groups from people with exceptionally short stature and/or physical abnormalities. Discusses mainly the physiology and roles of the latter, with 52 figures.


[See previous item.] Revisiting the topic, Dawson again complained of the confusion of pygmies and dwarfs, and reviewed the accumulating sources, secondary literature, iconography, and features of achondroplasia from pre-dynastic times through thirty dynasties. (See DASEN, above).


The extensive bibliography (pp. 157-213), which acknowledges various earlier compilers (p. 157), has been particularly useful for supplementing the earlier German and French sources having relevance to disability in Ancient Egypt in the present bibliography.


The German-Egyptian index (pp. 1033-1102), and brief further indices for some English, French, Coptic, Hebrew, Arabic, Akkadian and Greek words (1103-1105), give access to a variety of Ancient Egyptian terms relevant to disability, with hieroglyphs, roman transliteration, textual sources and examples, some notes and cross-referencing (from texts available up to the 1950s, and with the state of philology at the time). See e.g. abschneiden, Augenkrankheit, behindern, Blindheit, brechen, Dumpfheit, Epilepsie, halten, lahm, Lahmheit, Lepra, Ohrensausen, stumm sein, taub sein, Trachom, and many more having reference to disabling diseases or impairments of various parts of the body or mind. [It is mostly headwords that are indexed, so further German 'disability' words appear in the textual notes. Some of the words, while in common use in Germany in the 1960s, have since dropped out of polite discourse, as is the case with most European languages.]


An extended introduction and discussion appears, on the main trends and major difficulties in constructing an evidence-based history of Zoroastrianism. Mention is made of the custom of segregating or excluding people having serious diseases or disabilities, such as leprosy, in a
specific place or shelter, called the armest-gah (pp. 240-243). There may also have been some disposal of elderly and infirm people, though De Jong is cautious about exaggerations by distant historians (444-445). There is evidence that men serving in the armed forces, and contracting a serious illness or disabling condition, were set apart in an open place, and provided with a stick, water, and a little food. While they had some strength, they could keep off the wild animals with the stick; but unless they returned quickly to health, the dogs would finish them off. Some did survive and returned home, but were feared and shunned until they had been through an exorcism ceremony (232-233, 239-242, 444-446).


The author first refers to the notable work of GRAYSON (q.v.) on this topic, and tries to avoid duplication. He outlines some conflictual positions on identifying eunuchs. Admission to the “corps of eunuchs”, and their status, rewards and range of positions are discussed. Deller suggests possible links with earlier Hittite practices.


Detailed description and measurements are given of a skull and limb bones, found in the winter 1911-1912, “in a cemetery of Roman date at Shurafa, not far from Helouan, in Egypt”, being of a male more than 30 years old. The skull was remarkably large, and several authorities agreed that the cause was likely to have been hydrocephalus. Uneven limb development and joint wear strongly suggested that the man suffered left side hemiplegia, and may have “supported himself by the use of a long staff placed across the body so as to reach the ground on the left side, and grasped high up by the right hand” (p. 455).


Found in Iraq, 'Shanidar I' was a male dating to the Middle Paleolithic period, who lived 30 to 45 years. Injuries indicate that his right arm was paralysed, and he was probably blind in one eye. The remains of this disabled Neanderthal have stimulated imaginative reconstructions of his supposed life (and the lives of some comparable cases), which Dettwyler shows to be unscientific and probably based on modern misconceptions about disabilities.


The Byzantine state made curative and welfare provisions for blind and other disadvantaged people from the 4th century onward.

The DINKARD. The original Pahlavi text; the same transliterated in Zend characters; translations of the text in Gujarati and English languages; a commentary and a glossary of select terms. [Volume III, English translation by Ratanshah Erachshah Kohiyar], ed. Peshotan dastur Behramjee Sanjana, 1874-1928, Bombay. 19 volumes.

The “Dinkard” (now more often shown as Denkard or Denkart), compiled in 9 books (of which the first two are missing) in the 9th or 10th century CE, a range of practical and ancient knowledge of the Zoroastrian religion. Book 3, chapter 110 (translated in Sanjana edition Volume III), differentiates people of good or of bad conduct, predicting the joy of paradise for the former and punishment for the latter, also some intermediate positions for those of mixed conduct. Two distinctions are made of capacity for moral responsibility: “Children under eight years of age, and men without intelligence, are harmless and safe (from hell). Every child not being of age and small in proportion, and imbecile men, owing to want of intelligence, do not deserve to be punished, and their souls, in addition to being saved from hell, are destined to return to the Khorshedpaya (paradise).” Book III of the “Denkart” has also been translated to French by Jean de Menasce, 1972.


Mention is made of blind boys studying the Qur'an at Al-Azhar from possibly the 12th to the 20th century CE, on pp. 44, 86-87, 101, 165, 206. A special hostel was built for them by Osman Katkhuda in the early 1730s. The sheikh in charge was customarily a blind man. See LANE (1890, 192-193); MALTI-DOUGLAS (1988, 33-40, 43-47, 84-85, 68-69, 78-79, 125, 130-138, 180-181); HEYWORTH-DUNNE (1968, 25-27).


Brief swing through some notable cases and practitioners.


Extensively referenced, showing the sources and progress of knowledge, and problems with differential diagnosis & nomenclature.


Detailed scholarly discussion of social aspects of leprosy and other disabilities in the history of Islam. Dols found that although Muslims had ambivalent views and beliefs about leprosy, the Qur'an had nothing comparable to the Levitical 'separation' laws which [whether rightly or wrongly understood] profoundly affected both Jewish and Christian attitudes towards people with leprosy.


Brief mention of 'fools and idiots'.

The most comprehensive work on the topic to date, though Dols found the available evidence insufficient to claim that the book was 'definitive'. Extensively referenced. Comparatively little is specifically about idiocy, but records of 'strange behaviour' were often not differentiated by 'modern' categories. Dols reviews madness from medical, magical/religious, social and legal viewpoints. The book includes much well-researched supplementary information relevant to disability histories. (Dols died in the late stages of preparing the book, which was completed by his student and research assistant Diana Immisch, with other colleagues).

DOMENICO HIEROSOLIMITANO (c. 1580-1590). *Relatione della gran città di Constantinopoli ... [narrata da Domenico Hierosolimitano già Medico della persona di Sultan Murath Avo del presente Gran Turco che regna hora nell'anno 1611.]* Harleian MS, No. 3408, ff. 83-141. Translated as: *Domenico's Istanbul*, with introduction and commentary by M.J.L. Austin, edited by G.Lewis (2001). Warminster: EJW Gibb Memorial Trust. Domenico, c. 1552-1622, was a Jewish rabbi and physician, who spent ten or more years as one of Sultan Murad III's physicians, apparently between about 1578 and 1589, and wrote his account some 20 years later. On p. 19, he remarked that, “In that section of the rooms where he [the Grand Turk] is served by men, there are, at a distance apart, the rooms of the mutes, thirty in number, all shut up in a court in which there is every convenience for them, to wit, baths, fountains and gardens. Often the Turk amuses himself alone with them, and sometimes he lets them walk through the great garden, and to some of them he gives the convenience of a room next to his (and) of a female mute for (their) use for a certain time.”


DZIERZYKRAY-ROGALSKI T (1980) Paleopathology of the Ptolemaic inhabitants of Dakleh Oasis (Egypt). *J. Human Evolution* 9: 71-74. At a cemetery at Balat in the Dakhleh Oasis, four adult male skeletons were found showing cranial changes typical of damage from leprosy, i.e. atrophy of nasal spine, palatal perforation, and loss of upper teeth. It is possible that these four, having ethnic characteristics differing from the local population, had been banished from Alexandria to the South. The remains are dated to the 2nd century BC.


EBIED, Rifaat Y (1971) *Bibliography of Medieval Arabic and Jewish Medicine and Allied Sciences*. London: Wellcome Institute of the History of Medicine. 150 pp. Bibliography of 1,972 items in Arabic, English, French, German, Hebrew, Hungarian, Italian, Latin, Russian, Spanish, Turkish, and a few other languages. (Arabic and Hebrew titles are given in original language and script, with translation to English; those in Russian,
Hungarian, Turkish etc are transliterated, with translation). A few items seem to have relevance to disability; more of them provide useful background. Indexes of authors and subjects, pp. 137-150.


Reviews evidence and uncertainties in meanings of these two commonly occurring Arabic medical terms, covering leprosy, leucoderma and various other conditions.

ELGOOD, Cyril (1951) *A Medical History of Persia and the Eastern Caliphate from the earliest times until the year 1932*. Cambridge University Press.
This and Elgood's later work contain many incidents and references pertinent to disabilities, and range much beyond Persian boundaries.

The work by AL-SUYUTI occupies pp. 48-177. See notes on disability references below under AS-SUYUTI. Elgood notes (pp. 42-43) Suyuti's reputation for recounting unreliable traditions.


Erizzo was Venetian *bailo* at Constantinople, commissioned in April 1554, and in post until mid-1556. Back home in 1557, he expressed amazement that Sultan Suleiman, in his private quarters, had for company only “eunuchs, mutes, and other men of the most abject varieties, who are his slaves”, rather than people with good education and knowledge of public affairs.

While this extensive study draws mainly on Greek and Roman sources, the location of writing on physiognomical lore extends through Asia Minor and the Eastern Mediterranean region. Papyri (pp. 39-46) are mentioned containing “iconistic portraits of the utmost detail”, occurring in Egyptian-Greek legal documents where clear identifications of people was required, e.g. “recruits in military enrolment ... capture of runaway slaves” and in sales of land or housing, etc. Scars and other peculiarities were listed.

Notes on simpletons, saint-fools, dwarfs, mutes and freaks at Istanbul and elsewhere; e.g. I (i): 64-65, 114-115, 149, 174-175, 180; I (ii): 21, 25-29, 45, 80-81, 115-119, 240-241; II: 141-142. Female circumcision among Arabs, I (ii) 215. Mimics pretending to be infants to advertise toy-shops, I (ii) 232. Views of the father of a boy with huge hydrocephalic head at Shin Kara Hisar in 1647, II: 207-208. (Maybe the earliest recorded parental comment on this condition?)


Introduces Naysaburi, a well-known theologian and Qur'anic scholar who lived at Nishapur, and died c. 1015. His short book on the 'wise mad' has a discussion of the concept of madness, and then over 100 reports about 'mad' people. Ezabi translated the first chapter, which places the wise/mad people within the purposes of Allah, who has created people with some “contradictory qualities”, linking strengths and weaknesses, sickness and health. Prophets who spoke the word of Allah, shaking up the normal ways of human living, have always been considered mad, but Allah has vindicated them. Examples are given from the life of the prophet Muhammad. Real folly is the inability to discern and practice right conduct. The madman is he who “builds for his worldly life and wrecks his life in the hereafter”. From the 'case histories', Ezabi gives excerpts on Bahlul, a renowned 'fool', portrayed as something of a simpleton, heedless of self-care and formal knowledge, yet holding to some higher truths.


Brief sketch and bibliography on physiognomy and allied studies, having mostly negative implications for attitudes towards people of non-standard appearance.


Reviews the legal incapacity of minors, and the extent of the child's legal responsibility, in the early centuries of Islam.


Part I has a few passing references, e.g. p. 29, “He who sets fire by the hand of a deaf-mute, an imbecile or a minor...”, i.e. who takes advantage of the legal non-liability of people in these categories; cf CASSIN, above; MARCUS, below); also p. 100; and pp. 123 (legal incapacity of “deaf-mutes, lunatics and minors” to testify in court). Part II has more detail on the legal capacities of “Deaf-mutes, Idiots and Minors” (pp. 256-261), and suggests a progressive removal of the legal 'disability' under which they suffered. Thus, “A deaf-mute may communicate by signs and be communicated with by signs ... in matters concerned with movable property. (M Gittin V 7)”. See also pp. 326-331 on Guardians.


Detailed study (in German) on the Akkadian words for 'blind', with their earlier meanings and
use in the context of various kinds of literature.


FISCHER A (1907) Arab basir 'scharfsichtig' per antifrasin = 'blind'. Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft 61: 425-434 and 751-754. Discussion (in German, with Arabic examples) of the antiphrastic interchange between terms for 'sharp-sighted' and 'blind'.


FOSTER, Benjamin R (1997) In: WW Hallo & KL Younger (eds) The Context of Scripture. Volume I. Canonical compositions from the biblical world, 486-495. Brill: Leiden. Foster translates several Akkadian documents of apparent theodicy, in which a 'righteous' sufferer complains of his ailments and tries to discover why the gods have turned nasty. The first includes “a veritable thesaurus of medical symptoms” (p. 486), some being also descriptions of impairment and disability: “He is the one who afflicts with demons of shaking-disease... My lips, which used to discourse, became those of a deaf man / My resounding call struck dumb (487)... Terror and panic have jaundiced my face (488)... They
wrenched my muscles, made my neck limp... Numbness has spread over my whole body / Paralysis has fallen upon my flesh... From writhing, my joints were separated / My limbs were splayed and thrust apart...” (489). Eventually relief came: “My beclouded eyes... he brightened my vision... My ears, which were stopped and clogged like a deaf man's / He removed their blockage, he opened my hearing... My mouth, which was muffled, so that proper speech was diff[i]cult / He scoured (490)... My neck, which was limp and twisted at the base, / He shored up...” (491). The second theodicy, a dialogue, mentions various mental states: “You make your estimable discretion feeble-minded... your well-ordered insight [sound] like babble... scatter-brained, irrational... take pity on the fool(?)... You have let your subtle mind wander... (492-494). This time there is no happy ending, and the sufferer's friend suggests that the gods have told a pack of lies to humankind (495).


FRAYNE, Douglas (1993) Sargonic and Gutian Periods (2334-2113 BC). Volume 2, of The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. On p. 175, Frayne translates an inscription, collated from a published photograph of a seal that appears to depict princess Tutnapshum seated, with a servant woman named Aman-Eshtar standing before her. For the woman standing, the English given (lines 3-5) is: “Aman-Ashar, the deaf lady, the prattler, (is) her female servant.” Frayne gives two lexical references for the Sumerian U.HUB, equivalent to Akkadian, su-uk-ku 'deaf' (MSL XII, p.142; cf. Von Soden, Akkadisches Handwörterbuch, II: 1055-56, sukkuku and U.HUB; and in greater detail, the 'Chicago Assyrian Dictionary' 15: 362b-363b). To make 'prattler', sa-bi-ri-im is taken as a part of sabaru(m), 'to be voluble, to prattle'. [Diacriticals in several quoted words are omitted here.] Unfortunately, the location of the seal itself is no longer known. Several details of scene and inscription have been interpreted differently by various authors. Some (including Frayne) suggest that Aman-Eshtar is offering a small harp-like instrument to the princess, while another view is that a thread-spinning apparatus is being worked. For the inscription, a slightly different transliteration and translation is given by Aage Westenholz & Joachim Oelsner (1983) Zu den Weihplattenfragmenten der Hilprecht-Sammlung Jena, Altorientalsiche Forschungen 10: 209-216, who do not translate U.HUB (they give the MSL XII lexicon reference, but not the 'deaf' equivalent on p.142; and seem to be thinking of a possible occupational designator or personal name for Aman-Eshtar. (An early ruler of Kish bore the name Uhub, but it hardly seems common). The sa-at Za-bi-ri-im (Frayne) becomes “die (Angehörige / Abhängige) des Zabirum”, “belonging to, or dependent on, Zabirum”. Yet the use of U.HUB for 'deaf' seems to be accepted as a Sumerian term, used also more widely (e.g. in Hittite, see GOETZE 1971, pp. 78-79, also in a context of palace servants). [The modest quantity of scholarly literature making reference to the seal of Aman-Eshtar (-Ashtar, -Ishtar) is almost entirely preoccupied by the identification of Tut-napshum and details of her life -- the female servant is an incidental. If she were in fact deaf or hearing
impaired, Aman-Eshtar might have been found a job at court as a relative or dependent of some other functionary, 'Zabirum'. If the relevant word is in fact related to sabaru(m), it might be a reference to 'indistinct speech, babble', as by someone losing much of their hearing in early childhood, rather than 'prattle' in the sense of an adult domestic who chatters continually without saying anything of significance. An alternative use of U.HUB, to mean 'stupidity, ignorance', might better accommodate 'silly prattling'.

The Summa Alu omens seem to have accumulated over a period of more than 1,500 years, with the majority of available tablets dating to the 7th century BC (pp. 13-14). "Omen collections were viewed by the Mesopotamians as scientific reference works" suggests Freedman (p. 1). Yet the conclusion of each omen does not always have universally appealing logic -- “1. If a city is set on a height, living in that city will not be good. 2. If a city is set in a depression, that city will be happy.” (Tablet 1, p. 27). [The first might make sense in an area where water was scarce, and more likely to be found at lower points than higher; the second would make no sense in a land liable to flooding.] “78. If a city's young men are good, that city will have peace. 79. If a city's young men are evil, that city (will suffer from) the hand of its god.” (p. 31). [The proposition 78 comes near to be universally plausible. These examples are noted only as preliminaries to the following omens about city-dwellers with impairments or abnormalities, on the pattern: “If X-Y are numerous in a city, that city will be happy / in trouble / in dispersal/ abandonment”, where X-Y may be lame men, lame women, idiots, blind men, etc.] “86. If lame women are numerous in a city, [that] city will be happy.” On the same pattern, “87. If idiots ... happy. 90. If wise men ... abandonment 91. If men with warts ... dispersal. 94. If deaf men ... happy. 95. If blind men ... trouble. 98. If cripples ... trouble. 99 If disabled men ... dispersal.” (p. 33) [Intermediate entries are here omitted; in some there are flaws in the tablet, or the meanings of the terms used are uncertain.] The impairment terms BA.AN.ZA and KUD.KUD (lame, cripple), and AD{4} (disabled) have brief discussion in footnotes, recognising the difficulties of interpretation; but U.HUB (deaf), IGN.NU.TUK (blind) attract no comment.

Includes extensive “Bibliography of Ancient Hebrew Medicine”, pp. 109-145, listing c. 700 items mostly published since 1600 CE, in German, Latin, French, English, Hebrew, and Italian. Partial annotation indicates specific attention given by some authors to disabling conditions.


Also reviews evidence for Timur's lameness.

FUCHS, Johannes (1964) Physical alterations which occur in the blind and are illustrated on ancient Egyptian works of art. Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences 117: 618-623. Fuchs suggested that a number of physical changes in blind people, known to modern
science, are reflected in the depictions by early Egyptian artists, as shown in seven illustrations of blind harpists.


The author, who worked extensively on the Dead Sea Scrolls, describes some Jewish men who fled to the desert to live in a strictly observant religious community at Qumran, a little over 2000 years ago. They believed their fellow Jews had been corrupted by gentile practices and impurities, including “defilement brought into the holy city by animal skins, dogs, the blind, the deaf, lepers, corpses, unlawful unions, marriages of priests with the laity, tithes, etc.” (p. 33) They intended to be a holy community obedient to God. To exclude men whose spiritual, behavioural or physical characteristics were imperfect, they developed stringent tests for candidates. These seem to have filtered out anyone who was “defiled in his flesh, paralysed in his feet or in his hands, lame, blind, deaf, dumb or defiled in his flesh with a blemish visible to the eyes, or the tottering old man who cannot keep upright in the midst of the assembly” (p. 39). Angry speaking, lies, insults, deception, animosity, inane giggling, would result in punishment and possibly expulsion from the community (39-40). [The Qumran thinking was presumably based on an extreme interpretation of some revered Jewish texts, and did not represent the views common in Palestine during the life of Jesus. Yet it offers a contemporaneous view of disability that would have been known to the priests and religious teachers with whom Jesus reportedly clashed over issues of disability and ritual purity.]


An early suggestion of sign or gestural language appears in a series of Egyptian magisterial admonitions to an idle schoolboy or clerk: “Thou art one who is deaf and does not hear, to whom men make (signs) with the hand”, in the Papyrus Koller, “dated approximately to the end of the 19th Dynasty” or around 1200 BC (pp. 35-39, 84-86).


Based on the legend of baby Moses grasping Pharaoh's crown. (See HAMILTON, below).


Some discussion of hobbling or blinding captives (pp. 86-87) to restrict their mobility and reduce the likelihood of their rising against the masters; and also branding (p. 95); in Mesopotamia during the second half of the third millennium BC.

GEOFFROY SAINT-HILAIRE, Étienne (1826) Description d'un monstre humain né avant
l'ère chrétienne, comparé à un pareil monstre de l'époque actuelle; et considérations zootomiques et physiologiques sur le caractère de ces monstruosités, dites Anencéphales; sur l'indépendance de formation de chaque sexe... [etc]. Annales des Sciences Naturelles 7: 357-388.

[See annotation to DASEN & LEROI, above. Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire was one of 19th century scientists who offered an opinion on the anencephalic neonate.]


While focusing a particular controversy, on the issue whether an author had illegitimately drawn attention to prominent people having physical impairments and exposed them to ridicule, Ghaly usefully sketches and comments on a much wider range of earlier Arabic literature in which people with impairments and disabilities appear for various purposes, e.g. juristic rulings and comic anecdotes, from the 9th century CE onward.


Detailed scholarly study, reviewing literature in Arabic and other languages (mostly English) from the early days of Islam to the present, with focus on how Muslim theologians and philosophers have debated and developed their thinking about disability and disabled people, the financial, rehabilitative and social provisions for disabled people within Islam in theory and practice, and the position of the disabled among the wider group of people living in circumstances of suffering and adversity. Dr. Ghaly takes a moderate stance, noting strengths and weaknesses in the arguments of earlier authors. He appreciates some advances in thinking and efforts to include disabled people in a positive way, while noting that social realities tend to lag behind the theoretical provisions.


Section titled 'On the Training of Infant Children, their Education and the Improvement of their Character'. (GILADI, 1989, q.v., traces it to Greek origin).


This and next items are extensively referenced, and sympathetically undertaken. Some reference to modern childrearing studies.


New versions of Giladi's published papers and some further work, provide substantial scholarly review of sources and pertinent material.

Detailed article on the infant and child in Islamic history and culture.

Gillespie collaborated with Ragheb Moffah in recording the complete Coptic Liturgy of St. Basil. He made detailed studies of the background of Coptic language, culture and music, the ancient Egyptian roots, and the Jewish, Christian, Arab, and Greek connections and possible influences, citing scholarly sources. In this article, it is possible to see a continuum from the musicians of Egyptian antiquity, the Jewish cantors and 'repeaters' in Egypt from some centuries before Christ, the Coptic cantors from the 1st century CE, and the later Muslim reciters and muezzins. [With regard to the specifically blind participants, the continuum is hinted with appropriate caution by Gillespie. He makes more of the continuity from the ancient Egyptian 'chironomy' (based on work by Hans Hickmann) to some gestures made in modern Coptic musical performance.]


GINZBERG, Louis (1909-1959, reprinted 1968) *The Legends of the Jews.* Translated from German, by H Szold. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America. 7 volumes. Volume IV: 382-383 (and notes in volume VI: 458-459) tells a story from the Jewish community living in exile in Persia. Among them was the nobleman Mordecai, whose niece Esther reportedly became the wife of King Ahasuerus (probably Xerxes I, reigned 486-465 BC). Of Mordecai it is written that he “knew the language of the deaf mutes.” Two examples are given in which Mordecai correctly interpreted important signed (or at least gestural) messages by deaf people. The Book of Esther may have achieved written form in the 2nd or 3rd century BC. The legend concerning Mordecai is hard to date.

The second item treated here is the purification ritual for the Royal Couple, earlier transliterated and translated to German by OTTEN & SOUCEK 1969 (q.v.), following KBo 17.3, with participation by a deaf man. The relevant parts are translated to English here (pp. 307-308). There is no difference to the deaf man: “But when it dawns, a deaf man and I enter {the royal sleeping quarters} to pick them {the ritual materials} up”; but some points are clarified by Goedegeburre in the curious ceremony, which is intended to remove “woe, pain
and worries” from the king and queen, by their symbolic transfer to various ritual materials. (See General Introduction, 'Deaf Antiquity' for other references to these deaf men).

[The ritual is described 'in the first person' by the chief actor, who does not mention anything that the deaf man does. Elsewhere a deaf man is described as taking part in palace security, i.e. shutting windows, barring the staircase (see PUHVEL 1983). Could it be that in the present case, the deaf man has a similar security function, but in reverse, i.e. the responsibility and authority to unlock the way into the royal sleeping quarters, at first light, and to conduct the ritual practitioner into the presence of the king and queen? As might be expected, some surviving ancient law codes prescribe close control, of the presence of male personnel in the vicinity of females in royal palaces, with severe penalties for infringement. See e.g. ROTH & HOFFNER, pp. 195-209. (Water-carriers - one of the occupations of deaf men - are specifically mentioned, possibly because some of the carriers may have come and gone frequently through the day, carrying skins of water from sources outside the palace and filling large vessels at various convenient points).]

GOETZE, Albrecht (1970) Hittite shipant-. *J. Cuneiform Studies* 23 (3) 77-94. This philological study contains 194 brief translated excerpts illustrating use of different parts of the verb shipant- (libate, pour a libation). In one religious ceremony (p.78), “8. The deaf man, [\{LU\}U.HUB] gives the cup to the king; the king libates. The chief deaf man [GAL U.HUB] libates into the pipe, then performs the sanctifying rite over the king. KUB XX 24 iii 6ff.” [Sumerograms have been inserted.] Further, “26. The chief deaf man [GAL \{LU\}U.HUB] gives 2 t. vessels of m. to the king. The king libates 3 times before the table. X 21 v 15ff.” (p. 79) [Location of this second example, X 21 v 15ff., is not shown in the list of passages treated (pp. 93-94); but other scholars cite it as KUB X 21 v 15, or 15-19.]

In other examples where people libate, they are variously specified as: the king (No. 5); a priest (No. 9); the chief of the cup-bearers (13); the palace official (19); the cup-bearer (20); the seer (21); the foreman of the cooks (23); the oeconomos (27); the crown prince (28); the anointed one (35); the sacrificer (37); the oracle priest (40); the woman... in her inner chamber (44); a woman, outdoors (63); the 'Old Woman' (64) the nurse (96). (As the purpose of the excerpts is simply to illustrate the uses and grammatical nuances of shipant-, Goetze made no comment on the actors or circumstances). Further evidence for these early Anatolian deaf men, in the ruler's immediate vicinity, in the General Introduction under 'Deaf Antiquity'.

Pouring a libation to a god or gods was evidently a common Hittite religious practice, in whatever parts of the second millennium BC these various excerpts appeared. Yet the examples involving 'deaf men' have some remarkable points: (i) The appearance of a "deaf man" together with a "chief deaf man" might be taken to suggest that there was a cadre of deaf men on the palace staff (with possible implications for their use of sign language among themselves). (ii) Evidence of the involvement of deaf people in religious ceremonies (of hearing people) is rare; (iii) yet the "chief deaf man" is shown performing "the sanctifying rite over the king", a role which one might expect to be taken by one of the most senior religious officials, or at least a highly respected person, having a right of close access to the monarch. (More than 2500 years later, in late 15th century Istanbul, some of the Ottoman Sultans - who were also titled as Caliph of Islam - had deaf servants, who in some cases were their closest companions, and who caused sign language to become a medium of communication also among hearing courtiers, with evidence that this practice extended to the close of the Ottoman period c. 1920. Some senior officials also had deaf servants. The principal reason seems to have been that discussion between the sultan and his chief officials could be held with the deaf servants standing by, without secrets quickly being known and
disseminated).]


Goitein's massive compilation, analysis and synthesis, based on the vast hoard of Judaeo-Arabic documents discovered at Cairo in the 1890s, gives a detailed picture not only of the immediate medieval Jewish community at Fustat, but of life in the much wider Jewish and Arab communities of the Eastern Mediterranean. Disability and some disabled individuals are reflected in texts, notes and commentaries, more particularly in volume II (The Community), and in discussion of formal and informal care, charitable arrangements, old age infirmities etc. (The Cumulative Indices, volume VI, cover the extensive endnotes, and thus indicate more than the individual volume indices, which are limited to the main text).

Blind people are more prominent, being mentioned e.g. in II: 92, 133, 134, 161-162, 199, 454, 458, 459, 501, 553, 559, 574, and V: 90, 91, 124, 531, 540, while other disabling conditions are also mentioned on some of those pages. Numerous indexed references to oculists (*kahhal*) are consonant with the notorious frequency of ophthalmic disease in Egypt, e.g. II: 255, 256, 257, 346, 579; and V: 100-101, 104, 110, 111, 533. Infirmities of old age are discussed in V: 119-120. Some impairments appear incidentally, e.g. in II: 93, 438, 497; III: 11, 169, 472, mostly unindexed. For example, III: 169 is indexed under 'impotence', quoting a wife's declaration that “Whenever she is alone with [her husband], he falls down and shakes convulsively and remains in this state until the fit is over ... this husband of hers to whom she was married did not have sexual intercourse with her... This illness is chronic since he was taken by it, but she had neither observed nor known of it before.” [Goitein seems to have been reluctant to encroach on medical ground, but it is not unreasonable to think that the husband may have had epilepsy.] Where disabilities appear, the context is often one of care or charitable support, either requested, recommended, or granted. In II: 199, the education of blind youths to memorise the Mishnah or the Talmud accurately, and to recite from these texts in the traditional singing manner, gave some blind men employment as *tanna'im* (repeaters) in the *yeshiva*, supplying those centres of scholarship, law and education with 'living encyclopedias' of oral tradition. [This education of blind youths preceded by many centuries the 'blind schools' opened in Western Europe from the 1790s onward, as did its counterparts in the Coptic and Islamic traditions of Egypt. Cf. BARDY; DODGE; MAKDISI; MANNICHE; RAGHEB MOFTAH.] COHEN, above, provides some more detailed notes on disability in the Geniza documents.


In volume 2, p. 222, on the Hadith literature, Goldziher noted the debate about whether a blind man could rightly be counted among the Companions of the prophet Muhammad (and who could thereby give authentication or rebuttal of sayings attributed to Muhammad). The issue turned on whether the definition was of believers who had been in the company of Muhammad *and* (wa) had seen him, or was of those who had been in Muhammad's company *or* (aw) had seen him. The accepted reading, 'or', enabled blind men such as Ibn Umm Maktum to be counted, but some interpreters thought 'and' should be read.


Suggests ways in which rabbinic interpretation evolved in applying Torah and Mishnah texts to legal decisions about mental capacity, conduct and responsibility.

Gray listed some abbreviated personal names involving physical or mental characteristics (pp. 158-159). He also mentioned a number of names on the pattern of *kattul*, i.e. with doubled middle consonant, indicating some abbreviation [cf. HOLMA 1914, *Quttulu*; but the Hebrew names following *kattul* do not seem to be of a 'defect' nature.]

Brief note, quoting some Pahlavi and Avestan literature pertinent to childhood. Noted that “while deformed or idiotic children were regarded as a curse (cf. Yasna xi.6), offspring are explicitly said to be a blessing.”


Sermon 14 was written in the context of the construction, 368-372 CE, of a cluster of hospital and care buildings, by Basil, Bishop of Caesarea, possibly the earliest extended Christian
establishment for people with leprosy and other serious disabilities (though preceded by a smaller institution built by Eustathios of Sebastia, c. 357). Vinson (p. xvi) notes some “rivalry between pagans and Christians over the delivery of social services” at the time. Gregory wrote partly in a spiritualising mode i.e. we are “all poor and needy where divine grace is concerned”, and our “leprosy of the soul” needs healing. Yet he specifically addressed physical conditions and social exclusion. People with leprosy “are deprived of the opportunity to work and help themselves acquire the necessaries of life; and the fear of their illness ever outweighs any hope in their minds for well-being... Besides poverty, they are afflicted with a second evil, disease, indeed, the most abhorrent and oppressive evil of all and the one that the majority of people are especially ready to label a curse. And third, there is the fact that most people cannot stand to be near them, or even look at them, but avoid them and are nauseated by them, and regard them as abominable, so to speak. It is this that preys on them even more than their ailment: they sense that they are actually hated for their misfortune... human beings alive yet dead, disfigured in almost every part of their bodies, barely recognizable for who they once were or where they came from; or rather, the pitiful wreckage of what had once been human beings.” (Vinson translation, pp. 44-45). Gregory described further their exclusion from homes, streets, markets, even from sources of water. He contrasted the comfortable (but deceptively temporary) life of himself and his hearers, and demanded a compassionate practical response toward the suffering of fellow humans.


A collection of 139 tablets from the kingdom of Arraphe, comprising an archive of one family during five generations, includes a short legal case report (translation and commentary, pp. 53-54; note p. 58), by Seris-atl son of Zini, for Akawatil son of Wullu, dating probably from the 14th century BC (pp. 11, 17). In court, Akawatil alleged that Akkuleni had accused him of being “full of leprosy”. Akkuleni denied saying this, but Akawatil brought three witnesses stating they had heard him say it. The judges ordered Akkuleni to pay one ox to Akawatil for the defamatory remark. Grosz suggests that the comment was taken seriously, rather than being ignored as merely hard words, because
“Affliction with leprosy figures as one of [the] standard curses throughout the history of Mesopotamia”, and one so afflicted “is avoided by everyone and excluded from the human community” (p. 54), citing “Kocher, Oppenheim, AFO 18, pp.62-77; coll.II.1.42-45” and “Kinnier-Wilson, RA 60, p.49-50” (note 28, p. 58; see KINNIER WILSON 1966, below). The key words in the text (“Gadd 28. Baghdad Museum”, transliterated by Grosz pp. 218-219) seem to be ep-qà ma-la-ta-mi (lines 6, 21); ep-qa ma-lu-ti (lines 10-11). [For ‘leprosy’, in the sense of ‘a serious skin disease’, epqu may serve; Grosz (p. 54) seems to recognise a lack of precision. Kinnier Wilson's suggestions on leprosy do not persuade STOL 1987-88, 23-24; yet Stol (p.30) mentions other instances of the phrase “full of epqu” (p.30), meaning scales on the skin, possibly psoriasis.]

GÜTERBOCK, Hans G (1979) Some stray Boghazköy tablets. In: Florilegium Anatolicum. Mélanges offerts à Emmanuel Laroche, 138-144. Paris: Éditions E. de Boccard. The third tablet here given transliteration, translation and commentary by Güterbock (pp. 142-144) is here titled “A Letter of the Queen to the King”, comprising 44 lines, with some damage. It was probably detached from a collection of Hittite letters found on Büyükkale in 1964 (published as KBo XVIII), came to an Ankara dealer, and was seen and copied by H Otten, and later photographed by DI Owen. Lines 29-44 seem to be a kind of additional, explanatory message by a palace official, in which the GAL {LU}U.HUB “Chief of the deaf men” appears clearly in a damaged section (line 36), then appears again (partly, with damage, line 38) reporting about the supply of part of a provisions order: “Fruit and sesame oil I shall give you, but the sweet(-smelling) oil and linen cloth I shall [take]” (39-42). Güterbock reviews the 'deaf men' texts known to him (p. 144), supplying one (not listed in GOETZE, or OTTEN, q.v.) in KBo V 11 iv 13-17, where “a 'deaf man' assists the palace attendant in closing up windows and staircase.” Güterbock asks himself “Who are these men, and why are they called 'deaf'?”, and notes that “Here the 'chief of the deaf men' seems to be in charge of provisions, which fits his role in the festivals.” Further, he shows how the Queen's letter and the official's addition would link well with letter KBo XVIII 2, with the sender and recipient probably being Queen Mother Puduhepa and her son King Tudhaliya IV [towards the close of the 2nd millennium BC].

HAAS, Volkert, with BAWANYPECK, Daliah (2003) Materia Magica et Medica Hethitica. Ein Beitrag zur Heilkunde im Alten Orient, volume II. Berlin: de Gruyter. Section 322.4 'Krüppel', has some discussion of Blinder, Tauber (Hittite duddumiyant, Sumerogram U.HUB), and Lahmer, in various texts (volume II, pp. 549-552). [Many other diseases and disorders are indexed.]

HAJ F (1970) Disability in Antiquity. New York: Philosophical Library. 188 pp. Focus on Islamic Middle East, 632-1258 CE; mostly on blindness, physical disabilities, and their causation. “Just as deafness was hardly ever mentioned in the literature of the period, so it was that mental retardation was neglected in Arabic writings.” (p.163) Some referencing. Style is more popular and anecdotal than academic. Haj lists (pp. 177-182) some material from Safadi’s dictionary.

Philological discussion of terms in Sumerian, Akkadian etc, focusing on the proverb “in the city of the lame, the halt is courier” and showing evidence of differentiation between levels of physical disability in the Old Babylonian period.


Describes the contents of several outstanding works. (See Al-RAZI).

Cited by PAUL (below, pp. 12-13) as the “original medical interpretation” of poliomyelitis in an Egyptian stele showing a man with a withered leg, with foot in a characteristic dropped position of flaccid paralysis, and a long walking staff.

[Hamburg: O (1911) “Un cas de paralysie infantile dans l'antiquité”, *Bulletin de la Société française d'histoire de la médecine* 10: 407-412. This makes no reference to the Danish version. The French text occupies pp. 407 and 408, describing the stele from the 18th dynasty, held at the Glyptothèque Carlsberg in Copenhagen, the city where Hamburger worked as a lecturer in anatomy. A photograph of the stele appears on p. 408. The museum catalogue considered the foot of the central character to be poorly represented; but to a medical observer, it was clearly a foot in the equinus position, with the leg shown withered and smaller. From the foot of p. 409 to 412, comments are by M. Marcel Baudoin, who pointed out a number of hazards of interpretation for those who were not very familiar with Egyptian artwork.

A further version appeared, translated by E Hansen (1912-1913) A probable case of infantile paralysis in ancient Egypt. *Hospital Bulletin of the University of Maryland* 8: 912-13.]

The convoluted career, in many language versions, of a legend on how Moses got a speech impediment. As an infant he was shown to Pharaoh. Sat on the monarch's lap, he pulled his crown off and threw it down (or maybe pulled Pharaoh's beard). Courtiers, aghast, debated this ominous act. A test was proposed. The babe was shown two basins. One held a glowing coal, the other a jewel. He reached for the jewel, but an angel guided his hand to the hot coal, which stuck to his hand. Putting his hand to his mouth for comfort, lips and tongue were also burnt; hence the speech impediment.


Among the later imprecatory inscriptions, one of the time of Nebuchadrezzar I (c. 1140 BC) calls for comprehensive ills and woes on any person who tries to damage the inscription, “or
who employs a fool, a deaf man, a blind man, or a knave to destroy this tablet with a stone, or to burn it in the fire, or to cast it in the river or to hide it in a field where it cannot be found.” A similar fate is wished on anyone in the reign of Merodachbaladan, King of Babylon (721-710 BC) who persuades “an enemy, a deaf person, a fool, a blockhead, a short-sighted (?) ignorant person, a knave” or similar, to damage or remove a tablet.


[The dwarf's name is printed with the transliteration Pr-n(j)-'nh(w) (with diacritical below 'h'), but elsewhere is cited in the form shown above.] The small (48 cm), finely carved, black basalt statue of Pr-Ni-Ankhu was discovered in 1990 in the vicinity of the Great Pyramid of Khufu, and to the north of the tomb of the well-known dwarf Seneb. Hawass notes an unusually high level of detail shown by the artist, suggesting several medical conditions possibly represented. An inscription is translated “One who delights his lord every day, the king's dwarf Pr-Ni-Ankhu of the Great Palace”. On dating, Hawass suggests several reasons for placing the statue in the 4th Dynasty. (See DASEN 1993).


Hazembos gives transliteration and English translation of some “Cult Inventories”, probably collected as part of a royal survey, providing a guide to the local gods, cultic objects and practices, spring or autumn festivals, etc. On p. 35, transliteration of KUB XXV 23, Rev. IV, Left Edge, (a) lines 1 and 3, and (b) line 1 contain {LU}U.HUB, and corresponding translation on p. 40: [Left Edge (a)] “1. Stormgod of the Rain. On the Deaf Man's Tell he stands on a pashshu-. [footnote: a kind of elevated or raised structure...] It becomes spring 2. and the Man of the Stormgod [ftn: a kind of priest and magical expert...] goes down from Hakmish. He carries 3 loaves of bread of an UPNU (and) 1 haneshshat(-vessel) of beer 3. from his house. The men of the Deaf Man's Tell deliver 1 black sheep 4. and the man of the Stormgod offers it. They slaughter it at the huuashi for him. They put down 5. meat, from the raw (and) from the cooked.” [Left Edge (b)] 1. “Bread and beer, the men who (are living) around the Deaf Man's Tell, 2. they too deliver (it). [etc.] Glossary, p. 207: {LU}U.HUB “deaf man”. This “Deaf Man's Tell” (i.e. mound, or site of earlier occupation), seems to have been the standard name of the location of this particular cult.


Herodotus recorded and commented on much Middle Eastern history or legend of his time, with incidental comments on people having various kinds of impairment or disability, and some remedies, e.g. deafness or muteness (pp. 54-55, 75, 129-130); leprosy (98); the 'marriage market' in which men paid for the pretty girls but others were paid to marry the ones with impairments (120-121); dwarfs or pygmies (141, 284); blindness (170, 183-185, 430); punitive amputation, mutilation, blinding, impalement (181, 195, 233, 251, 266-269, 271, 284, 564, 613-14, 621); madness, behavioural disturbance, or epilepsy (21, 217-219,
263-264, 355); eunuchs, castration (204, 244, 284, 558-559); lameness, prosthetic foot (256-258, 325, 374); speech defect (322-323); and more. Some have independent historical confirmation, others do not.


Introduction, translation, detailed annotation and extensive discussion of criminal law codes from the 15th century and later, together with their administration. Various disabling punishments were prescribed for serious offences; see index: 'mutilation', also 'bodily harm', diyet. People with leprous diseases were to be isolated (pp. 120, 303).


Brief mention of blind students at a mosque in Dasuk (pp. 20-21) and Al-Azhar, Cairo (25-27), and other blind or deaf schools (372, 390, 441).


Hickmann met the elderly and famous blind Coptic cantor and music teacher Mikhail Guirguis [also found transliterated as Guirgis, Gerges, Girgis, Jirjis, etc] al-Batanouni [various spellings], in 1949, and was impressed by his performance, believing that “son chant représentait tous les signes d'une authenticité véritable qui était encore soulignée d'une façon fort curieuse rappelant non seulement la tradition du chant chrétien ancien, mais aussi celui du chant de l'Égypte ancienne.” Hickmann described in general the kind of facial and bodily movements from graphic representations of singers and musicians early and late, and includes three plates with twelve photographs of Muallim Mikhail demonstrating characteristic hand and arm gestures, which he had learnt in the 19th century. The more detailed comparison with ancient Egyptian chironomy is made in Hickmann (1958), below. In the present paper, Hickmann gives a few biographical notes on Mikhail, which resolve an apparent problem in the account: “Une maladie d'yeux l'a atteint depuis son jeune âge, mais il a appris le chant et la tradition des signes dont nous venons de parler, encore du temps où il n'était pas privé de la vue. Ses maîtres sont les chanteurs coptes les plus réputés de la grande tradition du chant liturgique” (p. 425).


[The full pagination appears to be pp. 249-335. The study of blind musicians, both harpers and singers, occupies pp. 298-314, with Fig.20 appearing on p.298.] For many years Hickmann concerned himself with “l'enigme du chanteur aveugle” in Egypt and beyond. He suggested that, while the harpists of the Egyptian Ancient Empire were no different from other musicians, “L'aspect des harpistes a changé complètement depuis le Moyen Empire”, being depicted with shaven head, distinctive dress, dignified and separated from other musicians and dancers, and blind. This change could have been imported from outside, along
with the idea that the artist received something from the gods in compensation for his blindness, e.g. the gift of some kind of spiritual insight. The study mostly comprises a carefully referenced tour of folklore about blind musicians and singers across the world, with some modern examples noticed by Hickmann, and with special attention to legends of Tiresias. [Hickmann's application of this folklore collection to possible activities in Egyptian antiquity has, however, remained somewhat speculative and without clear confirmation.]


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Introduction to ancient and modern Zoroastrian beliefs about health and suffering. (Disability as such is hardly mentioned).

Brief review of Zoroastrian charitable work in Islamic Persia and in India, which benefitted orphans, widows, disabled people and the poor in general. During the earlier 20th century, the problems of pauperising the poor became more evident, and some efforts were redirected to removing the causes of poverty.

Translated by FC Blodi, from German text published 1899-1918. Bonn: Wayenborgh.
In this colossal work of history, Hirschberg (1843-1925) assembled material globally and personally translated relevant Arabic MSS to German. Volume 2 (orig. 1905), pp. 1-244, details medieval Arabic sources. For the present translation, Arabic materials were reviewed by Syrian physician Mohammad Zafer Wafai.


On pp. 397-398, Hoffner (partly following Ehelolf) discusses structure and possible etymological basis for Hittite words meaning 'deaf' (dudummi) and 'blind' (dashuwant), mentioning also the Sumerian words used in Hittite. “The Sumerogram which means 'blind' in Hittite texts is a good example; IGI.NU.GAL literally means 'having no eye'. The
Sumerogram for 'deaf', on the other hand is U.HUB, yet a rare example of GESHTUG.N.GAL does exist at Hattushash KUB XVIII 16 ii 1. The Hittite adjective 'blind' (dashuwant) may also fit into this category."


Hoffner discusses on pp. 67-69 some captured men who were blind, referred to in cuneiform texts of correspondence from the Middle Hittite period, discovered in the 1970s. They were probably blinded after capture in battle, but this is not yet certain; also some of them may have lost only one eye. They were put to work at a mill, which was considered 'women's work', and therefore both tiresome and humiliating for men, and warriors in particular. Some of them escaped, and were caught and sent back to the mill.

HOFFNER HA [2003] The disabled and infirm in Hittite society. *Eretz Israel* 27 (“Hayim and Miriam Tadmor” volume, edited by I Eph'AL, A Ben-Tor & P Machinist), pp. 84* to 90*. This useful short essay seems to be the sole attempt, up to the present, to survey and comment on the range of evidence concerned with defect, disability, punitive mutilation, psychological trauma, impotence, infertility, and infirmity of old age that has come to light during the past century of Hittite archaeological and linguistic research, informed also by reference to practices in broader Middle Eastern antiquity. Hoffner makes a few suggestion about possible social attitudes, but finds the accumulated evidence too thin to make any confident assertions.

[The *Eretz Israel / Erets Yisrael* series has been published irregularly in 23 volumes between 1951 and 2003, as edited collections of contributions, each volume being dedicated to a notable scholar. It is listed in some library catalogues as a journal, in others as a book series, isbn 9652210501. Some give its Hebrew name, with one or both English transliterations. In some catalogues individual volumes are listed more prominently by the name of the dedicatee - in the present case 'Tadmor' or 'Hayim and Miriam Tadmor'. Many of the contributions to each volume are in Hebrew, and some in English, listed and numbered separately. (Presumably this accounts for the pages numbers, in the present case, having an added star: *).]


HOLMA HG (1914) *Die assyrische-babylonischen Personennamen der Form quttulu mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Wörter für Körperfehler: eine lexikalische Untersuchung.*
Following his lexical work on body parts (previous item), Holma produced a monograph on a particular linguistic feature of Assyrian-Babylonian personal names, with focus on the use of words for bodily defects. After some introductory material (pp. 1-21), the main body of the work is the lexicon, with description of approximately 155 terms, plus variants and cognate terms in neighbouring languages, describing their use, with sources and references. The index (pp. 93-97) gives the page location of the Assyrian, with mostly a single German equivalent where appropriate; and separately a selection of non-Assyrian terms referred to (Arabic, Aramaic, Egyptian, Hebrew, Syriac etc), with German equivalent.

HOLMA H (1943-45) La forme quttulu en sémitique. *Journal Asiatique* pp. 426-427. [This gives a half page summary of a communication from Dr Holma, read to the Société Asiatique by M. Virolleaud; the essential points are the quttulu pattern indicating bodily abnormality, and corresponding patterns in Hebrew, Syriac and Arabic. Holma believed a similar pattern could be found on tablets from Ras Shamra, in Ugaritic names. Some observations and objections were raised to this hypothesis. The full paper is presumably the next listed item, in *Orientalia*.]


HROZNY, Frédéric (1922) *Code Hittite provenant de L'Asie Mineure (vers 1350 avant J.C.), Première Partie*. Paris. v + 161 + 24 plates. Transliteration and translation to French are provided, with some notes. In KBo VI, no. 3 (VAT 12889), paragraphs 11-16 (pp. 8-13), provision is made for compensation for disabling bodily injury; and similarly in KBo VI, no. 4, paragraphs 5-17 (pp. 80-85). (See fuller annotation under ROTH & HOFFNER). Hrozny pointed out (p. 155) that, “Ma traduction est tout à fait littérale...” This at least enables the reader who is unfamiliar with Hittite language to get a sense of how it is composed.


HULSE EV (1975) The nature of biblical leprosy. *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 107: 87-105. Hulse reviewed medical, historical and palaeopathological evidence from which it was “clear that biblical 'leprosy' is not modern leprosy” (i.e. not the condition produced by *Mycobacterium leprae*), whether in the Hebrew or the Greek texts revered by the Christian Church. Confusion has arisen from the use of various terms for a range of skin diseases, which may share some (but not other) symptoms with modern leprosy. Several diseases are discussed that might have given rise to the visible manifestations described in the Hebrew book of Leviticus.

for madmen, turned away from the bathhouse, and chased off by children “throwing stones and yelling” (p. 206).

HUSSELMAN, Elinor M; BOAK, Arthur ER; & EDGERTON, William F (1944) Michigan Papyri, Volume V, Papyri from Tebtunis, Part II. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. Amidst many papyri transcriptions (with translations from Greek) at Tebtunis, Egypt, detailing land deals, tax payments, division of property, etc, a few incidental details show people with disability or deafness. Document 293, the sale of a house and courtyard, some time in the 1st century CE (pp. 202-204), located the property precisely: “The neighbours are on the south, the house of Apynchis, son of Apynchis, on the north the house and court of Apynchis, the so-called deaf mute, [(Gk) “borra ‘Apunchis kophEs legomenEs oikia kai aulE’” on the west the house of Leontiskos, on the east the royal road.”

Footnote 4: “‘Apunchis kophEs legomenEs’: ‘Apunchis does not occur elsewhere as a woman's name, but Punchis is found as a feminine form in P.Tebt.I, 164, 7.” The householder on the north seems to have been a deaf woman, one of extremely few recorded in antiquity, with a name, place and approximate date. Documents 323-325 (pp. 280-283) record a division of property (four slaves, inherited from their father) among three brothers. The youngest son, Harouotes Arabarches, received two slaves, Thermoutharion, and Heraklous who was lame [(Gk) “Erakloun chOlEn”]. In further documents for the sale of slaves (No. 264-265, pp. 160-163; No. 278-279, pp. 187-188; and No. 281, pp. 190-191), a common clause is included, that the slave, of whom a description is given, shall not be rejected except on particular grounds. For example, on p. 163, “the young female slave that belongs to me, whose name is Tasouchas, who is seventeen years old, with somewhat inflamed eyelids and a scar on the right side of her forehead, such as she is, not to be rejected except for external claims and epilepsy [kai ‘eiairas nosou]”. (Description of visible bodily or facial marks was commonplace in contracts, along with the names of close relatives, to identify the parties to the contract, as well as to describe slaves being transferred).

10th century compilation on pediatric care. GILADI (1989 p.129): “One is impressed by the attitude towards infants as creatures deserving special understanding and treatment.”

12th century writer compiled 'Stories about Idiots and Sots', which, according to ZAKHARIA (q.v.) broke new ground in differentiating idiocy as a permanent, innate condition, from madness and folly. GOLDZIHER (q.v.) notes Al-Jauzi's list of the relative stupidity of women, weavers and schoolmasters.

IBN JULJUL. [Supplement to Arabic translation of the Herbal of Dioscurides. Bodleian MS Hyde, 34.]

IBN KHALDUN. The Muqaddimah. An introduction to history, translated by F Rosenthal

A few points about disability occur in this famous work. Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406) listed four agreed conditions for the Caliph. One stated that “Freedom of the senses and limbs from defects or incapacitations such as insanity, blindness, muteness, or deafness, and from any loss of limbs affecting (the imam's) ability to act, such as missing hands, feet, or testicles, is a condition of the imamate, because all such defects affect the (imam's) full ability to act and to fulfill his duties. Even in the case of a defect that merely disfigures the appearance, as, for instance, loss of one limb, the condition of freedom from defects (remains in force as a condition in the sense that it) aims at perfection (in the imam).” (I: 395-396). He noted ironically that people very well acquainted with the charitable requirements of Islam often failed to make any connection with their own personal conduct (III: 39-40). Among his comments on education, he saw the problems of starting children on an inappropriately advanced and restricted curriculum (III: 303-304). Clearly some experiential knowledge of learning abilities, stages and difficulties was in written circulation.

IBN KHALDUN. The Muqaddimah, translated by F Rosenthal, abridged and edited by NJ Dawood, with new introduction by B.B. Lawrence (2005). Princeton University Press. See annotation of previous item. In this abridged edition, the quotation on the fourth necessary condition for the Caliph appears on pp. 158-159. See also p. 86, for a great 14th century Muslim scholar's appraisal of the spiritual capacity of imbeciles: “Among the adepts of mysticism are fools and imbeciles who are more like insane persons than like rational beings. None the less, they deservedly attain stations of sainthood and the mystic states of the righteous. The persons with mystical experience who learn about them know that such is their condition, although they are not legally responsible. The information they give about the supernatural is remarkable. They are not bound by anything. They speak absolutely freely about it and tell remarkable things. When jurists see they are not legally responsible, they frequently deny that they have attained any mystical station, since sainthood can be obtained only through divine worship. This is an error. The attainment of sainthood is not restricted to the correct performance of divine worship, or anything else. When the human soul is firmly established as existent, God may single it out for whatever gifts of His He wants to give it. The rational souls of such people are not non-existent, nor are they corrupt, as is the case with the insane. They merely lack the intellect that is the basis of legal responsibility.”

IBN KHALLIKAN. Ibn Khallikan's Biographical Dictionary translated from the Arabic. 4 volumes (1842-1871), translated by Baron Mac Guckin de Slane, Paris, for Oriental Translation Fund.

13th century collection of 865 biographies of well-known Muslims through six centuries, many also giving information on lesser known persons. Over 100 entries mention some disability, often recorded in a nickname (e.g. II: 3, 10, 'broken-tooth', 'the one-handed', 'the club-footed'). Some became learned men in spite of childhood disabilities; others became disabled in old age. Many entries have anecdotes involving disabilities. See e.g. I: 83-86, Thalab, a deaf scholar who died in a traffic accident; I: 191-192, the proverbially stupid Ijl; I: 633, academic fraud at the expense of a blind scholar; I: 662-667, Abu'l-Aswad Ad-Duwalli could hardly walk but knew he must appear in public or be forgotten; II: 32-36, Sharaf ad-Din ibn Abi Uusrun and debate over whether a judge could continue in office after becoming blind (cf. IV: xiv, refusal of office to a deaf judge); II: 132, Abu Hashim al-Jubbai's son, a simpleton; II: 203-205, Ata ibn Abi Rabah, a notable black lawyer at Mekka, who had the use of one eye, one arm and one leg; II: 425-437, al-Faiz al-Obaidi, a child ruler
suffering epileptic fits; II: 513-14, Katada ibn Diama as-Sadusi, a learned blind man who “used to go from one end of Basra to the other without a guide”; II: 551-554, Majd Ad-Din Ibn al-Athir, who had reasons for wishing to remain disabled; II: 586-589, Muhammad Ibn Sirin, a highly esteemed law lecturer with impaired hearing; III: 269, an early writing prosthesis; III: 459, grief of Muwarrij as-Sadusi on losing his sight; IV: 379-385, Ibn as-Saigh, a teacher known for his patience with slow learners; IV: 416, notes on some Arabic disability terms.

A contemporary of Ibn Khallikhan was Muzaffar ad-Din (1154-1233 CE), known as Kukuburi, ruler of Arbela (Iraq) from 1191. Among many welfare institutions, Kukuburi built “four asylums for the blind, and persons with chronic distempers: these were always full, with all things requisite for their wants”. An unusual detail was that “every Monday and Thursday he visited these establishments and entered into all the chambers”, giving gifts, asking how people were, “conversing affably with the inmates and jesting with them so as to soothe their hearts.” (volume II: 535-543). Ibn Khallikan's own family had received many benefactions from this ruler, but he emphasized that he had witnessed all the humanitarian work of Kukuburi, and “avoided even the slightest exaggeration”. See also:


IBN AL-MARZUBAN (1978) The Book of the Superiority of Dogs over many of Those who wear Clothes. Edited and translated by GR Smith & MAS Abdel Haleem. Warminster, UK: Aris & Phillips. The author lived near Baghdad, and died in 921 CE. On p. 20, an “old dumb servant woman” saw a viper spit poison on the king's food, unseen by the cook. She tried to give warning by signs, but the other servants did not understand. The king's dog also saw the viper, and kept on barking and howling, but was ignored. When the king went to eat the food, the dog jumped up, ate the poisoned food, then fell dead. The old woman again made signs to show what had happened, and finally was understood.

introduces the context of *al-Tibb al-Nabawi* of al-Jawziyya (1292-1350) and gives an English translation with several indexes / glossaries including all Hadith references. See general index e.g. bonesetter, elephantiasis, epilepsy, eyes, leprosy, madness, melancholy, mind, ophthalmia, paralysis.


c. 1100 BC. Ch. 2:1 “Beware of robbing a wretch, of attacking a cripple”. Ch. 25: 8-12 “Do not laugh at a blind man, nor tease a dwarf, Nor cause hardship for the lame. Don't tease a man who is in the hand of the god [i.e. ill or insane]...” (See PRITCHARD, below, p. 424a)


Reviews a small amount of Arabic pediatric literature, starting with *Kitab siyasat al-sibyan watadbiruhim* by Ibn Al-Jazzar (895-979/80 CE). See IBN AL-DJAZZAR.


Supposed representations of Mani or Manes, c. 216-276 CE, are discussed, with consideration of the tradition noted by al-Nadim (writing c. 987 CE) that Mani was lame in both legs or in his right leg. That tradition would be supported by retranslation of a term in the Pahlavi *Denkart* (3.200, 1-13) (see Dinkard, above), applying the term 'broken' or 'crippled' to Mani (see below, al-NADIM, *Fihrist*, pp. 773, 794).


Within this review of ancient Mesopotamian ideas and literature, Jacobsen recounted the tale “Enki and Ninmah: integration of oddities” (pp. 175-179), with some comments. (For this story, see next item by Jacobsen; and annotation to the slightly different version by BOTTÉRO & KRAMER 1989, q.v.)


(See previous item). After nearly 40 years, and with some new materials and thoughts, Jacobsen produced a fresh translation with some commentary on the tale of 'Enki & Ninmah', pp. 158-166, following the (probably) independent tale of the birth of humankind (151-158).

The basic story is of a kind of contest in which “Ninmah makes freaks for Enki to cope with” (p.159, in blunt Nordic English). Jacobsen translates lengthy hyphenated phrases (with transliterated Sumerian in footnotes) for the types of disability: “Man unable to close the shaking hand upon an arrow shaft to send it going” while yet “a seeing man”; “One handing back the lamp to the men who can see”; “Hobbled by twisting ankles”; “Moron, the engenderer of which was a Subarean” (i.e. son of a barbarian); “Man leaking urine”; Woman who is not giving birth”; “Man in the body of which no male and no female organ was placed”. The weak-handed man is given some kind of ceremonial guard role, to “stand at attention by the head of the king”. The blind man is “allotted to .. the musical arts”, in the
king's presence. The crippled man goes to “the work of metal casters and silversmiths”; the moron is posted to stand at attention near the king; the incontinent is showered with blessed water, and cured in some magical way; the barren woman has something to do with weaving in the queen's household; the hermaphrodite “would stand in attendance before the king”. Of note is Jacobsen's hypothesis that the composer of the tale might himself have been a blind performer at court, which could account for the extraordinarily detailed focus on people with disabilities, in an early creation myth.

AL-JAHIZ (Abu Othman Amr bin Bahr). *Al-Barsan wal-Argan wal-Umyan wal-Hawlan* [The Lepers, the Lame, the Blind, and the Squinting], ed. Abdel-Salam Haroun (1998). Cairo. Al-Jahiz (776-868 CE) was a prolific, influential and notably ugly writer with 'goggle eyes' (jahiz), at Basra (now in Iraq), whose work has been much quoted across the Arab world. Here, according to Michael Dols, he discussed “physical infirmities such as skin disorders, lameness, paralysis, and deafness and personal characteristics such as baldness, leanness, and ugliness.” His aim was to show that “physical infirmities and peculiarities do not hinder an individual from being a fully active member of the Muslim community or bar him from important offices. Al-Jahiz maintained that physical ailments are not social stigmas but are what may be called signs of divine blessing or favor.” (M DOLS, 1983, The leper in Medieval Islamic society. *Speculum* 58: 891-916, on p. 901). A recent paper by Geert Jan van Gelder discussed “two concluding chapters” of this work, on right-handed, left-handed and ambidextrous people, and the advantages and disadvantages of different laterality. (See also TREMBOVLER, 1993-94, below).

Despite his own experience of negative public reactions, al-Jahiz in one of his better-known works, 'The Wonders of Creation', wrote harshly about social aspects of deafness. Apart from the deaf person's loss of music, “People are bored in his company and he is a burden on them. He is unable to listen to any of the people's stories and conversations. Though present it is as though he were absent, and though alive it is as if he were dead.” (quoted by F HAJ, *Disability in Antiquity*, q.v., p. 159). See next items. Another commentator notes that “Al-Barsan wal-Argan...” is among the most difficult works by al-Jahiz, and its topic is practically unique in historical Arabic literature. A footnote by Lawrence Conrad (ARM, 6, 1994, pp. 225-244, on p. 234) notes that in “Al Bursan wa-l-`urjan...”, Jahiz collects “a large corpus of the lore extant in his day on leprosy, famous people who had suffered from the disease, and poems and tales concerning them...” [There does not seem to be a European-language translation available at present.]

AL-JAHIZ. *The Book of Misers. A translation of al-Bukhala*, translation by RB Serjeant, revised by E Ibrahim (1997). Center for Muslim Contribution to Civilization. Reading: Garnet. xxvii + 259 pp. References to physical or sensory disability in this work are few (see e.g. the faked disabilities of some beggars, pp. 36-37, 43-44; blind Ali, 102); but Jahiz is energetic in dissecting and putting on display the disabilities of the human spirit that cause his Misers to behave in their ludicrously avaricious manner.

malformation of the tongue, but to the fact that having never heard sounds, articulated or otherwise, he does not know how to produce them. Not all deaf people are completely dumb, and there are also degrees of deafness.” [Gives examples of loud noises that some deaf people can hear.] “Others can hear words if spoken in their ear, but otherwise they hear nothing, even if the speaker raises his voice; if the speaker positions himself so that the sound goes right into their ear, they understand perfectly, whereas if he speaks just as loudly into the air, the sound of his voice not being concentrated and conducted along a canal into the brain, they do not understand.”


From the book on 'Elegance of expression and clarity of exposition', I: 77-79: pp. 102-103. “As regards gesticulation, the hands, head, eyes, eyebrows and shoulders come into use when a conversation is carried on at a distance, and even a piece of cloth or sword. ... Speech and gesture are partners, and what a precious helpmeet and interpreter gesture is to speech! It often takes its place, or makes writing unnecessary. ... The wink, the movement of the eyebrows and other gestures are priceless adjuncts, and a great help in expressing surreptitious thoughts.”

AL-JAHIZ [attributed]. *Le livre de la couronne. KitAb at-TAj (fi ahlAq al-mulUk)*, translated by Charles PELLAT (1954) Paris: Société d'Édition “Les Belles Lettres”. pp. 46-47. The Sassanian monarchs (reigned c. 224-636 CE in Mesopotamia) had the custom of silence at mealtimes, and if they needed to communicate their wishes they used signs and gestures instead of speaking (cf pp. 50, 56, 81, 83, 85, 106, 118). Monarchs also maintained their status and dignity by not being seen by their courtiers, particularly when engaging in amusements (49-50). The 'third rank' of people at court were entertainers, i.e. clowns, jugglers, tumblers, comics and musicians. However, these were not to be drawn from among people of humble origin, the weak or disabled, giants or dwarfs, deformed people, or others of low class (52-53).


Sample 'numskull tales' appear (pp. 27-38) from Jewish origins in Afghanistan, Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Palestine, Persia, Turkey and Yemen. Jason suggests that they differ from tales ridiculing “normal human stupidity”. They may represent efforts to depict the distorted thinking of an underclass of 'others'. Perhaps they serve many purposes.


Tabulates and discusses major physical and mental problems, addictions etc of the Ottoman Sultans up to Mustapha II, with excerpts from Greek, Turkish and Western European sources as evidence.


This account of Byzantine rulers with epileptic symptoms and episodes begins with Zenon, reigning 474-491 CE (pp. 226-228); then Isaac Comnenus, reigning 1057-1059 (pp. 228-
230), before returning to Michael IV, the Paphlagon (1034-1041) and his nephew Michael V, called Calaphate (1041-1042), both treated in greater detail (pp. 230-261). Finally Jean III Vatatzès (1222-1254), and his son Théodore II Lascaris (1255-1259) are described (pp. 261-273), the latter being also apparently subject to further neurological problems.


Brief and suitably cautious review of evidence on social responses to disability and disabled persons in the social and religious context of Egyptian antiquity, for which archaeological sources are “plentiful but often ambivalent”.

JESTIN, Raymond (1937) Texte religieux hittite (KUB X No. 21). Revue d'Assyriologie 34: 45-58.

KUB X.21 v 15f. is the text translated by Goetze (1970, see above): “The chief deaf man [GAL {LU} U.HUB] gives 2 t. vessels of m. to the king...”

Doubts had been raised in the 1930s, about the 'deaf man' [U.HUB] who seemed to appear in some Hittite cultic practices. Jestin noted (p. 58) that PA Deimel [1928-1933] Sumerisches Lexikon, 318, 67, gave 'Tauber' for U.HUB, but thought this was "évidemment impossible à admettre ici", and thought it doubtful in other cases. [Nevertheless, by the close of the 20th century, scholars had found no other credible meaning for U.HUB, and mostly concluded that deaf people did take part in palace and cultic ceremonies; unless perhaps there was a group of palace functionaries who were nicknamed 'the deaf' for some unknown reason. See the General Introduction under 'Deaf Antiquity'.]

JOHNSTONE, Penelope (1975) Tradition in Arabic medicine. Palestine Exploration Quarterly (Jan-June) 23-37.

Includes (pp. 33-34) description by IBN JULJUL (q.v.) of lathyrism arising from excessive eating of lathyrus sativus.

JONCKHEERE, Frans (1948) Le bossu des Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire de Bruxelles. Chronique d'Égypte 23 (no. 45) 24-35.

The ten centimetre, damaged wooden figurine of a bearded hunchback, apparently kneeling (p. 25 and figures between pp. 30 and 31), is presented in detail, and dated back to Egyptian pre-dynastic times in an added paragraph by P Gilbert (p. 35). Six comparable hunchback models are reviewed (25-29). Jonckheere suggests (32-35) that the figurine offers a fine artistic representation of the physical outcomes of Pott's disease.


Pediatrics in Ibn Sina's Qanun.

The 'Cabous Namè' (in English: Kabusnama, Qabus-nama, etc), written in Persian in 1082-1083 CE, was an early example of the class of literature intended as instruction manuals for princes. (See article on Kay Ka'us by C.E. Bosworth, Encyclopaedia of Islam, new edition).
A passage in Ch. VII (on “De la Recherche de l'Excellence dans l'art du bien dire”) suggests that a child deprived of all language exposure during infancy will grow up mute, giving also the example of congenitally deaf persons.

p. 86. “Ne te lasse pas d'être un auditeur attentif, c'est en sachant écouter qu'on acquiert [p. 87] la sagesse et l'art de bien dire; les enfants nous en fournissent la preuve. En effet, supposons un enfant qui, dès sa naissance, serait enfermé dans un caveau, y serait allaité, nourri, auquel sa mère ou sa nourrice n'adresserait jamais une parole ni une caresse, qui n'entendrait aucun son, il est évident que, devenu grand, il resterait muet et incapable d'émettre une parole à moins que, par quelque hasard, il n'eût l'occasion d'entendre et ainsi d'apprendre à parler. Une autre preuve de ce que j'avance est ce fait que tout sourd de naissance est en même temps muet; ne voit on pas que tous les muets sont sourds?” (See also: A Mirror for Princes: the Qabus Nama, translated by Reuben Levy, 1951, London: Cresset, p. 44.)

Many entries have some disability relevance, e.g. Dwarfism, Ears, Epilepsy, Hemiplegia, Talipes (etc), with references to papyri.

Gives Roman transliteration of Qur'anic vocabulary (with compounds). Alphabetical index of topics in English gives relevant Arabic word(s) transliterated, facilitating location of texts on any topic.
Examples: (pp. 317-318) root B K M, in 6 references to 'dumb'; (p. 1061) root S F H, in 10 refs to 'stupidity, foolish'; (p. 1194) root [S] M M, in 15 refs to 'deaf'. See also KHERIE; SACRED WRITINGS; WENSINCK.

14th century Hebrew version of the 'Alexander Romance' by Immanuel Ben Jacob Bohnfils. After defeating Darius near Persepolis, Alexander investigated some Persian palaces and hidden treasures. “In a field nearby there was a high tower where the men who had fled from battle had gone into hiding. Some of them had suffered the loss of arms and legs ... they cried out and pleaded, saying: “Save us, O King Alexander.” His compassion aroused, he had money given to them (pp. 107-110). (Cf’Mutilated Greeks' in MILES, 2003). Alexander went eastward and met people “skilled in the art of magic. They had only one leg, one arm and one eye and they ran like horses” (p. 114, 209). These apparently belong to mythologies of 'half-people' at the world's margins.

Disability-connected words appear in the French translations of the old Avestan texts, at

KHERIE, Al-Haj Khan Bahadur Altaf Ahmad (1979) A Key to Holy Quran. Index-cum-Concordance for the Holy Quran, 2nd edition. Karachi: Holy Quran Society Pakistan. Quranic references to “Blindness; Deafness; Dumbness; Lameness; etc”, and to “Weakness”, pp. 922-927, showing the cited phrase briefly in English, with the transliterated Arabic key word. The great majority are used metaphorically, to signify e.g. people's deafness to the law of Allah. See also KASSIS; SACRED WRITINGS; WENSINCK.

KHOSRAU [KHUSRAW], Nasir [Nassiri]. Sefer Nameh. Relation du Voyage de Nassiri Khosrau, célèbre poète et philosophe Persan, ca. 1003-1088 A.D., en Syrie, en Palestine, en Égypte, en Arabie et en Perse, pendant les années de l'Hégire 437-44 (A.D. 1045-1052), texte Persan, publié d'après trois manuscrits... translated and introduced by Charles Schefer (1881, Paris), reprinted 1970, Amsterdam: Philo. The Persian religious teacher and traveller Khosrau visited Egypt from 1046 to 1049, and his account is largely confirmed by other sources. One detail concerned the annual rise of the Nile and the important ceremony of opening a major water canal (pp. 136-142). The Caliph led the ceremony and gave the first symbolic blow to the embankment sealing the river; then the crowd piled in with picks and shovels, until the water poured through, and it was possible to launch boats. A vast population then took part in the celebrations. The honour of opening the boating was reserved for deaf-mute people: “La première barque, lancée dans le canal, est remplie de sourds-muets appelés en persan Koung ou Lal. On leur attribue une heureuse influence et le sultan leur fait distribuer des aumônes.” (p. 142). This seems to be one of the earliest reports in Africa or the Middle East in which a group of deaf people gathered and performed an important symbolic role in a major ceremonial occasion. [Other travellers at different times have described the annual ceremony of breaking the embankment, but the boating activities of deaf people do not seem to have been recorded. This is not a reason to doubt Khosrau's account, as these activities were an incidental feature which might have lasted for decades and then fallen into disuse, without affecting the main ceremony.] En route for Egypt, Khosrau passed through Ma'arat en Na'aman in Syria. This town was governed by the famous blind poet, ABU’L 'ALA AL-MA'ARRI (q.v.), who was reportedly wealthy, but lived as an ascetic (pp. 34-37).

KILMER, Anne D (1976) Speculations on Umul, the first baby. In: L Eichler et al. (eds) Kramer Anniversary Volume: cuneiform studies in honor of Samuel Noah Kramer 265-270. Alter Orient und Altes Testament, volume 25. Kevelaer: Butzon & Bercker. Kilmer reviews the account of Umul in the ancient Mesopotamian story of ‘Enki and Ninmah’. Umul has generally been understood as a multiply impaired old man, created by Enki and dismissed by Ninmah as unable to do anything and beyond help. [See translations by BOTTÉRO & KRAMER; BLACK et al.] Kilmer argues that this being was in fact “simply a new-born baby with the normal lack of physical abilities”. The previous (proto-human) beings had been created fully-grown; but in this case Enki had first made a woman, then (apparently) impregnated her, and she produced the first helpless babe, thus modelling a method of reproduction widely used ever since. [Enki’s pride in the newly-realised wonders of his penis, and midwife Ninmah's horror at the uselessness of the first baby, which would need to have everything done for it, are further recognisable and gender-differentiated
features in subsequent human experience.] Kilmer then tentatively assigns the semi-divine baby a possible later role as a flood hero in subsequent regional mythology.

In the second part of this article, the text seems to concern epilepsy. [See also, after fifty years, Kinnier Wilson 2007!]

An interesting example of the extent and detail of linguistic and medical discussion, as Kinnier Wilson tries to elucidate 'sa-gig' and to rebalance his views (see previous listed item) in the light of new evidence.

Kinnier Wilson mentions the “somewhat parallel paper” to appear in Brothwell & Sandison (see below, 1967), the annotation to which is relevant here. Kinnier Wilson is concerned in some detail with the “mental attitudes of the 'bewitched' and therefore with the great treatise Maqlu... one of the main textbooks of Babylonian psychiatry” (p. 293), using terms considered valid in 1960s psychiatry. [Thus, for example, the Akkadian document, known as 'The Poem of the Righteous Sufferer' (see translation by FOSTER, above, pp. 486-492), is retitled by Kinnier Wilson as 'The autobiography of a paranoid schizophrenic‘, and examined in some detail through this lens (pp. 296-297). In a further passing comment, the condition described by GOETZE & PEDERSEN (q.v.) as “Murshilis Sprachlämung”, also commented on by THURSTON (q.v.) in terms of “’stroke', facial paralysis and speech difficulty”, becomes in Kinnier Wilson's view “...the dramatic storm which led to the hysterical aphonia of Murshili” (p. 298).]

Most of the possible words for leprosy in antiquity have lacked adequate support from description of symptoms, for differential diagnosis. Kinnier Wilson suggests that one short Old Babylonian omen text not only refers to leprosy but differentiates symptoms of the two main types, neural leprosy and nodular (or lepromatous) leprosy, indicating also that the person with this disease was rejected by God, and should be rejected by man. Further observations are made about some words that have been associated with leprosy.

Based on texts dating back probably to the first half of the second millennium BC, Kinnier Wilson assembles disease reports in which behaviour may be classifiable (in terms of the 1960s) as psychotic, neurotic or psychopathic, or otherwise strange; including epileptic psychosis. One of the “most important cliché's of Babylonian psychiatry” was that “witchcraft, spells, magic, or other evil machinations of men” lay behind these peculiar phenomena. The mental attitudes or processes of the person reportedly suffering from these conditions is considered.

The text introduced and translated is said to represent “the oldest written account of epilepsy so far known” (p. 185), dating back to a compilation in the reign of a Babylonian king, between 1067 and 1046 BC. The “manifestations of epilepsy” were believed to be “the work of demons and ghosts”, and associated with “attack” and “possession” of the victim, with “release” at the end of the fit (186, 187). The translated text (189-194) gives a detailed catalogue of symptoms commonly experienced before, during and after epileptic episodes, and their frequency and severity, with interpretation and prognosis, in terms relating to demon attack and survival of the victim. These are commented upon by the authors. (See also STOL 1993, whose assistance Kinnier Wilson & Reynolds acknowledge).


Gives the story of Enki and Ninmah, with introduction, English translation, and footnote commentary, and some remarks about differences in earlier translations. (See Bottéro & Kramer, above).

In this massive 'reconstruction' of Hattic / Hittite cultic ceremonies, texts, German translation and commentary, some deaf men (with the Sumerogram U.HUB) appear fleetingly in texts on pp. 544-545; 596-597; 610 (fragmentary); from passages in Keilschrifturkunden aus Boghazkoi (KUB) texts 2.13; 56.45; with comments on pp. 573-574, 605, and reference to the remarks by H Otten 1971 (see above).

[Further Anatolian U.HUB references appear in KUB XX 24 iii 6ff; and X 21 v 15ff (Klinger gives X 21 V 19) (see GOETZE, and authors mentioned in the General Introduction, 'Deaf Antiquity'); and KUB 13.34 + 40.84 I 21; and KBo XIX 128 V.32; V.7 (citing also Bo 2926 II 4ff., Bo 2843 IV 16f.; KUB II 13 I 8f. {X 20 Z.5f.} (see OTTEN); and in KBo V 11 IV 13-17, and a stray letter (see GÜTERBOCK 1979).]

(See MANNICHE below).

In Chapter 10 (pp. 342-428), “The pattern purrus-”, the section 10.6.2 “Purrus forms for salient bodily characteristics” is of interest, as these “tend to be of a more of less pathological nature, they are often subsumed under the term 'bodily defects'”, which “immediately catch the eye of an observer, and provoke a strong emotional response.” (p. 371). Kouwenberg lists
34 such terms, with probable meanings, sources and discussion (372-378), but notes that many of them are infrequently used, so there remains some uncertainty about their exact meaning. The 'salient' Akkadian adjectives (or names) shown would probably refer to people who were: bald or balding; bent, twisted; blind; crippled; crooked, squinting; deaf; defective; dumb; hairy; lame, limping, paralysed; leprous; maimed hand; reddish face and red hair (372-373). (See also HOLMA 1914).


Passes briefly across ground given in much greater detail in V. Dasen's book, q.v., which Kozma acknowledges as “a comprehensive review of the subject”.


Ugly and deformed anti-heroes seem to have played curious roles in Persian folklore and ceremony, sometimes becoming temporary substitutes for the king, sometimes being killed at the end of the game. (A link may have existed to an old Babylonian custom, see e.g. KÜMMEL, below).


[Akkadian text, German translation.]


Among the 'substitute rituals', in section III, “Der Ersatzkönigsritus in Mesopotamien” (pp. 169-187) there is brief mention (p. 177) of what appears to have been an earlier custom of having a deaf person act temporarily as substitute for the king, to be replaced now by a mentally limited (“geistig Beschränkten”) person, who would undertake the religious rites, or actually sit on the throne, only at some time of perceived danger, such as a lunar eclipse. [Later folklore customs seem to reflect such a practice, as noted by KRASNOWOLSKA (q.v.) in Iran.]


Compiled by Stanley Lane-Poole, from the principal Notes in Lane's translation of the Thousand and One Nights (1859 edition). See pp. 186-206 on 'Childhood and Education'.

Citing work by HOLMA (q.v., 1914) on Babylonian personal names referring to physical defects, Langdon contrasted the practice in Sumerian cuneiform sources during the preceding two millennia: “The most remarkable fact about the personal names of this agglutinating language is that even the rude archaic inscriptions of almost prehistoric times contain no names reflecting the lower stages of culture. They have already freed themselves from names referring to bodily deformities, so frequent in the later Babylonian names.” (p. 171).
[Whether or not a further 90 years of Sumerian studies support this view, it is interesting that Langdon so readily connected the absence of such names with a higher 'stage of culture'.
Used in southern Mesopotamia (now part of Iraq) until it was supplanted by Akkadian, the Sumerian language was apparently an isolate, having no connection with the neighbouring Semitic languages. (D Crystal (1987) *Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language*, 326).]


In 4th century Alexandria, Didymus lost his sight when 4 years old. Later he is said to have “learned the first letters of the alphabet through his sense of touch upon their shapes which were engraved in depth on planks of wood”. He became a renowned theologian, teacher and writer.


Many plates and figures. Much reference to disabling conditions, e.g. “Les nanismes, les obésités” (249-274); “Mutilations” (425-434), et passim.

LEIBOWITZ, Joshua O (1974) A mental hospital in Baghdad as described by Benjamin
Compiled over more than 2000 years, these translated tablets from Mesopotamia and region recorded predictions of good or bad events and local or national outcomes, signalled by the birth of a human or animal of deformed or anomalous appearance. “Late in the Middle Babylonian period” a systematisation took place, “intended to cover all the possible occurrences of abnormal births” (p. 24). The profusion of possibilities, real and conjectural, can be illustrated by a few examples: “If a woman gives birth and the right foot (of the child) is twisted - that house will not prosper. If a women gives birth, and the left foot (of the child) is twisted - that house will prosper” (Tablet III, 83, 84, translation p.62). “If a woman of the palace gives birth to a deaf child - the possessions of the king will be lost.” (Tab. IV, 48, p.70) “If a woman of the palace gives birth, and (the child) has six fingers on its right hand - an enemy will plunder the land of the prince.” “If [ditto] and [ditto] on its left hand - the prince will plunder the land of his enemy.” (Tab. IV, 57, 58, p.71). [Given the basic belief that birth anomalies provide a means of foreseeing future events, it made good sense to study closely the supposed connections. Similar efforts to discover predictive patterns are pursued by millions of people today while buying lottery tickets, betting on horse races, football matches or presidential elections, or adjusting their lives on the basis of the supposed positions and movements of planets or stars from the day of their birth.]

Documents some of the transformation of European thinking about early childhood by Arabic writings.

Well referenced discussion of the evil eye and how hunchbacks and other persons or images showing deformities were thought to avert the evil.


On an alternative reading of the ancient Hebrew text, Dr Levin suggests that the baby Moses had a cleft lip, possibly a cleft palate.

Short item on deaf mutes at the Ottoman court from 15th century, with references.

Includes some discussion of the depiction of harpers at various dates in Egypt, and the practice of representing them as blind people, pp. 187-188.


III: 262-286 discusses meanings of words for mental disabilities, and provisions for guardianship, in the various legal schools of antiquity and modern times.

LION, Brigitte (1998) La conception de la pauvreté dans les textes littéraires akkadiens. In: J Prosecky (ed) *Intellectual Life of the Ancient Near East. Papers presented at the 43rd Rencontre assyriologique internationale, Prague, July 1-5, 1996*. Prague: Oriental Institute. Notes a comparative lack of studies on poverty in Mesopotamian texts. Considers some moral attitudes towards the poor, the view that poverty is a punishment from the gods, the duty of gods, kings and ordinary men to offer some help to the poor (among whom the weak, the widow and the orphan might be prominent), and some literary images of poverty. Textual sources are stronger on the 'comparative poverty' of the well-to-do who have fallen on hard times, or fallen out of favour with their ruler, and on their efforts in pleading for restoration, than on people in permanent poverty, starving, lacking shelter, wandering the streets in their tattered rags. [Disability is not mentioned, though it might be an expected feature of poverty.]


Detailed examination is given to textual and iconographic evidence from Egypt and Palestine, covering the various types of sticks and staffs, and possible medical and geriatric conditions for which walking aids would credibly have been useful, with eleven illustrations. (Full text is open online, via NLM Gateway).


The panoramic drawings of Constantinople by Lorichs, in 1559, have some handwritten notes in German, of which Oberhummer provided a printed edition. (Some words are illegible, or have missing or conjectural letters). In pp. 9-10, Lorichs stated that the Sultan's mute servants customarily stood by, who could neither speak nor hear. They communicated with him by many peculiar signs. A further passage suggested that those servants, numbering about 30, were born deaf and dumb, and were not able to read or write. They had the Sultan's books, letters and private writing in their safekeeping. They brought him news of what was happening among the court servants, in the city or state, and indeed in the world. They made their communication with head, hands and feet. They could (describe? identify? mimic? indicate by signs?) individuals, names, shape of bodies whether short or long (and some other features?) or by people's gait. Nobody trusted them, because (as the Turks say) the Devil spoke with them (?). [Kindly transcribed by Katharina Sprick, who also provided a draft translation.]

Nearly 3000 separate personal names were discovered, between 1927 and 1931, on cuneiform tablets dating from around the 15th century BC, in the remains of the ancient city of Nuzi, ten miles from Kirkup, in Iraq. Half were classified as Hurrian, roughly a fifth were Akkadian (Babylonian and Assyrian), and a small number Sumerian. (Data from Ignace Gelb's introduction, p. 5). Macrae noted that “A few names at Nuzi belonged to the class descriptive of bodily defects indicated by the form quttulu”, as studied by HOLMA (1914).

In the quttulu names, however, “much obscurity remains, since the exact sense of the root is imperfectly known and nothing in the name indicates what part of the body is affected by the peculiarity. In the absence of descriptions of the individuals bearing quttulu names, their exact connotations remain often largely conjectural” (p. 292). Macrae noted seven “names definitely concerned” on the quttulu pattern among his Akkadian class, see pp. 305b, 306b, 311b, 312a, and 316a; on all but the latter page, he gave the comparable reference in Holma. (In Gelb's further list of “names perhaps Akkadian”, six references to Holma's quttulu work appear on pp. 323-324).


EL MAHI, Tigany (1955) Majhoun el siha el aglia fi el tareekh. [The concept of mental health in the ancient cultures of the Middle East.] Egyptian Historical Society Review. Cairo: Costa Tsounas Press.


“The one major technique that Western medicine definitely inherited from the Arabic world...” See ETON 1795, 1798.


Detailed history of the development of Madrasas and of European colleges, and of the waqf or charitable trust, and other legal frameworks for continuing financial support. Brief mention appears of disabled people, mostly blind. A person could not be appointed mutawalli, to administer a waqf, if insane, incompetent or untrustworthy; but equal consideration could be given to “males and females, the blind and those with eyesight” (p. 45). Some blind men became notable teachers, learning by heart the legal, grammatical and religious books they would teach to others: the jurisconsult Abu'l Hasan at-Tamimi (d. 918) was one such; and also Ibn al-Muna (d. 1187), who “went blind at the age of forty and was hard of hearing” (pp. 99-101). A Qur'anic scholar at Baghdad, Abu Mansur al-Khaiyat (d. 1106) had a very long life teaching the Qur'an to blind students (p. 180). The number of these students, 70,000, is an end-note issue (p. 331), and a more likely 700 was suggested. Another source explained that al-Khaiyat's students also taught many blind men, greatly multiplying the total. There was
clearly an established and significant practice of educating blind youths in this way in 11th century Baghdad, and onward. (See also DODGE, above, for notes on the similar practice at Al Azhar, Cairo).

The Arabic descriptive nicknames borne by blind persons listed in Safadi's biographical dictionary have varying significance, including some reverse or antiphrastic meanings. (Cf FISCHER; MARCUS)

Study of dreams in SAFADI's (q.v.) biographical dictionary of famous blind people (or notable people who became blind in later life). Semiotic and literary-critical analyses are applied to Safadi's presentation of biographical material.

With some discussion of historiographical approaches, Malti-Douglas suggests “the identification of the principal roles of blindness and the blind in Mamluk mentalities”, based on SAFADI's biographical dictionary of some 313 distinguished blind Arabs. The identified roles are compared favorably with some of the roles of blind people in modern 'western' countries.

Saint Eustratius was associated with miraculous healing of a “deaf and dumb child” at the monastery of St Abercius, now in Turkey. The shrine has since been a place of pilgrimage for families with deaf children, of whatever religion.

Discussion of musicians depicted wearing blindfolds, and others who were actually blind, and the possible significance of these differences in the ancient Egyptian contexts where they occur. (See next item).

Detailed and informative work in popularising style, on a growing field of knowledge. Refers to blind musicians and some wearing a blindfold, pp. 89-90, 94-95; chapter on “The blind harpist and his songs, 97-107. Music was often performed in religious ritual. Some performers undoubtedly were physically blind, others were so represented in situations where they performed in the presence of deities, who were not to be gazed at by humans. Some discussion is given of the hand signals of chironomists, accompanying musicians (pp. 14-15, 26-27, 29-33, etc).

MARCUS, David (1980) Some antiphrastic euphemisms for a blind person in Akkadian and

Technical paper on linguistics; discussion reflects a variety of interesting points about attitudes to blind and other disabled people in the ancient Middle East. (Also mentions the practice whereby someone causes a blind or otherwise disabled person to move a boundary stone or damage a monument, to avoid the penalty or curse that would otherwise fall on the instigator. See CASSIN, and FISCHER; also FALK).


Translation of an influential commentary by a 12C. CE lawyer, taking account of the major legal schools of Islam, used over centuries in Middle East & South Asia. See index entries under Blind; Child, Children; Divorce (Ch. I, of a dumb person; Ch. IX, of expiation, slaves with defects; Ch. XI, husband leprous, scrofulous or insane; Ch. XV, maintenance to other relations, a father and mother); Dumb, Dumb person; Foundlings; Guardian (disposition of a lunatic woman) Infants; Idiot, Idiotism; Inhibition (operates upon infants, slaves, and lunatics; Ch. II, from weakness of mind); Lunacy, Lunatic; Maniacs; Property (destruction of an infant or lunatic); Punishment (Ch. II, whoredom committed by infant or idiot; or who goes blind); Safeeya; Sale (Ch. III, inspection of a blind person, defects incident to children; lunacy operates as a perpetual defect; Ch. X, fine incurred by maiming); Wills (Ch. IV, or to the orphans, blind lame); Zabbah (provided he be ... infant or idiot); Zakat (not due from infants or maniacs); etc. These indicate varied applications of law to disabled persons, e.g. entitlement to some protections and exemption from taxes or punishments, incapacities as witnesses or in transaction of business, etc. (These are discussed in great detail in many Arabic legal texts. A modern translation of the Hedaya is believed to be under way).


The article gives a clear description of the ways in which Arabic names were (and are) composed, and also informally abbreviated. Margoliouth noted that the laqab or soubriquet is often “taken from a personal defect”, e.g. Caliph Omar II, “Slashed-face” (p. 137); while unlucky names, such as Qabihah (Ugly), might sometimes be given to avoid attracting the attention of malign spirits.


Mark proposes that “leprosy did not appear in the Mediterranean region before approximately 400 BCE or so, and it traveled there via cargo ships, not via Alexander's army.” He examines and rejects various arguments for an earlier appearance of leprosy, and argues for the transmission of leprosy by trafficking of young women and children as slaves from India to Egypt. The author suggests that “the various forms of leprosy were well understood in India by 600 BCE”, based on the view that the *Susruta Samhita* “dates to as early as 600 BCE” (pp. 301, 308). [That dating and clarity of understanding would be questioned by some specialists in Indian medical history (e.g. RE Emmerick (1984) *Indologica Taurinensia* 12: 93-105; D Wujastyk (1998) *The Roots of Ayurveda*, 104-105, Penguin).]


Surveys in detail the rabbinical debates on Jewish law (halakha) as applied to people with various categories of disability during the past two millennia. The aim is to expose and suggest ways of reducing some of the mutually contradictory interpretations within Jewish legal practice, and the dissonance between Jewish law and modern euro-american secular beliefs and ideologies around disability.

Al-Mas’udi (c. 896-956 CE) gave more everyday life and humour than most historians, including stories of disabled people. The Caliph Mansur and a blind poet (pp. 21-23); the ugly, crippled and sharp-witted Ahnaf ibn Qais (61); a madman known as 'Sheep's Head' (68); a bonesetter works on Caliph Amin's hand (142); history illustrated by verses of the blind poet of Baghdad, Ali ibn Abi Talib (146, 151-153, 156-165); inhabitants of Kufa choose a deaf man to plead their case before Caliph Ma’mun, which he does with subtle wit (193-194); Caliph Mu’tasim disobeys doctor's orders (224-225); traffic accidents involving infirm or blind people in Baghdad (228); Caliph Wathiq and medical science (233-335); ugliness of Jahiz causes his rejection as tutor to the sons of Caliph Mutawakkil (249); ailments and death of Jahiz (309-311); wit and self-preservation of the blind Abu al-Ayna (322-34); former-Caliph Qahir's revenge for losing his eyes (409-410); Caliph Muttaqi has his eyes gouged out (415); the warrior Utrush 'The Deaf' (425).

[Seen on microfilm.] The thesis reviews Islamic teaching on 'Man and Society'; 'Disability' (definitions and types; responses within Muslim communities (pp. 83-88); 'Poverty' (and responses within Islam to relieve poverty, including the provision of Zakat); and 'Other Islamic Resources', with regard to human efforts for a healthy and balanced society. Implementation of these teachings in Saudi Arabia is presented as an example of modern practice. Qur'anic verses cited, and Saudi rules on Zakat, appear in Arabic appendices. Bibliography lists 91 items in Arabic, and 42 in English (16 being books on disability in UK or Europe, from the early 1980s).

A summary of the “principles underlying the Islamic attitude towards disability” is given (pp. 83-84), comprising: (1) Recognition that “the human being consists of body, mind and soul, and that a disability affecting any one of these involves concomitant effects on the others.” (2) There are limits on everyone's “ability, to perform even his duty”, so Islam does not “require anyone to act beyond his ability”. (3) Islam takes into account the maturity, or lack of it, in anyone's body, mind and soul, so “performance of any Islamic duty can be
required only from those in whom this threefold maturity is present.” (4) Even when these mature capacities are present, a person's “obligations are waived if he is temporarily incapacitated.” (5) Acting under compulsion or duress “is also counted as a disability in Islam; the person compelled is thus absolved from responsibility.” Examples are given of these features, “to illustrate Islamic concern for the disabled, the weak and the oppressed” (p. 87).

A tentative definition of disability in Islamic terms is suggested: “Disability is a state of failure to produce and perform what a normal person can produce or perform, or failure to control actions or behaviour in a way that a normal person can, and thus to differ from those who constitute the normal categories of society.” (p. 87) The thesis concerns itself with the first part (“failure to produce and perform what a normal person can produce or perform”). An appropriate role for the Islamic State is illustrated (p. 200) from the Caliphate of Abu Bakr: “the most significant, as both giving the same right to non-Muslims as Muslims alike, and designating particular classes of people as eligible for such relief, is that of the peace treaty agreed between Khalid b. al-Walid and the people of al-Hirah. Khalid reported to Abu Bakr, ‘I have promised them to give financial support to the elderly who can no longer work, to those who have suffered disability and to those who were rich and have become poor; I have exempted these from paying taxes, and they will be paid from the treasury.' (Abu Yusuf, Kitab al-kharaj, p. 144).”

MATTSON, Ingrid (2003) Status-based definitions of need in early Islamic Zakat and maintenance laws. In: M Bonner, M Ener & A Singer (eds) Poverty and Charity in Middle Eastern Contexts, 31-51. Albany NY: State University of New York Press. Mattson usefully examines the development of ideas of poverty, 'need' and relief among Muslim administrators and jurists over three centuries, and the conflict between fixed definitions and those dependent on local norms, or taking into account the accustomed standard of living from which an individual had fallen (whose situation which might feel desperate to him or her, while looking very comfortable to people born into deep structural poverty).


MEHRABI, Fereydoon, BAYANZADEH, Seyed-Akbar, ATEF-VAHID, Mohammad-K., BOLHARI, Jafar, SHAHMOHAMMADI, Davoud, & VAEZI, Seyed-Ahmad (2000) Mental health in Iran. In: I Al-Issa (ed) Al-Junun: mental illness in the Islamic world, 139-161. Madison, CT: International Universities Press, Inc. Provides an historical background of psychiatry in Iran (pp. 140-145), with some references, followed by a broad overview of the present state of epidemiology, characteristics and treatment of mental illness. Includes the story, attributed to Naisaburi, about a madman seeking refuge from the usual group of street boys throwing stones at him. He gets into the governor's palace, where he sees servants fanning the governor to keep the flies away from his face. Asked what he is doing in the palace, the madman tells the governor that he came to complain about children harassing him; but he now realises that the governor, being unable even to keep the flies off his own face, would be incapable of helping anyone else (p. 143).

A story is told of the saint al-Gharib who had leprosy and then became paralyzed and blind. After a healing ritual at the mosque he was able to walk home, holding his wife's hand. “And at home he asked his wife: ‘Who put the books over there?’ and he pointed in their direction. His wife said: ‘They're not there!’ He replied: ‘Yes they are!’“ (p. 463) After demanding that he show her a particular book, the wife knew that Gharib really could see again.


Translation of an Ottoman law code compiled during the 1870s and apparently presented to the Grand Vizier in 1885, as the “Report of the Mejelle Commission” (p. ix). Some disability and deafness references appear. An early section gives guidance on philosophical and linguistic issues, i.e. the interpretation of evidence, whether spoken or silent.

“70. The well known signs of a dumb man are like an explanation by speech. 71. In every case the word of an interpreter is accepted.” (p. 11). [It is not entirely clear whether 70 and 71 are intended to have a link, or appear in succession without the second relating to the first. There were many spoken languages in the Ottoman Empire, and interpreters were often needed in legal situations.]

“1573. It is a condition that the person who makes the admission should have arrived at years of discretion. Therefore, the admission of an infant, madman or person of unsound mind, male or female, is not good.” (p. 263)

“1586. An admission made by the known signs of a dumb person are held good. But the admission by signs of a person who can speak is not considered. For example -- If someone says to a person who can speak 'Has such a one a claim against you for so many piastres' that person does not admit the claim by bowing his head.” (p. 266).

“About the description of evidence (shehadet). ... 1686. The evidence of the dumb and blind is not admissible.” (p. 294).

[Within the legal framework, provisions 1586 and 1686 need not be mutually contradictory. A (possible) explanation would be that an “admission” could be the simplest kind of Yes or No to propositions put to a mute person, such as “At midday on September 7th you stood by the East gate of town.” [Sign: YES] “You saw this man go out through the East gate.” [Sign: YES] “He was leading a white donkey” [Sign: NO] “He was leading a white horse with one black hind leg.” [Sign: YES]. On the other hand, to give “evidence” could be a much heavier legal responsibility, in which the witness took upon himself to describe the whole story in detail and to draw out the moral point (for example, that he recognised the horse as one belonging to his neighbour, and believed that the man leading it out of town had stolen it). Muslim lawyers, in different schools of legal tradition, had in fact discussed the validity of mute people's signs for at least one thousand years before the Mejelle. They had accepted signs where they were clearly understood, while admitting that in more complicated situations there could be some doubt. See the Hedaya (Guide) of the 12th century scholar al-Marghinani, translated by Hamilton (1870), pp. 707-709.]


Melchert's discussion of the meaning of 'huppi and similar includes KUB 43.30 III 16-17: “memal shemehunan {UZU} NIG.G[IG ANA UGULA {L/U.MESH} U.HUB huppi=shshi
shuhhanz[i] 'they strew groats, sh. and liver onto the pile [of the leader] of the deaf men.” (p. 516)

Brief account of Didymus the Blind, theologian and teacher at Alexandria in the 4th century.

Includes three cases of epilepsy (pp. 341-342).


Detailed appraisal of evidence on the signing system used by deaf servants and others at the Ottoman court, Istanbul. [The article closes at 1700, but that was because of word limits on the journal article, not because of any lack of later evidence of the Ottoman/Turkish Sign Language -- sparser evidence exists from the 18th century, and increases again in the 19th century and through into the 20th century.]

Reviews some significant texts concerned with disability in the Qur'an, the hadiths, the Hedaya of al-Marghinani, and some early Arabic literature concerned with education.

Extended web version: http://www.independentliving.org/docs7/miles2003.html A large group of Greeks, who had been mutilated by their Persian captors, were released as Alexander advanced on Persepolis in January 330 BC. Alexander agreed to help them, and they debated whether to go back to their old families in Greece, or remain in Persia with their new families. The majority decided against Greece, fearing negative attitudes to their disabilities; but when they saw Alexander again, he had already arranged for their return to Greece, assuming that would be their decision. Group representatives informed him otherwise, and Alexander changed his plan and gave them lands and benefits in Persian territories that he had conquered. The historicity of the story has undergone critical review, which is outlined. Evidence is presented on groups of disabled people in the Middle East in antiquity, and social responses to disabled individuals.

MILES M (2006) Signs of Development in Deaf South & South-West Asia: histories, cultural identities, resistance to cultural imperialism. (Revised, extended and updated). http://www.independentliving.org/docs7/miles200604.html The revised article offers evidence and hypotheses for a short cultural history of deaf people,
culture and sign language in South Asia and much of the Middle East, using documents from antiquity through 2005. A new appendix shows 110 items on deafness and sign language in the Arab countries of the Eastern Mediterranean and South West Asia.

MILES M (2006) Five hundred years of Turkish SL? Looking at textual evidence. Seminar presentation at the Centre for Deaf Studies, University of Bristol, 15 Dec. 2006. Reviews textual evidence for the history of Turkish Sign Language, perhaps the world's oldest documented sign language. The case from the 1540s to 1910s is strong. Continuity from the Ottoman era to modern Turkey still needs more attention. [Article with detailed documentary evidence is forthcoming.]


The *MISHNAH*, translated from the Hebrew with introduction and brief explanatory notes (1933) translated by Herbert Danby. Oxford University Press. Compilation of Jewish oral law and interpretation, in six major sections. Reaching final form by the 3rd century CE, it was the basis for further interpretative commentary known as the Talmud. Disabilities appear in various restrictions or exceptions to laws, e.g. Terumoth 1: 1-2 (translation p. 52) states that a certain offering is not valid if presented by a deaf-mute (heresh), an imbecile or a minor; Gittin 2: 5-6 (pp. 308-309) concerns the invalidity of a writ of divorce presented by a deaf-mute, imbecile or blind person (unless the disability came temporarily and then cleared up); Baba Kamma 4: 4 (p. 337) takes the case of “the ox of a man of sound senses” that harms an ox belonging to a deaf-mute, imbecile or minor, in which case the first owner is liable; but if the disabled person's ox harms someone else's animal, the disabled person is not culpable (but some supervision is required). A longer passage in Bekhoroth 7: 1-6 (pp. 538-539) lists a wide range of physical blemishes deemed to render a member of the priestly clan unfit to serve in the Temple. The blemishes include almost any visible abnormality or asymmetry of head, eyes, ears, nose, lips, torso, legs, arms, hands, feet, skin colour, body dimensions, as well as impairment of sight, hearing or intellect.

The *MISHNAH. A new translation* (1988) translated by Jacob Neusner. New Haven: Yale University Press. While Danby (see previous item) translated into flowing English, Neusner deliberately adheres to the shape and order of the Hebrew text, pointing out that the form and meaning are intimately bound into the context and horizons of the original authors and their communities. He notes (p. xxxiv) that “the Mishnah is separated from us by the whole of western history, philosophy and science”.

MITCHELL, John K (1900) Study of a mummy affected with anterior poliomyelitis.

Very brief note, since “From a strictly religious point of view there is nothing special to be remarked about the childhood of a Parsi child”. (See next entry for 'education').

MODI JJ (1905) Education Among the Ancient Iranians. Bombay.

“Moslem influence” appears in pp. 58-61 of Mora's paper, in a brief scan of Arab writing on psychology and psychiatry.

Mourad capably reviews the background, variety and ramifications of Arabic physiognomical writings, the major Greek and Arab sources and the ideas involved (pp. 7-66), then introduces and translates al-Razi's influential kitab al-firasa (69-128) with notes and commentary (129-144) and bibliography (145-153). The Arabic text follows. The physiognomical lore may appear to many modern readers as a farrago of absurdities, probably reinforcing popular prejudices about anyone whose physical appearance deviates even slightly from the male norm. For example, the person supposedly of a cool, humid temper is expected to be slow-thinking and stupid, the more so if he has a small head, following Galenic notions (96, 102). Repeated connections are made with the imagined characteristics of various animals and females, e.g. someone with a thick, swollen nose has low intelligence by analogy with the bull (p. 120); one with a small face must, like the monkey, be of mischievous disposition (121); a narrow, weak back signifies moral weakness, by analogy with women (!) (124). Some positive views also appear, e.g. one whose appearance is like that of a child, with bright, cheerful eyes and face, will live long (119).


York: Columbia University Press. 2 volumes. Based at Baghdad, Al-Nadim (c. 935 - c. 990 CE) is highly informative across a range of literary, religious and cultural topics, and biographical detail (indexed separately, pp. 931-1135). People with a 'disability' name, or impairments in lives and literature, are mentioned or implied on pp. 73, 88, 92, 116, 154, 320, 337, 399, 405, 414-415, 463-464, 519, 522, 621, 673-711 (on physicians and medicine), 773 and 794 (Mani's deformed foot or feet), 784 (deformity of Cain), 963, 978, 1005, (and probably more).


NAKOSTEEN, Mehdi (1964) History of Islamic Origins of Western Education A.D. 800-1350. Boulder: University of Colorado Press. xxii + 361 pp. Compendium of Muslim scholars and translators. Lists c. 120 “Muslim Educational Classics, 750-1350”, with some annotation (pp. 75-106), and translates (pp. 107-142) many reflections on education by SA'DI (q.v.)

AL-NAYSABURI. (translated 1924) Ogala el maganeen, by Naysboury [The sane insane] ed. WF Kilani [Kaylani]. Cairo: Al-Matba'a al-`arabiyya. [Cairo: Egyptian Arabic Press]. Taha BAASHER, 1975, noted that al-Naysaburi [Nasaboury] (d. 1014-15 or 1015-16 CE) offered an early “outline of the definitions, terms, classifications, and clinical descriptions of mental disorders”, including those with mental or intellectual disabilities. This item is also mentioned by ZAKHARIA, 1995, q.v., as: al-Nisaburi, Uqala al-maganin (Les Sages Insensés), Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyya. See partial translation by Shereen El EZABI

NÖLDEKE, Theodor (1902) Names. [Section: Personal Names, paragraphs 1-86.] In: TK Cheyne & J Sutherland Black (eds) Encyclopaedia Biblica III: 3271-3307. After discussing the common tendency to abbreviate names (paragraphs 49-58), in paragraph 66 (column 3297) the linguist Nöldeke described “a group of names descriptive of physical peculiarities”, in ancient Hebrew, some of which “may have been originally nicknames, like the corresponding names in Latin; but Arabic usage seems to show that such terms, even when they are far from flattering, often served from the first as proper names in the ordinary sense”. Some equivalents names in Arabic, Aramaic, Greek, Latin or Syriac are shown, e.g. for Dumb, Blind, Bald, Crooked, Maimed, Leprous.


NWIYA P (1978) Ishara. Encyclopaedia of Islam (new edition), IV: 113-114. Leiden: Brill. “Ishara (A.), 'gesture, sign, indication', has acquired in rhetoric [ ] the technical meaning of 'allusion' but, in its early connotation, a gesture of the hand, a sign of the head, of the elbow, the eyebrows etc., is considered by al-Jahiz (Bayaan, i, 80; Hayawaan, i, 33), together with speech, writing, nusba and computation on the fingers [ ] as one of the five methods by which a man may express his thoughts” ... “In fact the Arabs considered anyone who did not
understand the language of gestures and obliged his interlocutor to express his thoughts in words to be a fool”. Nwiya remarks that further research is needed “on the ritual or symbolic gestures, which with the Arabs go back to remote antiquity...”

The apparently deliberate damage inflicted on a copper head of an unidentified Akkadian ruler, from perhaps the 7th century BC, is linked by Nylander with disfigurement and mutilation inflicted by various ancient rulers on their captured enemies, alive or dead.


A provision for retaining the allegiance of Hittite troops, probably dating from the middle of the second millennium BC, has become known as the 'Soldier's Oath', during which there is supposed to have been a dramatic enactment of the woes that would befall any soldier resiling from his undertaking. Oettinger provides text, introduction, translation of the Hittite document into German, with detailed commentary and apparatus. In verse II of the first Soldier's Oath, wax is melted, salt is strewn, there is grinding of barley, to show that the disloyal soldier would be similarly treated; then women's clothes, a spinning wheel and a mirror are placed to suggest that such a man would turn into a woman (pp. 9-11). Verse III begins with the “eine blinde und taube Frau” being brought in (pp. 12-13, also pp. 38, 121, 123) ['blind': IGI NU GAL; 'deaf': U.HUB], and the oath-taking soldiers are warned that this could be their fate if they break the oath. (Other versions have a blind woman and a deaf man exhibited as horrible examples).

Article (in Turkish) covers deaf-mutism in Islam, and history of mutes at the Ottoman court and their signing system.


Includes reported cases of disabling conditions such as spina bifida, dating from around 3100 BC.

Leviticus Rabba is a detailed commentary on the Jewish book of Leviticus, produced in the 4th or 5th century CE, intended for teaching and spiritual benefit (rather than for expounding the legal details). Ostrer examines how the ancient teachers understood those parts of Leviticus that describe the legal implications of serious, disfiguring, skin diseases (which
very probably do not correspond with the condition now known as leprosy or Hansen's
disease, caused by *Mycobacterium leprae*; see Hulse, 1975, above, and other pertinent
references in Ostrer), and their social outcomes and philosophical interpretation.
Anthropological categories of purity, boundaries, and liminality are discussed, in the context
of historical interactions between Jewish and Greek medicine and philosophy.

EL-OTMANI S & MOUSSAOUI D (1992) Système nerveux et neuro-psychiatrie chez Ibn

OTTEN, Heinrich (1971) *Ein Hethitisches Festritual (KBo XIX 128)*. Studien zu den
This description of a Hittite religious festival, probably from the second millennium BC,
includes mention of deaf (U.HUB) servants of the King, who appear briefly in Rs. V:32 and
VI:7 (pp. 14-17) to sweep the floor, sprinkle water, and provide the King with water for
hand-washing. “Die Taub(stumm)en fegen (den Boden), Wasser spritzen sie, dem König
bringen sie Hand-Wasser herbei.” (p. 15) [It has been suggested that in V 32-33, 'sweep' is
not correct; the sense is more “the deaf men flush (and) sprinkle water”: Jaan Puhvel (1979)
Some Hittite etymologies. *Florilegium Anatolicum*, p. 299. Paris.] Otten mentions the deaf
men's part in Hittite ceremonies in his Commentary (p. 43, see also p. 23), without casting
('deaf?') men”, noting a suggestion by Sommer, 1938, *Orientalistische Literaturzeitung* 41:
281, “that the graph U.HUB was a confusion with SAI 2404 (= kalu 'lamentation priest'
Deimel 213b)”. Gurney reiterated the point in 1980, *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 37 (3/4) p. 198;
but after 70 years, Sommer's view has not found favour.]

Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
[See previous item.] Patched together from various fragments (pp. 3-9), this ancient Hittite
ceremony for the Royal Couple includes mention of a deaf man {LU}U.HUB (pp. 38-39). It
appears that he accompanies another palace servant, taking early morning (?) food and drink
in to the King and Queen. On p. 105 the participation of deaf men in other ritual contexts is
noted briefly. (See previous item).

PAHLAVI TEXTS. Part I. *The Bundahis, Bahman Yast, and Shayast La-Shayast*, translated by
This and subsequent volumes translate some surviving theological and legal texts (as known
in the 1880s) of Zoroastrianism, presumed to derive from Avestan texts now lost. Translator
remarks on frequent difficulties and uncertainties of his work. Notes below are very tentative.
Bundahis (or The Original Creation). ch. XV: 1-5 (translation pp. 52-54), creation story, first
man and first woman, and a tree “whose fruit was the ten varieties of man” - with note to XV:
31 (pp. 59-60) where footnote 6 discusses ten varieties of 'monsters', recalling legends of
strange races in India.
Shayast La-Shayast (or The Proper and Improper). ch. II: 97, fnt.5 (p.270), meanings of
‘armest’, including 'lame, crippled, immobility’. V: 1-2 (pp. 290-291) suggests stages of
children's responsibility for incorrect chatter during prayer time: up to five years, no blame;
from five to seven, may be some blame on father; eight to fifteen, greater level of youth's
responsibility. V: 7 (pp. 292-293) excuses deaf and dumb person who cannot make proper
response to prayers. VI: 1-2, “The deaf and dumb and helpless” (‘armest’: fn 2 gives probable meaning here, “an idiot, or insane person”), though of correct behaviour and disposition, “is incapable of doing good works”. X: 35 (p. 332), a woman is fit for some priestly duties among women; fn 6 cites Avestan passage in which “any woman who is not feeble-minded” can perform some priestly duties for children.

PAHLAVI TEXTS. Part II. The Dadistan-i Dinik and the Epistles of Manuskihar, translated by EW West (1882) Sacred Books of the East (ed Müller) volume 18. Oxford: Clarendon. Dadistan-i Dinik (or Religious Opinions of Manuskihar son of Yudan-Yim, Dastur of Pars and Kirman, A.D. 881). Ch. LXII: 4, on inheritance, seems to suggest that a son (or his wife) “who is blind in both eyes, or crippled [armest - see previous annotation] in both feet, or maimed in both his hands” receives twice the share of an able-bodied son.

Epistles of Manuskihar. Epistle II, ch. I: 13 (p.329), ref. to “Zaratust the clubfooted (apafrobd)”. Fn. 2 suggests a recent person named Z., “who had endeavoured to conceal the deformity that disqualified him” from the high priesthood. See also Introduction (p. xxvi). Appendix. III, on the meaning of Khvetuk-Das, 'next-of-kin marriage'. p.407 discussing risks of divorce, mentions “vice and fraud and the misery of deformity” as faults which may secretly be attributed to a man.


Dina-i Mainog-i Khirad (or Opinions of the Spirit of Wisdom). Ch. XV: 1-6 and fn 2 (p. 42), refers to “the poorest and most secluded (armesttum) person” (see earlier annotation on ‘armest’) who maintains honesty in thought, word and deed, will have good works imputed to him even though incapable of actually performing such works. Ch. XXVI: 4-6, (p. 56), the blind person who has achieved learning and understanding “is to be considered as sound-eyed”. XXXVII: 36 (p. 75), blessedness of one “who provides lodging accommodation for the sick and secluded [‘armest’] and traders”.

Sikand-Gumanik Vigar (or the Doubt-Dispelling Explanation). V: 63-64 (p. 144), if an eye, ear, nose, limb etc is disabled, one of the other organ is no substitute. X: 64 (p. 170), mention of “manual gestures” among ways in which Zoroaster preached and convinced King Gustasp. XII: 64-70 (p. 207), blindness figures with darkness, ignorance etc in a list of “demoniacal peculiarities”.

Sad Dar of The Hundred Subjects. Ch. LXIV: 2-5 (pp. 326-327), penalties for theft include amputation of ear and (at third offence) of right hand, as well as a fine and prison sentence.


Contents of the Nasks as stated in the Eighth and Ninth Books of the Dinkard. Chs XVII & XVIII (pp. 39-43), the ‘assault code’ and ‘wound code’ detail various injuries and impaired abilities. XX: 111 (p. 68), and XXI: 1-6) (pp. 74-75), punishments on the limbs of sinners. XXII: 2 (p. 77), on children's education and their moral responsibility.


Detailed and well-referenced paper in three parts, with numerous illustrations, concerned with medico-surgical treatment of ear, nose and throat conditions, according to medical
papyri from antiquity.


Discussion and medical speculation based on the texts published by LEICHTY (q.v.)


Paul reviews 'Ancient Records' and notes some hazards in retrospective diagnosis of polio (pp. 10-16). In Fig. 3 (p. 13), he shows the “Egyptian stele, dating from the eighteenth dynasty (1580-1350 B.C.) now in the Carlsberg Glyptothek, Copenhagen”, and notes this “depicting a deformity so characteristic of the aftereffects of poliomyelitis that the diagnosis is practically assured” (p. 12). Paul attributes the detailed diagnosis to Ove HAMBURGER (q.v.).


In this extensive listing of the known occupations of the ancient Hittites, LU.U.HUB “sordo” appears on pp. 572-573, with GAL U.HUB, and UGULA LU{MES} U.HUB “sovrintendente dei sordi”, indicating textual locations, connections and details (but without translation).


Pellat, who specialised in the works of AL-JAHIZ (q.v.) lists (p. 27) the work on disabilities as: 'Kitab al-`urjan wa al-bursan wa al-qur'an. MS. Rabat.'


Brief paper with mostly secondary references.


The author, a French lawyer and “Lauréat de l'Ecole de droit d'Alger”, noted that Algerians continued to live under Islamic personal law after the French captured Algiers in 1830; but some inconvenience arose in relations between the indigenous population and the colonialists who acted under French law. His thesis examines in detail the legal capacities and disabilities of various groups, such as minors, married women, people with mental disabilities (e.g. those considered 'mad', and the 'prodigals' who did not know how to manage their property), and those deemed to be responsible for others (e.g. as fathers, husbands or appointed guardians) under the Muslim legal traditions, compared with those of France, which in many ways differed from them significantly.


Mention of Middle Eastern items on hearing and deafness appear in various places, e.g. pp.
Linguistic note on the dearth of Egyptian words for muteness. Proposed that the known word *inb3*, be joined by *ibb*, giving examples in a list of impairments, a medical use, and a possibly educational/miraculous use ([*Egyptian to French:*] “Il apprend à parler au muet, il ouvre les oreilles du sourd”); also a possible connection with *ibf* (thirst).

Much detail on disabilities, e.g. pp. 206-209 & 230-239 (deformities, malformations), 270-280 (eye problems), 289-293 (ear problems), 299-321 (neurological & mental disorders), 402-407 (peri- & post-natal activities), from Hebrew, Aramaic & Greek texts over some two millennia in Palestine.

Large collection of excerpts from ancient epic, legendary, legal, didactic, religious, political and historical texts from Mesopotamia, Asia Minor, Assyrian and Egyptian civilisations, with brief notes on each. Many incidental, sometimes metaphorical, references are made (but not indexed as such) to disability and disabling conditions. See e.g. 143b, 144b (“the blind man gropes his way”); 163a, 189ab, 524b (fines for causing different sorts of disablement); 175ab, 176a, 177ab (disabling punishments, including loss of hand for the surgeon whose operations fail); 294b (“like a madman”); 302a (a king “suffered a stroke, his mouth was paralyzed, he was unable to speak”); 328a (Osiris will catch anyone “deaf to this decree”); 409b, 410a (“blind to what he sees and deaf to what he hears”); 433ab (witty account of occupational illnesses, risks and disabilities); 434ab (blind, deaf); 435ab, 436b, 598ab, 599b (severe illnesses and disability, followed by healing); 445a (‘deaf’ where ‘blind’ is expected); 476a (some crippled and feeble people have all they need); 477a, 478a (an appalling journey); 511b (“bald, twitching, lame”, amidst the gods); 533ab, 538a (may the god clothe them “in leprosy as in a cloak so that they have to roam the open country”); 540b (like mutilating punishments for blasphemy); 596b (reduced to muteness); 602ab (sufferer's plaint: “A cripple does better than I, a dullard keeps ahead of me”); 659a (after placating the angry spirit: “Lame one, run! Speak, dumb one!”) See also notes under DALLEY, and *The Instruction of Amenemope* (above), and ZABA (below).

In his remarkable *Chronographia*, Psellus (1018-1096 CE) included a detailed and sensitive account of the Byzantine Emperor Michael IV (reigned 1033-1041) who suffered from epilepsy. This had been known earlier, when Michael was engaged in an affair with Zoe, wife of the previous Emperor, Romanus III. Michael experienced increasingly severe fits during his reign, though courtiers and attendants took care to minimise the public exposure of their ruler's condition. He persevered diligently with his duties even as his health worsened (pp. 78-79; 96-99). See also Aubineau (1975) Zoticos, p.85, recording Michael's personal care of people with leprosy, as an example of Christian piety.


[Only volumes 1/2 and 3 seen.] Volume 1/2. Under the entry for “istap(p)” (p. 471), meaning 'shut', 'close', 'bar' etc., two among the examples given are from KBo VII iv 14 and 16: “the deaf man [{LU} U.HUB] shuts the windows”; “the deaf man bars the staircase”.

[See also GüTERBOCK 1979, who notes that the deaf man assists another palace functionary to carry out these tasks. This kind of responsibility seems to extend a little the other mentioned tasks, concerned with provision of water for cleansing purposes, and provision (and cooking) of food and drink.] Under “iwar” (p. 499), meaning 'in the manner of' or 'like', the example given is “they shall blind him like a blind man, and make him deaf like a deaf man” (KBo VI 34 iii 7-9).

Volume 3. “hu(r)uppi- (c.) a kind of dish or bowl, in plural also a kind of bread, ...KUB...(XLIII 30 III 17 ANA UGALA {L/U.MESH} U.HUB huppi-shshi suhhanz[i ‘they pour [them] into the h. of the chief of the deaf’.” (p. 407) “hu(wa)llis- ‘cone' (of fir, pine or other conifer) ... KBo XI 32 Vs. 22 ... (ibid. 20 {LU} U.HUB {GIS} irhu(y)az ME-i ‘the deaf man takes cones from the basket’). (p. 423)


See disability references under “Sacred Writings”, next item.

Examples of metaphorical uses of disability reference: Sura 6 (Al An'am), v.39 “Those who reject our Signs / Are deaf and dumb -- / In the midst of darkness / Profound: whom Allah willeth, / He leaveth to wander; / Whom He willeth, he placeth / On the Way that is Straight.”

Sura 17 (Al Isra', or Bani Isra'il), v.97: “It is he whom Allah guides, / That is on true guidance; / But he whom He leaves / Astray - for such wilt thou / Find no protector besides Him. / On the Day of Judgement / We shall gather them together, / Prone on their faces, / Blind, dumb, and deaf: / Their abode will be Hell: / ...” (p. 701). Interest in signs and gestures was sustained among Muslim scholars by the Qur’anic incident (Sura 19, 1-11) where Zakariya, temporarily mute, “told them by signs / To celebrate Allah's praises” (p. 746).
Parallel English & Arabic text. Most references to disabilities seem to be metaphorical (see KHERIE; KASSIS). Some Suras where the disability reference is probably non-metaphorical: 2. Al-Baqarah, 282 (mentally weak borrower); 3. Al-`Imran 49, & 5. Al-Ma' idah, 110 (Prophet Isa healing blind, lepers etc); 4. An-Nisa, 5-6 (wardship of property of mentally weak person); 16. An-Nahl, 76 (dumb & useless servant); 24. An-Nur, 61 (disabled or sick people may eat in your house); 48. Al-Fath, 17 (disabled or sick people exempt from call to arms); 80. `Abasa, 1-16 (rebuke for discourtesy to blind man). See also: 5. Al-Ma' idah, 33, 38, 71; 9. At-Taubah, 91; 11. Hud, 24; 12. Yusuf, 84, 96; 17. Bani Isra'il, 72, 97; 20. Ta Ha, 27-28; 30. Ar-Rum, 52-53; 35. Al-Fatir 19-22; 36. Ya Sin, 65-67; 41. Ha Mim As-Sajdah, 5, 17; 43. Az-Zukhruf, 36, 40. Many Qur'anic exhortations to behave with kindness and practical help towards the poor and needy have readily been applied to people with disabilities in Islamic countries from the earliest times.

RADBILL, Samuel X (1971) The first treatise on pediatrics. Comment and translation. *American J. Diseases of Children* 122: 369-376. Introduction (pp. 369-371) and English translation (372-376) of the “Booklet on the Ailments of Children and Their Care, Which is Called Practica Puerorum” by “Abubatri Son of Zacharie Arazis” (i.e. the Persian physician Al-Razi or Rhazes, of Baghdad), written c. 900 CE. This contains 24 'chapters' ranging from about 50 to 400 words (in translation), including chapter 3 on “Enlargement of the Heads of Children”, ch. 7 on Epilepsy, chs 9-12 on ear and eye diseases, and ch. 24 on Paralysis. The latter, according to Radbill, “gives us a hint of poliomyelitis”. [See below, AL-RAZI]


RANKE, Hermann (1952) *Die Ägyptischen Personennamen*. 2 volumes. Glückstadt/Hamburg: Augustin. In volume II, p. 177, Ranke introduces a large group of names, some of which indicate personal characteristics, or some physical or mental impairment or feature - “wie Taubheit, Stummheit, Blindheit, Zwergenwuchs, Linkshändigkeit”, also such epithets as the Friendly, the Black, the Little, with the [big] Nose, big Belly. The names are then listed (pp. 177-180), with transliteration in roman (+ some symbols), in hieroglyphic representation, and with equivalent in German.

AL-RAZI, Abu Bakr M b.Zakariya. *Man la Yahduruhu Tabib* [He who has no physician to help him], ed. Jamal al-Din Ma’arif Purur (1954). Tehran. Late 9th century home treatment book (1,000 years before D Werner's famous primary health
care manual 'Where There Is No Doctor'). HAMARNEH (1972) (q.v.) notes that al-Razi includes treatment of hemiplegia, epilepsy and some mental problems.


Various ancient terracotta objects, found in the foundations or substructure of houses in the old town of Smyrna, are described (without illustrations), apparently depicting a variety of diseases and deformities. They may have served some religious purpose.

Regnault discussed a number of small wood and clay figures from antiquity, some being from the Middle East, noting deformities and apparently paralysed members, while also recognising that some peculiarities might represent no more than an artisan's haphazard modelling.

Here Dr Regnault mentioned French work from the 1870s onward concerning dwarfs in ancient Egyptian art, including his own essays from 1900. He described drawings and statues of dwarfs from the 5th dynasty onward, including two (rare) female dwarfs (Fig. 2 and 3). A tabular comparison is given of bodily features of the gods Phtah and Bes along with features produced my myxoedema or cretinism, a connection Regnault had suggested in 1897.

Believed to date from before the Twelfth Dynasty, i.e. more than 4000 years old, this 18 cm. statuette was found in 1913 at a cemetery at Naga ed-Der. “The harper has his eyes closed and is manifestly blind”. (One plate shows the statuette at c. 80% of real size; the other shows it much reduced, from four different angles; and the editor provided a fifth photo of another, smaller, statuette of a blind female harper).

Ricaut, a diplomat, lived for five years in Constantinople and wrote his History in the 1660s. After a detailed description of the education of future officers and servants of the Emperor's court (pp. 45-59), a chapter describes the large band of 'mutes and dwarfs' at court (pp. 62-64), mentioned earlier by DALLAM (q.v. See also BRAGADIN; LORICHS; DOMENICO; EVLIYA; et al). The former, “men naturally born deaf”, during the daytime “learn and perfect themselves in the language of the Mutes, which is made up of several signs, in which by custome they can discourse and fully express themselves; not only to signifie their sense in familiar questions, but to recount Stories, understand the Fables of their own Religion, the Laws and Precepts of the Alchoran, the name of Mahomet, and what else may be capable of being expressed by the Tongue. ... But this language of the Mutes is so much in fashion in the Ottoman Court, that none almost but can deliver his sense in it, and is of much use to those
who attend the Presence of the Grand Signior, before whom it is not reverent or seemly so much as to whisper.” [The double negative 'none almost but' = 'almost all']


Some Babylonian birth omens run parallel with the Omen series Izbu, e.g. KBo VI 25 + KBo XIII 35, with ill effects predicted by the birth of a baby who is blind (pp. 22-24); or with the birth of “ein Dummkopf” (marlandan, {LU}LIL, idiot) following that of a baby whose right ear lies close to the cheeks (pp. 28-29, 31, 35-36, 38-39, 93, with some discussion).

RISPLER-CHAIM V (2007) Disability in Islamic Law. Dordrecht: Springer. 184 pp. Extensive and detailed review, based on the works of Muslim Jurists from medieval times to the present, and many years of experience in the modern Middle East. Different perspectives and terminologies of law, religion and medicine are used to describe legal and social responses to disability and people with disability, in a variety of situations that arise in everyday life and the practice of Islam. Chapters are headed (1). People with disabilities and the performance of religious duties; (2). People with disabilities and jihad; (3). People with disabilities and marriage; (4). The Khuntha [hermaphrodite]; (5). Disabilities caused by humans: intentional and unintentional injuries. A useful Appendix (pp. 97-134, plus notes and references pp. 150-153) gives English translation of “Contemporary fatwas on people with disabilities”, by Islamic scholars mostly in Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, and a few on the web. The Appendix ends with an excerpt from a book by Dr Musa al-Basit (listed separately above, modern section) which considers the rights of disabled people in a broader way than the specific fatwas.


After discussing schools of Islamic thought on the 'problem of evil' in the realm of an omnipotent deity, the paper considers various tales in which anger is expressed to God by some Muslim 'wise fools', whose sense of intimate relationship put them in a good position to inform God of their complaint (though this was far from the orthodox position of submission to the Will of Allah; and also from the sufi teaching of delight in divine providence). See next item.


In this wide-ranging book on the writings of the 13th century Persian poet and mystic Fariduddin Muhammad `Attar, chapter 10 “Das Hadern Mit Gott - Der Narr” (pp. 159-180) discusses in greater detail the quarrels that some 'wise fools' had with Allah, in the context of Sufi teaching (see previous item). In the analytical index, “narr” has a full page (pp. 742-743) listing many entries apart from that chapter. (See also, e.g. Bahlul, blind(er), lahm(er), stummheit, taubheit, and similar older terms in index.) [An English translation of Ritter's work has now been published by Brill.]

Broad review of historical psychotherapy, Muslim contribution to concept and therapeutic practice, and some modern western trends. More detailed focus is given to the thoughts and writings of Al Ghazali (1058-1111 CE), Shah Wali Allah (1703-1762), and Maulana Thanvi (1863-1943).


While considering how the observations in the Babylonian 'omen' texts formed a body of knowledge that was significant to its practitioners, some examples are taken from Summa Izbu, involving the 'meaning' ascribed to various kinds of anomalous births (see LEICHTY, above).

Scholarly discussion of the life, medical practice and writing of al-Razi on speech disorders, with background details and context. Al-Razi associated speech defects mainly with adverse conditions of the tongue.

With a brief review of the status of blind men in the early Islamic world, the author quotes and comments in detail on the work of the blind poet of Basrah, Bashshar bin Burd [c. 690-783], and the extent to which he used visual imagery and described situations as though seeing them (sometimes aided by being seriously enamoured of the young woman he was describing). Weighing evidence and counter-claims, it seems likely that Bashshar was blind from birth or early childhood.

Brief overview quoting literature from Avestan to modern times. (Followed by articles on further aspects of childhood, see e.g. OMIDSALAR).

Ch.2, pp. 21-70, discusses mental illness in 'Ancient Palestine and Neighbouring Adjacent Areas', based mainly on evidence in translation from the Hebrew records.

Well referenced historical introduction.

The accidental or deliberate infliction of disabling injury, by one person on another, or on another man's live 'possessions' (e.g. wife, children, cattle) is an event with which very early
legal systems dealt, in more or less detail, with punishments often involving graduated payments in compensation. The fine may be considered to give a very approximate indication of the comparative practical and social value' placed on different kinds of ability or amenity, when lost by another person's action. The present collection offers instances with transliterated text and translation, indexed mostly under “assault and bodily injury”, and 'disease', in Middle Eastern law codes from the late 3rd millennium onward. (The value of the shekel may have varied across time and place, in the following abbreviated examples). From Ur-Namma “[19] If a man shatters the __-bone of another man with a club, he shall weigh and deliver 60 shekels of silver. [20] If a man cuts off the nose of another man - 40 shekels.. [22] ..knocks out a tooth - 2 shekels..” (p.19). From Sumer, “[1] If he jostles the daughter of a man and causes her to miscarry her fetus - 20 shekels (p.43). From Eshunna, “[42] If a man bites the nose of another man and cuts it off - 60 shekels; an eye - 60 shekels; a tooth - 30 shekels; an ear - 30 shekels. [43] ..cut off the finger - 20 shekels.. [44] ..breaks his hand - 30 shekels.. [45] ..foot - 30 shekels.. [46] ..collarbone - 20 shekels.. [47] ..any other injuries(?) - 10 shekels” (pp. 65-66).

In the Laws of the Hittites (pp. 213-247, translated by Hoffner), some evolution is noticeable, with the amount of compensation being dependent on whether the action was deliberate (or had raised the risk) or was accidental; thus, “If anyone blinds a free man in a quarrel - 40 shekels.. If it is an accident - 20 shekels..” (p. 218), and similarly for other injuries. If the incapacitation is temporary, the assailant may pay the injured party's medical care and physician fee, and also provide someone to work on the injured party's land, until he recovered. (See HROZNY).

Some codes suggest social protection of the status of a person acquiring a disadvantage or disability, e.g. Laws of Lipit-Ishtar, “[28] “if a man's first-ranking wife loses her attractiveness or becomes a paralytic, she will not be evicted from the house; however, her husband may marry a healthy wife [note: or 'a second wife']", and the second wife shall support the first-ranking wife [note: or the man shall support both wives]” (pp. 31-32). The Laws of Hammurabi suggest similar protection for a wife who contracts a 'serious skin disease' (pp. 109, 141). However, a purchaser has protection against being sold a slave with epilepsy: if he discovers it within one month, he can return the slave and get his money back (p. 132).


Detailed study of “the captive, the shattered, the blind, the deaf mute, the lame, lepers, the maimed, the dead, and the poor” (pp. 17-19, 23-24, and passim) as portrayed in first century Palestine and earlier, based in two Christian 'New Testament' texts in Greek, the 'Gospel of Luke', and the 'Acts of the Apostles', attributed to a common author, Luke. Roth examines concepts, identities, character groups and stereotypes within poverty, disability and marginality, both in the Lucan texts and in the assumed background of the Septuagint, i.e. the Jewish scriptures in Greek translation, which were available and familiar to Luke's expected Hellenistic readers; and also in a wider pool of literature available to them. In the Septuagint, “The blind, the lame, the poor, and the others are typically anonymous, powerless, vulnerable, and a-responsible. In addition, and most significantly, these character types are standard, conventional recipients of God's saving action” (p. 214). Roth suggests that the stereotypes persisted in Luke's Gospel, in which Jesus is portrayed as healing and blessing them, as the agent of God and with eschatological reference; but they are practically absent in
Luke's 'Acts', for reasons that are discussed. The aim was supposedly to change the expected readers' perspectives on the mission of Jesus and his credentials during his earthly life (in the Gospel), and his subsequent life as the risen Christ, represented by the Spirit, among the nascent Christian church (in the Acts of the Apostles).


Many references to disability. See Index, e.g. abnormalities, baldness, clubfoot, deformed persons, dwarfs, hunchbacks, etc. Heavily illustrated.


p. 186, entries for two cuneiform terms having slight visible difference, transliterated {LU}U.HUB (second case without one diacritical), “tauber Mann, Tauber, taub”; and also GAL U.HUB, “Oberster der Tauben”, with note below that the {LU}U.HUB entries are from fragmentary sources.

Useful background study on poverty and charity. Mentions disabled people incidentally (e.g. blind, lame, crippled, lepers etc, pp. 47-49, 60-61, 74-78, 85), but they were there among 'the poor' for whatever benefits were provided.

Suggests some of the diversity of solutions reached by Muslims on questions of health,
suffering and divine purpose, with reference to the Qur'an, hadiths, and development of
theodicies. (The title word 'unrequited' may be inappropriate. The text suggests that a sense
such as 'purposeless', 'unrelieved', or 'uncompensated' is intended).

SA'DI, Gulistan. [Rose Garden.]
(Many translations to English and other languages.) For centuries, Gulistan was the standard
textbook in Persian, studied by millions of schoolboys across the Middle East. In many
anecdotes and aphorisms Sa'di emphasized the futility of trying to teach the slow-learning
child: “to educate the blockhead is like throwing a walnut at a dome”.

SA'DI. The Orchard: The Bostan of Saadi of Shiraz, translated by Mirza Aqil-Hussain.
London: Octagon.
A Sufi classic, the Bostan was also much used as a second, more advanced Persian text after
Sadi's 'Gulistan', in schools across the Middle East and South Asia. On pp. 210-212, Sadi
gave a story about 'Hatim the Deaf' (Abdel Rahman Hatim), of whom it was said that he was
not actually deaf. His pretence of deafness began when an old woman who was speaking to
him happened to break wind and was deeply embarrassed. Hatim immediately asked her to
speak up because he could not hear her properly; and thereafter maintained the pretence.
Here he gives some justification: when people thought he could hear, they were careful not to
mention his faults; whereas, thinking him deaf, they discussed his faults openly, and by this
means he came to know which parts of his conduct should be amended. See also pp. 116-117,
in which a fox lame in all its legs was kept alive on the remnants of a lion's food. (A dervish
tried to imitate this, but no food arrived and eventually he understood that he, not being
disabled, should work to contribute food for others). pp. 77-79, the caliph Mamun, being
rejected by a beautiful slave girl, was ready to kill her until she told him that the problem was
his bad breath. He got that remedied, and appreciated her honesty.

by Ahmad Zaki. Cairo: al Matba`a al-Jamaliyya.
As-Safadi, who died in 1363, compiled the biographies of 313 distinguished blind Arabs of
medieval times. (Many of them actually lost their sight late in life). (See ZAKI PACHA; also
MALTI-DOUGLAS).

SAFAI, Hossein (1966) La Protection des incapables: étude comparative du droit musulman
Doctoral thesis of Université de Paris, 1965. Includes detailed consideration of meanings of
“Safih” (prodigal or weak-minded) in classical and modern legal terminology, and similarly
“Madjnoun”, “Ma'touh” and “Moghaffal (mad, mentally disabled), the legal incapacities of
people so classified, and provisions for guardianship, in earlier times and in specific modern
Middle Eastern countries. (The author was lecturing in Law in Teheran).

SAFI al Din ibn Abi l-Mansur ibn Zafir. La 'Risala' de Saofi al-Din ibn Abi l-Mansur ibn
Zafir: Biographies des maîtres spirituels connus par un cheikh égyptien du VIIe/XIIIe siècle
(translated by Denis Gril, 1986). Cairo.
Some of the 'holy fools' described by Safi d-Din in 13th century Egypt and elsewhere were
more holy than foolish, others perhaps the reverse.

Profusely illustrated paper combining insights from genetics, physiology, art and Egyptology.


This and the next item concern Turkish charitable foundations e.g. almshouses, shelters, soup kitchens etc where poor people, some being disabled, received some help.


Various kinds of people were prohibited from access to important ceremonies in honour of the deity Khnoum, at Esna; among them were people 'possessed'. The paper discusses what is meant by that condition and its behavioural symptoms.


Includes a story (pp. 83-84) of Yuhanna ibn Masawayh (777-857 CE), the Nestorian Christian physician who served four Caliphs at Baghdad and wrote several medical works. Highly intelligent, he married a woman of great beauty and weak intellect. Their son, Masawayh ibn Yuhanna ibn Masawayh, was like his mother, feeble-minded. Yuhanna expressed a wish to dissect the ‘useless’ lad, learn the causes of his stupidity, and so add to knowledge; but the Caliph forbade him. Yuhanna's frustrated wish (which was perhaps rhetorical, rather than a serious plan), apparently became known to his father-in-law, who was much displeased. A little later, the boy became ill, and died after medical treatment, which caused further suspicions and recriminations. (Source: Ibn-al-Qifti, *Tarih al-hukama*, ed. J. Lippert, Leipzig).


This study reviews relevant Arabic literature and details the terminology of deafness, medical perceptions and treatment of the condition, the legal, civil and religious implications, briefly mentioning sign language. A number of case histories are given of people who became deaf during the stated period, with biographical references, from Arabic primary sources.

Extended introduction and review of disability-related historical materials in the Middle East, with closer focus on particular kinds of 'difference' in Ottoman Syria (a much larger area than the present Syria). Terminology, social and religious views on the origins of disability, appropriate and inappropriate responses, and issues of Islamic law are considered, with many useful primary Arabic sources.


[Michael Dols: “In one of the few studies devoted to insanity in Islamic society, Heinrich Schipperges has emphasized the dignity of the insane that was based primarily on a religious interpretation of the irrational. And the notion of unreason, as in the law, is basically neutral; mental incapacity has no moral meaning but entails serious social consequences.” - DOLS 1992 (q.v.) p. 6.]

SCHRUMPF-PIERRON, B (1934) Les nains achondroplasiques dans l'ancienne Egypte. Aesculape 24 (n.s. 9) 223-238.


SCRIPTORES Historiae Augustae (Latin text, with translation by D Magie, 1954). London: Heinemann. Volume III, chapter VIII, pp. 399-401, of this curious literary collection, is part of a description by 'Vopiscus' of the life of Saturninus, and claims to be a letter from the Emperor Hadrian (reigned 117-138 CE) to his brother-in-law Servianus. Hadrian had lived and travelled widely in the Greek-speaking Eastern Mediterranean, and spent time in Egypt in 130. The supposed letter gave a critical description of Jews (and Christians, and other Egyptians) at Alexandria: “They are a folk most seditious, most deceitful, most given to injury; but their city is prosperous, rich and fruitful, and in it no one is idle. Some are blowers of glass, others makers of paper, all are at least weavers of linen or seem to belong to one craft or another; the lame have their occupations, the eunuchs have theirs, the blind have theirs, and not even those whose hands are crippled are idle [the 'disability' part in Latin: et habent podagrosi quod agant, habent praecisi quod agant, habent caeci quod faciant, ne chiragrici quidem apud eos otiosi vivunt.] Their only god is money, and this the Christians, the Jews, and, in fact, all nations adore.” [A number of errors of history and date, and the Latin vocabulary used, suggest that this 'letter' was composed in perhaps the late 4th century, but the unknown author took some care to give it credibility within the context of Hadrian's life, the repeated Roman battles to subdue Jewish communities, and the flourishing city life and trading products of Alexandria. The remarkable note on employment of people with disabilities, while certainly an over-generalisation, might possibly be based on some genuine historical observation.]

Reviews the available evidence, mainly from the 10th through the 7th centuries BC, and some peculiarities detectable in the previous millennium of accumulation of medical texts. Scurlock suggests that a valid and functional Mesopotamian medicine has been dismissed or seriously undervalued in recent scholarship, because of its association with magic, sorcery and supernatural practices repugnant to the modern scientific mentality. [These points are quite possibly true; they are not necessarily well argued by assertions such as that, “when a person became ill in ancient Mesopotamia, he had many of the same options we {sic} have today...”, that the medical services were “not financially out of reach of the average ancient Mesopotamian” (p. 306), or reference to “our blind attachment to a humoral philosophy” (p. 315).]

Worked up from a doctoral thesis of 1988, this tome presents transcriptions / transliterations, and translations, of some 352 'prescriptions' for physical and mental/spiritual symptoms and ailments, apparently associated with adverse 'ghost' activity, ordered and classified as Scurlock found useful, e.g. by the body part afflicted, type of problem, and suggested solution (pp. 161-677), based on painstaking collation of practically all the known relevant material scattered in museums across the world, with various aids and indices for navigation and location (679-788). There are many levels of complication in the results. The first part of Scurlock's book (pp. 1-83, and notes pp. 85-159) engages with the complication in moving from collation of scattered bits and pieces of cuneiform text in several languages, toward an interpretation and translation, in modern English words and concepts, of the transactions between the main players. Much of this is offered with appropriate caution, though it is not always clear whose 'voice' is in use. The frequent “we” (e.g. “When we think of ghosts, we think of strange noises and apparitions, not of migraine headaches and rumblings in the stomach” {p. 1}; “using what we might term 'managed placebo effect‘” {p. 83}) seems to vary, while the 'chatty' voice (“ancient Mesopotamian ghosts did their share of making spooky noises and scaring people half to death”) fits uneasily with more cautious, scholarly remarks. Connections with disability, and mental disorder or difference, may be found throughout, with indexed words such as: confusional state, eyes, lead water pipe [not flagged as a hazard], maltreatment, meningitis, mental disturbance, neurological disorders, otitis media, paralysis, seizures, etc; and possibly-equivalent Sumerian and Akkadian terms.

[See paragraphs subtitled “Mesopotamian skirmishing” in the General Introduction.] This substantial work, interacting with the previous listed item by Scurlock, offers a large amount of ancient Assyrian and Babylonian health and medical material, organised by body parts, disease classification, aetiological conceptualisation and prognostics, giving transliterated Akkadian and Sumerian text with English translation (pp. 13-548), and suggesting 20th century American medical equivalents and resonance, with some discussion and argument in end-notes (pp. 679-764). There are also aids to textual navigation (575-677) and indexing of
words in Sumerian, Akkadian, and English/Latin (779-879). An “Unsolved Puzzles Appendix” (pp. 553-573) lists whatever has “defied our abilities to suggest a probable diagnosis”, and invites readers to assist in cracking these few remaining “medical mysteries”, “mysterious curses”, “mysterious sorcery”, etc. Disability-relevant terms and implications occur throughout the work, most of which can be tracked from both specific, elaborated and more general index terms (e.g. 'arthritis' listed on 40 pages, then differentiated by listing 14 distinct body locations with pages; 'blindness', plus many specific eye disease terms listed separately; 'birth defects' differentiated by lists under 'abnormalities', 'congenital', 'malformations' and more specific terms such as 'autism', 'cerebral palsy', 'Prader-Willi syndrome'; etc.)

[Some of Scurlock & Andersen's attempts to read back recently identified complex syndromes into a few words of ancient text are quite speculative. Modern specialists in autistic spectrum disorders might wish to learn the semantic range of known instances of the ancient term used, where a child supposedly “rejects its mother” (pp. 334, 407), and could mention the difficulties of reaching any professional consensus on understanding the behaviours lumped together 'on the autistic spectrum'. For identical texts, Scurlock & Andersen themselves (inadvertently?) display different stages of their own certainty or uncertainty about supposed 'Autism' where it appears under Neurology (p. 334) as against its appearance under Pediatrics (p. 407); see also differences in Leichty (q.v.) Summa Izbu I 69, text and footnotes (p. 38), compared with Scurlock & Andersen's text and endnotes (pp. 334, 407, 740, 749). In their Introduction (pp. xix, xx), they wisely admit some uncertainty in their diagnoses and interpretations, and claim that “we have tried in all cases to indicate our level of conviction in the suggested diagnosis”; yet that attempt is not always evident. In the first edition of a work of this length and massive detail, some mistakes and typographical errors are inevitable, though perhaps the English ones could have been located by electronic spelling checkers. Some, such as “sonambulism” (pp. 752, 868), might be attributed to selective dyslexia from rapid code-switching across the medical and Assyriological worlds and the dozen primary and secondary languages involved. A selective naiveté appears in some of the wilder historical generalisations (e.g. “the skill of ancient Mesopotamians in diagnosis and therapy was only surpassed in the late nineteenth century”, p.12). Broadly, the work will be a valuable resource for linking Middle Eastern disability with very early primary sources. For specific disability conditions, the views of cited scholars and other reference works must be consulted closely.]


16th century Ottoman work on physiognomy, with brief outline (p.12) of Arab, Persian and Turkish works on this 'science'.

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SEZGIN, Fuat (1986) *Augenheilkunde im Islam: Texte, Studien und Übersetzungen*. 4 volumes. Frankfurt am Main: Institut für Geschichte der Arabisch-Islamischen Wissenschaften an der Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität. This work includes reprints of translations and monographs by Max Meyerhof, Julius Hirschberg, and other authors, on Arab ophthalmology. (SAVAGE-SMITH, q.v.)

Notes that fathers were “obligated to make special provisions for an infirm or disabled (armist) child and to arrange for the elders of the family to administer it”, as a first charge upon their estate (p. 408a).

SHALABY, Ahmad (1979) *History of Muslim Education*. Karachi: Indus Publications. Reprint of Cambridge doctoral thesis, first published Cairo c.1952. Largely based on original sources, e.g. MS from Aleppo in which Ibn Juma’a (13th century?) recommends testing and classifying students by intelligence, so that they do work appropriate to their ability, and the bright and mediocre are not taught together (pp. 7-8, 169).

SJÖBERG AW (1976) The Old Babylonian eduba. In: *Sumerological Studies in Honor of Thorkild Jacobsen on his seventieth birthday June 7, 1974*, pp. 159-179. Assyriological Studies No. 20. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. The ‘eduba’ was the ‘tablet house’ or school for scribes, the activities of which are described in detail by Sjöberg. One well-known passage has a virulent critique by a capable student of one less competent in acquiring the essential knowledge of Sumerian, translated “he is a deaf fool when it comes to the scribal art, a silent idiot when it comes to Sumerian’ (Enkimansum and Girini-isag, l. 10, Ur Excavations, Texts, VI/2, No. 15:10, CBS 13984 i 6’)” (p. 161). [In *J. Cuneiform Studies* 34, p.109, WHP Roemer translates that line “taub hinsichtlich der Schreibkunst, stumm in Bezug auf die sumerische Sprache”].


SOYSAL, Yasemin [Arikan] (2001) Hitit din ve sosyal hayatinda {LU/MUNUS} U.HUB “sagir”. In: G Wilhelm (ed.) *Akten des IV. Internationalen Kongresses für Hethitologie, Wurzburg, 4.-8. Oktober 1999*, pp. 652-669. Studien zu den Bogazkoey-Texten, Band 45. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz. This contribution collects most of the available locations and constructions in which {LU} U.HUB (deaf man) and GAL {LU} U.HUB (chief / supervisor of deaf man) are found, and gives transliteration of them, with translation and discussion in Turkish. (Translations in German, English and French may also be found for many of the texts; see references in General Introduction, 'Deaf Antiquity'). Soysal discusses and lists the various activities and roles performed by Hititite deaf men, mostly within the cultic ceremonies performed in or near the royal palace, in the later half of the second millennium BC. (See also ARIKAN).
Recognises that although Muslims historically have taken seriously their duty to the poor and needy, studies on this topic have been few - charity has been largely an unrecorded, individual exercise rather than an official matter.

Revisiting the topic 25 years after his first paper, Stillman used a more sceptical gaze, following the trend for historians to question who actually benefitted from charitable activities. (No specific mention of disabled people, who were subsumed among 'the poor and needy').

Babylonian eye diseases and treatments.

Discusses Akkadian terms used for blindness and night blindness, and some difficulties in determining the meanings. Some medical texts suggest treatments, which included eating liver. (See MARCUS, 1980, which Stol mentions in a footnote, but had not seen when writing this paper).

Reviews literature on the possible early existence of leprosy in the Eastern Mediterranean, with appropriate caution. [Stol's work, in general, displays remarkable skill in balancing merits and problems of quite difficult material in a dozen languages, while making his remarks accessible to non-specialists.]

Stol first discusses an obscure surgical technique of treating an eye by opening the temple, and suggests that blood-letting by incising veins in the temple may be in view, rather than any ophthalmological aim. Next a text is reassigned as a description of trachoma; and thirdly, lead-based kohl as an eye salve at Elam is discussed.

Detailed, scholarly account of how Babylonians viewed epilepsy: their beliefs, attitudes, diagnostic texts, magical rites, therapeutic efforts, and legal sanctions. Notes beliefs and attitudes towards some other disabilities, and reviews literature from some neighbouring
areas and through many centuries. A few points are criticised by AVALOS (1995) above.


This is a collection of chapters from a colloquium in 1995, with Introduction and Conclusion (on legal aspects) by R Westbrook (pp. 1-22; 241-250) and highly detailed contributions cautiously discussing primary text material on the care of elderly people: in Mesopotamia of the third millennium (C Wilke, 23-57, translated by N Yoffee); in Mesopotamia in the Old Babylonian period (M Stol, 59-117); in Old Assyrian and Ancient Anatolian evidence (KR Veenhof, 119-160); in the Neo-Babylonian period (G van Driel, 161-197); in legal aspects in Egypt to the end of the New Kingdom (A McDowell, 199-221); and in Papyrus sources (H-A Rupprecht, in German, 223-239). Specific references to impairment and disability are few, (e.g. in Van Driel, pp. 169-170, 172, 181-182; Veenhof, 143-144; see details under their individual entries). Yet the contrast is never far away between, for example, the able-bodied worker and the elderly men who might possibly be infirm, stooping, with diminished hearing, sight and physical strength, or the beginnings of senile decay. Some evidence is shown for a range of legal, social and financial accommodations made by families to give at least a modest provision for members liable to long-term poverty; but evidence remains patchy, and the contributors have resisted hasty generalisations.

This work appeared originally in Dutch in 1983, and has been completely rewritten, updated and extended with new materials, and has one chapter by FAM Wiggerman. Disability-relevant material appears in many parts of the book, particularly in pp. 158-170, on “malformed or anomalous miscarriages and births”, with substantial source referencing and comparisons across the Middle East. Disability in the 'Enki & Ninmah' story is discussed (pp. 109-110). On pp. 210-211, a phrase from the Diagnostic Handbook, “If the ligaments (?) of a ... child are 'loose' from its neck to its spine, it will die”, is accepted by the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary (under 'kislu') as a possible description of spina bifida, with some differing opinions.


Gives an historical background to the country and culture, and describes some historical developments and traditional concepts and therapies concerned with mental illnesses (pp. 205-215). A description of modern services follows.


15th century compilation of Tibb an-Nabbi. Includes advice for prevention or treatment of disabilities, e.g. pp. 10, 17, 18, 35, 57-59, 70, 91, 101, 106, 109, 140-141. Mentions hidden blind brother of Ayesha (35), and epileptic fit of Umar (162); but see note under ELGOOD (1962) above.


TAGGAR-COHEN, Ada (2002) The EZEN pulas - a Hittite installation rite of a new priest. Based on text KUB 17.35 i 17'-37' (CTH 525), among the cult inventories from the reign of Tudhaliya IV, in the late 13th century BC, discussion of the ceremony involves transliteration of several other texts, among which is KUB 60.152. This fragmentary text, relating to a religious ceremony in the city Zuppara (pp. 143-146), includes fleeting mention of LU {MES} U.HUB, the deaf men... (144, 145) The deaf men appear to play a subsidiary part in the ceremony, located at the temple, providing bread, in the presence of the king and priests.

On pp. 216-242 (romanised text and English translation of 'Vendidad' II.20-43), the exclusion of people with deformities is depicted (with alternative rendering in the sense of moral, rather than physical, depravity, pp. 223, 237-238). The 'eugenic' lesson is noted by Taraporewala (p. 229). See also: Zend-Avesta.

Temkin stated he had “left out a discussion of epilepsy in Eastern civilizations” (p. x), and that is largely true, yet scrutiny of the Subject Index shows references to Alexandria (on 3
pages), Arabs (on 18 pages), Byzantium (4), Egypt (1), Islam (7), Mesopotamia (3), Palestine (2), Zend-Avesta (1), and words such as antasubbu, bennu, sar`un; while the Names Index contains Abulqasim (on 8 pages), Averroes (4), Avicenna (11), Mohammed [the prophet] (17), Rhazes (4), and several other Muslim names with one page reference. Among 1120 references in Temkin's bibliography (pp. 398-443) at least 40 refer to Middle Eastern epilepsy.


Published posthumously, edited by CJ Gadd, the dictionary is arranged thematically, quoting passages in which terms occur, and discussing possible identification. Copious indexes (mostly by DJ Wiseman) give access to Sumerian, Akkadian, various Dialects, Hebrew, Aramaic & Syriac, Ras Shamra, Phoenician, Arabic, Latin & Greek, Persian, Sanskrit, Indian, Egyptian, Hittite; and English botanical, personal, geographical and medical terms (as many plants are listed for their supposed therapeutic effects). Among the body parts and
disabling conditions possibly benefitting, see index for: arthritis, baldness, brain, convulsions, ear, epilepsy, eyes, feet, giddiness, goitre, hands, head, impotence, leg, leprosy, limbs, mania, melancholia, mouth, ophthalmia, paralysis, psoriasis, rheumatism, skin diseases, weak children, weakness.

Part of an informative, scholarly website by Steve Thurston designed to inform the literate public about Hittite history. The apparent 'stroke', facial paralysis and speech difficulty suffered by Murshili II (reigned c. 1317-1293 BC; son of Shuppiluliuma I) has several paragraphs in the general history pages of this Hittite ruler and his times, and refers more specifically to another page where an English translation is given of the prayer in which he described his symptoms and offered ritual sacrifices. “The Storm God brought a storm and then kept thundering frightfully. I was afraid and speech became scarce in my mouth. The matter went up from me as something small, and I put aside that matter entirely. As the years came and went, it came about that that matter began appearing to me in dreams. The hand of a god reached out to me in a dream and my mouth went to one side.” (The religious ceremonies followed, in which efforts were made to transfer the ailment to 'a substitute ox'). [This is referenced to the Hittite text “Mursilis Sprachlähmung” edited by GOETZE & PEDERSEN, q.v.] Earlier in his reign (under “The Conquest of Arzawa”), Murshilis II and his troops witnessed a thunderbolt hurled by the Storm God, which passed them and “struck the land of Arzawa. It struck Uhha-ziti's (capital) city of Apasha. It settled in Uhaa-ziti's knees, and he became ill. (10 Year Annals, para. 17)” The weakness in Uhha-ziti's knees prevented him from leading his troops in defence of his land.

pp.93-94 discusses Karagos, the Turkish shadow play figures (illust. no.20) citing German scholarly literature, and adds some remarks about dwarfs and mutes at the Ottoman court.

Reviews a considerable amount of literature, the Hebrew supplemented by Akkadian and Arabic evidence.

See pp. 286-287, where the pattern of Hebrew q_tt_ı, used in a number of words connoting bodily deformity or abnormality is noted as similar to the Akkadian quttulu pattern (studied in detail by HOLMA 1914).

Gives brief introduction to the Egyptian dwarf god Bes, literary sources and bibliography (p. 98); then lists iconographic remains of Bes, in groups or singly (99-106), classified by apparent roles, e.g. apotropaic, warrior, musician, magic, etc. and by artistic medium. Commentary (106-108) notes the slow rise of this minor deity, starting probably as “un des démons nains au service des divinités, surtout d'Hathor”, and achieving some folk popularity
in his own right in Mediterranean countries, and as far as Iran. “Il est surtout connu sous sa forme la plus populaire, comme un nain grotesque debout de face, le visage large et aplati, doté d'une barbe frisée aux extrémités, les oreilles léonines rondes, les mains posées sur les cuisses” (106). Lacking any substantial divine genealogy, the early Bes adopted some normal human patterns. He is reported to have gone to school with ordinary children and learnt to read and to play music (p. 107), perhaps an early example of 'inclusive education'. However, he was destined for greater things.

Discusses the idea, expressed in the essay “Kitab al-Bursan etc” by Jahiz (see above) that physical impairment may be a sign of divine favour, or an opportunity for spiritual strengthening, rather than a social stigma; and how such a point of view would be accommodated in medieval Muslim society.

In his famously laconic style, Tritton gave referenced notes on the start, practice and administrative problems of registration and pensions in the early centuries of the Muslim world. Disabled recipients are listed under the authority of Mansur (“unmarried women, orphans, and the blind”); Mahdi (“prisoners and lepers”); and Umar II (“the poor ... and the cripples”).

Dullness in students occasioned various measures (pp. 37, 48, 52-53, 80-81, 131). Primary teachers were assumed to be stupid, with many mordant stories. (E.g. A slave brought his master a cooked sheep's head from market. En route he ate the eyes, ears, tongue and brains. Questioned, he said the sheep had been blind, deaf and dumb. But where were the brains? Well, this sheep had been a teacher... p.8) Some teachers or scholars were blind, deaf or crippled (pp. 14, 60, 88, 106, 140, 150, 153, 200); blind people also appear on pp. 120, 155, 181. Speech therapy is noticed (pp. 60-61).


Brief description of the skeletal remains of two people probably with disabilities in the 18th and 15th centuries BC, suggesting how and why they were unrecognised or misinterpreted in classifications by earlier archaeologists.

Much cited historical survey, with some discussion of blindness, eye disease and ophthalmology, various forms of leprosy, epilepsy, and disabling diseases associated with malnutrition. (More exists than is shown in the rather scanty index). States (p.1) that the health/disease picture noted by DOUGHTY (q.v.) “certainly existed in the same form in pre-Islamic Arabia.”


[See notes under STOL & VLEEMING.] Van Driel cautiously points out that “we have only very hazy ideas about people's age in the period concerned” (p. 161), and notes other difficulties of generalisation, e.g. the lack of evidence about the ordinary manual workers, for whom “old age or infirmity, coming early could pose serious problems” (p. 172). Discussing father-son business partnerships, with “practical transfer with retention of all rights”, he notes that “The senior could be old, but he probably could not be decrepit or senile. I know of no case in which a person is deprived of his formal legal capacity to act on account of senility” (pp. 169-170) though that situation might be latent. On pp. 181-182, the members of a working team are summarised: “four old men, 29 of working age, seven young boys, five person not seen (at the inspection), six (the number can be calculated with confidence) run away, one cripple, one blind”, with some discussion of what these categories may imply.

The 15 Hebrew words shown in this dictionary, connected with impairment and disability, are cross-referenced: #522 speechlessness; #1492 hunchbacked; #3024 mutilation; #3094 speechless; #4171 lame, crippled; #4583 blemish; #5425 disfigured; #5783 crippled, smitten; #6422 be blind; #6589 stammering; #7174 lame, crippled; #7519 limping; #7832 defective; #8594 deformed, mutilated; #9319 white spot in eye.

After a brief resumé of his life, most of this article discusses the prolific theological writings of the blind teacher Didymus, which were widely cited, though much of his work has disappeared.

Gives “the most popular beliefs and opinions that the Persian world held about epilepsy”, based on Persian medical texts and also “folk beliefs and superstitions”. Three case histories
appear from al-Razi. Avicenna's views are outlined, and those of more recent practitioners.


[See notes under STOL & VLEEMING.] Among discussion (pp. 143-144) of contracts giving a legal right to live in a house until death even if the house were sold to a new owner, one case concerned Musa, probably a widow, who had such a right until [...], and was 'not to be chased away' by a named owner and his sons. The omitted word, "ta-sha-bi4-ir", "might perhaps be translated by 'to become disabled', 'to break down' and be taken to refer to the physical problems of old age leading to death."


Brief secondary note on Avicenna's practice, after Galen.


Partial English translation at: [http://www.vitae-patrum.org.uk](http://www.vitae-patrum.org.uk)

Among the Vitae of the Desert Saints, in Egypt, Palestine and Syria of the early centuries of Christianity, there are stories of people with disabilities being healed or cared for. The framework is often modelled on stories where Jesus healed disabled people by expelling demons; yet the hagiographies have some sharply observed and unexpected features in dialogue and interplay between characters. In Book 1(d), no. 17, the young saint Euphrasia's humility, fasting, battles with the devil, and devotion to serving her religious companions, are standard fare. In ch. XXV-XVI, families brought sick or disabled children to the monastery for prayer and healing. At the Abbess's command Euphrasia received one boy of eight years, brought by his mother, paralysed, deaf and dumb. Euphrasia prayed while carrying him to the Abbess, and the boy was healed and started shouting for his mother. Euphrasia dropped him in surprise, and he ran back to the gate. Later, the Abbess sent Euphrasia to feed a “devil-possessed” sister, who had violent fits and was locked up. This one often assaulted whoever brought the food, and she began shrieking and threatening Euphrasia. The latter commanded her to be quiet or she would get the Abbess's cane and give her a terrible thrashing! This subdued the madwoman, so Euphrasia asked her pleasantly to sit down and eat her food and be calm, which she did. After further spiritual conflict, the woman was healed (Ch. XXVII - XIX).

Another tale is told in two versions (in Book 7, ch. 19, “Tending the sick”, and Book 8, ch. XXVI, “Eulogius and the Cripple”). The scholar Eulogius of Alexandria entered the holy life with a promise to care for a severely disabled man whom he saw in the marketplace. That man was happy to be taken up, fed, washed and maintained in the saint's cell. Yet after 15 years the cripple got tired of this life, and denounced Eulogius as a crafty hypocrite and criminal who was just using him for his own spiritual ego-trip. The cripple demanded to be taken back to the marketplace, where he could see some ordinary scenes of life and meet some normal people, and maybe get some decent food! After ineffectual attempts to sort out the quarrel, Eulogius and the cripple went for mediation to St Anthony. The holy old monk
banged their heads together and told them to go home and live together in peace and harmony.


WACE, Alan JB (1903-1904) Grotesques and the Evil Eye. Annual of the British School of Athens No. X, pp. 103-114. Lists 76 “grotesque”, crippled or deformed figures in bronze, marble etc, and discusses their probable origins in Asia Minor, Egypt and nearby areas, and their possible apotropaic functions.


WALLS, Neal H (2007) The origins of the disabled body: disability in ancient Mesopotamia. In: H Avalos, SJ Melcher & J Schipper (eds) This Abled Body: Rethinking Disabilities in Biblical Studies, 13-30. Society of Biblical Literature. From a background in Hebrew and Akkadian studies, Walls reaches further back to “direct the reader to important textual resources from Mesopotamia and to explore the representation of disability in the myth of Enki and Ninmah using a community model of disability” (p. 29), the latter model being one in which “disability is defined or measured by one's capacity to fulfill socially prescribed tasks or functions rather than by medical or physical criteria” (p. 15). The chapter does usefully open up a significant amount of textual work and interpretation, much of it necessarily tentative, that has had very little attention in the field of disability history. (See BLACK et al 1998-2006, and BOTTEIRO & KRAMER 1989, for 'Enki and Ninmah' translations).

one who is deaf and does not hear, to whom men make (signs) with the hand”.


WENSINCK AJ (1927, reprint 1960) A Handbook of Early Muhammadan Tradition, alphabetically arranged. Leiden: Brill. xviii + 269 pp. The relevant tradition is summarised in a phrase or sentence, and authorities for it are given. (See also AL-BAGHAWI, AL-BUKHARI, KASSIS, KHERI).


WERTLIEB EC (1988) Attitudes towards disabilities as found in the Talmud. J. Psychology and Judaism 12: 192-214. Quotes extensively from Talmudic lore and rabbinic interpretations, to rebut the idea that negative attitudes towards disabled people were promoted in early Hebrew literature. (See ABRAMS, above).


WIGGERMANN FAM (1993-1997) Mischwesen. A. In: DO Edzard et al. (eds) Reallexicon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie, 8: 222-245. Berlin: de Gruyter. Describes and classifies a variety of Babylonian minor monsters or beings of mixed or hybrid nature (man-animal-bird combinations and deformed entities), in antiquity, who survived as clay objects “interred at strategical points” in house or palace, “to serve as apotropaic guardians” (p. 222); or were depicted on seals, or artistic representations, with various cosmological functions, “as a class of supernatural beings that are neither gods nor demons” (p. 231). Some displayed “abnormalities, redoublings, and metamorphoses” (236), with more than one head, androgynous nature, or other peculiarities. A survey of 36 types is listed (242-244) and sketched (245-246). (See further description and discussion by GREEN, on “Mischwesen. B.”).


WINTER, Irene J (1989) The body of the able ruler: toward an understanding of the statues of Gudea. In: H Behrens, D Loding & MT Roth (eds) Dumu-E(2)-Dub-Ba-A. Studies in Honor of Ake W Sjöberg, 573-583. Occasional Publications of the Samuel Noah Kramer Fund, 11 [9?]. Philadelphia: The University Museum. Statues of Gudea, governor of the city state of Lagash in southern Mesopotamia toward the close of the 3rd millennium BC, are considered by Winter to be a flawless embodiment of the ideal, symbolically displaying leadership, strength, wisdom, alertness, piety. [This is in some contrast with ordinary bodies, and still more so with deformed or disabled bodies, though the latter point is not made by the author.]

WOLFSON, Harry A (1935) The internal senses in Latin, Arabic, and Hebrew philosophic
Detailed, scholarly account of the varied understanding of terms in Latin, Hebrew, Arabic,
(and also Greek) for the 'internal senses' as used by thinkers in the classical and medieval
Mediterranean and Middle East, ranging from Aristotle through the Church Fathers, the
major Arab philosophers and later Medieval Christian theologians. Various systems of
classification were used for cognitive processes, with some mutual influence, sometimes
hampered by shifts of meaning in translation. [While not concerned with disability, the paper
has importance, and a cautionary function, for historical studies of the meaning of some
impairments and disabilities across the Mediterranean and Middle Eastern regions. Lack or
serious diminution of receptive senses such as sight and hearing (and to a lesser extent, touch,
taste and smell) is both historically inherent and fairly transparent in ideas of impairment and
disability. Absence or diminution of internal processing by the 'cognitive faculties', exhibiting
as weaknesses in the development, maturing and practice of thinking, awareness, common
sense, intellect, focus, memory, imagination, planning, communication, (and other related
terms), seem to be inherent in concepts of 'mental retardation' or 'intellectual impairment'. Yet
these have been, and are, considerably less transparent in their meaning, as there is a wide
range in both the popular, the educated, and the scientific conceptualisation of these
processes.]

WOODINGS, Ann F (1971) The medical resources and practices of the Crusader states in

[Friedenwald, q.v., praises this as “the first systematic and comprehensive modern treatise”
on the topic, also having an extensive bibliography.]

YOELI, Meir (1955) A 'facies leontina' of leprosy on an ancient Canaanite jar. *J. History of
Medicine* 10: 331-333.
The jar, dated probably from the 14th century BC Palestine, appeared to show a face with
features associated with leprosy.

YOELI M (1968) Mot, the Canaanite god, as symbol of the leper. *Bulletin of the New York
Academic Medicine* 44 (8) 1057-1067.
The author returned to the subject of his 1955 paper (see previous item), suggesting that new
light had been shed on leprosy in ancient Canaan by Ugaritic texts. The 'dark kingdom Sheol'
of the Canaanite deity Mot was also called 'Bat Choffat', the house of the dead, similar to a
Biblical expression 'Bet Chofshit', the house of segregation for lepers (Hebrew book of Kings
2:5 and 15; Chronicles 2:2 and 26). The leonine face on the ancient jar was a representation
of Mot, the lord of the underworld, as a leper.

YONG, Amos (2007) *Theology and Down Syndrome. Reimagining disability in late
While mainly reviewing and updating Christian theological thinking on intellectual
impairment and disability, in the light of modern disability studies, Yong offers much more
than the usual cursory paragraphs on 'history'. His “biblical and historical trajectories” on
“the blind, the deaf and the lame” (pp. 19-42, notes on 299-303), and “world religious
perspectives” on “disability in context” (pp. 140-150, notes p. 317) take in a useful amount of historical scholarship on disability, in and beyond the Abrahamic faiths.

Early perceptions of (possible) epilepsy in a Persian monarch, Cambyses, son of Cyrus. Herodotus (Book III, 1-39) depicted the brutal and apparently irrational behaviour of Cambyses during his invasion of Egypt, which he thought could have arisen from the 'sacred disease', or some other affliction. Beliefs about epilepsy are discussed.

Sayings ascribed to Ptahhotep (fl. 2450 BC) translated from Egyptian hieroglyphs to French. Includes an eloquent lament over bodily decay and impairments of sight and hearing with old age (pp. 69-70). (See PRITCHARD, above, p. 412, for an English translation).

16th century blind physician Da'ud ibn `Omar al-Antaki.

See note on IBN AL-GAWZI (above).
Volume 4, p.17, The Vendidad (Fargard II, 27-29) paints one of the earliest pictures of a 'New World' from which disability, disease and behavioural weaknesses are excluded, apparently by selective breeding. Volume 23, pp. 75-76 prohibits disabled, diseased or wicked people, or women, from drinking the divine libation. See also TARAPOREWALA. [NB the term commonly given as 'Vendidad' is more correctly transcribed as 'Videvdat']


Suggests that a leprosarium constructed at the behest of the Empress Eudocia (died 460 CE), and mentioned in the 14th century by the historian Nicephorus Callistus, was located at Herodium, on the edge of the Judean desert. Some evidence from archaeology and circumstantial detail is offered.