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Article. Source : Histoire culturelle de l'Europe

Dina Bacalexi et Mehrnaz Katouzian-Safadi, "Medical auxiliaries from the physician's viewpoint in Ancient, Medieval and Renaissance medical texts : codifying professional skills or establishing a hierarchy ?", Histoire culturelle de l'Europe, 2, 2017

Extrait de l'article

Hippocrates (460-370 B.C.), Galen (129-210 A.D.), and Soranos of Ephesus (ca. 98-138 A.D.) refer to female 'paramedics'. Razes († 925), as well as Avicenna (980-1037), two physicians, and Ibn al-Quff (1233-1286), a surgeon, underline the instrumental role of nurses in child nutrition and development and provide detailed descriptions of the ideal nurse. The Renaissance commentators of Galen François Valleriolo (1504-1580) and Leonhart Fuchs (1501-1566) insist on the competence and morality of midwives and nurses. The French Renaissance physicians and surgeons Simon de Vallambert († 1558), Jacques and Charles Guillemeau (respectively 1550-1613 and 1588-1656) refer to Galen (but not to Soranos) as well as to the Oriental Medieval physicians, mainly Avicenna and Razes, in order to emphasize good practices and prevent errors of female 'paramedics'.

Our aim is to focus on midwives and nurses in order to examine a gendered medical practice by people who did not study it in an academic context : how and by whom are they to be educated ? How do physicians establish the hierarchical limits between them and their assistants ? What is the status of paramedical knowledge : amateur or professional, although not officially included in the academic medical curricula ?

Concerning the comparison between male and female paramedics, we will only open the debate here with a working hypothesis, as our study is still a work in progress.

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