AR-RĀZĪ ON THE HIDDEN ILLNESS

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The catalogue of Arabic manuscripts in the General Library in Rabat, Morocco, lists a "Treatise by Abū Bakr ar-Rāzī on the Hidden Illness (ad-dā' al-khāfī)." No such treatise by ar-Rāzī is known from bibliographical reference. When I looked at the manuscript during my visit to Rabat in 1963, I found it to be a treatise on ʿubnah, on which ar-Rāzī is known to have composed a monograph. ʿUbnah is a much used term for passive male homosexuality, and maʿbūn is the individual affected by it; it will be seen that ar-Rāzī's use of the word comes as close to describing genetic confusion of gender in general terms as can be expected from a man of the Middle Ages. Following a lead provided by Fuat Sezgin, I inquired about manuscripts containing the treatise in Teheran. With the greatest courtesy and promptness, Professor M. T. Danespazhuu sent me photostats of four manuscripts. Three of them contain ar-Rāzī's Risālah fi l-ʿUbnah, and the

1 Cf. J. S. Allouche and A. Regragui, Catalogue des manuscrits arabes de Rabat, II, 332, no. 2641, shelf-no. 1588a (Paris, 1954, and Rabat, 1958, Publ. de l'Institut des Hautes Études Marocaines, 58, 63). The treatise appears on fols. 440-49a. The manuscript contains many different works, though this is the only one dealing exclusively with a medical subject. Since it is written throughout by the same Maghrībi hand, the copying date of Muḥarram 917/April 1511 found at the end of one of the entries, fol. 145b, applies to the entire Ms. The name of the scribe is Abū l-Qāsim ʿAbdallāh b. Muhammad b. Muhammad b. Ibrāhim b. ʿAbd-as-Salām al-Asadi al-Andalusī. Entries in the Ms. are listed under the following numbers in the Catalogue: 938, 950, 1173, 1375-1377, 1379-1381, 1385, 1387, 1712, 1737, 2007, 2424, 2426 f., 2445 f., 2454, 2501, 2503 (containing the date), and 2641.

I wish to thank the authorities of the libraries in Rabat for the courtesies generously extended to me during my visits there in 1963 and 1976.

2 The title in Ibn an-Nadim, Fihrist, ed. G. Flugel (Leipzig, 1871-2), 301, 1. 18, reads: Kitāb al-ʿUbnah wa-ʿilājīhā. The Rāzī-bibliography of al-Birūnī (Risālah fi fihrist kutub . . . ar-Rāzī, ed. P. Kraus [Paris, 1936], 8, no. 33) has 'Iḥāṭ al-ʿUbnah, “The Treatments for ʿUbnah,” Al-Qīṭī, ed. J. Lippert (Leipzig, 1903), 276, 11. 1 f., has the same title as Fihrist, with the addition of the preposition “on.” Ibn ʿAbī Ṣayyībī, 'Uyūn al-anbā', ed. A. Mūllī (Cairo and Königsberg, 1882-4), I, 320, 11. 15 f., expands the title of the Fihrist to include the words “and its explanation (wa-ṭabikhāhī).” This may be correct, but it could be a corruption of “wa-sababīhā, and its reason,” which looks almost alike in Arabic script.

In the treatise itself, ar-Rāzī refers to it as maqālah (here translated "essay"). What we have is hardly a kitāb, "book," which implies a more substantial work. Ar-Rāzī himself made a distinction between kitāb, maqālah, and risālah when speaking of his approximately two hundred published works in his ar-Sīrah al-jāmīʿfīyāh, ed. trans. P. Kraus in Orientalia, n.s., 1935, 4: 319, 333, ed. by the same, Abū Bakr . . . Raghenzs Opus philosophico (Cairo, 1939), 109, 11. 9 f.

If the text available to us at this time is an excerpt, it might very well be a representative one that omits nothing essential. The authorship of ar-Rāzī, about which I originally expressed doubts, seems beyond dispute. Lingering suspicions can all satisfactorily be disposed of. The quotation in Ibn al-Maṭrān provides strong supporting evidence, even if by itself it proves no more than that the text, in some undetermined form, was believed in the twelfth century to be a work by ar-Rāzī, and already al-Birūnī knew of works of doubtful attribution. While ar-Rāzī likes to refer the reader to other works of his, as a careful scholar he is usually specific in his references and indicates the exact titles. In the treatise on ubnah, his references are vague, but this may be because he did not feel it would be necessary for the reader to have recourse to other specific works as they did not contribute much to the debate. The introductory statement on motivation and quality has its analogues in other works of ar-Rāzī. Quoting cases from his own practice (even if it is only one as in the present work) was ar-Rāzī’s customary procedure. Forgers could have successfully reproduced these devices, to be sure, but that is unlikely. A rather uncommon scientific spirit, such as that of ar-Rāzī, is unmistakably at work throughout; if the author appears to be brief and a bit jumpy in his presentation, this may be due to his uncertainty and hesitation as to what to say about the puzzling subject. In sum, there is no decisive evidence to cast suspicion on ar-Rāzī’s authorship, but everything tends to confirm it. However, we must repeat that the original work may have been fuller than the text preserved in R and T.

The title found in R, speaking of a “hidden illness,” goes back to ar-Rāzī’s own reference to a work so-titled by an unnamed predecessor. “Hidden” is

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* Cf. al-Birūnī, 7.
* Cf., for instance, as-Sirah al-falsafiyah (above n. 2) or Sirr ṣīna’at at-Tibb, which corresponds to the beginning of Liber Razi de secretis in medicina qui liber Aphorismorum appellatur, printed in the old collections of ar-Rāzī’s works (Venice, 1497; Lyon, 1511). (I used the Arabic manuscript in the Royal Library in Rabat, no. 3477; for other mss., see Sezgin, III, 286). The frequent references in the Murshid (below, n. 10) are also always specific.
* It seems unlikely that in one of the instances the general reference should not be to ar-Rāzī’s works, see below, n. 32.
* Cf., for instance, the introduction of his famous work on smallpox where he says that there is no exhaustive and satisfactory book by the Ancients on the subject, that Galen does not mention a specific or sufficient treatment or convincing cause, and that the experts in Syriac and Greek he consulted knew of no detailed information on the subject in Galen’s works not available in Arabic translation. In the Murshid, ar-Rāzī complains about the lack of arrangement, obscurity, etc., of the Hippocratic Aphorisms, cf. A. Z. Iskandar, in Revue de l’Institut des Manuscrits Arabes, 1380/1961, 7 (1): 17. At the beginning of his work On Coitus (Ms. Istanbul, Aya Sofya 3724, fol. 156b), he states that the defects of earlier works on the subject caused him to write his own.
of Aristotle and devotes the thirty-first of his own Problems to a paraphrase of Physical Problems, IV, 26, ascribed to the Greek philosopher. Ar-Râzi’s illustrious, much older Christian contemporary, Qustâ b. Luqâ, did not evade the subject in his remarkable “‘Book on the reasons why people differ in their character traits, their ways of life, their desires, and their preferences.’” Qustâ admits to having knowledge of only two brief passages from the works of the Ancients dealing with it, one from the sixth book of Aristotle’s Physical Problems, and the other from his work on Physiognomy. The contention that passive intercourse serves for some individuals as a stimulus for active intercourse goes back to the Physical Problems, but Qustâ also reports that the great Hunayn b. Ishâq called his attention to it. He himself hesitantly proffers the suggestion that the cause may be sought in the smallness and dysfunction of the penis as stimulating itching and motion.

All this is indeed less, and less scientific, than what ar-Râzi had to say. As in all his medical monographs, he structured his discussion to deal in strict sequence with cause and symptoms and the recommendable treatments and medicaments. He considers the illness to be basically a genetic one. This would imply that it cannot be “‘cured.’” However, ar-Râzi uses the unambiguous root for “‘healing’” (b-r-) twice, and apparently refuses to give up hope for a complete cure under favorable circumstances; mostly he speaks of Ḥilâj which vacillates in meaning between treatment and the cure effected by it. A certain amount of physical treatment at an early stage promises some relief, as do certain drugs and the observance of certain dietary rules. He considers the psychological aspect of the disease and recommends avoidance of any sort of self-indulgence. In particular, he warns against the kind of entertainment, common at the time both in public places and at private parties, which would arouse sexual emotions. A most potent palliative he


19 The reference to Aristotle clearly is to Physical Problems, IV, 26. For the Physiognomy, cf. R. Foerster, Scriptores physiognomonic (Leipzig, 1893), I, 34. The latter passage was referred to by Y. Mourad, La physiognomonie arabe (Paris, 1939), 46, n. 3, who cites Qustâ. Cf. also the similar passage in Polemo, ed. Foerster, I, 277, ch. 61.
fourth a quotation from it from Ibn al-Maṭrān’s Bustān al-aṭībā’ with Ibn al-Maṭrān’s comments (see below, n. 20). 4

As it turned out, the Teheran manuscripts (T) contain only the first half of the work. All three of them do not have the section concerned with the treatment of the disease which, as indicated by the transmitted titles (above, n. 2), was an integral part of it. That section can, therefore, not be a secondary addition in the Rabat manuscript (R). It must have been omitted by the original copyist or compiler of T. On the other hand, T contains a long insertion not to be found in R. Whether or not this insertion belonged to ar-Rāzī’s original text, is a much more difficult problem. It first refers briefly to a certain assumed characteristic of mules and hinnies, apparently as a confirmation of the possibility that either the male or the female sperm may be prevalent without being the exclusive determinant. The line of reasoning remains, however, rather obscure (see below, n. 34). We then find a long quotation, from “another treatise” (introduced in the third, and continued in the first, person), 5 on the sterility of mules. At least on the face of it, it has nothing to do with the subject at hand. In fact, it tends to argue against the assumptions relied on in the treatise on ubnah. The conclusion seems likely that this passage was not found in the original treatise and was derived by the compiler of T from another work of ar-Rāzī. The subject of the sterility of mules, which was so fascinating because it seemed to provide a clue for the solution of the distressing medical problem of human sterility, was no doubt discussed by him in his many works. The larger part of the addition in T can thus be eliminated as an original component of the treatise on ubnah. It is less certain that a similar case could be made for the first few lines. If they belonged to the original text, we are faced with the possibility that the text of R is also an excerpt, and a manuscript of the complete text remains still to be discovered.

4 The Mss. as indicated by Prof. Daneshpazhuh are: Parlement, no. 352 Tabatabai; Parlement, no. 6201/5 (Catalogue, XIX, 188); and Bibliothèque Senat, no. 360, pp. 383–384 (Bulletin de la Bibliothèque Centrale de l’Université, vol. 6, p. 563). I have so far been unable to follow up his bibliographical references, which may have relevant information. On the dates of the Mss., see below, n. 76. The excerpt from Ibn al-Maṭrān is contained in Ms. Parlement, no. 3821/12 (Catalogue, X, 1852).

The three Teheran Mss. are identical in contents and go back to a common source. Textual variants are minimal. The Tabatabai and Senat Mss. have homoioteleuton omissions as compared to Ms. Parlement, no. 6201, which is the best of the three. Ms. Tabatabai has only one of Ms. Senat’s three omissions, and is thus quite likely to have been the Ms. from which Ms. Senat was copied, although the difference in the title (below, n. 23) is a slight problem.

5 If the reference is to the work of someone else whose view was quoted and debated by ar-Rāzī in his treatise on ubnah, that other authority must have been mentioned in a passage now omitted. It would mean that there is a good likelihood that T and R represent a very much shortened version.
by his vigorous denunciation of those foolish physicians who think that there might be a cure?22

The omission of the second half of ar-Rāzī’s treatise concerned with the treatment of ubnah in T might possibly be due to the influence of Ibn Sīnā and his school. The compiler of T might have considered this part as superfluous and outdated, and therefore omitted it. We have no way of knowing whether this was so. If this was his motivation, he did not serve scholarship well. It was unavoidable for ar-Rāzī to come up with highly speculative, not to say fanciful or even silly, ideas. As a whole, however, his monograph on a problem or set of problems long debated and as yet unsolved would seem to be quite remarkable for its time as a work of serious scholarship groping in the dark.

TRANSLATION

Muḥammad b. Zakariyyā’ ar-Rāzī says:23

As we have stated in the beginning of more than one of our books, (scholars) later in time must investigate what early (scholars) have neglected and24 postponed25 or scattered26 (in different places) or expressed obscurely. They will thus mention what they had neglected, bring together what they had kept separate, comment upon what they had expressed summarily, and explain what they had kept obscure.

Something the early (scholars)27 have neglected is the discussion of ubnah and its cause and treatment. Till now, I have not found this discussed exhaustively by anyone. Indeed, I have not found it mentioned by nearly anyone of them except for one man who wrote a book on this subject which he entitled “The Hidden Illness,” but he indicated in it28 neither specific29 cause

23 R “Abū Bakr says.” The title in R is: “The essay (maqālah) of Abū Bakr ar-Rāzī on the hidden illness.” In T, it reads: “The treatise (risālah) on ubnah by Muhammad b. Zakariyyā’,” which in Ms. Senat, however, is replaced by: “On ubnah, also one of his compositions and works composed for one of his friends.”
24 R “or”.
25 Ar. tawwul, whose more common meaning, “to explain at length,” does not seem to fit here. If ar-Rāzī meant to criticize too great length, it could be only as a general statement and would be inapplicable to the subject at hand.
26 R om.
27 Ar-Rāzī may have thought here of the Ancients, but apparently his intention was to include the early centuries of Islam to his own time.
28 T om. It could mean: “in connection with (the disease).”
29 Mustaqqil om. R. It means literally something like “being in independent control of.”
meant to imply that it is an illness which the afflicted person keeps secret because he is ashamed of it. Love is sometimes called a hidden disease which one tries to conceal. The "hidden illness" allegedly caused by hashish may refer to *ubnah*, which in another passage is stated expressly to be one of the evil consequences of hashish consumption. Elsewhere, *ubnah* is referred to as the "incurable (ʿudāl) illness." The scribe of R, or an earlier copyst, may have picked the title in order to avoid the straightforward but crude word. This would be in line with the note of prudery struck at the end of the treatise where ar-Rāzī apologizes for having discussed such an unpleasant subject. Coming from a physician, it may seem a somewhat unexpected statement, and those who know the ribaldry and coarseness of the innumerable jokes and anecdotes in Arabic belles lettres that have the *maʿbūn* as their object may be surprised by it. However, they need not be. The attitude expressed by ar-Rāzī reflects Muslim middle class sentiment much more accurately than the entertaining literature, and while ar-Rāzī’s statement is particularly to the point, it is not unique.

Ar-Rāzī’s claim that his is the first detailed work to deal with the subject is hard to refute. No earlier medical monographs, and none from later medieval times, are known at present. In fact, we find little serious discussion either before or after him. The ninth-century ʿIsā b. Māssah invokes the authority

11 Cf., for example, the verse quoted from Ibn al-Jawzi in an-Nuwayri, *Nihāyat al-arab*, II, 143, 1. 10 (Cairo, 1342—): *siqam khaft.*
13 Ibid., 74, 82. The genuineness of the ascription to ar-Rāzī remains to be ascertained.
14 Cf. *ar-Riḍālah al-jāmī‘ah*, ed. Jamīl Ṣaḥib (Damascus, 1368-71/1948-51), II, 185. The description of *ubnah* as a disease is found also in lascivious anecdotes such as are contained in the collection Ms. Aya Sofya 2938, fol. 280b, 281a. In connection with cases of coprophilia and similar aberrations, the description of *marad ġarif*, which is probably to be understood as something like "voluptuous/decadent disease," is employed by al-Tawḥīdī, *al-Baṣīr wa-dh-dhakhā’ir*, ed. A. Amin and as-Sayyyid A. Ṣaqq (Cairo, 1373/1953) 90; ed. I. al-Kayhān (Damascus, 1964), I, 108.
15 Cf. my forthcoming article on the role of sex in medieval Muslim society in the *Sixth Giorgio Levi Della Vida Biennial Conference*.
16 An Ismaʿīlī work of an uncertain early date explains that no true Muslim can be affected by the "unclean illness" which came into existence through the reincarnation of a licentious woman, cf. al-Mufaddal b. ʿUmar, *Kitāb al-Haft wa-l-ḥaḍīlah*, ed. ʿĀ. Tāmir and I. Khalīf (Beirut, 1960), 109 f. Analogous ideas about the origin of homosexuality appear in the religious literature. A manuscript said to exist in private possession and entitled *Kitāb al-Ubnah wa-l-maʿbūn* may not be a medical work but a collection of anecdotes, cf. P. Bath, *al-Fihrist* (Cairo, 1938), II, 197, no. 2498. The same applies to other known titles using different terms.

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has not provided the basic reason. That is, one must know why the sperm of mules becomes colder and thinner, and why their uteri are placed in such a position. It should rather be said that the most likely and convincing (explanation) concerning this subject is that the sperm of this animal has undergone a transformation (istahāla) and has greatly deviated from the nature of reproductive sperm because it is generated from two sperms different in species that have mixed although they are very different. This has the effect that it is outside the accidental temper (‘araḍ mizdī) of each one of the two. Each one of the sperms has thereby been removed far from its own nature, and something very unlike both is generated from them. Therefore, their sperm has become non-reproductive.

Now, I say: This proof does not at all achieve the objective sought, because the fact that what is generated is unlike both does not require it to be non-reproductive; it rather requires it to be able to reproduce another species. If it is correct, as stated (by some), that the sperm of the sim’ (Lycan pictus), which is a cross between wolf and hyena, is able to reproduce, then the proof is entirely invalid. If it is not correct—and it is obvious that this is the truth—, the proof needs completion, because the statement mentioned leaves it incomplete. The most likely assumption is that, if sperms of two species combine in the uterus, the formative power of the sperm of the male finds it hard to act upon the sperm of the female because it can indeed influence it, or be influenced by it, only with difficulty. The same applies to the formative sperm of the female. Thus, both powers are weakened or ineffective in the male and female of the species that originates from the two species, because they find it difficult and troublesome to act and be acted upon. Similarly, if the stomach of a person is able to digest only soft foods, and he then combines soft and coarse food, the digestive power of his stomach is weakened, because it suffers on account of having to digest that coarse food. If the power of formation in the sperm of the female mule is weakened or ineffective, no animal can be generated from it.

If the sperm of the man is the one that transforms, the newborn child will be male, and if the sperm of the woman is the one that is prevalent, the newborn child will be female. We have explained the correctness of this proposition in another book (of ours). The Ancients have also much discussed it.

37 T adds: “Then he says.”
38 See above, n. 32.
39 The theory adopted here by ar-Rāzī is reported by Galen in the name of Straticenus and rejected by him, cf. De semine, IV, 629 (Kühn). Another theory more acceptable to Muslim authors (cf., for instance, ‘Arīb, Khalīf al-jāmīn, ed. & trans. N. Abdelkader and H. Jahier [Algiers, 1375/1956], text, 24; trans., 32) is related to one discussed by Aristotle (De generatione animalium 765a4 ff.) and reported in the Placita philosophorum, V, 7, 5 (cf. Daiber, op. cit. [n. 36 above], 86), where it is not made explicit that Aristotle rejected it; cf. ar-Rāzī, Ḥawāwi (Hyderabad, 1374-90/1955-71), IX, 75, 79. The theory that the amount (kafrak) of the male or female sperm determines sex is mentioned by ar-Rāzī, Ḥawāwi, IX, 126, as that of “the Indian” (cf. Ullmann, op. cit. [n. 17 above], 106). The subject was, of course, of immense interest and provoked many attempts to explain it. (For the Arabic translation of the cited passage of De gen. anim., cf. the edition by J. Brugman and H. J. Drossaart Lulofs [Leiden, 1971], 137 f.).
founds (true to his intellectual outlook) in the occupation with science and metaphysics.

In his commentary on the passage referring to the bearded Kurdish lady, Ibn al-Ma'āran largely agrees with ar-Rāzī on the genetic origin of the disease. He is slightly more detailed with respect to the physical characteristics of masculinity and femininity. However, he feels compelled to account for the existence of various degrees in the loss of sexual identity. He suggests as a likely cause the different amount of hotness in the temperament of the afflicted individual. In both males and females, the symptoms he mentions include disinterest in intercourse with the other sex. His starting point leads him to paying slightly greater attention to female masculinity, which, he says, may even go so far that masculine women “kill with their own hands.” It may be due to his interest in the factor of hotness that he concludes that race (jinān and geographical location (makān) play a significant role. “If a Slavic woman (sāqlābiyāh) were affected similarly as the Kurdish woman mentioned by ar-Rāzī, she would under no circumstances have grown a beard.”

A predominantly genetic cause of ubnah is strongly denied by Ibn Sinā. whose brief discussion of the subject is patently dependent on the Physical Problems, with, however, considerable distortion and change. He believes that it is the result of habituation in an individual possessing weak sexual potency to begin with and a strong desire created by the imagination (shahwah wahmiyāth). He rejects as absurd a physiological explanation proposed by an unnamed scholar concerning an abnormality of the sensing nerve leading into the penis. The persons affected by ubnah may be physically better endowed than ordinary males. They are people of a vile psychological (suqūt an-nafs) and bad physical disposition who have accustomed themselves to non-virtuous ways (radā'at al-ādah) and feminine behavior. "Any other theory is wrong. He who wishes to treat them is the most stupid of men. Their disease is one of the imagination, not a physical one. Things that break the desire, such as worries, hunger, vigils, detention, and beatings, constitute useful treatment." Ibn Sinā does not mention ar-Rāzī’s treatise. It would be surprising if he had not known it. Could it be that he meant ar-Rāzī

20 For Ibn al-Ma'āran (Ma'āran), cf. Ullmann, op. cit. (n. 17 above), 165f. The number of known manuscripts of his Bustān al-qībālī is growing. In addition to the Teheran manuscript (above n. 4), I have used the manuscript which is in the National Library of Medicine in Washington, D.C., where the passage in question appears on fol. 174b of the old backward foliation, and Ms. Tunis, Bibliothèque Nationale, 14287 (no. 5400 of the Ahmadiyah collection), fol. 7b.

21 Cf. Ibn Sinā, Qūnūn (Rome, 1593), 562 f. Ibn Sinā was quite closely followed by Ibn Hubal, Mukhārūs (Hyderabad, 1362-64), IV, 82-84.
in some male animals, and many\textsuperscript{53} people tell of a woman who gave birth to children and then afterwards, a male organ appeared on her (body).\textsuperscript{54} This story and others like it have come to us from many directions. For the purpose we have before us, we do not need (to ascertain) the correctness of this (particular) story. Rather, we can be satisfied with what has been mentioned before,\textsuperscript{55} namely, that not every male is masculine in the extreme and not every female is feminine in the extreme and that there exist masculine women and feminine men.

For, after the ideas which we have just mentioned have been perceived, the cause of \textit{ubnāh} is easy to understand. That is, when it happens by chance that the male newborn child is feminine because of the weak degree of prevalence of the sperm of the male over the sperm of the female, even if it is prevalent in general, the consequence is that the male organ, the testicles, and the sperm ducts and vessels do not fully tend outward and do not hang down low\textsuperscript{56} and are not big and strong, but the contrary is the case. I mean, they tend upward, are mostly also small, withdraw inward into the cavity of the belly, and are drawn toward the hypogastric and\textsuperscript{57} pubic regions because of their weak masculinity, since the organs of reproduction in the female are placed inside the belly and conditioned to tend in that direction, while in males, they are outside the belly and are by nature disposed to tend in that direction. Such disposition has the effect that the tickling and the motion that results from the sperm stirring it up by its quantity and quality are in the region of the rectum behind\textsuperscript{58} and not in the direction of the hypogastric\textsuperscript{59} and pubic regions, because the sperm vessels and testicles tend by nature in that direction. Therefore, someone affected by \textit{ubnāh} is rarely found to have large\textsuperscript{60} testicles that hang down, but the contrary is the case. Mostly he will have small and wrinkled testicles, drawn toward above and entering the groin (\textit{urbiyatān}). The hanging down of the testicles and the thickness and width of the skin of the testicles are an unfailing\textsuperscript{61} indication of the absence of

\textsuperscript{53} T om.
\textsuperscript{54} T "she revealed a male organ."
\textsuperscript{55} Thus T (al-madhkūr ānfān); R al-mawjūd dāʾīman, which may be translated "what always exist," but is probably a mere mistake.
\textsuperscript{56} Thus T (mistasbblāh mutadālliyah); R musblīn mutaddāyimah.
\textsuperscript{57} R om. "hypogastric and." The term given here the approximate translation "hypogastric region" is \textit{tunna}. It is defined as the region between stomach and pubes and stated to correspond in the front of the body to the lower part of the back, \textit{qutan}, which extends down and includes the perineum. Cf. for instance, ar-Rāzī, \textit{Iḥāī}, X. 59, 11. 13 f.; Ibn Manṣūr, \textit{Lisān al-ʿArab} (Būداخل, 1300-8), XVI, 235.
\textsuperscript{58} T min khalīfān; R min khalīfāhī.
\textsuperscript{59} R "bladder."
\textsuperscript{60} Thus T (maʿbūn ʿazīm); R fawy (or bwn) ʿzm.
\textsuperscript{61} R om.
If the matter is as we have described it, it may happen⁴⁰ in some cases that the sperm of the man is very forceful and strong in transforming the sperm of the female. Accordingly, it is necessary that the child born from such a sperm will be very strongly masculine—I mean, the properties of masculinity in him will be strongly and obviously masculine, such as limbs hard, dry, and large, much hair, a strong pulse and breath, prominent (zuhūr) joints, thick bones and similar properties peculiar to persons of a hot and dry temper, such as courage, quickness of speech and anger, and the like.⁴¹ If it happens in some cases also that it is the sperm of the female that possesses very great force and prevalence, then the newborn child will have the properties that are peculiar to females, which are the extreme opposites of what we have mentioned. Mostly it happens that one of the two sperms undergoes transformations between these (extremes). Then, the newborn child, whether male or female, is not masculine in the extreme and not feminine in the extreme.

If the matter with regard to this subject as is we have described it,⁴² it is possible that in some cases it happens that a male child's masculinity or a female child’s femininity is extremely weak. We therefore find masculine women, as we find feminine men. Among masculine women, it may go⁴³ so far that they have little menses or none at all,⁴⁴ and occasionally, they will grow beards. I have seen beards and⁴⁵ faint moustaches⁴⁶ on certain females.⁴⁷ Once I saw a Kurdish woman with a luxurious beard who had been brought to al-Mu’taṣid as a curiosity.⁴⁸ This is not the only thing that may occur. Rather, when the two sperms are equivalent and the one has little superiority over the other, hermaphrodites (khināth) will occur, and a child may even be born with both penis and vulva. We have learned⁴⁹ stories in this connection containing things that are marvelous,⁵⁰ hideous, and noteworthy⁵¹ in connection with this chapter. We have omitted to mention them because we consider them absurd.⁵² For instance, a certain surgeon is reported to have found a uterus

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⁴⁰ T“and it happens.”
⁴¹ R“and other such properties peculiar to them.”
⁴² T“mentioned.”
⁴³ R adds the negation lam (?).
⁴⁴ Cf. Aristotle, De gen. anim. 747a1 ff.
⁴⁵ T om. “beards and.”
⁴⁶ T ṣḥwār’s (?). Shawārib “moustaches” occurs also in Ibn al-Majrān’s comments.
⁴⁷ ‘Ādī (R ff) khalq min an-nisā’.
⁴⁸ See above, p. 50.
⁴⁹ R appar. ta‘addar; T ṣm‘dt ilāynā.
⁵⁰ T om.
⁵¹ T om.
⁵² Thus T (li-bu’dīhā ‘indana); R li-bu’d kawnihā ‘annā.
particular, if he is obviously feminine and effeminate (ta’nīth-takhnīth) and loves very much to be like a woman. If it is in its beginning stages and the person affected by it is not obviously effeminate and not strongly inclined to pleasure but rather ashamed (of it) and would like to be free from it, it is possible for him to be treated.

The best treatment consists of frequently massaging penis and testicles and drawing them downward. Maids and slaves\(^{37}\) with nice faces and much practice (mufrītāt) in this matter should be put in charge of the patient, in order to rub and massage that place and apply themselves to it and kiss it and fondle it. This should be done as much as possible. At other times, his treatment should consist of the application to the pubic region, penis, and testicles of ben oil to which borax, euphorbia, and musk are added. At times, some asafetida may be added to the oil. The penis is massaged with it, and drops of it are put into the urethra. When this treatment is applied, he should sit in hot water, and the penis and testicles are massaged while he is in the bath tub.\(^{28}\) Once each week, fluid pitch is employed. For it\(^{29}\) is the strongest treatment, which draws the blood and the hot vapor into this direction. If erection approaches (?),\(^{30}\) while the testicles hang down, the penis extends and grows big, and desire increases, it is a sign of the effectiveness of the treatment. He must apply the entire treatment faithfully. Nothing whatever should be omitted. When he feels well (fī awqāt al-ittisāʾ laḥū), the patient must not give up any part of it, the first being, as we have described, the maids, then the application of (various) oils, and then the fluid pitch. In addition, we should undertake treatment (tadbīr) of the lower back. For as there is need for the blood and the spirit to be drawn to this region (the genitals), thus the region of the lower spine and the rectum must be cooled. This is to be done by his lying on his back on the ground that is sprinkled (with water) or by his placing on his lower back rags likewise wetted with ice water. He should guard against lying down on the back upon something hot. He should wear a wide belt for a long period.\(^{31}\) He should receive an enema of rose oil into which vinegar has been boiled till the vinegar (with the rose oil) can be poured, and also with rose water with a little vinegar. In general, if he is able to have his lower

\(^{37}\) R wa-ru’ī, read wa-qīghāb.

\(^{38}\) In the Hellenistic tradition, ar-Rāzī has much to say on the therapeutic use of baths, cf., for instance, Murshid (n. 10), 38, or Liber ad Almansorem, IV, 18.

\(^{29}\) The entire procedure, it would seem, rather than just the fluid pitch.

\(^{30}\) R is not clear (fa-idhā aqbal al-in‘āz fiḥīr, etc. –k-w-n wa-t-hayyatān tandalyyān . . . ), but there can be little doubt about the general meaning.

\(^{31}\) Cf. below, n. 84.
back always cold and the pubic and hypogastric regions always hot, he
should do it, for it is the most appropriate thing to do.

It is clear that there is nothing more harmful for someone affected by this
disease than having passive intercourse, as there is nothing more useful for
him than practicing active intercourse or attempting to practice such
intercourse as much as possible.

This then is the sum and substance of the treatment of ubnah according to
the straightforward norm and method.

I am going to mention also (other) ways of treating it. One of them consists
of giving the patient many times an enema of strong intoxicating liquor
(ash-sharab al-musikir). More than one person has been cured by one or two
enemas. Other things that lighten (?) and weaken this are lying on the back
upon the ground and wearing as a belt a large sheet of black lead, also,
receiving an enema of the boiled seed of the chaste-tree and lying on the
back upon its leaves.

This is advice (isharah) for someone who confided his secret to me. I
decided that he would benefit from it, and he did so greatly. When that man ate
and repaired to his bed, this disease bothered him. So one day I advised him to
cut off a piece of ice to serve as a suppository and carry it (in his anus). He
slept in this manner satisfied and was able to dispense with what he had been
forced to do most days. He was almost close to being cured, and he would
have been if he had exercised strong control over himself.

The treatments mentioned by me are right for young men and affluent
people (mutraf). In connection with others, your aim in treating them should
be to make them lose weight and diminish the blood. Thus they should be
ordered to fast, to give up drinking wine, to use vinegar for seasoning, to keep
the lower back as cold as possible, and (to take) drugs known as effective for
diminishing the sperm, especially those that are cold, such as the drug derived
from the roots of waterlilies, roses, camphor, and tabasheer, as this is a drug
that diminishes and jells the sperm. We have mentioned its composition in
more than one place in our books. They should also stick to foods such as

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82 Rykhalf? (?). "Drying" (yu'afs), common in therapy, does not seem to make sense here. Read, perhaps, yud'il another word for "weaken."
83 R al-ward, read al-arad.
refrained here from going into the thorny and much discussed subject of the identification of medicinal plants.
qarīṣ, ṣṣ masūṣ, ṣṣ hulām (?). ṣṣ ḥiṣrimiyah,  ṣṣ with gourds and lentils,  ṣṣ drink constantly ozymel, do much sweating in the bath, place the feet in cold water, keep away from parties where there are amusement, winedrinking, and singing, and occupy themselves with pious devotions and the true kinds of knowledge that take hold of the hearts and engage the souls strongly, such as geometry and logic, and more than that, with that divine knowledge (metaphysics). For the concern with it and the immersion in it weaken all desires.

Having reached this place, I would like to mention the prescription for the compound that diminishes the sperm, so that the person who studies this essay (maqālah) has no need to search for it in my other books and in the books of the Ancients. This is one of the prescriptions:

Take ten dirhams of the dried roots of waterlilies, five dirhams of ground red roses, two and a half dirhams of white sandalwood, and five dānaqs of camphor. These are ten drafts.

Another prescription which is useful when the roots of waterlilies cannot be found: Ten dirhams of ground roses, five dirhams of white tabasheer, two and a half dirhams of white sandalwood, and five dānaqs of camphor. These are ten drafts.

Another prescription for those who dislike camphor: Take five dirhams of ground roses, ten dirhams of feawort seed that is not crushed, three dirhams each of lettuce seed, endive seed, and origanum (?) seed, and two and a half dirhams of dry coriander, (each) draft three dirhams of the whole, with half an ounce of vinegar.

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**Notes:**

86 Defined in the Persian-English dictionary of F. Steingass as “meat or fish eaten with bread.”

87 Described in Steingass as “a dish made of boiled meats, especially young pigeons, fowls, or other birds, dressed in vinegar and stuffed with condiments.” A recipe for it may be found in Muhammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Kāṭib al-Baghdādi, Kitāb al-Tabsīkh, ed. F. al-Bārdī (n.p. [Beirut], 1964), 56, where one also finds matṣarīyih, p. 23; trans. A. J. Arberry, in Islamic Culture, 1939, 13: 41. Cf. also M. Rodinson, in Revue des Études Islamiques, 1949 [1950], 133, with reference to another medieval cookbook, al-Waṣīlah ʿīlāt ʿl-habīb fi waṣīlah, by Ṣīyāṣāt waṣīla, which is not known to me. The correction to hulām (or halām) is suggested by the fact that hulām follows upon masūṣ and qarīṣ in ar-Rāzī, Ḥāwi, X, 262, 1.7. Hāva’s Arabic-English dictionary describes hulām as “veal served with the skin. Kind of animal jelly.”

88 Lane, Arabic-English Dictionary, 584b, basing himself upon J. G. Wetstein, Samachcharīl Lexicon Ararīcum Persicum, 60, defines the dish as “soup made [or flavored] with ripe grapes or dates, or with the juice thereof.” It occurs in ar-Rāzī, Ḥāwi, X, 215, 5. 1. A recipe for it in al-Kāṭib al-Baghdādi, 17 ff.; trans. Arberry, 37 ff.; Rodinson, op. cit. (n. 87 above), 136.

89 R., which is not very clear, seems to have bi-l-qarʿ waṣīla. Note that “lentils” are also mentioned in the Ḥāwi passage cited in n. 88.

90 Cf. Liber ad Almansorem, V, 67.

91 M-r-x seems to come quite close to what is found in R. The reading murabbū, “coated with insipissated fruit juice,” would presuppose that the word specifying the particular kind of seed is omitted.
Another prescription, good for those of a cold and wet nature and for those
who are advanced in age: Take ten dirhams of chaste-tree seed, five dirhams
of river mint93 dried, and two and a half dirhams of dried rue leaves, (each)
draft three dirhams of it, with an ounce of vinegar. Those who are sensitive
to vinegar should drink it with cold water or rose water.

I have discussed this matter sufficiently. We apologize for having discussed
it. We have been forced to do so because our predecessors did in no way
discuss it sufficiently.

To the Giver of the intellect be praise without end as He deserves and
merits. His prayers and blessings be upon His Prophet, Muḥammad, and his
family.

93 For the three kinds (mountain, field, and river) of sawdanaj. cf., for instance. ar-Rāzi, Ḥāwī, XXI, 243-50.
R omits the final f of an-nahr.