



ABŪ ZAYN KAḤḤĀL

ABŪ ZAYN KAḤḤĀL, author of the medical text *Šarāyeṭ-e jarrāḥī*; its dedication to the Timurid Šāhroḡ (r. 807-50/1404-47) provides the only context for his life. Judging by the text, he was a practicing surgeon (and not an oculist, *Kaḥḥāl*). The book, although titled “Surgical Requirements,” is actually a general medical handbook—thus an example of a common genre in Muslim medical literature. As was customary in Abū Zayn’s period, the discussion emphasizes the compounding of drugs and a survey of diseases with their appropriate treatment. In this respect Abū Zayn’s book can not command special interest. What distinguishes it from most others of its type in Persian is the discussion of surgical procedures in the ninth *maqāla*. Although its length is only about one-half of the average *maqāla* in this book and deals at length with cauterization as a kind of surgical panacea, the author does appear to base his discussion on his own practical experience, as can be gathered from his presentation of the operations of circumcision, castration, and the extraction of vesical and renal calculus.

Šarāyeṭ-e jarrāḥī is preserved in three incomplete manuscripts. It was apparently never quoted in other Persian works on medicine. Abū Zayn’s work does not in any way stand comparison with his great predecessors in the field of surgical practice and writing, such as Zahrāwī, but it merits detailed study as one of the very few examples of its kind in Persian medical writing.



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