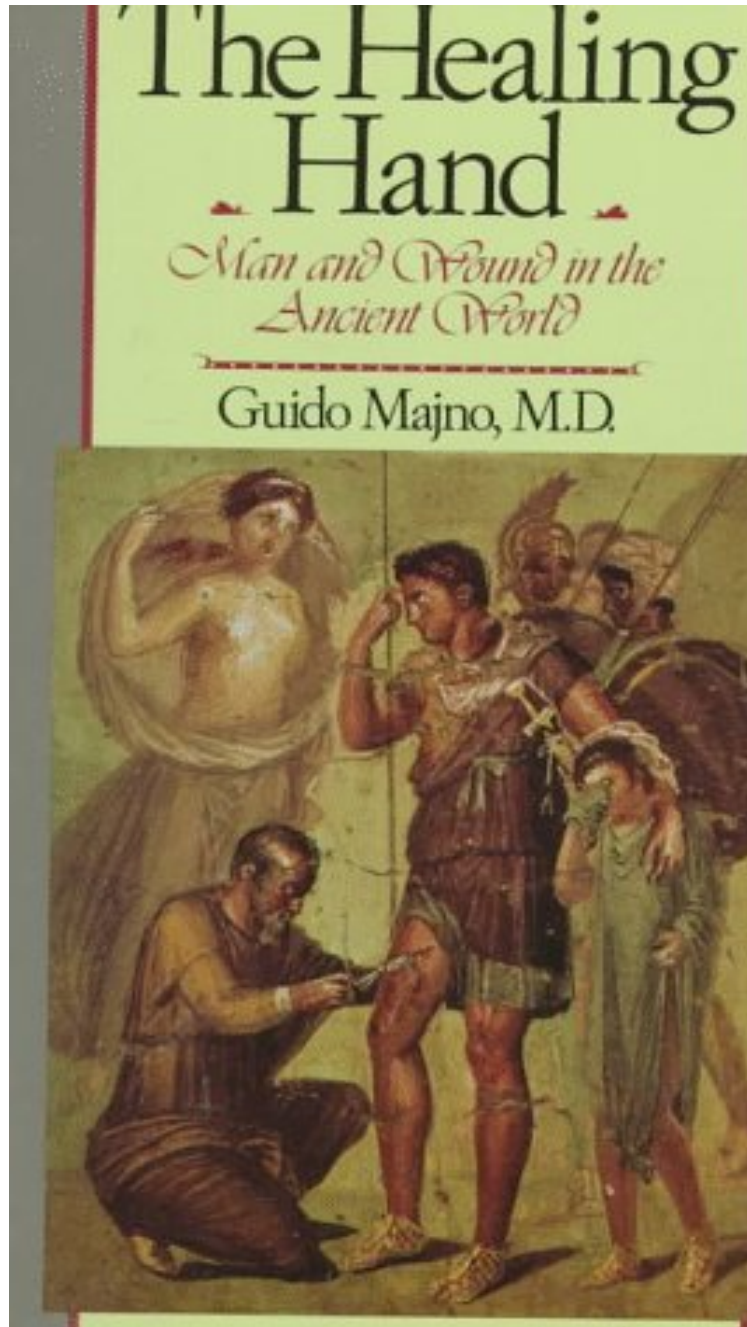


The Healing Hand: Man and Wound in the Ancient World (Commonwealth Fund Publications)

Guido Majno

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Guido Majno : The Healing Hand: Man and Wound in the Ancient World (Commonwealth Fund Publications)

before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *The Healing Hand: Man and Wound in the Ancient World* (Commonwealth Fund Publications):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Wound healing in an historical context
By Douglas R. Shanklin
This is a most thorough analysis and study of the effects of wounds and their treatments from early times of recorded history. Majno writes in a persuasive style with scintillating aphorisms, bringing light into corners of human experience rarely, if ever, visited these days. This is a 1991 reprint of his 1975 book. The messages and lessons are just as apt today as they were during the long incubation and eventual appearance of the book. This should be required reading for first year medical students if only to display the humanity of the journey our species has made so far, with metaphorical miles yet to go!
2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A Wealth of Medical History
By Geoffrey Holden
"The Healing Hand" is a generous and detailed history of ancient medicine. Majno, a practising physician and extraordinarily erudite amateur historian, has assembled a detailed account of what is known (and, perhaps, more importantly, what is NOT known) about the medical practices of prehistoric humanity, Egypt, India, China, Arabia, Greece and the Roman world. Those starry-eyed believers in 'the wisdom of the ancients' should read it and reflect on the bizarre, dangerous and just plain lunatic approaches to disease, wounds and healing practised with confidence in so many cultures. Blood-letting was only the start of medical and surgical techniques which must have almost always slowed the recovery of the patient. But Majno frequently goes further - and experiments (with laboratory animals) to see if some of the herbal 'remedies' had, in fact, any beneficial value. Generally they don't. His range of learning is impressive - to understand Egyptian papyri, for example, he appears to have mastered most of Gardiner's 'Egyptian Grammar' (the standard text book on learning hieroglyphics if you are Really Serious about learning them) as well as considering what other modern authorities have deduced from the ancient prescriptions. And the net result? The Egyptians knew little of medical value and used that little knowledge to little effect. Although the book is more than 20 years old, I have not seen any work which surpasses this one in depth, interest, wit and illustration. As a retired museum curator of medicine, I recommend it wholeheartedly.
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars
By Customer
Thank you for providing such an excellent product.

This journey to the beginnings of the physician's art brings to life the civilizations of the ancient world--Egypt of the Pharaohs, Greece at the time of Hippocrates, Rome under the Caesars, the India of Ashoka, and China as Mencius knew it. Probing the documents and artifacts of the ancient world with a scientist's mind and a detective's eye, Guido Majno pieces together the difficulties people faced in the effort to survive their injuries, as well as the odd, chilling, or inspiring ways in which they rose to the challenge. In asking whether the early healers might have benefited their patients, or only hastened their trip to the grave, Dr. Majno uncovered surprising answers by testing ancient prescriptions in a modern laboratory. Illustrated with hundreds of photographs, many in full color, and climaxing ten years of work, *The Healing Hand* is a spectacular recreation of man's attempts to conquer pain and disease.

This is a work of feeling and passion...What Guido Majno has created after a decade of effort is a work of scholarship of the highest order, which reads with the facility of an adventure story that, in a way, it is. (Human Behavior)
The author is a courageous and catholic amateur of history who delights in inference, an experimenter, a questioner and a cultivated writer of imagination, humor and compassion...His work is above all a delectable lesson in how to know the past. (Scientific American)
I found Majno's work so absorbing that I was hardly able to put it down...This is a book for the serious reader as well as the browser...A splendid book. (Natural History)
This beautifully illustrated, thoroughly referenced book certainly deserves recognition as an outstanding contribution to the history of medicine. Hopefully, physicians and historians will take advantage of its enjoyable wisdom. (Journal of the American Medical Association)
What vitality--a great laughing, learned, extroverted giant, dragging you with him on one of the most stimulating and entertaining journeys for a long while... This is just a great, astonishing book. (Charles Newman British Medical Journal)
The book provides a broad panorama of disease and healing from prehistoric times to the era of Galen, told with wisdom, grace, wit and new insights. Its author approaches the history of illness and its therapy with a joy and enthusiasm that are infectious...So--hurry, buy, read and enjoy! (Louis Lasagna, M.D New England Journal of Medicine)
Reading *The Healing Hand* is like going through a museum with a seasoned guide who not only points out the sights but relates innumerable anecdotes along the way. (Catherine Macek Journal of the American Medical Association)
About the Author
Guido Majno was Chairman of the Department of Pathology at the University of Massachusetts Medical School, Worcester.