

Ḥunayn ibn Ishāq on His Galen Translations. Edited and translated by JOHN C. LAMOREAUX. Eastern Christian Texts. Provo, UT: BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2016. Pp. xxxiii + 207. \$49.95.

The Graeco-Arabic translation movement of the eighth to tenth centuries CE, in which Ḥunayn ibn Ishāq played a major role, and the Greco-Syriac translation movement that preceded it by three centuries were pivotal for the intellectual history of mankind, since they were the conduits through which the Greek intellectual heritage reached the medieval world. The volume under review is thus a much-needed work of scholarship, making this extremely important historical source accessible to modern scholars and general readers.

Of the early translators working in the intellectual milieu of ninth-century Abbasid Baghdad who translated from Greek into Syriac and Arabic, Ḥunayn ibn Ishāq (809–873) was the most significant. Syriac was at the time the language of the dominant class of physicians, and Arabic was the imperial language of the Islamic empire, and was becoming a powerful intellectual tool for science and philosophy. Ḥunayn contributed to the foundations of scientific Arabic by creating much of the Arabic medical vocabulary from the Greek medical tradition, as well as by setting philological standards for the recovery and translations of Greek works into these two Semitic languages.

The book under review presents an edition and translation of Ḥunayn's own writings, written toward the end of his career, about many of the medical translations that he and others produced. In it, he placed his own efforts within the historical context of all of the Syriac and Arabic translators and their works that were known to him, from the early sixth century on. This took the form of a letter (*risāla*) to his colleague and patron, 'Alī ibn Yaḥyā. Each of the translations of works by Galen, Hippocrates, and several other Greek authors is listed and briefly described. Its translation history is sketched and the patron for whom the translation was prepared is described. Occasionally, additional details are provided, such as a patron's specific requests for a specific style of translation, or a recounting of the difficulties that Ḥunayn encountered when trying to locate a specific Greek manuscript. Details such as these make Ḥunayn's source immensely valuable to our historical understanding of the translation movement. John Lamoreaux provides an excellent review of the history of these translations in the introduction (pp. ix–xxx), assessing Ḥunayn's work in the light of what we now know about the translation movement, and indicates where Ḥunayn's own historical understanding was lacking.

The first modern edition of Ḥunayn's *Risālat ilā 'Alī ibn Yaḥyā fī dhikr mā turjima min kutub Jālīnūs fī 'ilmihī wa-ba'ḍ mā lam yutarjam* (Letter to 'Alī ibn Yaḥyā reviewing what books of Galen have been translated, according to his [Ḥunayn's] knowledge, and some of what has not been translated), a transcription of Istanbul ms. Ayasofya 3631, was published by Gotthelf Bergsträsser in 1925 (“Über die syrischen und arabischen Galen-Übersetzungen,” *Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 17 [1925]: 1–48). After another scholar discovered an additional manuscript of the same work (Ayasofya 3590), Bergsträsser collated the two manuscripts and published the results in 1932 (*Neue Materialien zu Hunain Ibn Ishaq's Galen-Bibliographie* [Leipzig: DMG, 1932], repr. Nendeln, Liechtenstein: Kraus Reprint Ltd., 1966). However, the second manuscript differed substantially from the first. Moreover, Bergsträsser employed other indirect witnesses, which paraphrase parts of Ḥunayn's catalog of works. The resulting publication, while fine scholarship, is very difficult to use, partly because it is organized by types of differences and presents lists of variants rather than a continuous edition with footnotes. These infelicities of Bergsträsser's pioneering effort have been rectified in the present edition, which alone justifies its publication in my view. In his edition and facing-page translation (pp. 2–131), Lamoreaux provides numerous notes, both textual and commentarial, to help the reader understand the reconstruction of the text from these two manuscript witnesses. In addition, he does not simply reproduce Bergsträsser's edition but makes his own textual judgments.

The volume concludes with four appendices. Appendix one (pp. 133–37) discusses the Arabic terms *talkhīṣ* (“summary, abridgement”), *taḥalluṣ* (“to refine, free from mistakes”), and *talaḥḥuṣ* (“to summarize, abridge”) as they appear in the *Risāla*. Ḥunayn employed these terms to describe the process by which he prepared a Greek text for translation, whether through collation, emendation, supplementation from other texts, or otherwise. (The last two terms exhibit a curious relationship of transposed root letters—*l* and *ḥ*—the sort of play on words beloved of Arabic poets.) As a transmitter of ancient Greek

texts to the Arabic world—and hence to the medieval European world—it is important to understand Ḥunayn’s philological methodology. Lamoreaux concludes that Ḥunayn’s use of these terms echoes the term διόρθωσις, which was used in the Greek tradition to designate the process of revision and emendation of a text before publication.

Appendix two (pp. 138–52), a “Prosopography of Translators and Patrons,” summarizes what is known about each of the persons mentioned in the *Risāla*. Lamoreaux goes beyond Max Meyerhof’s attempt to do the same in “New Light on Hunain Ibn Ishāq and His Period,” *Isis* 8.4 (1926): 685–724.

The third appendix (pp. 153–67), “Works of Galen Mentioned by Ḥunayn,” gives details about each work in the other main traditions. For each of the works described by Ḥunayn, Lamoreaux methodically gathers the citations in the standard bibliographic references for Galenic works in the Greek, Arabic, Syriac, and Latin traditions. Each work is listed by its number in the order that it appears in the *Risāla*—the ordering that Bergsträsser reproduced in his 1925 publication, which is now the standard numbering. In the present edition, Lamoreaux also includes in the inner margin by the title of each work the section numbering found in Bergsträsser’s second manuscript. I note here that my only disappointment with the volume at hand is the lack of systematic references to modern editions of Galen translations into Arabic. Recreating a survey like Kessel’s (see below) would not have been practical, since there already exist surveys for the Arabic tradition. The logical place to refer to them, it seems to me, would have been in appendix three, which in my view would have made the present work more complete and useful. As it is, some editions, such as my own of Galen’s *De diebus decretoriis* (London: Ashgate, 2011), are buried in the unwieldy bibliography. The bibliography would also have been more helpful had it been divided into primary and secondary sources.

In appendix four (pp. 168–92), “Inventory of Galen’s Extant Works in Syriac,” Grigory Kessel provides an excellent inventory of Galen’s works in Syriac translation. As discussed by Lamoreaux in the introduction, because Arabic versions of Galen’s works superseded their Syriac versions, most of the Syriac translations have been lost. Thus, every extant bit of Syriac material is precious evidence for understanding how the Greek medical tradition was transmitted to the East. This inventory will be immensely helpful for scholars in finding extant Syriac Galen translations.

This volume exemplifies the combination of beauty, utility, and reasonable pricing for which the several translation series published by Brigham Young University Press have become known. I expect that Lamoreaux’s edition will become a standard reference for scholars of Abbasid intellectual history and classical receptions.

GLEN M. COOPER
SPRINGVILLE, UTAH

The World in a Book: Al-Nuwayri and the Islamic Encyclopedic Tradition. By ELIAS MUHANNA. Princeton: PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2018. Pp. xiii + 214. \$39.95.

“This is a small book about a very large book,” Elias Muhanna writes by way of introduction. I would add that *Nihāyat al-arab fī funūn al-adab* (The ultimate ambition in the arts of erudition) is not only a large book, but a real monument of Mamluk literature and a good example of its encyclopedic trend. It is the magnum opus, indeed the only work, of the Egyptian Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Wahhāb al-Nuwayrī (d. 733/1333), an influential public servant of the bureaucratic apparatus of the Mamluk empire, who decided, after many years in his position in Egypt and Syria, to devote himself to the composition of this monumental enterprise. This compendium of his cultural and professional experience, which the author intended to leave for future generations, was in fact conceived, as Muhanna notes, as a “project of self-edification” (p. 24). His ability as a copyist (al-Nuwayrī was also held in high esteem as a calligrapher) and his exceptional speed of writing allowed him to pen the entire work in a relatively short time and produce multiple copies of it.

Nihāyat al-arab has a complex organization. It is divided into five large sections (*funūn*): the universe; man; animals; plants; and (universal) history, the largest and most important. Each section is