Greek text were remarkably successful, even though some of his reviewers found additions that had slipped through. The quality of Wenkebach’s reconstructed Greek text also depended to a considerable degree on the reliability of Pfaff’s reading and translation of the Arabic version. Pfaff explained his careful and measured approach as a translator in a separate preface to the 1934 edition. Most of Pfaff’s work has stood the test of time but his translation can be obscure and has its share of problems. For his work on the Commentary on Book 1 Pfaff relied exclusively on ms. E, which he seems to have regarded as an unproblematic witness. In his preface he also claimed that there were no substantial differences between the Arabic text of the Commentary on Book 2 transmitted in E and the second main witness, Ambrosianus B 135 sup.; we now know that the latter is the better source. His trust in E may have blunted his critical impulses at times, and he was unable to take into account any of the additional sources available now, for example P and especially A with their often better readings of the Hippocratic lemmata, or important secondary witnesses introduced above such as Ibn Riḍwān’s Useful Passages.

The potentially problematic relationship between Wenkebach’s Greek text and the Arabic translation on the one hand and the quality of the Arabic text and German translation produced by Franz Pfaff on the other provided a powerful incentive to take a fresh look at the Arabic textual tradition. In the course of establishing and translating the Arabic version, a number of additional issues came to light, for example additions Wenkebach made on the basis of Pfaff’s translation that could not be confirmed or need to be corrected, or some Arabic passages that may well be based on lost sections of the Greek original. The present edition of Galen’s commentary is therefore an indispensable tool to understand the text of Galen’s Commentary on Book 1 of the Hippocratic Epidemics. It also represents a crucial first step in disentangling the Arabic and Greek strands in Wenkebach’s edition, re-evaluating the Greek text and rectifying the problems that were introduced through the medium of Pfaff’s Arabic-German version.

B. The Arabic translation

I. Textual history

At the beginning of this introduction we outlined some of the problems associated with the transmission of the Hippocratic Epidemics and the fate of Galen’s commentary. Its transmission history and the character and problems of the extant

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2 Pfaff, in: CMG V 10,1, p. XXXIII.
4 Examples can be found in the Notes at p. 503, 504, 512, 540, 546, 552, 593, 603 and 606.
5 See e.g. p. 541 ad p. 248,9–11 and p. 546 ad p. 268,1sq.
Greek manuscript sources have been reviewed in great detail in the introductions to the three volumes of Wenkebach’s edition of the commentary\(^1\) and a series of separate studies he published during the preparation of these volumes. Among other fascinating findings, Wenkebach (as already mentioned) discovered that the Greek text of the prooemium to the Commentary on Book 1 and alleged fragments of that on Book 2 printed in the previous authoritative edition of Galen’s Opera by Karl Gottlob Kühn\(^2\) were early modern forgeries based on a combination of retranslated Latin material and Galenic and Hippocratic quotations from a range of other works.\(^3\)

The history of the Arabic version of Galen’s commentary started long before the scribe of the oldest extant Greek manuscript put reed to parchment. Like numerous other Arabic translations of Galenic and other ancient Greek scientific, medical and philosophical works, the Arabic version of Galen’s commentaries on the Hippocratic Epidemics was the product of the translation “workshop” established by Ḥunayn ibn Isḥāq in Baghdad, then capital of the ʿAbbāsid state, where Ḥunayn served at the caliphal court. The Greek manuscripts then available dated back at least to the ninth century but were probably even older. These Greek sources and the translations made from them represent a state of the textual tradition that antedates most of the Greek Galen sources available today.

Most of what we know about the details of the translation process originates with Ḥunayn’s abovementioned Epistle, in which Ḥunayn surveyed all Galenic or pseudo-Galenic writings known to him that he or others had translated into Syriac or Arabic. He named the individuals who had produced Syriac versions, assessed the quality of these translations and the competency of their authors and identified the translators who then rendered the Syriac texts into Arabic. Some entries describe the collation and translation process in some detail and provide information about the physicians, functionaries and courtiers who commissioned individual translations.\(^4\)

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\(^2\) Claudii Galeni Opera omnia. Galen’s commentaries on the Hippocratic Epidemics were printed in the following volumes: 17,1 (1828) contained the Commentary on Book 1 (p. 1–302), Book 2 (p. 303–479), Book 3 (p. 480–792) and the first two parts of the Commentary on Book 6 (p. 793–1009); 17,2 (1829) contained parts 3–6 of the Commentary on Book 6 (p. 1–344).

\(^3\) Cf. esp. Wenkebach, Beiträge zur Textgeschichte (parts I and II).

According to his entry on Galen’s Commentary on Book 1 of the Hippocratic Epidemics, 1 the early ninth-century translator Ayyūb al-Ruhāwī (Job of Edessa, d. ca. 835) translated the text from Greek into Syriac. 2 The Epistle mentions several of Ayyūb’s Syriac translations but, as Ḥunayn pointed out on several occasions, not all of them conformed to his exacting standards. 3 The proximate source for the extant Arabic translation was another Syriac version that Ḥunayn himself produced.

In spite of the conflicting testimony of some of the relevant bio-bibliographical sources 4 Ḥunayn’s authorship of the Arabic translation is not in doubt, not least because of his own testimony. Gotthelf Bergsträßer analysed and compared the linguistic features of a number of medical translations originating with the Ḥunayn “workshop”. He concluded that the language of Galen’s commentaries on the Hippocratic Epidemics was not as unambiguously “Ḥunaynian” as other texts but that there was little evidence against Ḥunayn’s authorship and even less for that of the other contemporary translator mentioned in some secondary sources, ‘Īsā ibn Yaḥyā. 5

II. Style

Ḥunayn’s translation of Galen’s commentaries on the Hippocratic Epidemics illustrates many of the features typically associated with the Ḥunayn “workshop”. The most important of these, various types of textual expansion, were already noted by the editors and reviewers of the Greek text. Knowing these types is of crucial importance for assessing the proximity between the Greek and Arabic texts and the translation procedure Ḥunayn followed. 6

1 Ḥunayn ibn Ishāq, p. 41sq., no. ṣḥ (Ar.). An earlier but not dramatically different version of this passage was transmitted at the end of the manuscripts that preserve Galen’s Commentary on Book 2 of the Epidemics; cf. Pormann, Case Notes, p. 252–254.
3 Ḥunayn ibn Ishāq, p. 20,7; 21,5; 24,7; 34,6; 40,7 (Ar.).
5 Bergsträßer, Ḥunain ibn Ishāk, p. 75. The author believed that it would be possible to distinguish between translations produced by different members of Ḥunayn’s group of translators on the basis of stylistic and terminological characteristics. His conclusions, based on a relatively small sample of texts, were criticised by G. Strohmaier, in: CMG Suppl. Or. II, p. 26–32.
6 Cf. also U. Vagelpohl, The ‘Abbasid Translation Movement in Context. Contemporary Voices on Translation, in: ‘Abbasid Studies II. Occasional Papers of the School of ‘Abbasid Studies, ed. by J. Nawas, Leuven 2010 (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 177), p. 248–253 on the translation “ethos” of the Ḥunayn workshop. G. Strohmaier, in: CMG Suppl. Or. II, p. 31 rightly points out that expansions such as the ones discussed below could already have taken place during the Greek-Syriac translation phase. Unfortunately, however, the Syriac versions are lost and we can only consult the
What Wenkebach vaguely called “the prolixity of the verbose Arabs” (verbosorum Arabum ambages) covers a number of relatively clearly distinguishable phenomena that can be divided into the following categories: (1) synonymic doublets or hendiadys to translate a single Greek term; (2) amplifications, which introduce information in the translation that is only implicit in the Greek text but can be derived from the context; and (3) additions, which introduce information that is not implicit in the Greek text.

One of the more prominent features of this translation (and many others produced by Hunayn ibn Ishāq and his associates) is the use of two or sometimes even more Arabic terms to translate individual Greek terms. There are more than three hundred instances of such synonymic doublets or hendiadyoin in the Commentary on Book 1 alone. They often serve to render Greek terms with added precision: the translator situates the meaning of a Greek term either at the semantic intersection of two Arabic terms or adds up the meaning of two Arabic terms where one would not have sufficed, for example:

P. 194,12 \textit{al-saktata wa-l-fāliḵa} (“stroke and hemiplegia”) for \textit{ἀποπληξίας} (“apoplexy”, “paralysis”; CMG V 10,1, p. 53,13)

P. 194,12 \textit{al-tašannuġa wa-l-iḵtilāḏa} (“convulsion and palpitation”) for \textit{πολ-\textit{μὀς}} (“throbbing”, “palpitation”; CMG V 10,1, p. 53,13)

In other cases the combination of two Arabic terms expresses a meaning that is implied in the Greek. For example, the translation regularly employs a combination of the verbs “settle” (\textit{sakana}) and “clear up” (\textit{ṣafā}) to translate passive forms of the verb καθίστημι, which in the context of the examination of urine means “to settle”; the Arabic doublet makes the meaning implied in the Greek text explicit.

Doublets may on the other hand also reveal that the translator’s grasp of a concept is only tentative. For example, lemma II 80 reports that people with specific physical characteristics were more likely to contract a certain disease, among them those “whose voice was thin” (\textit{ṣawtuhū raqīqun}, p. 316,8), translating \textit{ἰσχνό-\textit{φωνὀς}}. In his explanation of this term Galen noted that these people need to be final product of the Greek-Syriac-Arabic translation process. Since the Syriac sources of medical texts were often enough produced by the same or other members of the Hunayn workshop and, as Bergsträßer, Hunain ibn Ishāk, p. 48 noted, the Arabic translation was usually checked against the Greek version, I think we can be reasonably sure that the process of expansion was not random but so controlled and consistent that we can still make informed inferences about the underlying Greek text.

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1 Wenkebach, in: CMG V 10,1, p. XXIsq.
4 E.g. at p. 156,4 (CMG V 10,1, p. 39,20); 156,9 (CMG V 10,1, p. 39,25); 484,15 and 16 (CMG V 10,1, p. 147,17 and 18); and 488,5 (CMG V 10,1, p. 148,15).
distinguished from those with a “halting” or “stuttering” enunciation (ἰσχόφωνοι). Ḥunayn’s use of the doublet “halting and obstructed” (mutaʿāḏḏirun mumtaniʿun) instead of a more direct rendering of “stutter” suggests that he may have been unsure about the meaning of the Greek term in this context.

Beyond these technical uses the translator sometimes employed doublets for purely stylistic purposes, most clearly in cases where the corresponding Greek term is non-technical and generic. Some examples:

P. 162,7 muwāfiqun mušākilun (“is consistent with and corresponds to”) for ἀκόλουθα (“consistent with”; CMG V 10,1, p. 41,27)

P. 168,6 mušākilun muwāfiqun (“corresponds to and is consistent with”) for ὠμολογεῖν (“to agree with”; CMG V 10,1, p. 44,19)

Other typical and frequent candidates for this kind of treatment are the adjective σφοδρός (“vehement”) and the noun σφοδρότης (“vehemence”).

In other instances synonymic doublets are clustered or extended to triplets:

P. 210,11 layyinatan ḥafifatan ḍaʿīfatan (“gentle, mild and weak”) for μέτριος (“moderate”; CMG V 10,1, p. 58,17)

P. 326,12sq. aġlaẓu wa-ašaddu aḏan wa-makrūhan (“very tough, painful and troublesome”, lit. “very tough and very severe in [terms of] pain and discomfort”) for χληρότερος (“very troublesome”; CMG V 10,1, p. 96,15)

P. 402,15 bi-sukūnin wa-hudūʾin wa-līnin (“calmly, softly and gently”) for πραεως (“mildly”; CMG V 10,1, p. 121,14)

These elaborate renderings of terms that seem semantically unproblematic suggest again that their function often consisted in adding emphasis rather than precision, and synonymic doublets and triplets in general may well have been part of the “house style” of Ḥunayn ibn Isḥāq and his associates.

In the majority of cases synonymic doublets add only one or two words to the translated text. The same applies to the second type of expansion, amplification. The translator is induced by a variety of factors to make textual elements explicit that are either entirely implicit in the Greek text (for example a subject implicit in a predicate) or referred to with pronouns. Some cases of expansion result from the substantial linguistic differences between source and target language: without spelling out syntactic elements that can remain implicit in a Greek sentence, an Arabic sentence would be ungrammatical. Most amplifications, however, are

1 At p. 320,15, 17 and 20sq. (CMG V 10,1, p. 94,10 and 12).
2 E.g. at p. 134,4, 7 and 134,15 (CMG V 10,1, p. 29,1, 4 and 11); 180,9 (CMG V 10,1, p. 48,26); and 458,6 (CMG V 10,1, p. 439,1).
3 Other examples at p. 94,6 (CMG V 10,1, p. 19,10); 134,4 (CMG V 10,1, p. 54,17); 230,1sq. (CMG V 10,1, p. 137,5 and 7); and 450,21 and 3 (CMG V 10,1, p. 146,19).
apparently motivated by stylistic preferences: they are not grammatically or syntactically mandatory but clarify the sense of the text, improve its style or make it more cohesive. Such amplifications take a number of different forms but they all have in common that they do not change the content of the text, that is, they do not add any information that is not already implied in the text.

Some are triggered by Greek pronominal references: the translator sometimes replaces pronouns with the corresponding referent. Some examples:

P. 84,12  \textit{al-ḥāli llatī ḏakar ahā} (“the condition he mentions”) for \textit{tīn} (CMG V 10,1, p. 10,19)

P. 184,12  \textit{al-barda} (“cold”) for αὐτή (CMG V 10,1, p. 50,9)

P. 214,16  \textit{idā kāna mizāḥu l-hawā’i ʿalā hādīhi mina l-ḥāli} (“when the mixture of the air is in this condition”) for ἐν ᾗ (CMG V 10,1, p. 59,30)

P. 390,3  \textit{al-ḥummā} (“a fever”) for δόστις (CMG V 10,1, p. 117,11)

P. 390,5  \textit{al-ḥummā} (“a fever”) for δόστις (CMG V 10,1, p. 117,13)

P. 390,6  \textit{al-ḥummā} (“a fever”) for δόστις (CMG V 10,1, p. 117,15)

Similarly, the translator frequently makes explicit the subject of a sentence, particularly in contexts where Galen quotes Hippocrates. While Galen often simply writes “he said”, often with a form of αὐτός, Hunayn prefers to supply the implied subject “Hippocrates”.¹ These kinds of amplifications may sometimes be motivated less by any overt stylistic preference but rather by the subtle pull of the translation process itself. The frequency of often trivial clarifications of this sort in this translation sometimes seems to owe more to a general desire to make even the most obvious textual connections explicit than to individual stylistic decisions.

Also included in this category is another recurring phenomenon we observe in the present text: the repetition of syntactic elements that the Greek version only expresses once. The translator repeats such elements mainly to clarify that they apply to a whole series of clauses. These repetitions can reach considerable lengths, as the following example (p. 254,10–14) illustrates:

τῶν μὲν οὖν κατὰ τὴν γαστέρα τὰ περιττώματα κάτω διαχωρούμενα τὴν ἁπεψίαν τε καὶ πέψιν ἐκ τῆς ἑαυτῶν ἰδέας ἐνδείκνυται, τῶν δὲ κατὰ θώρακα καὶ πνεύμονα τὰ μετὰ βηχὸς ἀναγόμενα, τῶν δὲ κατὰ τὸν ἐγκέφαλον τὰ διὰ τῆς ῥινὸς ἐκκρινόμενα, τῶν δὲ κατὰ τὰς φλέβας τὰ μετὰ τῶν οὐρῶν ἀπερχόμενα. (CMG V 10,1, p. 72,18–22)

وفضل الطعام الذي يضج في المعدة نخرج من أسفل، فتدلّ بحالها على ضجة الطعام أو خلاف ضجة. وأما ما يضج في الصدر والرئة فضلله ينفث بالسعال، فيدلّ على مثال

¹ E.g. at p. 108,13 and 15 (CMG V 10,1, p. 20,17 and 20); 116,7 and 116,10 (CMG V 10,1, p. 23,1 and 5); 120,16 (CMG V 10,1, p. 24,23); 178,14 (CMG V 10,1, p. 48,9); 198,16 (CMG V 10,1, p. 54,20); and 494,7 (CMG V 10,1, p. 150,8).
Waste products of food that is concocted in the stomach are eliminated downwards, and their condition indicates whether the food was concocted or not. The waste of something concocted in the chest and lungs is expectorated through coughing and indicates the same. The waste of something concocted in the brain is excreted from the nostrils and indicates the same. The waste of something concocted in the veins descends with the urine and indicates the same.”

Another notable type of amplification is the frequent “verbalisation” of the telegraphic lists of symptoms in Hippocratic case descriptions by supplying suitable verbs such as “to pass (urine)” (bāla), “to pass (excrements)” (ǧāʾa minhu and others) or “to suffer from (a disease or symptom)” (aṣābahū and others). While not strictly necessary, the added verbs ensure stylistic uniformity between lemmata and commentary and improve readability.

The final type of expansion, which I provisionally call “additions”, consist of textual elements of various lengths, some of them substantial, that do not make any information explicit that is already implicit and obvious from the context. These can for instance be explanatory remarks intended to clarify a concept, statements that spell out stages of Galen’s argument left out in the Greek text or summaries of the results of a previous discussion:

P. 110,15sq. al-amrāda sa-tahdūtu mina l-amrādi l-ʿāmmiyati l-ġarībatī wa-miṭlihā mina l-amrādi llati biya min gāyri bādā l-ġinsī mimmā ʿāfiyatūn salimatuṇ (“the diseases that will occur are unusual general diseases or similar ones that are, unlike this kind, benign and harmless”) expands τὰ γενησόμενα νοσήματα (“the future diseases”; CMG V 10,1, p. 21,15)

P. 118,4sq. lammā ḥadaṭat li-l-hawāʾi ḥālun ʿāmmiyatūn afaqat ʿalayhi fibā l-barrū wa-l-ruṭūbatu (“when a general climatic condition arose in which it was extremely hot and wet”) explains διὰ τοῦτο (“for this reason”; CMG V 10,1, p. 23,21)

P. 322,14 wa-l-ḥušnātatu dūnahā takūnu ka-mā qulnā mina l-yubsī (“Only roughness is, as we said, caused by dryness”) was added to round off a

The almost consistent insertion of transitional phrases such as “then” (ṯumma innahū) to structure the case histories also serves to increase readability.
list of factors impacting the vocal apparatus that had been discussed before;

P. 350,6  
allaḏī yastadillu bihī min naḍī l-marīḍi ‘alā mā ta’ilū ilayhi ḥālūhū (“to draw inferences from the patient himself about the future development of his condition”) explains ὁ δ’ ἕτερος τρόπος τρόπος (“the other kind”; CMG V 10,1, p. 104,6)

P. 430,1  
ka-naḍāsi l-mutaḏakkari l-muntabihi ‘an sabwin (“like the breathing of someone who thinks about and is conscious [of it] because he neglects [to do it]”) expands and explains οἷον ἀναμιμνήκαμενω (“like the abovementioned”; CMG V 10,1, p. 130,8)

A subset of these longer additions may represent lost portions of the Greek text. Like other additions they do not bring out any implicit information, but they are at the same time untypical for the kind of explanations and expansions Ḥunayn usually added. This is for example the case at the beginning of Galen’s comments on lemma II 1, where he stated: “I shall now discuss everything I say about Hippocratic lemmata that are in need of explanation” (fa-anā l-āna wāṣifun mā asifū min tafsīri mā yaḥtāǧū fīli l-tafsīrī min qawli Abuqrāṭa). The translation (but not the Greek text) then continues:

P. 172,10  
‘alā anā l-qāri’a li-kalāmī ḏākirun li-mā taqaddama min qawli (“on the assumption that the reader of my comments will remember what I have said above”)

This kind of first-person appeal to the reader appears occasionally in Galen’s comments but not in those portions of the text Ḥunayn silently inserted or in the translation notes he included under his own name. Untypical both in length and in its assumption of Galen’s first-person plural authorial stance is another addition in Galen’s comments on lemma II 42. In a digression on the origins of strangury the Arabic translation notes:

P. 248,9–11  
fa-dalla ḏālika ‘alā šīḥati mā taqaddama min qawlinā innaabū ya’nī bi-l-ḥurūǧī l-amraynī gamī’an d’īnī mā yandaftu fa-yasta’ānu fī mawḍi’in mina l-badani wa-huwa l-ḥurūǧu wa-mā yandaftu fa-yandafu wa-yuṣṭafra’gu mina l-badani (“This indicates that our previous observation, that he means two things at once by ‘abscession’, is correct, namely something that is expelled and then settles in a region of the body – an [internal] abscession – and something that is expelled, passes through and is excreted from the body.”)

Less clear are the following examples: in his comments on lemma I 1b Galen criticised Quintus and the empiricists for denying the possibility of predicting diseases on the basis of the location where they occur. After mentioning that empiricists used the term “collection of symptoms” (iǧtimāʿi l-ʿarāḍi), i.e. “syndrome”, the Arabic translation adds:

1 Further examples at p. 104,2sq.; 150,17sq.; 190,4sq.; and 216,10sq.
The addition provides the reason why Galen attacked Quintus and the empiricists: while they rejected analogical reasoning in predicting diseases on the basis of the location where they occur, they seemed to approve of it for identifying medical treatments. Galen’s reasoning seems incomplete without the final clause, which is only preserved in Arabic. Hence, it may have been part of the original Greek.

Further examples for additions that may represent lost fragments of the Greek text are:

P. 122,13sq. *inna Abuqrāṭa inna-mā ya’ni ... annahū kāna aḡaffa wa-aqalla maṭarān mina l-miqdāri llaḏī yastaḥiqquhū l-šitā’u* (“Hippocrates means that it was dryer and there was less rain than is normally expected in winter”)

P. 322,5 *wa-qāṣabatu l-ri’ati inna-mā hiya maḡrā wa-manfaḏun faqaṭ* (“The windpipe is only a pathway and an opening”)

P. 378,20 *ḥattā yakūna ḥtimāluhā ʿalābi fi l-šitā’i ashala mina ḥtimāli sā’iri l-ḥummayāṭi* (“that it is easier to endure in winter than other fevers”)

There are also shorter, less prominent types of addition, among them for example short phrases inserted as structuring devices. We frequently find instances where the translator added “I say (that)” (aḡūlu inna) to clarify the flow of Galen’s arguments, specifically to mark the transition from a discussion of Hippocrates’ wording or an opinion he expressed to Galen’s statement about his own position.1

The distinction between phrases that make implicit information explicit on the one hand and short additions on the other is obviously not always straightforward; in some cases it is difficult to decide whether the added text provides a genuinely new piece of information.

What almost all of the translation’s amplifications have in common is that they aim at clarifying or explaining the Greek text by various means: expanding pronominal and other references or abbreviated formulations; putting added emphasis on certain terms and phrases; or dropping in explanatory remarks which almost invariably repeat more comprehensive explanations previously given in the text. They rarely add any new information that is not already contained in the text, implicit or otherwise. Also, they do not seem to be random. Rather, they signal passages in which, according to the translator, the Greek text was too terse or ambiguous. The underlying motivation, one that is amply illustrated in many of Hunayn’s writings, is eminently practical: to preserve and optimally present the valuable information contained in this commentary, both for medical practitioners and for students of medicine.

Where textual problems could not be overcome by amplifying the existing text, Hunayn resorted to personal comments which were kept distinct from the surrounding text and introduced with the formula “Hunayn said” (qāla Ḥunayn).

1 E.g. on p. 86,14; 104,19; 212,10; 338,9; 416,8; 474,14.
Of the seventeen notes in the Arabic version of Galen’s commentaries on the Epidemics only one occurs in the Commentary on Book 1. Since it illustrates Hunayn’s aims and approach quite well, it deserves to be quoted in full.

As part of his account of the first katastasis in Book 1 Hippocrates listed a number of symptoms frequently observed at the time. Among them he mentioned upset bowels accompanied by recurrent episodes of scant bilious diarrhoea. Ḥunayn appended the following note to Galen’s comments on this lemma (p. 154,17–156,2):

“Ḥunayn said: Galen described the reason for all the conditions of this excretion except for what (Hippocrates) said about the small quantity. I did not find him mentioning it, and I think that he left out the description of the small quantity either because he made an error or it was omitted from the copy from which I translated or its exemplar. I think that the reason for its small quantity is the recurrence of the bowel movements, as if he had said: ‘it came little by little’. This is indeed one of the possible senses of ‘little’ in Greek.”

Ḥunayn noticed that Galen failed to comment on one of the characteristics of this particular case of diarrhoea, its small quantity. He first ventured an explanation for this omission and then supplied an interpretation of his own which he supported with linguistic evidence.

The textual problem Ḥunayn encountered is not one that can be dealt with by simply amplifying the existing text: the information in question is missing. As a translator he was not prepared to manipulate the text itself, for example by silently inserting this information; as a physician and medical teacher on the other hand he felt obliged to alert his reader to an omission that could have impacted medical practice.

This note and the examples cited above demonstrate that Ḥunayn’s loyalty was not only to the text he translated, but also – and, as the various types of amplification suggest, perhaps to a larger degree – to his audience. It is the transfer of information that Ḥunayn valued most, not necessarily the verbatim transmission of his source; he intended to produce a “Gebrauchstext”, a text for practical use.

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1 There are another seven notes in the Commentary on Book 2, two in the Commentary on Book 3 and seven in the Commentary on Book 6; cf. Vagelpohl, In the Translator’s Workshop.
2 P. 154,5sq. (lemma I 26).
3 Cf. Vagelpohl, In the Translator’s Workshop, p. 267sq.
That his emphasis on the medical utility of his work did not impair the meticulousness of his philological preparations and the precision of his translation methods is the main reason why his translations are still celebrated as the crowning achievement of the Greek-Arabic translation movement.

This fortuitous combination of accessibility and accuracy was probably also one of the reasons why the translations of the Ḥunayn workshop, among them the present text, became key sources for Arabic medical scholars. Galen’s commentaries on the Hippocratic Epidemics in particular were widely studied and quoted and it inspired a rich literature of commentaries, compilations, handbooks and teaching manuals.

The most important secondary works that quote the commentary and were instrumental in reconstructing the text of the translation have been described above.¹ Galen’s commentary not only served as an indispensable source for medical information; the embedded Hippocratic case descriptions also became a model for a genre of similar texts, starting with the famous case histories of al-Rāzī,² especially in the aforementioned Comprehensive Book and in the oldest and largest collection of case histories, his Casebook (Kitāb al-taḡārib).³

The study of the impact of Galenic and Hippocratic writings in general and the present text in particular is still at an early stage.⁴ Many Arabic medical writings remain unedited; with increasing availability, we shall be in a better position to reconstruct the reception of Galenic medical knowledge in Arabic. Recent studies and editions of medical texts already suggest that we can anticipate rich new findings from these sources: concepts drawn from Galen’s commentary continued to reappear in different configurations in a wide variety of medical writings originating in the farthest reaches of the Muslim world.⁵

C. Editorial conventions

I. The Arabic edition

As a result of the small number of primary sources for the present text, the critical apparatus of this edition takes a somewhat different form from the customary negative notation of CMG editions. Instead of recording only those witnesses

¹ These and other secondary works inspired by and quoting Galen's commentary were surveyed by Hallum, The Arabic Reception.


³ C. Álvarez Millán, Practice versus Theory: Tenth-century Case Histories from the Islamic Middle East, Social History of Medicine 13, 2000, p. 293–306.
