



Greek Material Clothed in Islamic Garb: Ḥunayn Ibn 'Ishāq's *Fī Manāfi' al-'Adā'*

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Abstract

The Greek version of Claudius Galen's *On the Usefulness of the Parts* [Περὶ χρησέως μορίων: *Peri chrēsēōs moriōn*], an important book in terms of both the history of medicine and theology, has survived to this day. This work by Galen was translated into Arabic under the name *Fī Manāfi' al-'Adā'* by Ḥunayn Ibn 'Ishāq in Baghdad in the 9th century during the translation movement in the Islamic civilization. This article aims to observe the changes Ḥunayn made in the text by generally focusing on specific terms and phrases. Particularly, this will be achieved by comparing the English translation of Galen's Greek original work with its Arabic translation. And this will be specifically accomplished by drawing attention to Ḥunayn's method and approach of translation in adapting Galen's work *On the Usefulness of the Parts* to Islamic culture. It is clear that the term "Islamic culture" encompasses a vast array of concepts. However, for the purposes of this article, our focus will be on Islam's robust monotheistic principles, its rejection of pagan notions,

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and the unique phrases that can be traced back to the Qur'ān. Elvira Wakelnig described this translation approach as a method wherein the “Greek material was clothed in Islamic garb”. The reason for choosing this particular book stems from the fact that its topic is closely related to rational theology and it has arrived to us in a complete form in both its original Greek language as well as in its Arabic translation made by Hunayn.

Keywords: Galen, Hunayn Ibn Ishaq, translation movement, Arabic reception, on the usefulness of the parts.

İslami Kisveye Bürünmüş Yunanca Malzeme: Huneyn b. İshak'ın *Fi Menâfi'ul 'Azâ* Adlı Eseri

Öz

Claudius Galen'in *Organların İşlevleri Üzerine* [Περὶ χρῆσέως μορίων: *Peri chrēsēs moriōn*] adlı eseri, hem tıp hem de teoloji tarihi açısından önemli bir kitaptır ve Yunancası da günümüze ulaşmış bir eserdir. Galen'in bu eseri İslam medeniyetinde tercüme hareketi içinde 9.yy.da Bağdat'ta Huneyn b. İshak tarafından *Fi Menâfi'ul 'Azâ* adıyla Arapçaya çevrilmiştir. Bu çalışmada, hem Yunanca eserin İngilizce tercümesi hem de Arapça tercümesi karşılaştırılarak, genel olarak belirli terim ve ifadelere odaklanarak Huneyn'in metinde yaptığı değişiklikleri gözlemlemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Amacımız, tercüme metinleri karşılaştırarak Huneyn b. İshak'ın Galen'in eserinin Arapça alımlanışında İslam dini ve kültürü ile kurduğu ilişkiyi incelemektir. Kuşkusuz, “İslam dini ve kültürü” geniş bir kavram yelpazesini kapsar, ancak bu makalenin kapsamı içinde odaklandığımız nokta İslam'ın merkezinde yer alan tektanrıcılık prensipleri, putperest düşüncelere karşı reddiye ve Kuran'da izini sürebileceğimiz ve bulabileceğimiz özgün ifadelerdir. Elvira Wakelnig bu çeviri yaklaşımını “İslam kisvesine bürünmüş Yunanca malzeme” olarak tanımlar. Bu makale de başlığını Wakelnig'in bu veciz terkibinden almakta ve Huneyn'in *Fi Menâfi'ul 'Azâ* adlı çevirisini bu yaklaşımla incelemektedir. Bu eseri seçmemizin nedeni, konusunu rasyonel teolojiye yakın olan bu kitabın hem orijinal dili olan Yunanca hem de Huneyn tarafından tercüme edilen Arapça tercümesiyle eksiksiz bir şekilde elimize ulaşmasıdır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Galen, Huneyn b. İshak, çeviri hareketi, Arapça alımlanış, organların işlevleri üzerine.

Introduction¹

Claudius Galen (129–216 AD) was a Roman physician of Greek origin as well as a surgeon and philosopher. With his experimental approach, Galen made a great contribution to anatomy, physiology, and many other disciplines. Years after his death Galen's books were deeply studied in the Alexandrian school of medicine and they consequently reached the Syriac world through the Syriac translations, which also helped produce relevant commentaries on them.

Sergios of Ra's al-'Ain (d. 536) was the first to translate Greek Galenic books into Syriac. Also before the time of Ḥunayn other translators such as Yaḥyā Ibn al-Bīṭrīq (d. 815) translated Greek Galenic works into Arabic. Yet, one among the most important figures in establishing Galen's legacy in the Syriac and more importantly in the Arabic language was Ḥunayn Ibn 'Ishāq.

Ḥunayn Ibn 'Ishāq (809–873) was a significant Arab Nestorian Christian translator, physician, and scholar. Ḥunayn created what can be considered a school of translation that had its own methods for translations. He tried to translate all the Greek Galenic books into Arabic and Syriac. His method of translation—which focused on translating the meaning of the original sentence rather than its exact same words—was widely followed by later translators. Ḥunayn is considered as the most prolific author among the first generation of Arab physicians.² In fact, Ḥunayn's scientific accomplishments were carefully discussed by many Muslim authors of *ṭabaqāt* (biographical works) such as Ibn al-Nadīm (d. 990), Ibn Juljul (d. 994), Ibn al-Qifī (d. 1248), and Ibn Abī Uṣaybi'a (d. 1270).³ Likewise, Ḥunayn's legacy was examined and tackled by many 20th century historians of science such as Gotthelf Bergsträsser, Hellmut Ritter, Max Meyerhof, Giuseppe Gabrieli, Carl Brockelmann and many others.⁴

1 This introduction originally had a longer relevant discussion (about Galen and his book as well as about Ḥunayn Ibn 'Ishāq and his style of translation) but it was abbreviated due to the limited number of words required by the Journal.

2 Fuat Sezgin, *Tārīkh al-turāth al-'Arabī*, translated by Abdullah Hijazi, vol. 3, Medicine, Riyadh, King Saud University, 2009, p. 380.

3 Ibn al-Nadīm, *al-Fihrist*, edited by Mustafa Muhammed, volume 1, Cairo, n.y., p. 410; Ibn Juljul, *Ṭabaqāt al-aṭibbā' wa-al-ḥukamā'*, edited by Fu'ad Sayyid, Beirut, Musasat al-Risalah, 1985, pp. 68-72; Ibn al-Qifī, *Tārīkh al-ḥukamā'*, Cairo, Saada Press, n.y., pp. 119-120; Ibn Abī Uṣaybi'a, *Uyūn al-Anbā'*, edited by Imra-l-Quais-al Tahhan, volume 1, Cairo, 1882, pp. 90-102.

4 In this context, Strohmaier's remark is relevant in showing the importance of examining the translation of this specific book: "Owing to the 'scientific' context of these [Galenic] texts, the religious utterances which had to be modified or even falsified occur only rarely. Until now,

Before delving into studying Ḥunayn’s adaptation, it would be beneficial to take a quick look at *On the Usefulness of the Parts*. In this work Galen discussed the functions and purposes of various organs and parts within the human body. He explored their roles, importance, and interactions in maintaining health and functionality. This book also includes many important notions; the most well-known one is the argument about the perfection seen in Nature’s design.⁵ In other words, when a physician investigates each human organ, such as the eye or some other part, he would find many proofs of Nature’s wisdom and power.⁶ Hence, it is not surprising that the Greek original book was held in high respect by Christian writers in the fourth and fifth centuries.⁷ Likewise, at the beginning of the 9th century the book was received warmly—after it was translated by Ḥunayn—in the Arabic-Islamic world.⁸ Wakelnig noticed that “[o]ne of the flaws

only a small number of texts translated from Greek into Arabic are available where both the source and the target texts survive. With these texts, one can compare them so as to get a better insight into the particular methods of the Christian translators, and how they coped with the difficulties posed by the pagan character of the texts”. Gotthard Strohmaier, “Galen the Pagan and Hunayn the Christian: Specific Transformations in the Commentaries on Airs, Waters, Places and the Epidemics”, *Epidemics in Context: Greek Commentaries on Hippocrates in the Arabic Tradition*, ed. Peter E. Pormann, Berlin and Boston, Walter de Gruyter, 2012, p. 171.

- 5 Galen’s view about Nature can be traced back to the Hippocratic corpus but the idea of the perfect design probably came from Aristotle’s teleological reasoning. So, it must be stated that it was not Galen who invented this notion whose seeds are found in Aristotle’s metaphysical dictum which asserted that nothing happens without a reason because Nature does nothing in vain. Margaret’s Introduction in Galen, *On the Usefulness of the Parts*, translated from the Greek with an Introduction and Commentary by Margaret Tallmadge May, two volumes, Ethica & New York, Cornell UP, 1968, p. 10.
- 6 It should be emphasized here that Galen used ‘Nature’ (*physis*) in the Aristotelian sense of the word, which doesn’t imply the existence of God the way it was later translated into Syriac and Arabic. Therefore, even though Ḥunayn changed this materialistic ‘nature’ into ‘God’, the greatest philosophical synthesis of this Aristotelian concept with the monotheistic God will be achieved later by Ibn Sīnā. McGinnis reminded us that “Avicenna chastises physicians such as Galen and others, with their materialist basis for medicine”. Jon McGinnis, *Avicenna* (Great Medieval Thinkers Series), Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2010, p. 231.
- 7 Such as the famous two Christian writers who respectively lived in the fourth and fifth centuries, Nemesius of Emesa (d. 390-400) and Theodoret of Cyrhus (d. 457).
- 8 Galen’s *On the Usefulness of the Parts* was poorly translated into Syriac by Sergios of Ra’s al-‘Ain (d. 536) in the 6th century. However, in the 9th century, the book was retranslated into a better quality Syriac by Ḥunayn. Subsequently, a translation into Arabic was completed by Ḥunayn. According to Tallmadge May, the Arabic translation was made directly from Greek (Introduction of Margaret Tallmadge May’s translation: Galen’s *On the Usefulness of the Parts*, p. 5). To see the extensive debate about the details of the Arabic translation and Ḥubaysh’s role in it, look at: Elvira Wakelnig, “Medical knowledge as proof of the Creator’s

that Galen's monotheist successors found in his account was that he conflated the Creator (demiourgos) with providential Nature (physis).⁹ This flaw is rectified in the preserved Arabic translation of *On the Usefulness of the Parts*.¹⁰ By doing so, the translator provided an Islamic-oriented adaptation to the source text. At any rate, apart from this broad change in the translation, this article will go into considerable depth in order to demonstrate how Hunayn sometimes seems to intentionally make a change in the Greek pagan ideas by adapting them to Islamic culture generally as well as the Arabic language specifically.¹¹ But two issues must

wisdom", *Greek Medical Literature and Its Readers: From Hippocrates to Islam and Byzantium*, ed. Petros Bouras-Vallianatos - Sophia Xenophontos, New York, Routledge, 2018, pp. 143-144, note 7).

- 9 The Greek term "physis" refers to the concept of nature underlying the force that governs the natural world and its processes. It is taken as the inherent essence of things or the underlying reality that determines their behavior. In short, it maintains the idea that everything in this universe has its own natural principles and tendencies, which guide its development and existence. But this doesn't imply a divine interference, for example, Schwarb said: "Greek atomism was equated with a philosophical system which does not recognize a creator-God and views creation as a product of chance rather than divine providence". Gregor Schwarb, "Early Kalām and the Medical Tradition", *Philosophy and Medicine in the Formative Period of Islam*, ed. Peter Adamson - Peter E. Pormann, London, The Warburg Institute, 2017, p. 112.
- 10 Elvira Wakelnig, "Medical knowledge as proof of the Creator's wisdom", p. 131.
- 11 while we can see this 'Islamic garb' in Hunayn's Arabic translation, it is hard to trace back the 'Christian garb', so to speak, in his Syriac translations because they were unfortunately lost. In fact, Mavroudi discussed what can be looked at as the opposite of Islamizing the text, that is to say, the Christianizing of some Arabic texts when they were translated into Greek by Christian translators. For example, in talking about *The Oneirocriticon of Achmet* whose Greek version survived but whose Arabic origin was lost, she wrote: "His [the translator's] omission of the initial chapter on God can be hypothesized with some certainty, given the structure and contents of Arabic dreambooks; this omission indicates that he did leave out Arabic passages that he did not want-or did not know how-to Christianize". Maria Mavroudi, *A Byzantine Book on Dream Interpretation: the Oneirocriticon of Achmet and Its Arabic Sources*, Leiden & Boston, Brill, 2002, p. 236. So, when the Christian translator was faced with an entire topic about God based on the Islamic theology he found it hard to make it suitable and understandable for his audience and consequently he ignored that part, "because it would have been too complicated to disguise as Christian the Muslim interpretation of godhead and its properties" (Ibid., p. 72). Therefore, Mavroudi considered *Oneirocriticon* "but a Christian adaptation of Islamic material" (Ibid., p. 237). Mavroudi asserted that the Christianization of Muslim notions in a work translated from Arabic into Greek is not a phenomenon limited to the *Oneirocriticon* but it can be found in other texts, notably in the Greek translations of the astrological writings of Abū Ma'shar al-Balkhī (d. 886), where such changes seem to occur: shaykhs/desert fathers, ṣūfīs/monks, caliph/emperor, mosques/churches, etc. (Ibid., pp. 253-254). At the ends of her insightful book, Mavroudi even demonstrated how the translator of *Oneirocriticon* replaced the ideas

be clarified before starting the comparison in order to reduce potential confusion for readers who are not familiar with this topic.

For example, the reader might be confused by the idea of a Christian translator who translated Greek books into Arabic and infused his translation with Islamic-oriented terms and ideas rather than Christian ones. Although we are not required to accept the opinion of other scholars at face value but in Strohmaier's study ("Galen the Pagan and Hunayn the Christian: Specific Transformations in the Commentaries on Airs, Waters, Places and the Epidemics") he highlighted Ḥunayn's and his pupils philological accuracy and thorough understanding of the Greek texts. At the same time Strohmaier highlighted how Ḥunayn and his pupils sometimes deviated from their typical philological standards when religious matters were involved, because such matters needed to be altered. According to Strohmaier, there are different reasons why the Christians translators at the time eliminated pagan references from their translations to the Muslim readers. One of them is their concern about Muslim suspicions that they might introduce pagan beliefs under the cover of Greek science.¹² As for other views concerning this strange paradox of encountering Islamic-oriented terms or ideas in translations produced by Christian translators, rather than encountering Christian-oriented ones, Wakelnig discussed this phenomenon at the beginning of her relevant study ("Greek Texts in Arabic Translations: Quranic Language, Christian Translators, and Muslim Audiences") as follows: "Whereas the sponsors and patrons were mostly Muslims, the translators were overwhelmingly Christians, in particular Syriac-speaking communities within which knowledge of Greek, mainly as liturgical language, was still common. However, the Christian background of the translators does not seem to have influenced the language of their translations, mainly for two reasons. The first is that the translated philosophical and scientific

of Qur'ānic source with Biblical ones (Ibid., pp. 353-374). In short, Mavroudi compared the *Oneirocriticon of Achmet* with the 2nd-century A.D. *Book of Dreams* of Artemidoros (translated into Arabic by Ḥunayn in the 9th century) and five medieval Arabic dreambooks. Mavroudi concluded that the *Oneirocriticon of Achmet* is nothing but a Christian Greek adaptation of Islamic Arabic book (now lost).

- 12 Gotthard Strohmaier, p. 171. Furthermore, the reason of particularly using a religious language as suggested by Strohmaier is the rivalry between the Christians and the Ḥarrānī Sabians at the time. Sabians had gained a certain prominence (riyāsa) in Baghdad at the caliph's court and some such as Ḥunayn's colleague Thābit Ibn Qurra loudly claimed that their paganism was identical with that of the old Greeks, the true founders of civilisation. Therefore, the Christians certainly had no interest in supporting these claims by providing the Sabians with proofs to support their arguments. Hence, pagan ideas were replaced by religious ones (Gotthard Strohmaier, p. 172).

texts had little to no religious contents and thus did not lend themselves to a particular Christian interpretation. This is not to say that these texts did not operate within them a certain theological framework, which may best be described as rational theology, referring, e.g., to a first principle of everything and to universal ethical precepts, yet not presupposing any revealed scripture. As we shall see, these theological elements lent themselves to being rendered by Quranic concepts *and thus clad the translations in a Muslim rather than Christian guise*. In cases in which allusions to pagan deities or religion in the Ancient Greek source texts were replaced by monotheist concepts, it is difficult to discern whether such replacements were due to the Christian sensibility of the translators or of their intended Muslim readership. [...]”^{13 14}

- 13 Elvira Wakelnig, “Greek Texts in Arabic Translations: Quranic Language, Christian Translators, and Muslim Audiences”, *The Routledge Handbook of Translation and Religion*, ed. Hephzibah I., 1st Edition, London, Routledge, 2022, p. 304, emphasis is mine. The full details about this issue can be found in the same article especially in pages 305-306.
- 14 Additionally, the reason for this change made by Ḥunayn (and his disciples) was quite clear in his *Risāla*, which is a kind of bibliography regarding his translations of about 129 Galenic books. Ḥunayn often talked about how he made the style of his translations in accordance with the patron that asked him to do the translation. Ḥunayn Ibn 'Ishāq, *Risāla*, Arabic Manuscript, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Ayasofya, 3631, folios 2v-27r, pp. 4b, 5a, 6a, 8b, 9a, 11a, 11b, 12b, 13a, 16a. Thus, Ḥunayn's reason seems to be entirely commercial as well as pragmatic. In this context, we have to remember that he was paid with gold for each book he translated into Arabic. On the other hand, at the beginning of this *Risāla* Ḥunayn said that when he would review each of his Galenic translation, he would dwell on details about his age wherein he made that translation and to whom it was made, “because it is necessary to know these two things in that the quality of the translation is shaped mostly by the skill of the book's translator and the person for whom it was translated” (Ibid., p. 2b, translation is mine). Furthermore, in a recent Arabic interview with George Saliba on Finjān Podcast (minutes 51-58) titled ‘Li-Mādhā Khasira al-Muslimūn al-Ḥaḍārah al-'Arabīyah’ [‘Why did Muslims lose the Arabic Civilization?']; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SI24jUcidN8> (Date of Access: 04.05.2024), he mentioned something relevant to this question. Saliba discussed how a Christian friend of Ḥunayn advised him against translating a specific Galenic book into Arabic. According to Saliba, this suggests that Ḥunayn aimed to break the Christian monopoly on medicine by making Galenic books available to Muslims in Arabic, eliminating the need for Syriac. Considering the accusations and intrigues against Ḥunayn by his fellow Christians—whose mention is not possible here due to the limit of this paper—Saliba's argument gains further strength. Therefore, if this were true, it would make sense that Ḥunayn would make his translation easily understood by his Arabic-speaking readers. Similarly, it is known that Ḥunayn made a famous translation of the Old Testament into Arabic and wrote many theological books. Hence, it would also make sense for him to have read the Qur'ān in order to improve his translation as well as his Arabic style. We should add to this, the invitation letter to Islam sent to him by his Muslim patron of science ('Alī Ibn Yaḥyā), to consider and comment about the logical proofs that 'Alī wrote about the truthfulness of his religion.

The last issue to be addressed here is the issue of terms such as Qur'ānic or Islamic. Unlike other languages, the Arabic language and Islamic culture are deeply interconnected with one another. There is an ongoing scholarly debate about how each affected the other. So, while Arabic is the language in which the Qur'ān was revealed, Islam, in turn, had a profound influence on the development and spread of the Arabic language. Additionally, when Arabic grammar was established, the language of the Qur'ān served as the foundational standard. Therefore, when this article refers to the adaptation of the text into Islamic culture or the Arabic language, it essentially and generally refers to one in terms of the other. To avoid confusing terms (such as 'Islamic culture'), 'Islamic garb' was used in the title of this article. It goes without saying that some of the words used in the Qur'ān were also used in pre-Islamic times. To clarify, such words were not foreign to the people of that period. Yet, it must be emphasized here that the Qur'ān used these words in a different context. For example, when Toshihiko Izutsu analyzed the language and concepts of the Qur'ān, he explored how the Qur'ān revolutionized pre-Islamic Arabian terms (such as *fiṭra*, *sunna*, *ihsān*, *ḥikma*, etc.), particularly in the realm of metaphysics and ontology. Izutsu showed how the Qur'ān introduced new meanings to pre-existing Arabic terms, particularly in the context of monotheism and the nature of God. He highlighted how the Qur'ānic revelation transformed the understanding of many concepts, imbuing them with deeper theological significance. While Izutsu's study compared some Qur'ānic words with those found in pre-Islamic poetry, others like Arthub Jeffeby's seem to ideologically attempt to go so far in linking many of the Qur'ānic words with other Semitic languages.¹⁵ The point to be made here is that establish-

15 Arthub Jeffeby, *Foreign Vocabulary of the Qur'ān*, Baroda, Oriental Institute, 1938, pp. 292-293. It is as if the Arabs, who mastered language in a distinguished way, weren't able to invent words and terms by themselves. And it is as if the Arabic language doesn't have special features which are not even found in the other Semitic languages. To see the characteristics of the Arabic language, the reader is gently invited to look at this paper of mine: Ebrahim Al-Khaffaf, "Looking through the Lens of Language: How Early Muslim Intellectuals Tried to Reach Hidden Truths by Examining the Arabic Language", *Identities and representations, reaching one another: language as interface and performance, joint proceedings of the 3rd and 4th International Students' Conference ICON 2020 and 2021*, edited by Jan Jokisch in collaboration with Dr. Daniel Schmicking. Mainz, Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz, 2023, pp. 29-42; <http://doi.org/10.25358/openscience-8988> (Date of Access: 10.05.2024). So, there is a long debate about what is Qur'ānic and what is not. Additionally, we must remember that based on the field of studying the Stylistic Approach of the text, we can measure the impact of a specific word on the reader. In this sense, the original intention of the author/translator makes no big difference. So, whether Ḥunayn used these terms in their general or Qur'ānic meanings somehow becomes less of an issue when their impact on the reader is highlighted. Neverthe-

ing a methodology of what is Qur'ānic is not a something that can be achieved in such a short article. Hence, when this article refers to the use of such a term, it in a sense refers to the fact that the word in question is found in the Qur'ān. Yet in many cases, its specific importance to Muslim was also highlighted.

The Comparison of *On the Usefulness of the Parts* with *Fī Manāfi' al-'Adā'*¹⁶

Obviously Galen's texts are important, but the pagan language he used must be brought closer to Islamic culture. This is something that can be addressed through both translation and commentary writing. To put it another way, it is both a linguistic and theological problem, especially in this book, which closely relates to the theological domain. Versteegh wrote that in the writings of "the greatest of all translators", meaning Ḥunayn, there is no trace of pagan language, because "[he] explicitly rejects the literal translations of his predecessors and uses a businesslike, terse style that makes full use of the syntactic possibilities of Arabic and shuns the ornate epistolary style".¹⁷ It is worth noting in this context that al-Jāḥiẓ (d. 868) criticized the general translation process.¹⁸ He seemed to consider such methods

less, based on the exploration of this article, sometimes it *seems* that Ḥunayn was doing it on purpose.

16 Given that an explanation about the English translation used here must be made for the purposes of the methodology, theoretically speaking, a translation cannot be a copy or identical to the source, but only its representation in the target language. Nevertheless the English translation of Galen's Greek book used in this article was not arbitrarily employed. The English translation by Margaret Tallmadge May of Galen's *On the Usefulness of the Parts* was carefully chosen because in this translation she tried her best to reproduce an English translation which is faithful as well as committed to the original Greek text. Furthermore, given that this article primarily focuses on Ḥunayn's discourse, the changes that occurred in Ḥunayn's translation occurred in generally expected areas, such as in the names of Greek gods and other obvious pagan references, whose negative implications are clear whether they are read in Greek or English. However, it is important to remain aware of the possible shift in the English translation from the Greek one. That is why future researchers proficient in Greek language may find more concrete evidence on this matter through direct comparison. We have to remember that the research on the Arabic translation of *On the Usefulness of the Parts* is still in its infancy, and there isn't even an Arabic edition of it (Elvira Wakelnig, "Medical knowledge as proof of the Creator's wisdom", p. 144, note 13). In this way, this article may help necessitate a complete edition of this invaluable Arabic manuscript.

17 Kees Versteegh, *The Arabic Language*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1997, p. 69.

18 It seems that the old discussion about the credibility of translation remained important among intellectuals. For example, Al-Tawḥīdī (d. 1023) had dwelt on the famous debate that took place between Abū Bishr Mattā the Logician (d. 939) and Abī Sa'īd al-Sīrāfī the Grammarian (d. 979). Al-Sīrāfī maintained that translation deforms the original intended meaning especially when it goes through a medium language, like Syriac. Abū Bishr replied that trans-

as a clear sign of manipulation and changing of the original texts with the aim of bringing them in line with the translators' own religion.¹⁹ The mutakallim 'Abd al-Ġabbār (d. 1025) criticized Christian translators mentioning Ḥunayn by name, claiming that through their translations of the ancients, "[they] lent and bestowed upon them (i.e. the Ancients) the Muslims' concepts and explanations which do not belong to them".²⁰ 'Abd al-Ġabbār made allegations against these Graeco-Arabic translators by claiming that they were false Christians and that they were considered as such by their own religious community that banned them. He cited in support of his argument a claim made by the tenth century Christian translator Yuḥannā al-Qass. Wakelnig is of the opinion that, "[t]he citation may even be correct for we may well assume that Yuḥannā positively remarked that translators like himself corrected the Greek writings they translated and tried to make their translations acceptable to their Muslim audience by using Islamic concepts".²¹ The crucial point here is that from a relatively early time, readers have noticed these adaptations of the Greek texts, but while these changes were probably made to render the text more acceptable, it sometimes created accusations of corrupting (*tahrīf*) the original texts, which itself stems from Muslims' mindset of respecting the original text at all costs.

The following investigation will highlight some interesting culture-based adaptations as well as some Qur'ānic terminologies employed by Ḥunayn.²² Given

lation can still convey the purpose of the original text. Al-Tawḥīdī, Abū Ḥayyān, *Al-Imtā' wa-al-mu'ānasah [Enjoyment and Conviviality]*, edited by Aḥmad Amīn and Aḥmad al-Zayn, Mu'assasat Hindāwī, 2019, p. 123. Al-Sīrāfī referred to the fact that no language can ever be corresponded with any other language and consequently we cannot trust any translated text (Ibid., p. 126). As Vagelpohl commented on this issue, while al-Jāḥiẓ only doubted the efficacy of translation, al-Sīrāfī rejected the value of the source texts themselves. Al-Jāḥiẓ demanded a standard of exactitude in translation which he did not define. Yet, none of them provided anything that can be taken as a theory of translation. Vagelpohl, Uwe, "The Abbasid Translation Movement in Context Contemporary Voices on Translation", no year, Online article: http://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/38552/1/AbbStudies-2-2010_Vagelpohl.pdf (Date of Access: 14.05.2024, p. 16). For Ḥunayn, however, actions spoke louder than words. That is why highlighting the significant elements in Ḥunayn's translation is important, which is what this study is aiming at establishing.

19 Qtd in Gotthard Strohmaier, p. 171.

20 Qtd in Elvira Wakelnig, "Greek Texts in Arabic Translations", p. 314.

21 Ibid., p. 315.

22 In this particular context, Schwarb's comment holds significance, "The fact that Ḥunayn's Arabic translation of UPB is replete with terms and phrases borrowed from the theological discourse of early ninth century Muslim and Christian *mutakallimūn* further facilitated the reception of Galenic ideas in the *kalām* milieu" (Gregor Schwarb, pp. 118-119). Schwarb stated that

that it is hard to establish a method of deciding what is Qur'ānic and what is not here, as was previously explained, let's say, for the sake of clarity, that this will highlight how Hunayn sometimes selected terms whose counterparts can also be seen in the Qur'ān. However, it is impossible to prove that Hunayn borrowed all these directly from the Qur'ān. So, while some of the observed terms might imply a considerable general knowledge of Islam, others may have resulted from the indirect linguistic influence of the language of the Qur'ān, recognized as the most correct language. Still, highlighting this pattern could be a significant attempt to historicize the level of Hunayn's understanding of Islam, which undoubtedly needs further future concrete evidence. Wakelnig's comment regarding the early translations is relevant: "While we cannot thus expect to find any particular Christian colouring in these Graeco–Arabic translations, they are influenced by the language of the Quran and, more generally, Islamic notions".²³ In this context, Wakelnig's other comment is also important: "there is a huge caveat as it is often difficult to determine whether a translator uses a certain word because of its occurrence in the Qur'an or whether it is the simplest and most natural way to express a concept in Arabic which also happens to be found in the revealed text. A good example is *burhān* (*proof*) which is found 8 times in the Quran, but is also used widely in the Graeco–Arabic translations. It finally became *the* technical Arabic term for demonstrative syllogism (Rashed 2017: 56–57). Yet whether this is in any way linked to its Quranic occurrence is impossible to say".²⁴ Be that as it may, the Islamic-oriented style of Hunayn and his school of translation that may be considered by some readers as a commonplace can be further comprehended when we look at the translations made by the Kindī-group. In her relevant article, Elsherif remarked: "the Kindī-circle translations share a lexical and partially syntactical orientation towards Greek as their source language".²⁵ More surprising is the fact that even in theological topics, "al-Kindī avoids the use of religiously shaped words such as *god* [الله], *creator* [الخالق] or *created* [المخلوق] *things*. Rather,

"an analysis of theologically motivated modifications of the original text [of *On the Usefulness of the Parts*] would clearly be a worthwhile undertaking" (Gregor Schwarb, p. 119). So, while Schwarb aims to attribute such terms to mutakallimūn, this study will attribute them directly to their very source, that is to say, the Qur'ān.

23 Elvira Wakelnig, "Greek Texts in Arabic Translations", p. 305.

24 Ibid., pp. 315-316, emphasis in the original.

25 Garda Elsherif, "Philosophical production through translation: The Kindī-circle and development of an Arab philosophy tradition", *New Voices in Translation Studies*, 23, 2020, p. 86; <https://newvoices.arts.chula.ac.th/index.php/en/article/download/437/470> (Date of Access: 30.01.2024).

he tries to implement a more general philosophical terminology by speaking of *the first cause* (العلّة الأولى), *the first true complete Agent* (الأول التام الفاعل) and by differentiating between *the true One* (الواحد الحق) and those who are *one metaphorically* (واحد بالمجاز).²⁶ No wonder that al-Kindī faced as much criticism as his translators because of his foreign terminology.^{27 28}

Even if we encounter some Qur’ānic terms in translations predating Ḥunayn’s, we are surprised to find that they are significantly fewer in number compared to those present in Ḥunayn’s translation in question. To provide a more detailed explanation of this point, let’s explore Wakelnig’s recent, insightful study. Wakelnig discussed the Qur’ānic terminology found in the early Arabic translations. Her reasoning seems not only convincing but also relevant to this paper; she is of the opinion that the patrons and readers of the scientific and philosophical translations were mainly Muslims, which could explain why these Christian translators made efforts to use Qur’ānic language and Muslim concepts in rendering their source texts.²⁹

Wakelnig traced back the early seeds, so to speak, of this pattern of decorating the translated text, by her examining the oldest Greek book to ever be translated into Arabic, namely, *Epistolary Cycle between Aristotle and Alexander* [سر الأسرار], which was probably translated in the Umayyad period. Wakelnig observed in this text some Qur’ānic terms like *fiṭra*, *sunna*, and *al-ḥamd li-llāh* as well as other few “references to Islam and Muslim culture to make the composition more easily acceptable and comprehensible for its intended readership”.³⁰ Wakelnig, asserted that we cannot know for sure about the original replacements of these Arabic words because the original Greek is lost, but “[w]hat is clear, however, is that Greek material was clothed in Islamic garb”.³¹ Following that,

26 Ibid., p. 98.

27 “The stylistic peculiarities of the Kindī-translations and their complexity made the text so incomprehensible in parts that even the reader needs help from the Greek source text to understand it” (Garda Elsherif, p. 96). Kindī-circle included Eustahios, Ibn Nā’ima and Yaḥyā Ibn al-Biṭrīq, but we have to remember that other earlier translators, like Timothy I of Baghdad, also used very little Qur’ānic phrases. Thus, Ḥunayn appears to surpass the commonly used Arabic at the time, going far beyond the norm.

28 Garda Elsherif, p. 94.

29 However, it should be emphasized that during that period, there was a robust Mu‘tazilī school. This school, for instance, played a significant role in shaping al-Jāhīz’s views on translation. This fact strengthens Wakelnig’s argument and explanation regarding Ḥunayn’s translatorial behavior.

30 Elvira Wakelnig, “Greek Texts in Arabic Translations”, pp. 308-309.

31 Ibid., p. 308.

Wakelnig talked about the paraphrased version of the Aristotelian *Organon*, “Ibn al-Muqaffa’ composed an Arabic paraphrase based on originally non-Arabic material into which he introduced Qur’ānic terms [*abrār* and *fujjār*]”.³² Then Wakelnig provided a Qur’ānic example [*bi-idhn Allāh*] from Ḥunayn’s translation and others from al-Kindī-circle’s [*ḥikma*, *rubūbīya*, and *‘ayn al-yaqīn*].³³ Yet, as was highlighted earlier, such terms occurred little in such translations compared to Ḥunayn’s translation of *On the Usefulness of the Parts*. For example, the phrase *‘ayn al-yaqīn* occurred only in al-Kindī’s preface to the *Theology* of Aristotle but not a single time within the text itself. In her conclusion about the early translators’ use of the Qur’ānic and Islamic vocabulary, Wakelnig wrote that “[t]he techniques of how this was done deserve to be studied in more detail than has been done so far or is possible to undertake in this chapter”.³⁴ And that is why the next in-depth study is important.

Table 1. The table demonstrating some examples of what can be considered as Qur’ānic terms and collocations often used by Ḥunayn in this specific translation

Ḥunayn’s Arabic terms	English translations
علم اليقين	Certainty acquired by knowledge
حق يقين	Certainty acquired by truth
عيثاً	Unreasonably
هزلاً	Unreasonably
باطلاً	Unreasonably
بالعدل والقسط	With justice and fairness
نور .. القمر	Moon’s light
ضوء الشمس	Sun’s glow
الخالق	The Creator
الله	Allāh

It is evident that Ḥunayn consistently employed the term “yaqīn” [certainty]. While some may argue that using this term as a standalone word does not significantly relate to the current hypothesis, as it was also found in pre-Islamic poetry,³⁵ this is not quite true. After the Qur’ān used this term, its use remarkably

32 Ibid., p. 310.

33 Ibid., pp. 313-314.

34 Ibid., p. 315.

35 We find both “yaqīn” and its verbal forms used in the oldest poetry (Arthub Jeffeby, pp. 292-293).

increased and it started to be employed in arguments on theological and similar subjects by logicians, kalāmists, şūfīs, etc.³⁶ Nonetheless, when Ḥunayn used this term in conjunction with specific collocations, it became more closely associated with the Qur’ān. This is because such combinations were not documented before the Qur’ānic era. As an example, Ḥunayn would write, “ilm al-yaqīn” [certainty which is acquired by knowledge]³⁷, in the place where the source text spoke about the specific benefits of the parts that should be “clearly known”.³⁸ Here is one instance,

“Moreover, if he [the one who examines the body parts] sees that strong membranes clothe and are spread over and beneath not only nerves and tendons but also all vessels lying in bony grooves, I suppose *he will understand still more clearly* that Nature has made all such devices to render the parts invulnerable”.³⁹

”وإذا رأى أيضا ان جميع العصب والأوتار والعروق الموضوعه في المواضع المحروزة من العظام مغطا بحجب قوية قد قرم بها من فوقه و وطى بها من تحته علم علما يقيناً ان هذا انما جعل لها التوقي به من الافات“⁴⁰

Ḥunayn often seems to commit himself to using the Qur’ānic versions of this strict term.

Another relevant example is when Galen wrote that he would add another truth to strengthen his argument about the function of a specific entity in the eye,⁴¹ Ḥunayn wrote, “ثم أضم إليه هذا القول فانه حق يقين” [I will also add to what I have already mentioned, this speech which is certainty by truth].⁴² Referring to the

36 In this context, we must remember Toshihiko Izutsu’s opposing point of view found in *God And Man In The Quran*. In this work, he said that most Muslim philosophers wanted to create their own vocabularies outside the linguistic authority of the Qur’ān. But, Izutsu’s relatively modern view seems questionable when compared to older, relevant views. For instance, in his famous work *Al-Qānūn al-Mas’ūdī*, Al-Bayrūnī (d. 1048), noted that some Muslim philosophers—who were engaged in the translation of Greek, Persian, and Indian science—faced harsh criticism for using foreign terminology and concepts into their works.

37 Ḥunayn Ibn ‘Ishāq, *Fī Manāfi’ al-A’dā’* [*On the Usefulness of the Parts*], Arabic manuscript translated by Ḥunayn, MS Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, arab. 2853, Gallica, Digital Library Online, pp. 6b, 22a, 29a; <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b11001862n/f4.item.zoom> (Date of Access: 3.12.2021).

38 Galen, p. 76.

39 Ibid., p. 130, emphasis is mine.

40 Ḥunayn, *Fī Manāfi’*, p. 29a.

41 Galen, p. 501.

42 Ḥunayn, *Fī Manāfi’*, p. 188a.

same argument concerning the entity observed in the eye, Galen asserted that his explanation was true,⁴³ Ḥunayn used these words, “وهو امر حق يقين” [this issue is certainty by truth],⁴⁴ which can be interestingly compared with the Qur'ānic verse “إِنَّ هَذَا لَهُو حَقُّ الْيَقِينِ” [Verily, this! This is an absolute Truth with certainty].⁴⁵

Also, later when Galen talked about the perfection and harmony seen in the organs of the mouth, which when measured and examined carefully would assert that what he mentioned about Nature's wisdom at the beginning of his book was unquestionably true, Ḥunayn used these words, “وذلك مما يدل دلالة واضحة على ان الذي،” [This is clear evidence that what I stated at the beginning of my book is a certainty by truth..].⁴⁶ Again, when Galen said that he would demonstrate the perfection seen in the vertebra of the neck, not by empty words like those uttered by the accusers of Nature but by scientific and geometrical proofs,⁴⁷ Ḥunayn employed this sentence, “بل بكلام علم ويقين وبراھين خطوطية” [but with words of knowledge and certainty as well as geometry-based evidence].⁴⁸ In the same context, Galen said,

“I realize that very few indeed will follow my discourse”⁴⁹

Ḥunayn translated it as follows,

“أعلم علماً يقيناً ان الذين يمكنهم فهم ما اقله هم القليل من الناس” [I know with certainty that those who can understand what I say are few among people].⁵⁰

The word “yaqīn” and its derivatives are mentioned in the Qur'ān in about 28 places. So, when employed in combinations as highlighted in Ḥunayn's discourse, it reveals something about its impact on the reader. So, unlike other translations—as tackled by Wakelnig earlier—where we see a few Qur'ānic terms, they are rather prevailing in this specific Ḥunaynian translation. In this context, we must remember that this translation was “completed by Ḥunayn in his old ages”⁵¹ which provides insight into his mature grasp of the Arabic language.

43 Galen, p. 502.

44 Ḥunayn, *Fī Manāfi'*, p. 188a.

45 *Qur'ān [The Interpretation of the Meaning of The Noble Qur'ān]*, translated by Muhammad Taqi-ud-Din Al-Hilālī & Muhammad Muhsin Khān, Riyadh, Darussalam, 2007, 56:95.

46 Ḥunayn, *Fī Manāfi'*, p. 200b.

47 Galen, p. 558.

48 Ḥunayn, *Fī Manāfi'*, p. 216b.

49 Galen, p. 559.

50 Ḥunayn, *Fī Manāfi'*, p. 216b.

51 Margaret's Introduction of: Galen, p. 5.

When Ibn Abī Uṣaybi'a [for the sake of abbreviation: IAU] listed the Galenic books based on Ḥunayn's account, he mentioned something interesting regarding Galen's "كتاب في الأدوية المكتومة"⁵² [*Book On Secret Drugs*], which was written in a style resembling a set of riddles and parables "التي كنى عنها في كتبه ورمزها". Ḥunayn stated that this book contained all the knowledge that Galen collected throughout his life about secret drugs but he didn't reveal it to people because "لم يطلع عليها" [no one could have access to it except those elite who are able to reach the core meaning].⁵³ What is interesting is that Ḥunayn used a similar Qur'ānic term, as seen in the following verse, "آياتٍ لأولي الألباب" [signs for men of understanding].⁵⁴

In addition to using a semi-Qur'ānic term Ḥunayn here also seems to turn the Galenic science into a kind of secretive mystical community where some part of the teaching or revelation should be kept for the few, which is something very important in Sufism. In this context, that semi-Qur'ānic phrase "ذوي الألباب" is significant, because Ḥunayn was approaching the Galenic medicine in a way similar to that in which mystics approached the Qur'ān. Within this framework it would be constructive to refer to Strohmaier's relevant observation: "Ḥunayn also thought that his favored author Galen did express some truth in a more hidden way which might be brought to light by an allegorical interpretation, a method which was employed when commenting on difficult passages in the Old Testament".⁵⁵ To say it differently, Ḥunayn believed that Galen expressed truths in a manner that required deep interpretation, similar to the allegorical interpretations of difficult passages in the Scripture, which can only be realized by a few men of extraordinary understanding, like him.

52 Based on the *Dictionary of Islam* the term "كتمان: kitmān" means concealing or keeping a secret. According to Hughes's strange comment, although this term was repeated in Qur'ān such as in this verse, "Hide not the truth while ye know it", yet the art of concealing was a special characteristic of Ṣūfīs! Thomas Patrick Hughes, *A Dictionary of Islam*, second edition, London, W. H. Allen & Company, 1896, p. 280. No need to show here Hughes' mistake in mixing the general Qur'ānic truth with the Ṣūfī's personal divine secret. For example, Hughes already knew that Ṣūfīs have types of wisdom and one of them is the following: "Al-ḥikmatu 'l-maskūtah, 'unspoken wisdom.' Such as understood only by Ṣūfī mystics and not by natural men" (Thomas Patrick Hughes, p. 175).

53 Ibn Abī Uṣaybi'a [IAU], *Uyūn al-Anbā' fi Ṭabaqāt al-Aṭibbā'*, edited and studied by Ammar al-Najjar, (first volume), Cairo, Dar El Maaref, 1996, p. 370.

54 *Qur'ān*, 3:190.

55 Gotthard Strohmaier, p. 172.

At any rate, along all this translation Hunayn seems to make certain to use specific equivalent Qur'ānic terms when the Galenic text repeatedly talked about various perfections in the body. For example, the text often focused on such perfection to show that these organs were never made for amusement or for no purpose. Nature did so and so, “not unreasonably”,⁵⁶ Hunayn turned it into: “لم تفعل ذلك عبثاً ولا هزلاً”.⁵⁷ In similar repeated contexts Hunayn always used terms like ‘abathan, huzlan and bāṭilan: “لم تُجعل باطلاً ولا”⁵⁸, “لم تُجعل هزلاً ولا عبثاً”⁵⁹.

The Qur'ān has repeatedly used the same terms. The following are some examples: “أَفَحَسِبْتُمْ أَنَّمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ عَبَثًا وَأَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا تُرْجَعُونَ” [Did you think that We had created you in play (without any purpose), and that you would not be brought back to Us?].⁶⁰ “إِنَّهُ لَقَوْلٌ فَصْنٌ وَمَا هُوَ بِالْهَزْلِ” [Verily, this is a decisive statement. And it is not a thing for amusement].⁶¹ “رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَاطِلًا”⁶² [Our Lord! You have not created this without purpose].⁶² In fact, this term (bāṭil) in particular is found in pre-Islamic poetry. For example, we see it in the most famous verse of Labīd: “Alā kullu Shay' mā khalā Allāh bāṭil” [Lo, everything except Allāh is vain, unreal],⁶³ about which the Prophet remarked that the truest words ever said by a poet were the words of Labīd.⁶⁴ So, even though the term is old, it later started to have a special significance to Muslims.

Later when Galen talked about a particular organ—such as muscles or another tool—Hunayn used the most effective Qur'ānic terms in order to convey the religion-laden meaning. So, he would write that those organs were made with justice and fairness: “جُعِلت بالعدل والقسط”.⁶⁵

56 Galen, p. 99.

57 Hunayn, *Fī Manāfi'*, p. 16b.

58 Ibid., p. 35a.

59 Ibid., pp. 113b, 121b, 128b, 187b, 192a, 205b, 225b, 230b, 232a, 235a, 238a, 241a, 242a, 249b, 264a, 274a, 280a, 294b, 295a.

60 *Qur'ān*, 23:115.

61 Ibid., 86:13-14.

62 Ibid., 3:191.

63 *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, prepared by a number of leading orientalists, third vol., Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1986, p. 82.

64 Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Damascus, Risalah Publishers, 2018, ḥadīth 3841.

65 Hunayn, *Fī Manāfi'*, pp. 38a, 86a, 88a, 88b, 92b, 99b, 132a, 133b, 168b, 169a, 192b, 194b, 196a, 196b, 197a, 207a, 215a, 215b, 219a, 228b, 230b, 240b, 241a, 241b, 244a, 257a.

Just to provide one Qur'ānic example, we can look at the following verse: “فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا بِالْعَدْلِ وَأَقْسِطُوا” [make reconciliation between them justly].⁶⁶ This term (‘adl) is current in the Islamic vocabulary of religion, theology, philosophy, and law. According to al-Māwardī’s definition, ‘adāla (the quality of ‘adl) is described as “a state of moral and religious perfection”. This term in most its Arabic definitions was linked to Islam, elsewhere it was defined like this: “one can translate ‘adl by ‘person of good morals’, with the essentially religious sense that this has in Islam”.⁶⁷

In fact, Ḥunayn’s strict commitment to the Qur’ānic terms can be clearly seen in his employment of other Qur’ānic collocations. For instance, in his translation, after mentioning the Moon, he would specifically use the term “نور” [light], but soon afterwards when he was referring to the Sun, he would use the term “ضياء” [glow].⁶⁸ This differentiation actually reflects a considerable knowledge of the Qur’ān, knowing that even native Arab readers sometimes use these two terms equivalently, but based on the Qur’ān they are not. The Qur’ān established these two separate collocations: “هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ الشَّمْسَ ضِيَاءً” “وَالْقَمَرَ نُورًا” [It is He Who made the sun a shining thing and the moon as a light].⁶⁹ Regarding this matter, the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* provides insight by stating that: “According to some authors, *daw’* (*diyā’*) has a more intensive meaning than *nūr* this idea has its foundation in *Ḳur’ān*, X, 5, where the sun is called *diyā’* and the moon *nūr*. The further deduction from this passage that *diyā’* is used for the light of light-producing bodies (sun) and *nūr* on the other hand for the reflected light in bodies which do not emit light (moon)”.⁷⁰ As a result, it seems that these strict collocations were not coincidentally employed by Ḥunayn. For example, even in Ḥunayn’s Arabic translation of Artemidorus’ *Book of Dreams*, Ḥunayn made certain to use similar collocations “...الشمس” “ضوء” [the sun...glow],⁷¹ “الشمس وضوءها” [the sun and its glow],⁷² “ضوء الشمس”

66 *Qur’ān*, 49:9.

67 *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. 1, p. 209.

68 Ḥunayn, *Fī Manāfi’*, p. 57a.

69 *Qur’ān*, 10:5.

70 *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. 8, p. 121.

71 Ḥunayn Ibn ’Ishāq, *Kitāb Ta’bīr Al-Ru’yā* [*Artemidorus’s Oneirocritica*], edited by Toufic Fahd, Damascus, Centra National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1964, pp. 289, 294.

72 *Ibid.*, pp. 160, 292.

[the sun's glow]^{73 74} So, the Qur'ānic expression distinguishes between *ḍiyā'* (glow) and *nūr* (light) with precise semantic differentiation, placing each word in its appropriate context as dictated by the linguistic context.

Ḥunayn again supplied a religious perspective, so to speak, to Galen's text when he used a Qur'ānic verb, as he wrote: “يَتَفَكَّرُ الْإِنْسَانُ” [human contemplates] instead of “يُفَكِّرُ الْإِنْسَانُ” [human thinks].⁷⁵ This term was repeatedly used in the Qur'ān, a notable example of which is the following: “إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ ءَايَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ” [Verily, in these things, there are signs for a people who contemplate].⁷⁶

Ḥunayn seems to intentionally employ other specific Qur'ānic collocations when the source text mentioned that every human—when making a mistake—must judge himself; Ḥunayn translated it into: “يَشْهَدُ بِالْحَقِّ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ”.⁷⁷ Without going into details, Hunayn's phrase has a similar tone with the following verse: “حَتَّىٰ أَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ أَوَّلَمْ يَكْفِ بِرَبِّكَ أَنَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ” [until it becomes manifest to them that this is the truth. Is it not sufficient in regard to your Lord that He is a Witness over all things?].⁷⁸ The word “شَهِيدٌ”, according to the Qur'ān, means “witness” as well as “martyr”. And it is also used as one of the divine names.⁷⁹

In another section, when Galen talked about specific arteries in the human body, he referred to his medical opponents, who agreed that Nature created everything skillfully and has made nothing in vain, yet at the same time they said that these arteries have no blood at all. And in doing so, “they do not realize” the contradictory consequent of their argument, which would ultimately mean that these arteries were created for no purpose.⁸⁰ Thus, while they were trying to prove

73 Likewise in Ḥunayn's *The Book of the Ten Treatises on the Eye*, “نور” [light] was used to refer to a reflected light. Ḥunayn Ibn 'Ishāq, *Kitāb al-'ashr maqālāt fī al-'ayn* [*The Book of the Ten Treatises on the Eye*], edited and translated with a commentary by Max Meyerhof, Cairo, Amiri Press, 1928, p. 79. The important point to be noted here is that Ḥunayn often committed to using these two Qur'ānic collocations probably intentionally (Sun+Ḍiyā', Moon+Nūr), except when there is a reason to use them differently, such as when he talked about reflected light (Ḥunayn, *Kitāb al-'ashr maqālāt*, pp. 84, 103, 105, 106, 111). In *al-Furūq fī al-lughah* [*Differences in language*], the difference between al-Nūr and al-Ḍiyā' was made clear. Abū Hilāl Al-'Askarī, *al-Furūq fī al-lughah*, Beirut, Manshūrāt Dār al-Āfaq al-Jadīdah, 1980, p. 307.

74 Ḥunayn, *Kitāb Ta'bīr Al-Ru'yā*, p. 297.

75 Ḥunayn, *Fī Manāfi'*, p. 80a.

76 *Qur'ān*, 13:3.

77 Ḥunayn, *Fī Manāfi'*, p. 106b.

78 *Qur'ān*, 41:53.

79 *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. 9, pp. 203-204.

80 Galen, p. 321.

a point they refuted the very foundation of their own claim. In translating that part Ḥunayn used: “ثم لا يشعرون”.⁸¹ It would be interesting to compare Ḥunayn’s phrase with the following verse: “يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَمَا يَخْدَعُونَ إِلَّا أَنفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ” [They think to deceive Allāh and those who believe, while they only deceive themselves, and perceive it not!].⁸² Because in this context, Galen was addressing the scholars who contradicted their own argument without being able to notice it themselves, yet a true scientist can notice it. Similarly, this Qur’ānic verse addressed the hypocrites who were unable to see the contradictions in their own words, yet a believer can notice it. And while the source of the hypocrites’ incoherency stems from their corrupted hearts, the source of the scholars’ incoherency in the Galenic text stems from their corrupted medical beliefs. Thus, Ḥunayn here seems to purposely dress that Galenic account with a religious dimension in this highlighted context.

In other area when the Galenic text was describing some membrane entity within the eye, Ḥunayn used a famous Qur’ānic word, *libās*: “[وهو] لباس لما داخله” [it is apparel to what is within it of entities],⁸³ which likewise was employed in many different verses in the Qur’ān in a somewhat mystical way, covering many different ideas: “هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَهُنَّ” [They (women) are apparel for you, and you are the same for them].⁸⁴ We find the cognate counterparts of “لباس” in almost all the Semitic languages. But Arabic dictionaries defined it as “that which conceals or covers the pudenda”, and these dictionaries often linked this definition with this Qur’ānic verse “O children of Adam! We have revealed unto you clothing to conceal your shame, and finery, but the garment of piety [لباسُ التَّقْوَى], that is that best”⁸⁵

However, another Qur’ānic metaphor used about women can also be seen in another section. When Galen talked about how sometimes drunken men and women have sex and produce a child,⁸⁶ Ḥunayn used this phrase: “زراعة الطفل” [planting a child]. On the same page, Ḥunayn referred—in clearer way—to the act of impregnating a woman as a way of planting,⁸⁷ which is very Qur’ānic, since the act of impregnating is made analogous to the act of planting. For instance,

81 Ḥunayn, *Fī Manāfi*’, p. 113a.

82 *Qur’ān* 2:9.

83 Ḥunayn, *Fī Manāfi*’, p. 171a.

84 *Qur’ān*, 2:187.

85 *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. 5, p. 732.

86 Galen, p. 524.

87 Ḥunayn, *Fī Manāfi*’, p. 199a.

God said, “نِسَاؤُكُمْ حَرْثٌ لَّكُمْ” [Your wives are a tilth for you].⁸⁸ Furthermore, Galen said while he was comparing men to women: “The female is less perfect than the male”⁸⁹ but in Hunayn’s translation “المرأة أنقص من الرجل”, he employed the same word used⁹⁰ in the famous ḥadīth: “ناقصات عقل”⁹¹, undoubtedly, this could be quite coincidental, but it is relevant to highlight in this context.

The translation was cloaked in a mantle of generally religious culture when Hunayn employed the noun “رسول” [messenger] in a somewhat strange context. Even though it would be quite challenging to connect this commonly used Arabic word to the Qur’ān but we still have to remember that the word rasūl [messenger] is derived from irsāl [sending], which implies that the person has been entrusted with a message or news.⁹² Terms like “رسول” and “رُسُلٌ” were used in this sense in the Qur’ān. Even based on the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* there are only two meanings to this word; apart from the first meaning, it has only other secular meaning, which is “diplomatic envoy”.⁹³ At any rate, when Galen referred to a membrane in the eye, according to Hunayn’s rendering that membrane functions as a kind of a messenger who gathers nutrition to the nearby members, along with the other “رُسُلٌ” [messengers].⁹⁴ Hence, we can consider this specific usage as religious colouring, although not necessarily Qur’ānic. It must be highlighted here that Galen had used “membrane” for the former noun and “servants” for the latter.⁹⁵ Moreover, Hunayn used another unique verb also found in the Qur’ān when the text was addressing the skeptic reader to mean “give me your attention”,⁹⁶ and in such cases Hunayn would often use something similar to the following: “اقبل عَلَيَّ”,⁹⁷ a verb which is used in the Qur’ān with a similar meaning in more than one verse. One example is “يَا مُوسَىٰ أَقْبِلْ وَلَا تَخَفْ” [O Mūsā! Draw near, and fear not].⁹⁸

More than once, Galen made a strong critique to the prophet Moses, namely: “Moses believed everything to be possible to God, even if he should wish to

88 *Qur’ān*, 2:223.

89 Galen, p. 628.

90 Hunayn, *Fī Manāfi’*, p. 249a.

91 Al-Bukhārī, ḥadīth 304.

92 Abū Hilāl Al-‘Askarī, pp. 283-284.

93 *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. 8, pp. 454-455.

94 Hunayn, *Fī Manāfi’*, p. 171b.

95 Galen, p. 467.

96 *Ibid.*, p. 681.

97 Hunayn, *Fī Manāfi’*, p. 178b.

98 *Qur’ān*, 28:31.

make a horse or beef out of ashes. We, however, do not feel this to be true, saying rather that some things are naturally impossible and that God does not attempt these at all but chooses from among the possible what is best to be done”.⁹⁹ In dealing with this famous critique, Ḥunayn attempted to make it milder and softer by trying to present the noun as a normal name, that is, without adding the title ‘Prophet’: “كما قال موسى” [as Moses said].¹⁰⁰ Ḥunayn continued in creating a seemingly Qur’ānic tone to his translation, which can similarly be seen in the rendering of the following clause, “two eyes were made”¹⁰¹ where Ḥunayn wrote “جُعِلَتَا” ¹⁰² “عَيْنَيْنِ” which employs a structure similar to that found in the Qur’ān, “أَلَمْ نَجْعَلْ” ¹⁰³ “لَهُ عَيْنَيْنِ” [Have We not made for him two eyes?].¹⁰³ In another area where Galen used “by the gods”¹⁰⁴ Ḥunayn used the specific Islamic phrase “بِإِثْنِ الْمُسْتَعَاثِ” [By Allāh, the One sought for help],¹⁰⁵ which would remind his Muslim readers of the next Qur’ānic phrase: “وَإِنْ يَسْتَعِينُوا يُعَاثُوا” [And if they seek help, then they will be helped].¹⁰⁶ Ḥunayn had more than once used a phrase such as “مما لا ضير فيه” [of no harm],¹⁰⁷ which employed a form resembling what is seen in the following verse: “لَا ضَيْرٌ إِنَّا إِلَىٰ رَبِّنَا مُنْقَلِبُونَ” [There is no harm, indeed, we are returning to our Lord].¹⁰⁸

Sometimes Ḥunayn would even mix some Qur’ānic words to be able to create an impact on his readers. To provide an example, we can look at this sentence which was mentioned by Galen after he discussed certain idea about nerves: “If, however, this argument seems reasonable to anyone, he may use it”.¹⁰⁹ In dealing with this sentence, Ḥunayn used unique expression such as “صواب مُسْتَقِيمٌ” [straightly correct] when he wrote the following: “فان إستحسن إنسان هذا القول ورأى: “انه صواب مستقيم فقد يمكنه ان يقول به صواب مُسْتَقِيمٌ” [If a person finds favor in this saying and sees it as straightly correct, he may use it],¹¹⁰ which can be considered as an in-between

99 Galen, pp. 532-533.

100 Ḥunayn, *Fī Manāfi’*, pp. 203b-204a.

101 Galen, p. 483.

102 Ḥunayn, *Fī Manāfi’*, p. 179a.

103 *Qur’ān*, 90:8.

104 Galen, p. 516.

105 Ḥunayn, *Fī Manāfi’*, p. 194b.

106 *Qur’ān*, 18:29.

107 Ḥunayn, *Fī Manāfi’*, p. 227a.

108 *Qur’ān*, 26:50.

109 Galen, p. 500.

110 Ḥunayn, *Fī Manāfi’*, p. 187b.

usage of the following phrases: “الْقِسْطَاسِ الْمُسْتَقِيمِ” [the true and straight balance],¹¹¹ “الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمِ” [the Right Path],¹¹² “وَقَالَ صَوَابًا” [he speaks what is right].¹¹³ Knowing that later Ḥunayn also used: “بَيَانًا مُسْتَقِيمًا” [straight explanation].¹¹⁴ And again, he also translated one Galenic sentence into: “علمه [ارسطو] حق مستقيم” [Aristotle’s knowledge is straight truth].¹¹⁵ Therefore, Ḥunayn often tried to decorate his translation with such terms penetrable to his Arabic readers’s ear.

Indeed, he probably used such Islamic familiar terms so that his prospective Muslim readers will easily comprehend the intended meaning even if that would mean that sometimes he had to combine and invent new collocations.¹¹⁶ And this usage should be expected, since Ḥunayn was credited with an Arabic version of the Old Testament and was undoubtedly familiar with the Greek New Testament,¹¹⁷ by the same token he would similarly want to investigate deeply in the Qur’ān to further deepen his mastery on the issue. Hence, this detailed examination is important to historicize Ḥunayn’s knowledge of the Qur’ān as well as the Islamic Tradition which sometimes seems to be present in his mind during the translation process.

However, Galen referred to the human being as a lord of all creatures on land, water and air because of the power of his hands by means of which

“he writes law for himself, raises altars and statues to the gods...”¹¹⁸

“بهما يكتب النواميس والشرائع وكتب الحكمة” [by the means of which he can write laws, legislations and books of wisdom].¹¹⁹

As seen clearly, Ḥunayn ignored the noun that refers to the human as “lord”, and he likewise ignored the reference to “altars and statues to the gods” by replacing it with more understandable and less pagan phrase.

111 *Qur’ān*, 26:182.

112 *Ibid.*, 37:118.

113 *Ibid.*, 78:38.

114 Ḥunayn, *Fī Manāfi’*, p. 190b.

115 *Ibid.*, p. 248a.

116 For example, instead of creating the aforementioned combinations, Ḥunayn could have used other normal phrases such as “قول صحيح تاماً” or “حق لا شك فيه”, etc.

117 Gotthard Strohmaier, p. 184.

118 Galen, p. 69.

119 Ḥunayn, *Fī Manāfi’*, p. 3a.

As scholars have already highlighted, the many times when Galen referred to “Nature”,¹²⁰ were speedily turned into “الخالق” [the Creator] or into other Islamic nouns.¹²¹ For example, Galen said,

“Nature, being just in all her dealings...”¹²²

“وذلك ان الخالق لعدله وحكمته” [This is because the Creator is just and wise].¹²³

Let’s not forget that the Qur’ān has used the word “Creator” both in its plural form,

“فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ” [Blessed is Allāh, the Best of creators],¹²⁴

as well as in its singular form,

“هُوَ اللَّهُ الْخَلِيقُ الْبَارِئُ الْمُصَوِّرُ” [He is Allāh, the Creator, the Inventor, the Fashioner].¹²⁵

Another interesting, Islamic culture-oriented translation can be seen when Galen wrote,

“here too is something marvelous, a device of Nature’s which you will admire as it deserves”,¹²⁶

which was rendered into

“وقد نجد الخالق لَطَفَ ها هنا لطفاً عجبياً تفهمه وتقف عليه اذا انت تفتنت” [And you may find the Creator’s wonderful kindness right here, a kindness that you comprehend and appreciate once you become aware of it].¹²⁷

Even though at times Ḥunayn would not only replace Nature with the Creator, he would also add a name of Allāh’s ninety nine names (or other divine names), yet in the previous example he employed a verb “لَطَفَ” deriving from Allāh’s name “اللطيف” [The Most Kind], “إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَطِيفٌ” [Verily, Allāh is the Most Kind and Courteous].¹²⁸ In order to be certain that the invented sentence would hit beauti-

120 Galen, p. 92.

121 Ḥunayn, *Fī Manāfi’*, p. 14a.

122 Galen, p. 92.

123 Ḥunayn, *Fī Manāfi’*, p. 14a.

124 *Qur’ān*, 23:14.

125 *Qur’ān*, 59:24. Also look at *Qur’ān*, 6:102.

126 Galen, p. 95.

127 Ḥunayn, *Fī Manāfi’*, p. 15a.

128 *Qur’ān*, 22:63.

fully on his readers's ear he was sure to add an adjective “عجيباً” [wonderful], also deriving from the Qurʾān: “إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا قُرْآنًا عَجَبًا” [we have heard a wonderful Recitation].¹²⁹ It could be constructive to provide another example in order to highlight this dominant pattern. In discussing a particular issue, Galen wrote,

“How, then, did Nature resolve so great a difficulty?”¹³⁰

Hunayn wrote:

“انظر كيف أحكم الخالق هذا الباب” [Be aware of how the Creator wisely made that issue],¹³¹

and it should be noted that the employed verb “أحكم” [made it with *ḥikma*] in the last sentence was also derived from one of Allāh's names “الحكيم” [The Wise].¹³² Thus, this term, which is originally connected to Allāh, “denotes both individual ordinances and the whole of His dispensation. [...] So *ḥukm* comes to mean the authority, imperium, of the Islamic government and, on the other hand, the judgment of a *qāḍī* on a concrete case”.¹³³

Another similar example is when Galen had dwelt on the perfection seen in the thumb, created with two tendons which made it move with flexibility,

“do you maintain that such things have all been done at random and without skill?”¹³⁴

Hunayn translated it into:

“يقولوا ان جميع ذلك انما جعل باطلاً او انه من فعل غير حكيم” [They say that all of this was done in vain or that it was an unwise act].¹³⁵

Next, we will see one Galenic paragraph, which after being translated, was loaded with references to the Qurʾān, Ḥadīth, as well as Allāh's names. It is when Galen wrote,

129 Ibid., 72:1.

130 Galen, pp. 95-96.

131 Hunayn, *Fī Manāfi'*, p. 15b.

132 God referred to Himself as حكيم (Wise) about 90 times in the Qurʾān. The word حكمة (wisdom) was mentioned 19 times in the Qurʾān. It is a technical word in the Qurʾān, being used in its original sense once, but it was also applied to Luqmān, to David, to the Prophet's teaching, and to the Qurʾān. In searching for the development of this Semitic term, Jeffeby said that it often has the meaning of *wisdom* as well as of *govern* (Arthub Jeffeby, p. 111).

133 *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. 1, p. 257.

134 Galen, p. 96.

135 Hunayn, *Fī Manāfi'*, p. 20a.

“one should admire the skill of Nature (as Hippocrates does when in admiration he calls her always just) because she chooses what is adequate not according to ordinary appearance, but in respect to faculty and usefulness, and this, I think, is a work of divine justice to find out what is needful”,¹³⁶

Ḥunayn thoroughly adapted this paragraph to Islamic culture:

”يقول للانسان التعجب من الخلقة كما تعجب منها بقراط ولم يزل يقول انها قدرت واتقنت بحكمة وعدل وذلك انه لم يقصد فيها الى اعطاء كل ذي حق حقه والمساواة بين الشيء ونظيره فيما يظهر للتخيل والحس القريب فقط لكن قصد فيها الى اعطاء كل ذي حق حقه والمساواة بين الشيء ونظيره في القوة والمنفعة وهذا مما لا شك فيه من فعل الله جل وعز وهو المقسط له اذ كان هو القادر على ادراك ما يحتاج اليه“ [Human has the right to marvel at creation, the way Hippocrates used to marvel at it. Hippocrates used to assert that creation was constructed and executed with wisdom, fairness, and justice. This is because it was not meant merely to grant every rightful thing its right and equality with its counterpart as it appears to imagination and close perception. Instead, it was meant to give every rightful thing its due and equality with its counterpart in power and benefit as well. There is no doubt that this is an act of Allāh Almighty, who is fair in His judgment, as He is the Omnipotent who is capable of comprehending what is needed].¹³⁷

Ḥunayn almost used the very same sentence found in the book of Ḥadīth:

”فَاعْطِ كُلَّ ذِي حَقٍّ حَقَّهُ“ [so you should give the rights of all those who have a right on you].¹³⁸

Ḥunayn also utilized several of Allāh’s names, whether in their derivative forms such as ”الْحَكِيمُ“ [The Wise] and ”الْعَدْلُ“ [The Just], or the direct names such as ”الْمُقْسِطُ“ [The Fair in His judgment] and ”الْقَادِرُ“ [The Omnipotent].

Galen talked about Pindar’s obscene story of a man having sex with a female horse consequently producing a centaur. Ḥunayn treated this part very carefully and he paraphrased and even used difficult and vague terms to translate that story:

“... [Centaurus,]

136 Galen, p. 506.

137 Ḥunayn, *Fī Manāfi*, p. 190a.

138 Al-Bukhārī, ḥadīth 6139.

Who lay with the Magnesian mares at the foot of Pelion.

Thence was born a wondrous race, like to both who gave them birth.

The mother gave their lower parts, the sire the parts above”.¹³⁹

”كما حكى فيندارس الشاعر حيث قال ان رجلاً غشي حجوراً من بين الحواجر فولد له منهن افراس أبطال نز عوا الى أبوهم جميعاً فما سفل من أعضائهم كان شبيهاً بأعضاء إمهاتهم وما علا منها كان شبيهاً بأعضاء أبيهم“ [As recounted by the poet Pindar, a man mated (*ghashiya*) with a mare (*hajjur*) among mares, and they gave birth to valiant stallions, just as their father. Their lower parts resembling the organs of their mother, and those parts that were uppermost resembled the organs of their father]^{140 141}

This blurring technique apparently would make the full understanding of this story difficult for people with a low understanding of the context. What suggests that Ḥunayn had chosen this non-common word intentionally is the fact that the copyist of the manuscript had written this explanatory information in the margin: “الحجر الأثني من الخيل” [Al-hijr is the female of the horse].¹⁴² Similarly, the verb *ghashiya* in the meaning of having sex is not commonly used.

Ḥunayn had his own way in dealing with any description that exaggeratingly idolizes humans, Ḥunayn made sure to make it milder. In a context where Galen criticized the men who blame Nature and accuse it of having shortcomings, he wondered about the situation of such ungrateful person,

“How he maltreats and ruins the noblest qualities of his soul, crippling and binding that god-like faculty by which alone Nature enables a man to behold the truth”.¹⁴³

”وكيف يرى حال نفسه في فساد جمالها ودماره إذ كان قد أخلا قوتها التي تستدل بها الملائكة من العناية بما يصلحها وأسلمها للعناء والعماء وليس للإنسان سواها قوة ينظر بها الى الحق ويعرفه“ [And how does one perceive the state of his soul amidst the corruption of its beauty and amidst his own destruction, if he has squandered its faculty by the means of which he can communicate with angels in order to carefully reform himself, but he instead had given himself to hardship and blindness, when human

139 Galen, pp. 154-155.

140 Ḥunayn translated this “horse-man” into: “الانسان الفرسي” (Ḥunayn, *Fī Manāfi'*, p. 41a).

141 Ibid., p. 40a.

142 Ibid., p. 40a.

143 Galen, p. 189.

has no other faculty enabling him to contemplate God and through which to know Him].¹⁴⁴

So, Galen's "godlike faculty" was turned by Ḥunayn into "قوتها التي تستدل بها" [its faculty by the means of which he can communicate with angels]. Elsewhere, the stomach was described by Galen as

"a work of divine",¹⁴⁵

but Ḥunayn rendered the sentence into

"هيأها الله واعد لها للغذاء" [Allāh had carefully prepared it for food].¹⁴⁶

Similarly, Galen said,

"the Creator has bestowed upon each one [of the parts] certain godlike faculties",¹⁴⁷

but Ḥunayn translated it like this:

"الخالق... قد جعل فيها [الأعضاء] قوى كريمة" [The Creator... had endowed (the organs) with noble powers].¹⁴⁸

Galen repeatedly asserted,

"I am composing [this book] as a true hymn of praise to our Creator",¹⁴⁹

which after Ḥunayn's rendering became:

"هذا القول عندي تسبيح وتقدیس خالص لخالقنا" [This speech for me is pure glorification and sanctification of our Creator].¹⁵⁰

Here Ḥunayn used interesting terms found in the famous speech uttered by the angels to God:

"نَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ" [we glorify You with praises and thanks and sanctify You].¹⁵¹

144 Ḥunayn, *Fī Manāfi'*, p. 56a.

145 Galen, p. 204.

146 Ḥunayn, *Fī Manāfi'*, p. 63a.

147 Galen, p. 205.

148 Ḥunayn, *Fī Manāfi'*, p. 63a.

149 Galen, p. 189.

150 Ḥunayn, *Fī Manāfi'*, p. 56a.

151 *Qur'ān*, 2:30.

In this manner, Galen's voice would join the angelic chorus. This method of angelizing the Greek author to the Muslim readers seems to be intended. Sometimes, when the context is not related to faith Ḥunayn would keep the pagan element. For example, when Galen spoke about

“the image of Zeus at Olympia”,¹⁵²

it became as follows in Ḥunayn's rendering:

“صنم زاوس الذي في الجبل المسمى اولقما”.¹⁵³

Here instead of writing “تمثال” [statute] Ḥunayn used “صنم” [idol] to keep the phrase in its distant pagan dimension. So, given that the context was in a faraway and unknown place, there was no hesitation in using this pagan word as it is. Such context will not allow misunderstanding of this sensitive topic against which Islam has a clear stand.¹⁵⁴

In another instance, Galen said that if we needed food all the time in the same way in which we always need respiration then we would

“be terribly deprived of philosophy and the Muses”,¹⁵⁵

but Ḥunayn smoothly turned the inspirational goddesses into “good conduct”:

“لمنعنا ذلك من اكتساب الحكمة وحسن السيرة” [This would prevent us from acquiring wisdom and good conduct].¹⁵⁶

Elsewhere while Galen was talking about a wrong assumption, he used the phrase “by the gods” in the sense of “for god's sake”,¹⁵⁷ but Ḥunayn turned it to this: “وما اعجب هذا” [How amazing this is].¹⁵⁸ Galen criticized people who made fun of Nature by saying,

“O thou reviler of Nature”,¹⁵⁹

and Ḥunayn cleverly changed the construction of the sentence shifting the focal point from Nature to the created thing:

152 Galen, p. 189.

153 Ḥunayn, *Fī Manāfi'*, p. 56b.

154 For example, in al-Dīnawarī's interpretation of dreams we are told the following about seeing “صنم” [idol] in a dream: “[a]n idol is a false and fabricated image; it is a deceitful man with a beautiful face and an evil character” (Maria Mavroudi, p. 329).

155 Galen, p. 380.

156 Ḥunayn, *Fī Manāfi'*, p. 135a.

157 Galen, p. 390.

158 Ḥunayn, *Fī Manāfi'*, p. 139a.

159 Galen, p. 471.

”فدونك يا هذا الذي يهجو الخلقَةَ“ [Oh you who satirize creation].¹⁶⁰

In the same page, when Galen challenged such a reviler of Nature on the perfection seen in the seven circles in the eye's iris “that would be better suited to give rise to the hornlike tunic”. He wondered what such an accuser of nature would have done about it if he “had stood in the place of Prometheus! Would you not have made it thin and clear”,¹⁶¹ in this context Galen was referring to Prometheus of the Greek myth whose name means “forethought” and who was entrusted with the creation of man. Hence, Galen was challenging the accuser here that even if he had the sharp mind of that god he still would have never been able to create that part of the eye in such a perfect fashion. So, Ḥunayn made a significant change in the last quoted sentence: “يا هذا ضع انك لو جُعلت في موضع خالق: ” [Oh you, assume that you were placed in the position of the Creator of the creature, would you have produced something better and more excellent regarding the eye's iris in this specific place than it currently is].¹⁶² In the same context where Galen wrote about the aforementioned perfect construction of that specific entity in the eye he said,

“O most clever accuser, if you were endowed with the authority of Prometheus, [you] would perhaps have overlooked [the importance of creating that membrane in the way it was made]”,¹⁶³

Ḥunayn turned it into the following:

”وهذه الآفات غشاؤها¹⁶⁴ كان يذهب عنك ايها الهاجي الحكيم لو انك كنت المتولي لامر الخلقَةَ موضع خالقنا والمعنى بامورها“

[Oh you wise accuser! you would not have been able to think about the importance of the membrane of these entities (in the eye) if you were the one responsible for the affairs of creation in the place of our Creator, who is the One concerned with these matters].¹⁶⁵

Hence, in the last two examples, the name of ‘Prometheus’ was replaced with that of the ‘Creator’.

160 Ḥunayn, *Fī Manāfi*’, p. 173b.

161 Galen, p. 471.

162 Ḥunayn, *Fī Manāfi*’, p. 173b.

163 Galen, p. 471.

164 According to Hughes’s *Dictionary of Islam*, “غشاوة” is literally “a covering”. It means dimness in the eye. It is used in the Qur’ān for spiritual blindness, “Their hearts and their ears hath God sealed up, and over their eyes is a covering” (Thomas Patrick Hughes, p. 139).

165 Ḥunayn, *Fī Manāfi*’, p. 173b.

Galen had made up his mind not to write about specific contents in the eyes [sensory nerves] lest many of his readers be annoyed with the obscurity of his complex explanations which must necessarily include geometry, but after deciding to omit that point something strange happened to him:

“But afterward I dreamed that I was being censured because I was unjust to the most godlike of the instruments and was behaving impiously toward the Creator in leaving unexplained a great work of his providence for animals”,¹⁶⁶

Hunayn rendered it as the following:

”رأيت فيما يرى النائم بإلهام من الله جل وعز طارقاً طرقتني يعذلني ويلومني ويقول لقد ظلمت هذه الألة التي هيأها الله وناققت الخالق بتركك شرح هذا الفعل العظيم الذي يدل على عناية الخالق بالخلق“

[I saw, as one sees in a dream which is inspired by Allāh the Great and Almighty, a person who was rebuking and blaming me, saying, ‘You have wronged (ẓalamt) this instrument that Allāh had fashioned, and you acted as a hypocrite (nāfaqt) who didn’t share what he knew with people, by neglecting to explain this great instrument that indicates the Creator’s care for His creation’].¹⁶⁷

Such a simple and smooth translation would easily be understood by Muslims who read in the Qur’ān: “فَبَدَّلَ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْهُمْ قَوْلًا غَيْرَ الَّذِي قِيلَ لَهُمْ فَأَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ رِجْزًا مِنْ سَمَاءٍ بِمَا كَانُوا يَظْلِمُونَ” [But those among them who did wrong (ẓalamu), changed the words that had been told to them. So We sent on them a torment from the heaven in return for their wrongdoings].¹⁶⁸ Hunayn employed verbs with heavy negative implications such as “ظلمت” and “ناققت” in order to condemn this behavior of not sharing the truth with others. The word “ظلم” and its derivatives are found in more than 280 places in the Qur’ān; it can be seen as one of the most important negative value-words in the sacred book.¹⁶⁹ It is obvious that “ظلم” is connected with many negative meanings because of the close relationship between “ẓulm” and terms such as “كفر”, “شرك”, “فسق”, “إعتداء”, “ذنب”, “نقص”, “ضرر” and other vices. Providing one example is enough for the current context: “الْكَافِرُونَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ” [it is the disbelievers who are the *Zālimūn* (wrongdoers)].¹⁷⁰

166 Galen, pp. 490-491.

167 Hunayn, *Fī Manāfi'*, p. 182b.

168 *Qur'ān*, 7:162.

169 *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. 11, p. 567.

170 *Qur'ān*, 2:254.

More than once Galen asserted that he was told by “a god” to write this book,¹⁷¹ whereas in Ḥunayn’s translation it was rendered into “الله” [Allāh].¹⁷² Galen wrote,

“A god... commanded me to tell”,¹⁷³

and Ḥunayn likewise translated it as follows:

“ان الله جل وعز امرني على ما قلت”

[Indeed, Almighty Allāh commanded me to say so].¹⁷⁴

When Galen spoke about his foreknowledge of the uneducated masses who would ridicule his ideas about god he wrote,

“just as in the discourses of the mysteries the uninitiated are bidden to close the portals of their ears, so I too, who am inducting not into human ordinances, but into the veriest mysteries of the truth, bid those not initiated in the methods of demonstration to close the portals of their ears; for asses would learn the lyre sooner than those people would comprehend the truth of what is said here. And though I realize that few indeed will follow my discourse, still, for the sake of those few, I have not hesitated to deliver even to the uninitiated my mystic sayings. The book will not judge or determine the worth of the one who reads it and will not escape from the stupid and place itself in the hands of the learned. Even our Creator, though knowing perfectly the ingratitude of such men as these has yet created them”,¹⁷⁵

Ḥunayn translated that paragraph as this:

”وكما ان المتولين للأسرار يأمرؤن من لاعهد له بالاسرار ويتقدمون اليه في طبق اذنه وغلقها في وقت الكلام بالاسرار كذلك انا في مثل هذا الموضوع متقدم الى من لاعهد له بسر صناعة المنطق وعلم البرهان ان يطبق اذنه ويحجبها عما اقوله اذ كان ما اتى به من الأسرار ليس من الأسرار الموضوعه بين الناس بل أسرار الحق باعياتها فان فهم الحمار لنغمات العود اسهل وامكن من حس هؤلاء بما اقوله ها هنا وقد اعلم علماء يقيناً ان الذين يمكنهم فهم ما اقوله هم القليل من الناس ولكني لموضع هؤلاء وان كانوا الاقل قد رأيت ان لا ابخل بشرح الأسرار ولا اتكاسل عنه وان كان قد يشركهم فيما اصف من ذلك اهل البعد

171 Galen, p. 501.

172 Ḥunayn, *Fī Manāfi*’, p. 188a.

173 Galen, p. 502.

174 Ḥunayn, *Fī Manāfi*’, p. 188a.

175 Galen, p. 559.

عن علم الأسرار وذلك ان الكتاب لا عنده تمييز ولا له علم بمن يقرأه فيهرب عن الجاهل
ويضع نفسه عند ذوي الأدب كما ان خالفنا جل وعز وان كان عالماً بقلة شكر من هذه حاله
من الناس وكفرهم للنعمة فانه مع هذا لا يدع ان يخلق“¹⁷⁶.

Apart from the Qur'ānic terms here “علماً يقيناً”¹⁷⁸, “الحق”¹⁷⁷, and “البرهان”¹⁷⁷, “كفرهم”, note the ambiguous reference to the secret communities and their practices.¹⁷⁹ All the same, Galen went on and gave an example of “our Creator” whose goodness is provided to all, and said that he knew that ignorant people would make fun of his book yet he had made up his mind to complete it for the sake of those who deserve it. He justified himself, saying,

“The sun makes the seasons of the year and perfects the fruits without any heed, I suppose, to Diagoras, Anaxagoras, Epicurus, or the others blaspheming against it. No beneficent being bears malice over anything, but naturally aids and adorns all”¹⁸⁰,

Hunayn wrote,

“ويجعل الشمس لمواقيت السنة وتكمل الثمار من غير ان يلتفت الى دياغوراس
او الى اناكسواغروس او الى افيقورس او الى غيرهم ممن كفر به وافترى عليه اذ كان
الجواد بالخير لا يبخل على احد شئى ومن شأنه الاحسان¹⁸¹ الى كل الناس والنفع لهم
واستصلاحهم“

[And He makes the sun for the appointed times and to complete the growth of the crops, without turning to Diagoras, Anaxagoras, or Epicurus, or to others who disbelieved in Him (*Kafara bi-hi*) and attributed lies to Him. For indeed, the Bestower (*al-Jawwād*) does not withhold anything from anyone, and it is in His nature to bestow

176 Hunayn, *Fī Manāfi'*, p. 216b.

177 “The term [burhān] is Qur'ānic and signifies a ‘brilliant manifestation’, a ‘shining light’ come from God [...] which may take the form of that supreme argument of authority which is the miracle” (*Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. 1, p. 1326). In short, it is an ‘overwhelming proof’ which leads to ‘certitude’ [يقين]. Thus, Aristotle’s *Posterior Analytics* were translated by Hunayn as “كتاب البرهان”.

178 Haqq in its primary meaning is one of the names of Allāh, and it occurred often in the Qur'ān in this sense, as the opposite of *bātil*. But it was also common in pre-Islamic poetry (*Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. 3, p. 82).

179 There is another eerie reference to secretive communities (Galen, p. 731; Hunayn, *Fī Manāfi'*, p. 295b).

180 Galen, p. 559.

181 “[t]o confer favours, or to perform an action in a perfect manner.” It is a term often used by Ṣūfīs because the Prophet said Ihsān is “to worship God as if thou sawest Him, and to remember that God seest thee” (Thomas Patrick Hughes, p. 196).

goodness (*al-Ihsān*) upon all people, benefiting them and reforming them]^{182 183}

knowing that here, along with the highlighted terms, Ḥunayn also used one of Allāh's 99 names “الجواد” [The Bestower].¹⁸⁴

Note the ending of the book and note how Ḥunayn changed the pagan ideas and turned them into a normal act of praising God. Galen concluded his book as follows:

“This book like a good epode sets forth these many and great advantages of the work I have now completed. By ‘epode’ I do not mean magician who uses enchantments; for we know that the melice poets, called lyric by some, have not only a strophe and an antistrophe but a third song as well, an epode which they used to chant standing before the altars and, as they say, singing hymns of praise to the gods. And so, likening this book to such an epode, I have given it that name”.¹⁸⁵

Ḥunayn's final Islamic culture-oriented translation goes as follows:

”وقفنا من هذه المقالة على هذه المنافع الكبيرة الجليلة التي تنالها من هذا الكتاب وجعلناها خاتمة محمودة له واعني بقولي خاتمة المعنى الذي ذهب اليه الملحنون من الشعراء وذلك انهم اذا وقفوا فصلوا الصلاة الأولى ثم اردفوا بالثانية صاروا باخره الى المدائح فصلوا صلاة تالثة يمجدون الله بها ويثنون عليه ويسمون هذه الصلاة خاتمة فسميت هذه المقالة [We have concluded from this article the بتلك الصلاة فاستعرت هذا الاسم“ great and noble benefits (*manāfi*) attained from this book, making it a commendable conclusion (*khātima maḥmudah*). By saying ‘conclusion’ (*khātima*) I refer to the conclusion intended by singing poets, namely when they stop after the first section of the prayer,

182 This part is close to the following reference: “For he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and one the unjust”. *Bible* (The King James Version), Korea, Korean Bible Society, 2010, Gospel of Matthew 5:45.

183 Ḥunayn, *Fī Manāfi*, p. 216b.

184 It must be said that some of Allāh's 99 names were also used in Christian writings, such as “الجواد”, because the idea of God's being generous goes back to Late Antiquity and Neo-Platonist philosophers like Proclus (d. 485). For example, one of the Christian Trinity—according to Yaḥyā Ibn ‘Adī's interpretation—is generosity “جود”. Abdullah Rıdvan Gökbel, “Erken İslamî Dönemde Hıristiyanların Kur'an Çalışmaları [Christian's Works on the Quran in the Early Islamic Period]”, (Yayımlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi), İstanbul, İstanbul Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Felsefe ve Din Bilimleri Anabilim Dalı, İstanbul, 2019, pp. 48-49.

185 Galen, p. 733.

then follow with the second, and finally they culminate with praises (al-madā'ih), then offering a third prayer to glorify and thank Allāh. They name this prayer 'conclusion' (khātima), hence I named this article after that prayer, that is to say, I borrowed that name].¹⁸⁶

In short, Ḥunayn's rendering of particularly this concluding section is evidently supportive of the hypothesis laid out at the beginning of this article.

Conclusion

As was already highlighted above, historians of science had spotted general changes in Ḥunayn's translation of Galen's *On the Usefulness of the Parts*, but this article dives deeper in examining this translation. In other words, this article explores Ḥunayn's method of translation from a more in-depth perspective, demonstrating how Ḥunayn seriously attempted to reproduce the original text in a manner that would make it easy for his Muslim readers to comprehend and accept without any reservations. Thus, this article showed that Ḥunayn didn't only know about the cultural mindset of his Muslim readers, but he also understood Qur'ānic terminology which he employed carefully in order to hook his Arabic readers. Similarly, this exploration clearly indicates that Ḥunayn was also familiar with some Ḥadīth and other relevant areas of the Islamic Tradition. That doesn't mean that this article always limited itself to these areas, but it actually went even beyond that. For instance, as demonstrated, in the places where there was blasphemy against the Creator or references to unlawful sexual activity or some other unreserved behavior in the original text, Ḥunayn didn't necessarily need to employ Qur'ānic terminology or Islamic ideas. He was only required to adapt his translation to be accepted by the generally conservative society of his time. Thus, the point stressed in this article was his knowledge of his readers.

In fact, it was this knowledge that provided him with such capacity to enter into the very mentality of his Muslim readers, and to similarly enable him to get rid of the pagan nature of the Greek text and replace it with Islamic culture-oriented smooth Arabic translation. Consequently, it is not surprising that this Ḥunaynian translation in particular made the greatest impact on the Islamic intellectual discourse. To put it differently, many of the intellectuals who emerged during and after that time—such as al-Jāhīz, al-Fārābī, Ibn Sīnā, al-Ghazālī, Ibn Rushd, Ibn Taymīya, etc.—made a reference to this interesting book (or its main argument) to demonstrate the existence as well as the unquestionable wisdom of Allāh, as clearly manifested in His perfected creation.

186 Ḥunayn, *Fī Manāfi'*, p. 296b.

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