

REVIEW ESSAY

Wilson, E.J., Dinkha, S., *Hunayn Ibn Ishaq's "Questions on Medicine for Students". Transcription and Translation of the Oldest Extant Syriac Version (Vat. Syr. 192)*. Studi e testi, 459. Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 2010. xxiii + 615 pp., facsim.

GRIGORY KESSEL, PHILIPPS UNIVERSITÄT - MARBURG

“Opusculé couvrant seulement quelques feuillets de manuscrits, l'*Isagoge* se trouve au centre de difficultés de tous ordres et continue à faire l'objet de multiples interprétations.”¹

This statement was pronounced by Danielle Jacquart, a prominent historian of Medieval medicine, with regard to a Latin version of the medical treatise *Questions on Medicine for Students* (hereafter: *Questions*), the Syriac text of which is provided in the volume under review. As the review will demonstrate, the Syriac version of the text despite its undisputed importance, is also not destined to occupy the place it deserves, but this time it is because of the printed edition.

Ḥunayn ibn Ishāq (808-873) is a chief representative of the Greek-Arabic translation movement that produced a whole body of translations of Greek scientific literature.² Being mainly involved in translation activity, Ḥunayn also authored a number of original treatises, many of which (written in both Syriac and Arabic) fell into oblivion. The disappearance of texts produced by Ḥunayn does not provide evidence for their lack of popularity in the following centuries. Quite to the contrary, the literary production of Ḥunayn laid a foundation (taking into consideration only the field of medicine) for the development of medical science not only in the Islamic East but also, although to a less extent, in the Latin West. This statement holds true especially for *Questions*, a medical treatise that was enormously influential in the Islamic world. In Europe it was one of the most often copied and published (ed.

¹ Danielle Jacquart, “A l'aube de la renaissance médicale des XI^e-XII^e siècles: l'*Isagoge* Johannitii et son traducteur” (Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des Chartes 144 [1986]), 210.

² On Ḥunayn, see the survey article in *Encyclopaedia of Islam* III, 578-581 (G. Strohmaier).

princeps in Padova in 1476) texts. Such exceptional popularity of the text had a direct and inevitable effect upon its textual history because in both traditions (Arabic and Latin) the text developed different forms that eventually seemed to be independent works.

Regrettably, being such a crucial text for the history of Medieval medicine, the *Questions* has not received the investigation it deserves and, until today there exist various (often contradictory) hypotheses and opinions regarding the history of particular versions of the text. Let me briefly overview the *status quaestionis* of a research of Arabic and Latin versions before proceeding to the present edition of the Syriac text.

Two hypotheses have been proposed to explain a variation in the Arabic manuscript tradition of the *Questions*. According to the first, expressed by Fuat Sezgin, Hunayn authored only one text that later developed two seemingly independent forms.³ An opposite solution was put forward by Manfred Ullmann, who distinguished within the manuscript tradition of the *Questions* two independent works: *Kitāb al-Mudḥal fī ṭ-ṭibb* (*Introduction in Medicine*), which presents material in discursive, running form, and *Kitāb al Masā'il at-tibbīya* / *Kitāb al Masā'il fī ṭ-ṭibb* (*Medical Questions* / *Questions on Medicine*), which uses the form of questions and answers.⁴ In a later period, the opinion of Gerard Troupeau began gaining notoriety. Troupeau is said to have conclusively demonstrated that Hunayn penned only one treatise, and due to its active use and circulation, the text's inner literary form changed over time. To the best of my knowledge, nowhere was this position of Troupeau expressed in detail.⁵ The critical edition of the Arabic text, based on the oldest dated manuscript (Cairo, Library of the Faculty of Medicine 625 dated 526 A.H.), was published in 1978 in Cairo⁶ whereas an

³ Fuat Sezgin, *Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums*, vol. iii (Leiden: Brill, 1970), 249-250.

⁴ Manfred Ullmann, *Medizin im Islam*, Handbuch der Orientalistik. 1. Abt.: Der Nahe und der Mittlere Osten. Ergänzungsband 6, 1. Abschnitt, (Leiden: Brill, 1970), 117-118; this explanation is upheld also in a recent survey: Peter Pormann, Emilie Savage-Smith, *Medieval Islamic medicine* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), 68.

⁵ See the brief report in *École pratique des Hautes Études. IV^e section. Sciences historiques et philologiques. Annuaire 1976-1977*, 209.

⁶ Muḥammad 'Alī Abū-Raiyān, Mursī Muḥammad 'Arab, Jalāl Muḥammad Mūsā, eds., *Al-Masā'il fī ṭ-ṭibb li'l-muta'allimin* (Al-Qāhirah,

English translation based on that edition appeared in 1980.⁷ The text of the edition represents the question-and-answer form of the text.

The Latin translation of the *Questions* (in discursive form), which is widely known under the title *Isagoge Iohannitii*, is dependent upon the Arabic version. The Latin tradition is also very complex, and it is generally assumed that the text was translated more than once (by Constantinus the African and Mark of Toledo). In the 12th century, the text was incorporated into a collection of basic medical texts known as *Articella* and afterwards served as a kind of introductory work for those embarking on a study of medicine until the 16th century. Thanks to the commentary activity of the scholars associated with the medical school at Salerno, the text of *Isagoge* began receiving glosses and comments in the university milieu throughout the Middle Ages. Regarding the composition of the text and its relationship to the Arabic version, it was revealed that “il ne s’agit pas d’un véritable résumé, mais d’un assemblage d’extraits, de longueur variable, juxtaposés avec une adresse inégale suivant les passages.”⁸ A critical edition was published in 1978 by Gregor Maurach,⁹ though this edition does not include all available manuscript evidence.

1978). Eight years later a Doctoral thesis appeared containing an edition of the *Questions* based on one manuscript (Gotha ar. 2028) along with a French translation (Antoine Mansourati, *Le livre “Isagoge” de Hunayn Ibn Ishaq dit Iohannitius (808-873)* (Paris: Université Pierre et Marie Curie – Paris 6, 1986)); the work was never published and remained unnoticed by scholars.

⁷ Paul Ghalioungui, tr., *Questions on Medicine for Scholars by Hunayn Ibn Ishāq* (Cairo, 1980). For an important study on a previously unknown manuscript witness of the Arabic version of the *Questions*, see Delio Vania Proverbio, “Sul piu antico codice delle *Masā’il fi ‘l-tibb lil-muta’allimin* di Hunayn ibn Ishāq (*Isagoge Iohannitii*)” (Rendiconti della Reale Accademia dei Lincei, Classe di scienze morali 10 [1999], 58-92; the results however need to be corrected in the light of the Cairo edition that was not available to the author.

⁸ Danielle Jacquart, “A l’aube de la renaissance médicale des XI^e-XII^e siècles: l’*Isagoge Iohannitii* et son traducteur” (Bibliothèque de l’Ecole des Chartes 144 [1986]), 214.

⁹ Gregor Maurach, “Johannitius, *Isagoge ad Technē Galienī*” (Sudhoffs Archiv 62 [1978]) 148-174.

Notwithstanding, there also exists another Medieval version of the *Questions*: the Syriac text, which is widely acknowledged as a representative of one of the most important (and maybe even original) branches of the textual history of the work. For instance, thanks to the Islamic historiographic tradition (e.g. Ibn Abī Uṣaibi‘a) we are aware of the fact that the text of the *Questions* was never finalized by Ḥunayn, who died while working on it. The work was brought to its end by his nephew Ḥubayš ibn al-Ḥasan ad-Dimišqī.¹⁰ Nowhere in the Arabic manuscript tradition of the *Questions* is there any sort of distinction between two parts, whereas the Syriac version clearly marks the place that Ḥunayn had reached when he deceased.¹¹ For that reason it is no surprise that the Syriac version is often referred to in studies on the Arabic version (with a constant regret for its unavailability for examination) of the *Questions*.¹² Thus there can be no doubt that a critical edition of the *Questions* has been a great desideratum, and its appearance would definitely foster the study of the history of that important text.

Despite the fact that the first manuscript containing the Syriac version of the *Questions* was available in Europe already in the 18th century (i.e. Vat. syr. 192) whereas a larger part of its text was edited and translated in 1954,¹³ it was the late Rainer Degen (1941-2010) who managed to identify the text as a version of the treatise known in the Arabic tradition as *Kitāb al Masā’il fī ṭ-ṭibb* and as an unfinished work of Ḥunayn that was finalized by his nephew Ḥubayš.¹⁴ The same scholar discovered one more manuscript

¹⁰ *Encyclopaedia of Islam* XII, 375 (A. Dietrich).

¹¹ Cf. the conclusion of Jacquart and Palmieri: “Dans l’état actuel de la recherche, la répartition proposée par la version syriaque paraît la plus satisfaisante [...]” (Danielle Jacquart, Nicoletta Palmieri, “La tradition alexandrine des *Masā’il fī ṭ-ṭibb* de Hunain ibn Ishaq,” in *Storia e ecdotica dei testi medici greci. Atti del II Convegno Internazionale*, ed. A. Garzya (Napoli: M. D’Auria Editore, 1996), 222).

¹² See, for instance, Danielle Jacquart, “A l’aube de la renaissance médicale des XI^e-XII^e siècles: l’Isagoge Johannitii et son traducteur” (Bibliothèque de l’Ecole des Chartes 144 [1986]), 212, 215.

¹³ Jean-Baptiste Chabot, “Version syriaque de traités médicaux dont l’original arabe n’a pas été retrouvé” (Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Nationale et autres bibliothèques XLIII [1954]), 77-143.

¹⁴ Rainer Degen, “The oldest known Syriac manuscript of Ḥunayn b. Iṣḥāq,” in *Symposium Syriacum*, 1976, OCA 205, eds. F. Graffin, A. Guillaumont (Roma, 1978), 63-71. Before this the Vatican ms was

witness of the text (Mingana syr. 589) and for the first time raised a question concerning the original language of the text, which could have been either Syriac or Arabic.

The previously mentioned edition of the *Questions* appeared as a posthumous publication along with a couple other works of Jean Baptiste Chabot (1860-1948).¹⁵ The manuscript employed for the edition (known afterwards as CSCO syr. 21) contains a collection of predominantly medical texts and was produced in 1904 by a Chaldean scribe named Elias Hōmō.¹⁶ It was also used by Chabot for the publication of another text.¹⁷ Chabot's edition followed the only manuscript available to him and covered both the initial part of Hunayn as well as the addition by Ḥubayš (although this addition was not completely edited). Thus, there was an absolute necessity for a critical edition that would take into account the three extant manuscript witnesses.

In this respect the book under review can by no means be considered as representing a critical edition of the *Questions*. As it is clearly stated in the subtitle, it is a "transcription and translation of the oldest Syriac version." Taking into account the editorial approach applied in this volume, the edition can be considered a semi-diplomatic edition of the text (although all the editorial conventions are not indicated anywhere) along with a facsimile reproduction of the manuscript Vat. syr. 192, which contains the Syriac and the Arabic text of the *Questions* in two parallel columns.

This thick volume opens with a brief introduction (p. vii-xxiii) that provides a sketch of the history of ancient medicine, basic information about Hunayn, the presentation of the text, its

believed, following the identification of Assemani, to contain the *Medical compendium* of Paul of Aegina (e.g. William F. Macomber, "The literary activity of Hunain b. Ishaq in Syriac," in *Ephram Hunayn Festival* (Baghdad, 1974), 567).

¹⁵ See the notice on this in *Comptes-rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* 98/3 (1954) 348. The entire volume (see note 13 above) is available online at: <http://cpart.byu.edu/?page=99>.

¹⁶ See the complete description in André de Halleux, "Les manuscrits syriaques du CSCO" (Le Muséon 100 [1987]), 45.

¹⁷ Jean-Baptiste Chabot, "Notice sur deux manuscrits contenant les œuvres du moine Isaac de Rabban Isho et du métropolitain Aḥoudemmeh" (Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Nationale et autres bibliothèques XLIII [1943]), 43-76.

manuscript tradition, some remarks on transcription and translation, and a list of Syriac terms for herbs and drugs mentioned in the text. Concerning the important question of the original language of the text (p. xiii) the editors are inclined to accept the primacy of the Syriac text (for both Hunayn's part and the addition by Hubayš) over the Arabic without, however, adducing strong evidence. The editors do well in extolling the Syriac text as containing (contrary to the Arabic tradition) a precise indication of the place where Hunayn finished writing the text (p. 92 of the edition). One can hardly disagree with their conclusion that "the final work is therefore largely Hubaish's accomplishment" (p. xiv). With regard to the dating, the editors follow the dating provided by Degen, who, on the authority of M. Ullmann's evaluation of Arabic handwriting, assigned the manuscript to the 11th-12th century. Since Hatch's *Album of Dated Syriac Manuscripts* provides just a few specimens for that period of the development of East Syriac handwriting (due to a very limited number of relevant manuscripts that survived), one wonders if it would not be possible to assess the Syriac handwriting more properly by means of comparison with other East Syriac manuscripts that have become known in the 20th century. For example, it is worthwhile to compare the Vatican manuscript with the somewhat similar Mingana syr. 661, which contains a fragment from Hunayn's "Medicinal Properties of Foodstuffs"¹⁸ and which was dated by Alphonse Mingana to ca. A.D. 1100. Furthermore, a thorough investigation of the Syriac handwriting of the Vatican manuscript might also be informative and may enable a more refined dating. For example, such peculiarities as a Serto form of *aleph* and an East Syriac ligature *tau* + *aleph* at the end of a word suggests that the handwriting belongs to the somewhat later period of the 12th-13th century (notwithstanding a disproportionally limited number of East Syriac manuscripts from that period).

Unfortunately, readers of this volume will find no clues with regard to the issue of the relationship between the Vat. syr. 192 and the two other extant Syriac witnesses of the *Questions* (Mingana syr. 589 and CSCO syr. 21). The superiority of the Vatican codex seems to be taken for granted by the editors due to its age. However, we

¹⁸ On this treatise see Robert Hawley, "Preliminary Notes on a Syriac Treatise about the Medicinal Properties of Foodstuffs" (*Semitica et Classica* 1 [2008]), 81-104.

can not neglect a classical rule of textual criticism, *recentiores non deteriores*, and the task of collating both Mingana syr. 589 (Alqoš, 1932) and CSCO syr. 21 (Alqoš, 1904) against the Vatican manuscript therefore still remains on the agenda for further investigators.

Furthermore, regarding the manuscript transmission of the Syriac text, the editors fail to record one more witness, namely *olim* Notre Dame des Semences/Vosté 66 (A.D. 1904), which contains precisely the same content as Mingana syr. 589 and CSCO syr. 21. This manuscript seems to be lost, for although the entire collection of the monastery of Our Lady of the Seeds near Alqoš was transferred (according to the available information) to the Chaldean Monastery in Baghdad (cf. new catalogue Haddad-Isaac 1988), this particular manuscript is reckoned among the few that did not arrive at Baghdad. Notwithstanding the probable loss of that manuscript, the evidence it could provide can be assessed quite precisely because, as one learns from Vosté's description, its model was the same codex of a certain "Sīpā Dōdā from Alqoš" that was, most likely, used in the same year for production of CSCO syr. 21; and three decades later that lost codex served as a model for Mingana syr. 589. Thus, it is possible to conclude that all known witnesses (except for the Vatican ms.) descend from that manuscript of Sīpā Dōdā, whose whereabouts unfortunately are absolutely unknown.

When speaking about the manuscript tradition of the text of the *Questions*, it is necessary to recall that a study of its transmission history was long ago announced by R. Degen and M. Ullmann.¹⁹ Due to the recent death of the former (2010), one can only wonder if any steps towards its completion have been taken.

The present edition (p. 2-609) provides a black and white facsimile on the right side, with its transcription and English translation on the left side. The editors tried to reproduce the Syriac text while retaining all of its diacritical and punctuation

¹⁹ See e.g. Rainer Degen, "Ein Corpus Medicorum Syriacorum" (Medizinhistorisches Journal 7 [1972]), 118 n. 20); on p. 122 of the same article one can also read that the edition of the *Questions* was supposed to appear first in the announced *Corpus* (I am not aware if any work on the edition of the Syriac was done); cf. Danielle Jacquart, "A l'aube de la renaissance médicale des XI^e-XII^e siècles: l'Isagoge Johannitii et son traducteur" (Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des Chartes 144 [1986]), 211.

marks.²⁰ An index of terms mentioned in the text closes the volume (p. 611-615).

The text of the *Questions* in the Vatican manuscript is defective both in the beginning and the end. When compared with the complete Arabic version, one can say that roughly 10% of the Syriac text is lost. However a short fragment from the lost opening part is preserved in the other two Syriac witnesses (Mingana syr. 589, CSCO syr. 21), and it was edited by Chabot. Although the present edition does not provide the Syriac text of that fragment, the editors did translate it in the Introduction (p. xvii). Since the text of the Vatican manuscript was bound incorrectly, the editors correctly reconstructed the original sequence and placed fols. 107-151 in the beginning without introducing new foliation.

The edition of the Syriac text evokes some critical remarks.

First of all, and perhaps most importantly, it remains absolutely unclear why the editors decided to base the edition of the *Questions* only on the Vatican manuscript. It goes without saying that Vatican syr. 192 should be singled out among other extant witnesses as the most ancient one. But this does not necessarily mean that all other witnesses can be simply dismissed as valueless. Nowhere in the volume do the editors inform the reader about the state of this edition: be it either an edition of the text of the *Questions* or of merely one, although the oldest, witness. In fact, as it was mentioned earlier, two other extant manuscript descend from one model, thus a task of collation does not seem to present an impractical task to perform. It is worth recalling in this regard the voice of R. Degen, who, while supporting the possibility of facsimile editions for Syriac medical texts on the condition that an ancient witness is available, did advise providing the evidence of other witnesses as well.²¹

While the transcription of the Syriac text mirrors the text of the manuscript (all the lines are numerated), the text of the edition

²⁰ Thus producing forms like ܡܠܟܐܝܬܐ (p. 68 line 13), ܡܠܟܐܝܬܐ (p. 532 line 5 where ܡܐ is an initial part of ܡܠܟܐܝܬܐ that comes in full on the next line).

²¹ Rainer Degen, "Ein Corpus Medicorum Syriacorum" (Medizinhistorisches Journal 7 [1972]), 118 n. 22: "Bei alten Handschriften ist natürlich auch eine Faksimile-Ausgabe wünschenswert. Aber auch da sollte ein kritischer Apparat die vielleicht nötigen Textänderungen und Kollationsergebnisse enthalten."

in its entirety appears as one long narration, which prevents the reader from finding particular places easily and does not help the reader perceive the composition of the treatise. A consultation of the text might be more convenient, had the editors introduced some kind of textual division, or at least made its literary form (questions and answers) more visible. One can notice that occasionally it is the facsimile that assists in revealing the beginning of a new section.

It is not an exaggeration to argue that in the case of the present edition, the diplomatic approach (that entails a consistent disregard for any other witness) does not render a service to the text. On the contrary, as I have noticed while perusing the text, a consultation of Chabot's edition (about which the editors, somewhat oddly state, "Chabot only transcribes and translates [into Latin] the section written by Hunayn" (p. xvii) whereas, in reality the edition covers nearly a half of Ḥubayṣ's supplement), not to mention the Arabic version, would have noticeably improved both the transcription and the translation (see examples below).

Although it is never explicitly stated as such, the Vatican manuscript provides the text with a considerable number of errors. Occasionally the editors tried to emend the text and to correct apparent errors. However, not all such places were taken into account.

The reproduction of the Syriac text and its transcription has some imperfections. The facsimile of fol. 80r was omitted, and fol. 80v was reproduced in its place. On p. 196 there is missing a line number: (7) for "which alone is fine and compact." The principle of diplomatic reproduction for the text was not implemented consistently because occasionally one finds diacritical signs that were not transcribed.²² But what is more dramatic is that due to some peculiarities of the handwriting many words were misread and caused a faulty translation (see examples below).

The English translation is generally reliable and aims to reproduce scientific vocabulary with corresponding English terms. Some difficult passages are provided with helpful clarifying notes that aim to grasp the meaning of otherwise quite unclear Syriac

²² P. 66 line 2 (𐤀𐤁𐤅 instead of 𐤀𐤁𐤅𐤍), p. 316 line 9 ܐܕܡ instead of ܐܕܡ.

The index closing the volume is apparently selective. One does not find in it, for example, the only occurrence of the name of Hippocrates in the book (p. 304 line 11).

All in all, while fulfilling the task of a diplomatic reproduction of the *Questions* preserved in the Vat. syr. 192, the present edition does not provide a critical edition of the text. This circumstance is not helpful for the reader who needs to consult the Syriac text of the *Questions*. Since the Vatican manuscript is clearly not an uncontaminated copy of the text, anyone willing to use a text of the *Questions* will be obliged to execute a work of an editor while collating the present edition either with Chabot's text or (for a

²⁴ For Syriac loan words related to pharmacopoeia we now possess a special lexicon, Philippe Gignoux, *Lexique des termes de la pharmacopée syriaque*, Studia Iranica, Cahier 47; Chrétiens en terre d'Iran, 5 (Paris, 2011). The lexicon covers only the names of the plants.

²⁶ E.g. p. 224 line 6: 𐤀𐤕𐤁𐤀 (“antimony”) > Skr. *tuttha*, see Michael Sokoloff, *A Syriac Lexicon* (Eisenbrauns-Gorgias Press, 2009), 516.

section not covered by Chabot's edition) with a manuscript (either Mingana syr. 589 or CSCO syr. 21).

The first English translation of the Syriac text of the *Questions* will, hopefully, attract attention of students working in other fields and contribute to a further investigation of this key treatise in the history of Medieval medicine. Those interested in the Arabic version will appreciate a facsimile edition of the Arabic text as the Vatican manuscript is one of its oldest witnesses (and was not used in the Cairo edition).

The Syriac version of the *Questions*, regularly referred to in the context of discussing the intricate issue of the complex textual history of the *Questions*, undoubtedly deserves a proper study and a critical edition. With the appearance of this new edition, only some points on the agenda are accomplished (publication of the Vatican codex, English translation of its text), which only whets the appetite for a fuller treatment of the subject.

Corrigenda:

Below I provide corrections to some misprints and misreadings of the manuscript. In all the cases, the manuscript provides the correct forms:

p. x:

φυοις > φύσις

p. 66 line 4:

مبعضا > مبعضا

p. 66 line 5:

مصحفبهال > مصحفبهال

p. 196 line 8:

صعد > صعد

p. 196 line 14:

خلال > خلال

p. 204 line 14:

حلا > حلا

p. 210 line 10:

مصحفبهال > مصحفبهال

p. 274 line 8:

مصحفبهال استبا > مصحفبهال استبا

p. 304 line 12:

اهصلا > اهصلا

p. 312 line 10:

محبلا > مَحْبِلَا

p. 322 line 6:

فَعْتَمَا > فَعْتَمَا

p. 330 line 10:

حَبِّهِ فَعْدَقِيصَعْدَعَد > حَبِّهِ فَعْدَقِيصَعْدَعَد

p. 366 line 3-4:

فَاوْزِيْهَامَعْدَعَد > فَاوْزِيْهَامَعْدَعَد

p. 378 line 6:

حَبِّجَلَا > حَبِّ حَبَا

p. 378 line 16:

مَحْصِيْئَالَا > مَحْصِيْئَالَا

The word ("baths") was omitted in the translation at all.

p. 384 line 14:

مَنْزِلَا مَحْصِيْئَا > مَنْزِلَا مَحْصِيْئَا

p. 448 line 7:

مَحْصِيْئَا > مَحْصِيْئَا

p. 508 line 15:

مَحْصِيْئَا > مَحْصِيْئَا

p. 536 line 2:

مَحْصِيْئَا > مَحْصِيْئَا

p. 538 line 8:

مَحْصِيْئَا > مَحْصِيْئَا

p. 584 line 13:

مَحْصِيْئَا > مَحْصِيْئَا

p. 596 line 12 (cf. p. 570 n. 166):

مَحْصِيْئَا > مَحْصِيْئَا

Some passages of the text were (in a number of cases due to a misreading of the manuscript) misunderstood and thus require improvement:

1. p. 304 line 13:

While discussing a possible way to conceal an unpleasant taste of a drug, Ḥubayš describes the relevant practice attributed to Hippocrates:

[11] (This is) in a like manner as أَمْرًا بِسَكَلٍ لِّمَعْدَمِ الْهَيْفِ
Hippocrates mixes

[12] with hellebore either some مَحْصِيْئَا مَحْصِيْئَا

[13] ebony or seeds of ropey celery,	ܐܠܗܝܬܐ ܐܠܗܝܬܐ ܐܠܗܝܬܐ
[14] or cumin, or anise, or	ܐܠܗܝܬܐ ܐܠܗܝܬܐ ܐܠܗܝܬܐ
[15] something else	ܥܕܐ ܐܠܗܝܬܐ ܐܠܗܝܬܐ
[16] with a pleasant smell [...]	ܐܠܗܝܬܐ ܐܠܗܝܬܐ ܐܠܗܝܬܐ

The standard Syriac word for “ebony” is ܐܠܗܝܬܐ (from Greek ἔβενος, cf. *Thesaurus Syriacus* I, 17). Thus this rendering would presuppose a correction of the Syriac text that reads ܐܠܗܝܬܐ, relating the prefix *dal* to the preceding (somewhat unclear) expression ܐܠܗܝܬܐ. In fact, there is absolutely no need to introduce any emendation for a precise reading of the manuscript (ܐܠܗܝܬܐ > ܐܠܗܝܬܐ) itself provides a coherent passage:

“[11] As Hippocrates mixed [12] with black hellebore [13] either wild carrots (ܐܠܗܝܬܐ), or seeds of ropey celery, [14] or cumin, or anise, or [15] something else [16] with a pleasant smell [...]”

This reading of the manuscript can be found in the edition of Chabot (p. 111), and it is attested by the Arabic version as well (ed.: p. 195, tr.: p. 58). Furthermore, a very close parallel to the given passage can be found in Galen’s *De compositione medicamentorum secundum locos* (Kühn xii, 149, 3-8), where one encounters the very same sequence of ingredients and an attribution of a recipe to Hippocrates: οἷα περ αὐτῶν ἀρωμάτων εἰσὶ καὶ τινων ἐδωδύμων σπερμάτων, ὁποῖόν ἐστιν ἄνισόν τε καὶ σέλινον καὶ δαῦκος καὶ κύμινον καὶ σέσελι. κατὰ τοῦτο οὖν καὶ ὁ Ἱπποκράτης ἐπὶ τῶν πλευριτικῶν διδούς καθαῖρον φάρμακον, μιγνύναι τι τούτων ἐκέλευσε γράφων ὥδε.

2. p. 312 line 4:

Concerning theriac, Hubayš provides an etymological explanation, deriving it from Greek *therion* and then continues:

“[p. 310 line 16] and because [p. 312 line 1] theriac is useful for the bites [2] of wild animals; and because it wards off bile, [3] it was called theriac [4] from *therion* by Paranouma (ܦܐܪܢܘܡܐ).”

The reader would search in vain for any information about Paranouma and his ideas about theriac unless a Greek παρώνυμος is recognized behind the Syriac ܦܐܪܢܘܡܐ. The term paronym was used by Aristotle in his *Categories* to define a derivation of words with a difference of ending (Arist. *Cat.* chapter 1, 1a12–15). *Theriac* derives

from *thérion* but with a different ending. In this light the passage should sound:

“[p. 310 line 16] and because [p. 312 line 1] theriac is useful for the bites [2] of wild animals; and because it wards off bile, [3] it was called theriac [4] from *thérion* by paronymy”.

Chabot's edition provides a correct reading while revealing its Greek equivalent (p. 112 line 6).

3. p. 312 line 11:

Speaking about the invention of theriac, Ḥubayš records the scholars who contributed to it and records its discoverer as:

10] was the Great	هوذا هوذا هوذا
[11] Philosopher [...]	[...] هوذا هوذا

In the footnote we are informed that “the term “Great Philosopher” undoubtedly refers to Aristotle [...]” This is, however, not correct. Again, in order to accept the proposed interpretation we must emend the text that in fact does not read “great” (otherwise it could be, for example, هوذا, a loan word from μέγας, cf. *Thesaurus Syriacus* II, 2023). This emendation is absolutely unnecessary if one recalls that the name of the physician Magnus appears quite often in the works of Galen (*De differentia pulsuum*, *De causis pulsuum*). Although there is no common agreement with the regard to the identity of that Magnus, he is likely to be identified with Magnus of Ephesus (ca. AD 50-100).²⁷ The association of the discovery of theriac with Magnus seems to have appeared only in the Arabic medical tradition. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that in the treatise *De theriaca ad Pisonem*, Galen provides a recipe of theriac attributed to a group of people, and one of these is Magnus (Kühn xiv, 261).

4. p. 330 line 10:

While presenting the opinion of the Rationalists and Empiricists regarding the application of compound drugs, Ḥubayš mentions one of the approaches of the latter group:

²⁷ See Paul T. Keyser, Georgia L. Irby-Massie, eds., *The encyclopedia of ancient natural scientists. The Greek tradition and its many heirs* (Routledge, 2008), 519-520 (A. Touwaide).

[10] of them by means of فلسفة philogism,
 [11] that is to say, the common (i.e. فلسفة
 unsophisticated) thinking

A correct reading of the passage (فلسفة > فلسفة) does not necessitate introduction of the odd term “philogism.”

“[10] of them by means of epilogism [Gr. “reckoning, consideration”] [11] that is to say, the common thinking.”

This reading is provided by Chabot’s edition (p. 114 line 7), which records also the underlying Greek term. As it is known from the history of ancient medicine, “epilogism” is an epistemological term that was used by Galen to qualify the way of reasoning of Moderate Empiricists.²⁸

5. p. 366 lines 3-4:

In a section dealing with pulse, Ḥubayš describes ten kinds of pulse. The eighth of those falls into “good” and “bad” pulses. In turn, a “bad” pulse can be of three types:

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| [3] fruitful rhythm | فلسفة |
| [4] heterorhythmias | فلسفة |
| [5] <i>bekerorhythmos</i> | فلسفة |

First of all, as noted above, the reading فلسفة is incorrect and needs to be corrected to فلسفة. Secondly, all the ambiguity regarding those three terms can be resolved if one takes into account the teaching of Galen on pulse. Thus, in the treatise *De differentia pulsuum* Galen introduces precisely the same three types of

²⁸ See on that, for example, in Robert J. Hankinson, “Epistemology,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Galen*, ed. R.J. Hankinson (Cambridge, 2008), 173 and in Galen’s *De sectis* (Kühn I, 78): “The epilogism [...] is a reasoning solely in terms of what is apparent” (Richard R. Walzer, Michael Frede, trs., *Three treatises on the nature of science* (Indianapolis, 1985), 9). The term also occurs in the *De simplicium medicamentorum temperamentis et facultatibus* but, unfortunately, not in a part translated by Sergius of Rēšʿaynā.

pulse as different variations of arrhythmia: τοῦ δὲ ἀρύθμου τρεῖς εἰσι διαφοραί, παράρρυθμος, ἑτερόρρυθμος, ἔκρυσθος (Kühn viii, 515, 15-17).

6. p. 378 line 6:

The supplement carried out by Hubayš contains a section that provides an elementary introduction to medical science. Among the first basic definitions one encounters the following division of theoretical knowledge:

“[5] [...] the theory is divided [6] by means of the natural (ح) woe, and the unnatural, [7] and those outside nature [...]”.

This somewhat unclear sounding passage in fact presents a division of knowledge that was destined to become standard in both Islamic and Latin traditions. This division goes back to the teaching of Galen,²⁹ but was first formulated as such in the late Alexandrian tradition.³⁰ For a correct rendering of the passage one needs to change the reading ح to حح, following the manuscript.

“[5] [...] the theory is divided [6] into the knowledge of the things natural, non-natural, [7] and those outside of nature [...]”.

The edition of Chabot does not extend to the given passage, but the Arabic version faithfully represents the same reading (ed.: p. 225, tr.: p. 74): إن نظر الطب ينقسم إلى العلم بالأمور الطبيعية والعلم بالأمور التي ليست بطبيعية والعلم بالأمور الخارجة عن الأمور الطبيعي. One can compare also the Latin version: “[...] theoria dividitur in tria, idest in contemplationem naturalium rerum et non naturalium et earum que sunt extra naturam.”³¹

7. p. 508 line 15:

²⁹ Cf. Ἱατρική ἐστὶν ἐπιστήμη ὑγεινῶν, καὶ νοσωδῶν, καὶ οὐδετέρων (*Ars medica*, 307, lines 5-6, Kühn).

³⁰ Danielle Jacquart, Nicoletta Palmieri, “La tradition alexandrine des *Masī’il fi t-tibb* de Hunain ibn Ishaq,” in *Storia e ecdotica dei testi medici greci. Atti del II Convegno Internazionale*, ed. A. Garzya (Napoli: M. D’Auria Editore, 1996), 223-224.

³¹ Gregor Maurach, “Johannitius, Isagoge ad Techne Galieni” (Sudhoffs Archiv 62 [1978]), 151; I follow a revised edition of the passage in Danielle Jacquart, “A l’aube de la renaissance médicale des XI^e-XII^e siècles: l’Isagoge Johannitii et son traducteur” (Bibliothèque de l’Ecole des Chartes 144 [1986]), 238.

Dealing with fever, Ḥubayš mentions one particular kind:

- [15] For example, colossus fever, ܐܠܗܐ ܡܕܥܕܐ
 [16] that is to say, a burning (fever) [...] ܐܠܗܐ ܡܕܥܕܐ ܡܕܥܕܐ [...]

As with the case of “philogism,” we have here an introduction of an idiosyncratic notion of “colossus fever” without any note on what it is and why it is called so. However, a careful reading of the manuscript helps to retain a coherent and much more comprehensible passage:

“[15] For example, *kausos* (ܡܕܥܕܐ) fever, [16] that is to say, a burning (fever) [...]”

The Syr. ܡܕܥܕܐ stands for Gr. *καῖσος* (from *καίω* “kindle, burn”) that denotes a *bilious remittent fever* which was at detail discussed by Galen in some of his treatises (e.g. *In Hippocratis librum iii epidemiarum commentarii iii*).³² The passage is lacking in the edition of Chabot, whilst the Arabic version reads قاوسوس (ed.: p. 281, tr.: p. 91) and thus clearly follows the Syriac.

Appendix I: Concordance

The present concordance correlates the Syriac text of the *Questions* as provided by the Vatican manuscript (i.e. the edition under review) and the edition of Chabot against the Arabic tradition (for the sake of convenience I refer only to its English translation³³). The text divisions into chapters is borrowed from the English translation of the Arabic version. If a corresponding Syriac text is not complete, I provide in square brackets correspondence to the English translation of the Arabic version. Ḥunayn’s contribution ends at p. 92.

Arabic Version	Chabot’s Edition	Wilson-Dinkha Edition
	[fell short of completely reproducing CSCO syr. 21: the text of	[based on Vat. syr. 192]

³² On this kind of fever see in Mirko Grmek, *Diseases in the ancient Greek world* (The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), 289-292.

³³ See footnote 7.

	the ms. continues and comes abruptly to an end slightly earlier than the Wilson-Dinkha edition (p. 594 l. 9)]	
1 “The Naturals” (p. 1-5)	–	–
2 “Disease” (p. 8-18)	defective: p. 80 – p. 81 line 25 [= p. 9 line 31 - p. 10 line 10; p. 10 line 12 - p. 18]	defective: p. 2 – p. 12 line 12 [= p. 10 line 12 – p. 18]
3 “Etiology” (p. 13-18)	p. 81 line 25 – p. 85 line 4	p. 12 line 13 – p. 46 line 8
4 “Signs and symptoms” (p. 21-23)	p. 85 line 5 – p. 87 line 6	p. 46, line 9 – p. 66 line 16
5 “Therapy” (p. 25-38)	p. 87 line 7 – p. 97 line 3	p. 68 line 1 – 164, line 5
6 “Species and forces of drugs” (p. 42-65)	incomplete: p. 97 line 4 – p. 116 [p. 42 – p. 65 line 7]	p. 164, line 6 – p. 354, line 13
7 “The arterial pulse” (p. 70-72)	–	p. 354, line 14 – 376, line 15
8 “Another division of the theory of medicine” (p. 74-108)	–	defective: p. 376 line 16 – 608, line 16 [= p. 74 - p. 104 line 18]

Appendix 2. Greek words in the *Questions*.

The present list contains Syriac loan words and their Greek equivalents. I register only one (usually, first) occurrence of the word in the text. Personal names (Galen, Hippocrates, Hunayn) are not indicated. After the Greek equivalent, I provide a reference to the corresponding place in the *Thesaurus Syriacus* and, in case of pharmacologic terms (following a slash), to the recent lexicon of

p. 286 line 14

amir K

ἀήρ (I, 3-4)

ink

ἄκορον (I, 359 / 18, 28)

— aiaak

ἄμυλον (I, 226 / 20)

alask

ἀνάγκη (I, 274-275)

Kauk

ἀνέϋρυσμα (I, 260-261)

Къшиагъ

ἀνισον (I, 271 / 21)

അക്ഷ

ἀντίδοτος (I, 265)

අ.ම.ප.ක

ἄρωμα (I, 1051)

ᲕᲗᲗᲗᲐᲓᲙ (ex ᲕᲗᲗᲗᲐᲓᲙ)

³⁴ Philippe Gignoux, *Lexique des termes de la pharmacopée syriaque*, Studia Iranica, Cahier 47; Chrétiens en terre d'Iran, 5 (Paris, 2011). The lexicon is based on two Syriac medical treatises and does not include the evidence provided by Hunayn's *Questions*.

p. 164 line 7

γένος (I, 753-754)

γεν

p. 290 line 13

γογχυλίσ (I, 755)

γογχυλ

p. 304 line 13

δαῦκος (I, 802 / 35)

δαυκος

p. 160 line 10

δηλητήρια (I, 883)

δηλητηρια

p. 6 line 3

διάθεσις (I, 874)

διαθεσις

p. 6 line 7

διάθεσις οὐδετέρα (I, 55)

διαθεσις ουδετερα

p. 140 line 2

διάφραγμα (I, 872)

διαφραγμα

p. 366 line 11

ἔκρυθμος

εκρυθμοσ

p. 448 line 9

ἐκτικός (I, 1045)

εκτικος

p. 330 line 10

ἐπιλογισμός (I, 1033)

επιλογισμος

p. 366 line 7

ἐτερόρυθμος

ετερορυθμοσ

p. 160 line 14

εὐφόρβιον (I, 996 / 26)

εὐφώρασιον

p. 456 line 14

ἐφημερινός (I, 249 s.v.
εὐαῖματιστα)

εὐαῖματιστα

p. 164 line 13

ἔχιδνα (I, 176)

ἐχιδνα

p. 510 line 7

ἡπίαλος (I, 1032)

ἡπίαλος

p. 510 line 11

ἡπίαλος (I, 165)

ἡπίαλος

p. 378 line 1

θεωρία (II, 4368)

θεωρησις

p. 284 line 10

θηριακή (II, 4429)

θηριακή

p. 310 line 16

θηρίον (II, 4429)

θηρίον

p. 274 line 7

ἴρις (I, 171 / 17f.)

ἴρις

p. 224 line 7

καδμεία (II, 3497 / 76)

καδμεία

p. 192 line 9

κανών (II, 3660-3661)

κανών

p. 508 line 15

καῦσος (II, 3459)

ωλωορσο

p. 36 line 5

κηρωτή (II, 3612 / 76)

κῆρωτο

p. 134 line 12

κλείς (II, 3629)

κλειε

p. 510 line 8

κρυμώδης (II, 3734)

κρυμωδισ

p. 568 line 7

κυάνεος (II, 3542 / 67)

κκυανω

p. 510 line 8

λιπύρια (II, 1942)

κῆριωρι

p. 274 line 6

λοβός (II, 1903)

ωλωβ

p. 532 line 9

μαγνηῆτις (II, 2006)

ωμῆτις

p. 484 line 8

μελαγχολικός (II, 2026)

κωμωλολικω

p. 128 line 9

μεσάραιον (II, 2026 s.v.

κωμωριωτω

κωριωτω et I, 1069)

p. 302 line 15

μήκων (II, 2096-2097 / 56)

κωμω

p. 310 line 11

μιθριδάτειον (II, 2256)

ⲙⲓⲑⲣⲓⲁⲧⲉⲓⲟⲩ

p. 234 line 13

νίτρον (II, 2360 / 59)

ⲛⲓⲧⲣⲟⲛ (adj.)

p. 534 line 2

οἶδημα (I, 56)

ⲟⲓⲁⲧⲉⲙⲁ

p. 164 line 15

ὄπιον (I, 83 / 25)

ⲟⲩⲡⲓⲟⲛ

p. 212 line 15

ὄργανον (I, 91-92)

ⲟⲩⲣⲁⲛⲟⲛ

p. 108 line 8

οὐσία (I, 78)

ⲟⲩⲥⲓⲁ

p. 366 lines 3-4

παράρυθος

ⲡⲁⲣⲁⲣⲩⲧⲟⲥ

p. 312 line 3

παρώνυμος (II, 3025)

ⲡⲁⲣⲟⲩⲛⲩⲙⲟⲥ

p. 118 line 1

περιτόναιον (II, 3046 s.v.

ⲡⲉⲣⲓⲧⲟⲩⲁⲓⲟⲩ

ⲡⲉⲣⲓⲧⲟⲩⲁⲓⲟⲩ)

p. 100 line 10

πόρος (II, 3273-3274)

ⲡⲟⲣⲓⲥ

p. 132 line 9

ῥεῦμα (II, 3833)

ⲣⲉⲩⲙⲁ

p. 4 line 13

ῥῆγμα (II, 3844)

ῥῆγμα

p. 366 line 1

ῥυθμός (II, 3871)

ῥυθμοί

p. 304 line 13

σέσελι (II, 2538 / 64)

σέσελι

p. 88 line 3

σκαμωνία (II, 2719 / 66)

σκαμωνία

p. 272 line 16

σκίλλα (I, 318 / 24)

σκίλλα

p. 534 line 5

σκῖρος (II, 2716)

σκῖρος

p. 392 line 3

σχύθαι (II, 2715)

σχύθαι

p. 4 line 10

σπάσμα (II, 2696 et 2702)

σπάσμα

p. 300 line 3

σπληνίον (I, 315)

σπληνίον

p. 94 line 10

στοιχεῖον (I, 296)

στοιχεῖον

p. 306 line 13

στόμαχος (I, 297)

στόμαχος

p. 456 line 7

σύννοχος (II, 2568)

መሰላመ

p. 24 line 2

σχῆμα (I, 307-308)

ጽሑፍ

p. 458 line 2

τεταρταῖος (I, 1433)

መጠን ስራ

p. 456 line 10

τριταῖος (I, 1517)

መጠን ስራ

p. 510 line 9

τυφώδης (I, 1463)

መጠን ስራ

p. 22 line 10

ῥῆμα (I, 990-991)

ጽሑፍ

p. 30 line 12

φθισικά (II, 3340)

ጽሑፍ

p. 312 line 12

φιλόσοφος (II, 3105-3106)

ጽሑፍ

p. 394 line 14

φλέγμα (II, 3142)

ጽሑፍ

p. 532 line 14

φλεγμονή (II, 3143)

ጽሑፍ

p. 556 line 8

φρενίτις (II, 3242)

ጽሑፍ

p. 224 line 8

χάλιξ (I, 1751)³⁵

ܠܥܠܝܟܐ

p. 86 line 3

χειρουργία (I, 1726)

ܠܥܠܝܟܐ

p. 178 line 7

Χία (I, 1721-1722 / 48)

ܠܥܠܝܟܐ

p. 508 line 10

Χολοειδής

ܠܥܠܝܟܐ

p. 264 line 5

χυλός (I, 1698)

ܠܥܠܝܟܐ

p. 32 line 16

χυμός (I, 1700-1701)

ܠܥܠܝܟܐ

³⁵ Whereas *Thesaurus Syriacus* does not treat the word as a loan word from Greek (due to the existence of cognate Arabic كلس), Sokoloff (Michael Sokoloff, *A Syriac Lexicon* (Eisenbrauns-Gorgias Press, 2009), 627) treats this word as a loan word.