

DE GRUYTER

*J. Cale Johnson, Alessandro Stavru (Eds.)*

# VISUALIZING THE INVISIBLE WITH THE HUMAN BODY

PHYSIOGNOMY AND EKPHRASIS IN THE ANCIENT  
WORLD

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND MEDICINE  
IN ANCIENT CULTURES

## **Visualizing the invisible with the human body**

# **Science, Technology, and Medicine in Ancient Cultures**



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## **Volume 10**

# Visualizing the invisible with the human body



Physiognomy and ekphrasis in the ancient world

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J. Cale Johnson and Alessandro Stavru

# Introduction to “Visualizing the invisible with the human body: Physiognomy and ekphrasis in the ancient world”

Prior to the establishment of humoral medicine or scientific anatomy, one of the primary methods for divining the characteristics of an individual, whether inborn or temporary, was to observe the patient’s external characteristics and behaviour. Within the Mesopotamian tradition the linkage between external form and internal characteristics was only a small part of an encompassing approach to predicting future conditions on the basis of presently visible signs (omens). This volume opens with two types of descriptive literature in Mesopotamia: physiognomic omens as well as other descriptive paradigms that one might speak of, in general terms, as ekphrastic descriptions. Both of these descriptive paradigms grow out of the distinctively Mesopotamian obsession with enumeration.

In addition to the standard physiognomic compendia of Mesopotamian tradition, ekphrastic descriptions of physiognomic features also play a crucial role in the Graeco-Roman world. Long before the first physiognomic treatises were published under the name of Aristotle, detailed physiognomic descriptions occur right from the start of Graeco-Roman tradition, i.e. within the Homeric poems. Here specific parts of the bodies of gods, heroes and men are described in order to highlight features that are not otherwise visible such as kingship, nobility, love, wrath, and wickedness. From the Classical Age onwards, ekphrastic constructions of physiognomic features are both literary and visual: in some cases, literary and visual iconic media even interact, as the representations of famous historical figures such as Pericles, Socrates or Augustus show. In the Socratic tradition and especially in the Peripatus, physiognomic discussions became intertwined with the typological construction of characters. Roman rhetoricians such as Cicero and Quintilian applied these studies to rhetorical theory, and in the Second Sophistic the interaction between physiognomic features and ekphrastic description reached its climax (Polemon, Lucian, the two Philostrati, and Callistratus).

The Syriac and Arabic compendial cultures that grew out of Hellenistic scientific pursuits absorbed and reformulated these different physiognomic and ekphrastic traditions. Not surprisingly, in the Arabic scientific tradition we find both the traditional Mesopotamian links between physiognomy and medicine and the links between physiognomy and characterological types that had emerged in the Hellenistic period. These materials were then included in different types of compilations and compendia, from the *malhama* materials of Bar Bahlul to the explicit linkage of physiognomy and humoral temperaments found in Hunayn’s annotations on the Pseudo-Aristotelian *Physiognomonica*.



The construction, depiction, or reception of visual entities, whether existing or imagined, necessarily involves the sender or recipient in a system of norms or codifications. These norms of representation may (or may not) be explicitly formulated, but in their own context, even as they are instantiated in particular depictions, the norms themselves only rarely find expression as explicit statements, as we might find, for example, in a philosophical treatise. Ordinary descriptive paradigms – sets of rules for mapping observed entities into linguistically mediated descriptions – are already complex transubstantiations of the visual. In this volume we will look more closely at two such paradigms, both of which postulate or imply realities which are not directly visible: the theophantic manifestations of deities and the interior states of demi-gods and human beings. Though not visible, these realities can be presented, thanks to the description of facial and bodily features, as visually discernable entities: hence the ekphrastic value of physiognomy. As we will briefly outline here, and as several of the contributions to this volume describe at greater length, these special types of descriptive work are neither “natural” nor “obvious” nor “culturally-neutral”. And particularly in domains like physiognomy and ekphrasis, we bear witness to clear developments in the way these practices were conceptualized and implemented, as we move from the earlier Mesopotamian precursors to similar practices in the Graeco-Roman world, as well as in later Semitic language traditions and India. The time is not yet ripe for a discipline transcending synthesis of these different forms of intermedial texts: but this volume seeks to build the scaffolding and even a few bridges between these different genres and practices in the ancient world.

The macro-historical shifts, as we move between these major cultural and civilizational domains, are probably most evident – or at least most easily explained and exemplified – within the domain of physiognomy. The Mesopotamian physiognomic corpus, which reached a certain level of maturity with Böck’s *Habilitationsschrift*,<sup>1</sup> differs in several crucial ways from the physiognomic materials of Graeco-Roman tradition. What sets the Greek materials apart from the Mesopotamian materials, primarily, is the emergence of zoomorphic, climatological and racial models which are ultimately rooted in the robust activity of “nature”. In contrast, the Mesopotamian materials, written in Akkadian and first impressed in clay in the Old Babylonian period (ca. 1800–1600 BC), approximately a millennium before the Greek sources, emerged in a society that was, in at least certain respects, “before nature”. The centrality of *phusis* ‘nature’ in the Graeco-Roman sources is hard to overstate: it is the driving force behind nearly all of the innovations that we find in long pre-existing genres or practices such as physiognomy. Put somewhat differently, whenever we find a major divergence between Mesopotamian and the Graeco-Roman world in a practice like physiognomy, we can usually expect that the Graeco-Roman sources have moved in the direction of a relatively autonomous sphere of *phusis*, as their

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<sup>1</sup> Böck 2000.

underlying model. Rochberg's recent synthesis of the "Before Nature" problem in Mesopotamia goes to great lengths to demonstrate that certain kinds of objective, scientific description were part and parcel of Mesopotamian intellectual activity throughout its long history, but perhaps more importantly, that the different modalities of scientific description that we find in early Mesopotamia (including physiognomy and ekphrasis) grow, in an organic way, out of a wide-reaching, perhaps even comprehensive approach to the recording of ominous signs in writing rather than an autonomous domain of "natural" processes.<sup>2</sup>

If divination, generally speaking, is usually conceptualized as the queen of the Mesopotamian sciences, she was not a wise, old dowager, presiding over the reigns of sons and grandsons; she was a newly married bride. The earliest pieces of technical literature that we have from Mesopotamia – technical in that they have the form of recipes and do not consist primarily of incantations – are the handful of pharmaceutical prescriptions from mid-third millennium Ebla and the Ur III period at the end of the third millennium. None of these earlier recipes or prescriptions include diagnostic or prognostic signs, even if the use of the prescriptions must have been tied to an oral system of diagnosis. No, the earliest solid examples of diagnosis and prognosis emerge in the Old Babylonian period, directly alongside other collections of ominous signs. While Graeco-Roman physiognomic diagnoses typically discern characteristics or personality traits that might generally lead to predictable outcomes in the fullness of time,<sup>3</sup> the physiognomic omens that we know from Mesopotamia are happy and fully inclined to make predictions of future events that will affect the bearer of a physiognomic feature, even where no underlying invisible characteristic can be imagined. This fact alone places Mesopotamian physiognomy squarely in the center of the omen-driven sciences of early Mesopotamia.

As has now been made abundantly clear in both Stefan Maul's magisterial history of Mesopotamian divination<sup>4</sup> and in Ulla Koch's comprehensive handbook of the divinatory sciences,<sup>5</sup> Mesopotamians conceptualized omens as messages sent by the gods that are meant to inform knowledgeable human specialists about the realities of the present and eventualities in the future. Regardless, however, of where we stand on the cline of divestiture that has gradually removed the gods and replaced them by an anonymous "nature," it should be obvious that the gods were omnipresent in Mesopotamian thought, even when they were no longer wilful and unpredictable. Even the most law-like of physical causal chains in Mesopotamian thought would

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<sup>2</sup> Rochberg 2015.

<sup>3</sup> In fact, prognostic physiognomy is totally absent from the Pseudo-Aristotelian treatises dating back to the 4th-century BC. It occurs in Polemon (2nd cent. AD), where it has however a marginal role if compared to the characterological descriptions. For evidence of prognostic diagnoses in Polemon, see *Anonymus Latinus 133* and *Leiden 67–70*.

<sup>4</sup> Maul 2013.

<sup>5</sup> Koch 2015.

have been tied back, in a theologically appropriate way, to one deity or another. Or, to put the matter more bluntly, the fact that knowledge of the world comes from a deity rather than impersonal nature does not, in Mesopotamia at least, disqualify it as non-empirical; on the contrary, the divine warrant is evidence of its truth and reliability.

Bearing the central role of the gods in Mesopotamia firmly in mind, it should come as no tremendous surprise that ekphrasis in the ancient Near East also involves a necessarily divine moment. In the earliest genre that regularly includes ekphrasis in Mesopotamian literature, viz. the Tigi and Adab hymns in Classical Sumerian, the invisible entity that the writer-of-the-ekphrasis wishes to represent in linguistic or poetic form is a votive object that is planned and commanded by the deity, even if it is crafted and materialized by a human ruler. The ekphrastic description, originally vouchsafed from god to king, eventually finds its way into a hymn that celebrates the presentation of the votive offering back to the deity who ordered it. Here, with ekphrasis as well, therefore, a distinctive modality of description is used to “bring before the eyes” an object that exists only, up to that point, in the imagination of a god and subsequently the dream of the human king who receives the divine command. This kind of deity-centered generative process makes traditional definitions of, say, ‘notional ekphrasis’, where the object to be described exists only in the imagination of the person (or deity) writing or conceptualizing the ekphrasis, somewhat problematic.<sup>6</sup> The models of well-defined crafted objects normally derive from the gods in Mesopotamia, so it is little wonder that any object worthy of ekphrasis first exists in the mind of the god who requests it. After the fact, in the Mesopotamian conceptualization, we might even abbreviate matters by speaking of the hymn as an ekphrastic description of a carefully crafted work of art, viz. the votive object that the ruler will be presenting back to the deity, but in this act of abbreviation we move decisively away from how these phenomena were conceptualized in Mesopotamia.

Theophantic descriptions, viz. point-by-point enumerations of the parts and features of a divine object, being or locale, are probably more important to the history of ekphrasis in the Graeco-Roman and Semitic traditions than we might initially assume. These descriptions do not differ substantially from descriptions of demi-gods or ordinary human beings, such as those featured from the Homeric poems onward: also here the focus is very often on parts rather than on the whole of what is described (i.e., on parts of the human body). That being said, if we turn to the Greek sources that explicitly define ekphrasis, the focus is not on the object that is described, but on the vividness and the involvement of the viewer in the description of the object:<sup>7</sup> the

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<sup>6</sup> Of course ‘notional ekphrasis’ is already problematic as soon as we look into the history of the term *phantasia* in Greek philosophy. As Squire (2013, 104) emphasizes, Philostratus’s *Imagines* represents an extended meditation of these questions.

<sup>7</sup> Webb 2009 and Stavru 2017.

earliest definition of ekphrasis (“ekphrasis is descriptive speech which vividly brings what is shown before the eyes”) goes back to the *Progumnasmata* of the Alexandrian rhetor Aelius Theon (1st cent. AD), who was then followed nearly *verbatim* by other authors of *Progumnasmata*, such as the rhetors Hermogenes of Tarsus (2nd cent.), Aphthonius of Antioch (4th cent.), and Nicolaus the Sophist (5th cent.).

This vividness can be found in the Mesopotamian and West Semitic examples of ekphrasis surveyed in this volume, in particular in acts of “presencing” the relationship between the speaker and what he or she is speaking of. In the Sumerian Tigi Hymns this “presencing” is brought about through a direct address to the votive object in combination with a description of the ritual procedure through which the votive object is repatriated, as it were, back to the deity who originally conceived of it. In the Semitic forms of ekphrasis that Crawford surveys, however, we find this same act of presencing brought about through meticulous descriptions of the temples and tabernacles in which the deity manifests itself. This is very much the same process of presencing that we find in the Mesopotamian Tigi Hymns, but inflected through a culture that favored aniconic mediations of deity and limited votives dramatically. If nothing else, it can probably be said that odes to mundane objects, which play such a huge role in present-day poetries, did not exist in Mesopotamian or other early Semitic literatures. Ekphrastic descriptions do not appear in the midst of proverbs concerned with a dormouse. The distinctive form and presencing of early Mesopotamian ekphrasis is linked to properties or features in a deity, divine locale or soon-to-be-divinized object. Object and entities in this distinct ontic realm were regularly prefixed in cuneiform by a determinative for the divine and the divinized. But then again, perhaps we would do well to reconsider the earliest and most famous ekphrastic description in Greek literature: the shield of Achilles is the handiwork of a god even though it is inhabited by humans. The rhetorical background of ekphrastic descriptions has tended to overwhelm and preoccupy scholarly discussions, but what seems to be at the center of early Greek ekphraseis (such as, for example, the Homeric descriptions of gods, heroes, and humans) is the tension between the human (i.e. the ‘visible’) and the divine (i.e. the ‘invisible’), rather than any rhetoric-centered form of fictionality.

We hope that the studies assembled here can also, however obliquely, move forward the more general desideratum of a (meta-)iconic theorization of iconism. That is to say, how can iconic sign forms, whether in pictorial representation or written textualities, cite and recontextualize prior iconic sign forms. This project was at the center of Graeco-Roman ekphrasis for several generations before we arrive at the ekphrastic descriptions of the Second Sophistic, and it has also been a favorite theme of Assyriologists and Egyptologists in recent years, as they have sought to make sense of primarily logographic writing systems that eschew explicit, denotatively mediated commentary for most or all of their history.<sup>8</sup> One important problem that

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<sup>8</sup> Cancik-Kirschbaum 2012 and Johnson 2013.

immediately arises as we attempt to unfold chains of citations running backward to the object ekphrastically described is that the Classical Sumerian Tigi Hymns are not built around literary citations but rather coordinated descriptions of a votive object in at least two media: the fashioning of the votive artifact itself as well as the hymn that celebrates the votive. As noted above, it is wrong to see the hymn as derivative from the crafted object or vice versa. Instead, these coordinated representations of the divine plan operated within their own separate encodings and do not, as a rule, cite the other modality. The only place where this type of second-order citational reinterpretation is clearly visible in the cuneiform record is in the reuse of the ekphrastic paradigm made available by the Tigi Hymn in the theophany of the Anzu(d)-bird in the Lugalbanda Epics, where we see the same type of meta-ekphrastic rhetoric that characterizes Graeco-Roman ekphrasis more generally.

How then can we characterize the commonalities that exist between physiognomy and ekphrasis, broadly conceived as extending throughout the ancient world? In contrast to many different forms of objective or factual description, both physiognomy and ekphrasis make use of the tools of description in order to depict characteristics, entities or fates that are not visible at the moment of description. The future-oriented character of both practices fits perfectly into the omen-driven epistemological models that dominate early Mesopotamian thought. As we move away from this primordial context, however, we find the discussion shift increasingly to the representation of atemporal or at least unchanging characteristics and principles, whether a physiognomy like that of a lion representing “courage” or perhaps the lips of the Persian queen Rhodogoune in Philostratus’ *Imagines* uttering Greek words. These prototypical links between a visible characteristic (lion-like appearance) and a non-visible characteristic (courage) play easily into Aristotelian models, but we should not lose sight of the fact that this kind of linkage between the observable and the non-observable can also be found in the omen-drenched milieu of the land between the two rivers.

The fifteen contributions in the volume present cutting-edge research from both experienced and younger researchers and draw their exempla from the Eastern Mediterranean, Mesopotamia and India. More importantly, this volume situates the relatively well-known practice of physiognomy within a much broader set of structured descriptive paradigms, the first major element in the early scientific traditions that arose in Mesopotamia, Syro-Palestine and the Eastern Mediterranean in the 2nd and 1st millennium BCE. In fact, the connection between physiognomy and ekphrasis becomes even more evident in the Graeco-Roman world: chapters of this volume investigate this connection from 700 BC to 500 AD, in a timeframe reaching from Homer to the time of Proclus (including Aristotle, Polemon, Philostratus, Callistratus, the *Progumnasmata*, and Latin authors such as Cicero, Quintilian, and Suetonius). With the older materials from Mesopotamia and the Graeco-Roman world in place, this volume then turns to later traditions in India and the Arabic-speaking world, in particular the way in which elements of older physiognomic traditions were incorporated into multifarious technical compendia for rulers, such as the *Sirr al-asrār*, and a

Greek text on physiognomy that can be reconstructed through the scattered fragments found in a 14th century Arabic manuscript from Muhammad al-Dimashqi. What these seemingly heterogeneous materials have in common is the centrality of compendial configuration and the labelling of authorities in the latter phases of this tradition. Whether the movement of the physiognomy section from a chapter on medicine to a distinct section on the administration of justice within the *Sirr al-asrār*, or the careful annotation of sources in the materials assembled by al-Dimashqi, these late compendial sources demonstrate the fundamental modularity of the physiognomic materials in the later tradition.

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## Part I: **Mesopotamia and India**





J. Cale Johnson

# 1 Demarcating ekphrasis in Mesopotamia

**Abstract:** In its original Graeco-Roman context, the term ekphrasis (*ex*- ‘out’ + *phrazein* ‘to explain’) was quickly narrowed down to its usual present-day definition, as “a vivid description of a work of art,”<sup>1</sup> but in this contribution I argue that older definitions involving vividness and emotional involvement with the object of description are ideally suited for an extension of the concept to Mesopotamian literary practice. Vividness can already be identified, obliquely, in Irene Winter’s contrast between Western “representation” as opposed to Mesopotamian “manifestation,” where manifestation necessarily involves direct interaction between a worshiper or ritual specialist and the statue that acts in the stead of the king.

I argue here that this kind of vividness can be redefined, in largely formal terms, as a rhetorical practice in which a typically third person description (aka “representation”) is altered so as to give the impression of first or second person direct participation (aka “manifestation”). In Mesopotamia this rhetorical phenomenon is most clearly visible in the so-called Tigi Hymns, particularly when a votive object is directly addressed in the second person (and the ritual contextualization of these acts of direct address in well-defined sections of the hymnic genre).

As part of a broader effort to define the different “descriptive paradigms” that operated within early Mesopotamian scientific thought, the carefully circumscribed type of ekphrastic description that we find in the Tigi Hymns can be contrasted with other descriptive paradigms in cuneiform literature such as physiognomic descriptions and the late *šikinšu* texts. Within these several varieties of descriptivism, however, the particulars of ekphrastic description in the Tigi Hymns and similar materials are distinctive, and this paper concludes with a brief catalogue of ekphrastic descriptions in Classical Sumerian literature.

**Keywords:** ekphrasis, descriptive paradigm, multimodal configuration, translation, enumeration, lexical lists, Sumerian literature, Tigi Hymns, *Göttertypentext*, physiognomy

## Introduction

One of the easiest ways of comprehending the history of ekphrasis in the ancient Near East is to focus on a researcher who resolutely avoided using the term in reference to Near Eastern art. Irene Winter, by far the most important historian of ancient

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<sup>1</sup> Or more simply: “verbal representation of a visual representation” (Heffernan 2003, 3–4, apud Squire 2013a, 157).

Near Eastern art of her generation, was preoccupied in so much of her work with the mirroring of narrative or concrete linguistically-mediated textuality in non-written media of one kind or another. In her renowned 1981 paper on “Royal Rhetoric and the Development of Historical Narrative,” for example, Winter makes the case that the configuration of the throne room of Assur-našir-pal II (ruled 883–859 BC) as well as the scenes depicted on the carved stone reliefs on its walls recapitulate, point by point, the narrative of The Standard Inscription of Assur-našir-pal II: the scenes depicted on the walls correspond to the narrative descriptions (with the physical presence of the king himself on the throne corresponding to the first person pronoun in the inscription).<sup>2</sup>

This kind of mapping between a written text (The Standard Inscription of Assur-našir-pal II) and a non-linguistic medium (the carefully configured scenes depicted on the wall of the throne room in combination with the ruler himself seated on his throne) was not only a hallmark of Winter’s early publications, but also reappears as a central theme in her later investigations of how works of art could be “described” or “aligned” with corresponding statements in Classical Sumerian, in particular the alignment between the sculptural features of the famous gabbro statues of Gudea of Lagash, ca. 2130–2110 BCE, and the corresponding linguistic idioms and turns of phrase that one finds in the Sumerian inscriptions engraved on the statues.<sup>3</sup>

Height: Gudea’s “rightful head made to stand out in the assembly by his personal god Ningišzida” {saĝ-zī ukkin-na pa e<sub>3</sub>-a <sup>d</sup>nin-ĝiš-zī-da}

Breadth of Chest: Gudea is described as “his life within him abundantly (lit. widely) supplied by (the God) Šulšaga” {zī-ša<sub>3</sub>-ĝal<sub>2</sub> šu daĝal du<sub>11</sub>-ga / <sup>d</sup>šul-ša<sub>3</sub>-ga-ke<sub>4</sub>}

Full-Muscled Arm: “strength given one of (the God) Nindara” {a<sub>2</sub> sum-ma <sup>d</sup>nin-dar-a-ke<sub>4</sub>}

Broad-faced; wide-eared: “the *ensi*, a man of wisdom was giving ear” {ensi<sub>2</sub> lu<sub>2</sub> ĝeštu<sub>2</sub> daĝal-kam / ĝeštu<sub>2</sub> i<sub>3</sub>-ĝa<sub>2</sub>-ĝa<sub>2</sub>}<sup>4</sup>

As Winter herself already seems to be suggesting, to speak of this kind of point-by-point alignment as a “description” misses the point: neither the sculptural features in the statute of Gudea nor the linguistic representation of these same features in Sumerian is referring to objective reality. Both of these signaling modalities are highly

<sup>2</sup> Winter 1981, 21. Much the same approach is recapitulated elsewhere in her extensive body of work, now collected in Winter 2010.

<sup>3</sup> Winter 1989, reprinted in 2010, vol. 2, 151–165.

<sup>4</sup> Copyright issues prevent me from including relevant imagery here.

conventional encodings of predefined attributes and – more importantly for our purposes here – neither modality is explicitly encoded as “object” or “description.”

Given the alignment between these two modalities (sculptural and textual) as well as the absence of any derivational relationship between them, it should come as no surprise that Winter opts for a purely “semiotic” or “encoding” approach, directly linking the aligned attributes in the two different modalities to the business of maintaining political dominance.

... we may conclude that the stylistic features described above are not merely formal properties of the works, but rather have been deployed as signs, carrying definite and identifiable value, to accord with the rhetorical ends of the statues. ...

Visual attributes, no less than verbal epithets, thus function as part of a signaling code, with “style” very much a carrier of meaning. The particular physical traits represented would be seen in conjunction with the major iconographic signifier of “rule” seen on many of the Gudea statues: the round-brimmed cap associated with kings from Ur-Nammu to Hammurabi.<sup>5</sup>

Elsewhere in her extensive work, Winter identifies clear examples of “descriptions” of artistic prowess, which also mention objects and materials in passing, but that is not what we have here.<sup>6</sup> The Sumerian text is not “describing” the statue, nor is it even “describing” the actual human body of Gudea himself; instead, a pre-existing set of attributes associated with kingship and rule is here instantiated in two distinct modalities: sculptural attributes in stone and linguistic attributes initially pressed into the still malleable surface of a draft clay tablet (and then, later on, cut into the surface of the statue itself).<sup>7</sup>

I would like to suggest, *mutatis mutandis*, that the “vividness” of ekphrastic descriptions, in which the author seeks to “bring the events before the eyes of the spectator” or make “hearers into spectators,” corresponds within a distinctively Mesopotamian milieu to Winter’s emphasis on the “manifestation” of royal statuary in Mesopotamian ritual practice. If the Graeco-Roman background of traditional definitions of ekphrasis largely focuses on questions of “representation,” Winter argues, in contrast, that the dominance of ritual contexts (and in particular the ritual means of animating royal and divine statues through the mouth-opening ritual and the like) means that “manifestation” is more important than “representation” in a Mesopotamian context.

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<sup>5</sup> Winter 1989, 160–161.

<sup>6</sup> Winter 2003 focuses on expressions of artful skill in the crafting and decorating of objects and these materials do occasionally offer non-ekphrastic descriptions of highly crafted objects.

<sup>7</sup> The statues on which the Gudea inscriptions are inscribed are referenced in the text of the inscriptions with the term {alam} “image” (as recognized by Winter, for example, Winter 1992, 15), but there is no hint that textually-mediated attributes such as these are referring to attributes of the statues.

... through a process of ritual transformation the material form was animated, the representation not standing for but actually manifesting the presence of the subject represented. The image was then indeed empowered to speak, or to see, or to act, through various culturally-subscribed channels. ...

The rituals of consecration, installation, and maintenance that differentiate Mesopotamian (and other) “manifestations” from European (and other) “representations” further intensify three simultaneous representational identities cited above, and underscore the absolute aspect of the image.<sup>8</sup>

There is actually a great deal to unpack in Winter’s contrast between “representation” and “manifestation,” but the most important of these issues is undoubtedly the manifold possibilities of directly interacting with a properly animated statue of god or king. Since any kind of reified notion of statuary animacy or fetishism will lead us astray,<sup>9</sup> I would like to suggest that we redefine ekphrasis in terms of how the object of description interacts with the person describing it (and any witnesses to the description). Where these interactions are constructed so as to bring about a “presencing” effect — ranging from directly addressing the object of description in the second person to more subtle devices such as the alignment between the first person pronoun and the king himself in Assur-našir-pal II’s throneroom — we should speak of these descriptions as ekphrastic.<sup>10</sup> The best example of this type of “presencing” rhetorical practice in Classical Sumerian literature is found in a distinctive genre known as the Tigi Hymn.<sup>11</sup>

Textual descriptions of votive objects found in the Tigi Hymns, to which we will turn in detail below, are *not* objective descriptions of the votive object and consequently they were not simply meant to preserve information about the votive object in written form. Instead, these quintessentially ekphrastic texts situate a votive object, whether statue or temple, chariot or boat, in an explicitly described interactional context. In the most interesting and interactive of these contexts, the king speaks directly to the votive object in the second person:<sup>12</sup>

*Šulgi and Ninlil’s Barge* (= Šulgi R) 1–4

1. O Barge! Enki decreed for you a quay of abundance as (your) fate,
2. Father Enlil looked upon you with true benevolence,

<sup>8</sup> Winter 1992, 13 and 35.

<sup>9</sup> Much the same ground is covered in Böhme 2014, for example, although largely in reference to much later, modern materials.

<sup>10</sup> I am borrowing this term from Pongratz-Leisten’s 2015 description of “presencing” in first-millennium descriptive texts of one kind or another, but I am attempting to give it a more formalist definition here.

<sup>11</sup> The most important overview of the Tigi and Adab hymns is Wilcke 1976, which also represents, as it happens, our most important formalist manifesto for the study of Sumerian literary devices.

<sup>12</sup> As Squire (2013b, 112) points out, there are shifts into the second person in some limited circumstances in Theophrastus’s *Imagines*, but it does not seem to be a normative element.

3. Your lady, Ninlil, ordered your construction,
4. To the faithful provider, to the king Šulgi, she gave instructions concerning you,<sup>13</sup>

Crucially, in the Mesopotamian approach to modeling and instantiating divine objects, the plans for the votive object, namely Ninlil's barge, had been delivered, as it were, to King Šulgi (reigned 2094–2047 BC) beforehand in a dream (see below), and on this basis the experts in the employ of the crown had crafted the object. The Tigi Hymn *Šulgi and Ninlil's Barge* (= Šulgi R) not only situates the votive object in an explicitly interactional ritual context, as in these opening lines, but also offers a point-by-point description of the votive object in which each element is paired with a linguistically-formulated epithet or attribute.

*Šulgi and Ninlil's Barge* (= Šulgi R) 11–15

11. As for your large reed mats, they are daylight, spread widely over the pure countryside,
12. As for your timbers, they are ... *muššatur*-serpents, crouching on their limbs,
13. As for your punting poles, they are dragons, sleeping sweetly in their lair,
14. As for your oars, they are *sigsig*-snakes, whose bellies are pressed against the waves,
15. As for your floor planks, they are the currents of the flood, sparkling together in the pure Euphrates,<sup>14</sup>

The somewhat peculiar structure of the Tigi Hymn, as a genre, ensures that the votive object is brought before the eyes of readers, even if, as we will see later on, votive objects are also spoken of in the third as well as the second person. The feature of the Tigi Hymn that makes it so relevant to questions of ekphrasis, however, is its dominant concern with the interactive relationship between the votive object, the ruler who dedicates the object to the gods and, in many cases, the human audience that bears witness to the donation.

**13** The original reads:

1. [ma<sub>2</sub>]-<sup>r</sup>ĝar<sup>r</sup> <sup>d</sup>en-ki-ke<sub>4</sub> kar ħe-ĝal<sub>2</sub> nam-še<sub>3</sub> ma-ra-ni-in-<sup>r</sup>tar<sup>ar</sup>
2. [a]-<sup>r</sup>a<sup>r</sup> <sup>d</sup>en-lil<sub>2</sub>-le igi zi mu-u<sub>3</sub>-ši-bar<sup>ar</sup>
3. nin-zu-u<sub>3</sub> <sup>d</sup>nin-lil<sub>2</sub>-le u<sub>3</sub>-tu-zu bi<sub>2</sub>-in-dug<sub>4</sub>
4. u<sub>x</sub>(PA)-a zi lugal šul-gi-da a<sub>2</sub>-zu mu-da-an-aĝ<sub>2</sub>

**14** The original reads:

11. kid-maḥ-ḥal-zu-u<sub>3</sub> u<sub>4</sub> a<sub>2</sub>-dam ku<sub>3</sub>-ge daĝal-bi si<sup>2</sup>-a<sup>2</sup> [me<sup>1</sup>]-en<sub>3</sub>
12. ĝiš-šu-dim<sub>2</sub>-zu-u<sub>3</sub> muš-ša<sub>3</sub>-tur<sub>3</sub> sim-dam ak šu-ba nu<sub>2</sub> me-en<sub>3</sub>
13. gi-<sup>r</sup>muš<sup>2</sup>-zu-u<sub>3</sub> ušumgal ki-nu<sub>2</sub>-bi-a u<sub>3</sub> dug<sub>3</sub> ku<sub>4</sub>-me-en<sub>3</sub>
14. <sup>š</sup>mi-ri<sub>2</sub>-za-zu-u<sub>3</sub> muš sig-sig kur-ku ša<sub>3</sub> ki tab-ba me-en<sub>3</sub>
15. <sup>š</sup>eme-sig-zu-u<sub>3</sub> a-ĝe<sub>6</sub> <sup>id2</sup>buranuna ku<sub>3</sub>-ga teš<sub>2</sub>-ba gun<sub>3</sub>-gun<sub>3</sub> me-en<sub>3</sub>

## Pardigmaticity and enumeration

One useful way of differentiating types of descriptive practice in the Mesopotamian textual record is to ask if a particular mode of description is based, more-or-less explicitly, on particular sets of lexical items. Throughout the long history of cuneiform writing, lexical lists – lists of words written in cuneiform and organized according to various different principles – were used to bring order to the scribal enterprise. Recent work, in particular Niek Veldhuis’s survey of the lexical list tradition (2014), has now demonstrated that older, overwrought interpretations, in which these lists of words were taken as comprehensive models of the cosmos, can be safely disregarded: the primary purpose of lexical lists was, first and foremost, to bring order to the educational program of the Old Babylonian scribal academies. As the doyen of Sumerian literature, Miguel Civil, argued in a well-known contribution to *Festschrift Reiner* in 1987, the internal structure or logic of sequences of lexical items often served as a predominant means of structuring information in a number of Sumerian literary genres. Civil spoke of this practice as “enumeration” and used passages from Sumerian literary compositions like *Home of the Fish* and the paper’s eponymous *Feeding Dumuzi’s Sheep* to demonstrate how it operated.

Civil-style Enumeration (*Feeding Dumuzi’s Sheep* 11–14)<sup>15</sup>

11. ʾziʾ [k]alam-ma a-ša<sub>3</sub>-ga ḡal<sub>2</sub>-[la-ḡu<sub>10</sub>]

12. ʾu<sub>2</sub>-ḡu<sub>10</sub> ʾisin-na-**ḡu<sub>10</sub>**> udu-ḡu<sub>10</sub> ḡa-ma-gu<sub>7</sub>-e

13. ʾnuʾ-siḡ<sub>2</sub> il<sub>2</sub>-il<sub>2</sub>-ḡu<sub>10</sub> nu-mu-un-su ʾda-riʾ-ḡu<sub>10</sub>

14. u<sub>2</sub>-ḡu<sub>10</sub> <sup>u2</sup>šakira<sub>3</sub><sup>ra</sup>-**ḡu<sub>10</sub>** udu-ḡu<sub>10</sub> udu-ḡu<sub>10</sub> ḡa-ma-gu<sub>7</sub>-e

11–12. [<sub>frame</sub> May my sheep eat my plant,]

[<sub>lemma</sub> **my (barley) ears,**

[<sub>comment</sub> which, standing in the fields, are life for the country,]

13–14. [<sub>frame</sub> May my sheep eat my plant,]

[<sub>lemma</sub> **my churn-plant,**

[<sub>comment</sub> support of the orphan, sustenance of the widow,]

(Translation after Civil)

Here the terms or lemmata in the enumeration ({isin} ‘(barley) stalk’ in line 12 and {<sup>u2</sup>šakira<sub>3</sub>} ‘churn-plant’ in line 14, in **bold** above) are embedded in a literary formula that repeats throughout the enumeration. The “lemma” is sandwiched in between {u<sub>2</sub>-ḡu<sub>10</sub>} ‘my plant’ and {udu-ḡu<sub>10</sub>} ‘my sheep’ and each of these lines ends with the same main verb {ḡa-ma-gu<sub>7</sub>-e} ‘may (the sheep) eat (the plant)’ – we might speak of these elements as the “frame”. These lines define each entry and give the title to the composition as a whole, namely *Feeding Dumuzi’s Sheep*. Each of the lines that

<sup>15</sup> Civil 1987, 40.

consist of a lemma and its frame (12 and 14 above) are also preceded, however, by a comment line (lines 11 and 13 above) that provides us with a conventional piece of information about the lemma; its “cultural significance,” as it were: the stalk is described, appropriately enough, as “standing in the field” {a-ša<sub>3</sub>-ga ġal<sub>2</sub>-la} and as “the life of the land” {zi kalam-ma}, while the comment attached to the churn-plant {<sup>u2</sup>šakira<sub>3</sub>} describes it as “supporter of the orphan” {nu-sig<sub>2</sub> il<sub>2</sub>-il<sub>2</sub>} and “what sustains the widow” {nu-mu-un-su da-ri}. As Civil goes on to point out, these kinds of comments or conventional epithets are also attested in the few Early Dynastic plant compendia that we have,<sup>16</sup> and the functional similarities between the comments in *Feeding Dumuzi’s Sheep* and the comments attached to the individual pieces of the barge in *Šulgi and Ninlil’s Barge* above should be self-evident.<sup>17</sup>

As always, Civil wisely avoids making any general statements about the generative properties of the process of enumeration, and at least in part, this is due to the fact that we do not have explicit textual precursors that demonstrate this type of derivational process. Stated somewhat differently, for the most part, we do not have the thematically driven lexical lists that would have served as direct written sources for the type of enumerations that Civil hypothesized. This is particularly evident, if we turn to Niek Veldhuis’s magisterial edition of *Nanše and the Birds* (2004). Veldhuis provides his readers with a full edition of the Classical Sumerian version of *Nanše and the Birds*, as we might expect, but crucially he also makes available in the same volume editions of the Early Dynastic bird and fish lists as well as a wide variety of Old Babylonian lexical lists, both canonical and extracanonial, that cover much the same territory. Veldhuis recognizes the type of texts described in Civil’s 1987 paper (including *Home of the Fish*, *Dumuzi’s Sheep* and *Ninurta’s Fields*) as well as *Nanše and the Birds* as examples of “compositions . . . structured around a given lexical set (names of fish; names of plants; and names of fields respectively) [that] proceed by describing the individual items of the set and/or by framing them in a standard formula” and describes their internal patterning at some length.<sup>18</sup> The surprising thing about these texts, particularly when we take into consideration the full lexical dataset that Veldhuis makes available in the same volume, is that the sequence of lemmata in an “enumerated” text like *Nanše and the Birds* does not align with the sequence found in the purely lexical sources: the set

<sup>16</sup> Civil and Biggs 1966, 8, apud Civil 1987, 38. The clearest example in Civil and Biggs 1966 is in lines 3’-4’ of their text 3 (= CBS 7094 and its Early Dynastic precursors), where the Old Babylonian version has {sum<sup>sar.šum</sup> tukul<sub>x</sub>(GIŠ)<sup>tu-ku-ul</sup> mes<sup>me-eš3</sup> / gu<sub>2</sub> ki am<sub>3</sub>-la<sub>2</sub>}, which one might translate as “garlic, the weapon of the youth – he wears it around (his) neck.”

<sup>17</sup> It should not go unnoticed that in both texts the enumeration is linked through possessive pronouns to the person or entity that is being described. This is largely due to the way that topicalization operates in Sumerian: see Zolyomi 1993 and the somewhat different interpretation in Johnson 2010, 125–136. The fact that the epithet or comment precedes the lemma may be unsettling to some readers, but this is normative in Classical Sumerian literature: see Johnson 2010, 148–150.

<sup>18</sup> Veldhuis 2004, 56–58.



of lemmata is largely identical but their sequence is not. Veldhuis does allow for the possibility that *Nanše and the Birds* is roughly modeled on the sequence in the Early Dynastic list of fish and birds, but a careful perusal of the sources that Veldhuis has assembled shows definitively that written lists of words were not directly transformed into Civil-style “enumerated” literary texts.<sup>19</sup>

Rather than chasing after seemingly non-existent textual intermediaries I would like to suggest that the driving force behind “enumeration” and other “modalities of paradigmatic description,” or more simply “descriptive paradigms,” is the adoption of a specific rhetorical or discursive structure for each type of rhetorical practice. For enumeration, as suggested above, the combination of a repetitive frame (“May my sheep eat \_\_\_\_\_ (plant name), my plant”) with a preceding comment on the plant name mentioned in the gap serves as a formal criterion for its identification. Each entry is formulated in the same pattern, some entries adding the type of agricultural or bucolic comments that we might expect from the quintessential shepherd Dumuzi, while others turn metaphoric: wild licorice {<sup>u2</sup>munzer-ġu<sub>10</sub>} is described as “dripping with honey” {la<sub>3</sub>-ta ħab<sub>2</sub>-ba}, while carob-pods {<sup>u2</sup>ħarub} are compared to “waterskins hanging from the saddle” {<sup>kuš</sup>ummu dag-si la<sub>2</sub>}. These comments arise as part of the descriptive metalanguage of Sumerian littérateurs in the Old Babylonian Tablet House, but entries like “life of the country” in lines 11–12 or “support of the orphan, sustenance of the widow” in lines 13–14 move beyond simple description and allude to the social or symbolic significance of particular plants. These pairs of “lemma plus comment” were then embedded in a literary “frame” in order to give the rudiments of a narrative structure. Although there are important commonalities between “enumerated” texts and the ekphrastic materials that we are preoccupied with here (most importantly the basic paradigmatic structure of each individual “lemma” paired with a specific “comment”), they also regularly differ from each other in the rhetorical devices that define each descriptive paradigm.

If we are to define or identify a new descriptive paradigm under the heading of “ekphrasis,” which will hopefully take its place alongside the rhetorical pattern that Civil speaks of as “enumeration,” it is important, in my view, that it be identified on the basis of both internal rhetorical features as well as the primary or privileged contexts of use in which it typically appears. Returning to our earlier example of ekphrastic description from *Šulgi and Ninlil’s Barge* 11–15, we should note, first and foremost, a series of contrasts between the ekphrastic description in *Šulgi and Ninlil’s Barge* and the enumeration in *Feeding Dumuzi’s Sheep*:

11. kid-maḥ-ḥal-zu-u<sub>3</sub> u<sub>4</sub> a<sub>2</sub>-dam ku<sub>3</sub>-ge daḡal-bi si<sup>2</sup>-a<sup>2</sup> ʾme<sup>-</sup>-en<sub>3</sub>
12. ġiš-šu-dim<sub>2</sub>-zu-u<sub>3</sub> muš-ša<sub>3</sub>-tur<sub>3</sub> sim-dam ak šu-ba nu<sub>2</sub> me-en<sub>3</sub>

<sup>19</sup> This kind of direct transformation of the lexical list tradition does occasionally pop up in the written sources, but it was presumably seen, in aesthetic terms, as jejune. For one apparent instance of this kind of aesthetic criticism, see Johnson and Geller 2015, 36.

13. gi-<sup>r</sup>muš<sup>27</sup>-zu-u<sub>3</sub> ušumgal ki-nu<sub>2</sub>-bi-a u<sub>3</sub> dug<sub>3</sub> ku<sub>4</sub>-me-en<sub>3</sub>  
 14. <sup>ḡiṣ</sup>mi-ri<sub>2</sub>-za-zu-u<sub>3</sub> muš sig-sig kur-ku ša<sub>3</sub> ki tab-ba me-en<sub>3</sub>  
 15. <sup>ḡiṣ</sup>eme-sig-zu-u<sub>3</sub> a-ḡe<sub>6</sub> <sup>id2</sup>buranuna ku<sub>3</sub>-ga teš<sub>2</sub>-ba gun<sub>3</sub>-gun<sub>3</sub> me-en<sub>3</sub>  
 [frame O Barge! Enki decreed for you a quay of abundance as (your) fate, . . .]  
 11. [lemma As for your large reed mats,]  
     [comment they are daylight, spread widely over the pure countryside,]  
 12. [lemma As for your timbers,]  
     [comment they are *muššatur*-serpents, crouching on their limbs,]  
 13. [lemma As for your punting poles,]  
     [comment they are dragons, sleeping sweetly in their lair,]  
 14. [lemma As for your oars,]  
     [comment they are *sigsig*-snakes, whose bellies are pressed against the waves,]  
 15. [lemma As for your floor planks,]  
     [comment they are the currents of the flood, sparkling together in the pure Euphrates,]  
 (Translation after Civil)

Here in an ekphrastic description, the framing element only occurs at the beginning of the entire description, typically in a vocative addressed to the entity or object being described: “O Barge! Enki decreed for you a quay of abundance as (your) fate, . . .” in line 1. The individual entries then follow in sequence, each beginning with the lemma at the beginning of the line. As here the lemmata are modified by a second person possessive pronoun, which refers back to the entity or object addressed in the frame at the beginning of the description. Several aspects of this pattern are different from enumeration, not least, the fact that in an ekphrastic description the frame is not repeated for each unit, as was the case with Civil’s examples of enumeration. The use of clause-initial nominal phrases that include a possessive pronoun has been recognized, in somewhat different ways, by the several descriptions of topicalization in Classical Sumerian (see n. 17 above), and here the repeated addition of the copula at the end of each line confirms the topic-comment structure of ekphrastic descriptions like this. In *Feeding Dumuzi’s Sheep*, in contrast, each lemma occurs in apposition to the generic term “my plant” {u<sub>2</sub>-ḡu<sub>10</sub>} as the direct object of a finite verb and no topicalization is involved.

Thanks to Beate Pongratz-Leisten’s recent paper on “Imperial Allegories: Divine Agency and Monstrous Bodies in Mesopotamia’s Body Description Texts,” we have a ready-made array of first-millennium Akkadian texts that can be easily arrayed in a cline of decreasing ekphrasis, ranging from examples of full-fledged ekphrasis such as the Ninurta hymns to the purely descriptive *Göttertypen* and *Body Description Texts*.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>20</sup> It should be kept in mind that Pongratz-Leisten has rather different aims in mind, with her presentation of these different groups of descriptive materials from the first millennium BC, not least an

Like the Classical Sumerian ekphrastic description from *Šulgi and Ninlil's Barge*, which we looked at a moment ago, the Ninurta hymns that Pongratz-Leisten summarizes exhibit very much the same rhetorical pattern: direct address to the deity at the beginning followed by a series of body-parts, each bearing a second person possessive pronoun, and a corresponding paradigm of conventional comments attached to each of the lemmata.

*Syncretic Hymn to Ninurta, the Warrior Deity 4', 11'-12' and 19'-22'*

[<sub>frame</sub> 4'. O Ninurta, warrior, you . . .]

. . .

19'. [<sub>lemma</sub> Your teeth]

[<sub>comment</sub> are the Seven (Pleiades), who slay evildoers,]

20'. [<sub>lemma</sub> Your cheeks, O lord,]

[<sub>comment</sub> are the rising of brilliant stars,]

21'. [<sub>lemma</sub> Your ears]

[<sub>comment</sub> are Ea and Damkina, sages of wisdom . . .]

22'. [<sub>lemma</sub> Your head]

[<sub>comment</sub> is Adad, who makes heaven and earth resound like a smithy,]

The key difference between these lines from *The Syncretic Hymn* and the lines that we looked at earlier from *Šulgi and Ninlil's Barge* is that here the comments are limited to named deities and their attributes, whereas the comments attached to the items listed in *Šulgi and Ninlil's Barge* mostly refer to snakes and serpents, more-or-less mythologized elements of the cosmos and, only at the end, a couple of major deities (the moon-god Nanna and the sun-god Utu) for the major structural members of the boat: “your prow is Nanna . . . fair sky” and “Your stern is Utu . . . at the horizon” in lines 37 and 38.<sup>21</sup>

When we turn to the *Göttertypen* and *Body Description Texts*, however, the content is much the same but the rhetorical structures that involve direct address (and any other means of “presencing” the deity) are gone, replaced with purely descriptive third-person forms that involve no emotion or interaction. The following is an extract from the *Göttertypentext* for Ninurta.

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effort to link the regularization of subordinate deities as the comment to the relative agency of the deity being described.

21 The Sumerian for the two lines is as follows: {ma<sub>2</sub>-saĝ-zu-u<sub>3</sub> <sup>d</sup>nanna ur<sub>5</sub>-ra-aš sa<sub>6</sub><sup>?</sup>-[ga . . .]-<sup>r</sup>me-en<sub>3</sub>} and {ma<sub>2</sub>-eĝir-zu-u<sub>3</sub> <sup>d</sup>utu an-ur<sub>2</sub>-<sup>r</sup>ra<sup>?</sup> [ . . . me-en<sub>3</sub>]}. The contrast may result from the entities being described, with a votive object like Ninlil's barge only requiring a modicum of divine equations, while the divine body of Ninurta can only be equated with other deities.

*Göttertypentext* for Ninurta (MIO 1: i 51'–55' and ii 8–10)<sup>22</sup>

i

51'. The head (carries) a horn and a po[los?]

52'. The face is (the one of) a hum[an being].

53'. The cheek is set (in profile).

54'. He has a *pursāsu*-headdress.

55'. His hands are (the ones of) a hum[an being].

...

ii

...

8. His left foot is opened in a walking pose.

9. He tramples with his foot on the Anzu bird.

10. His name is Ninurta.

As Pongratz-Leisten reiterates, these texts are probably meant as descriptions of statues, so it is little wonder that they avoid the presencing and other interactive qualities that we might expect of a hymn. Nonetheless, the *Göttertypentext* for Ninurta is particularly important as a comparanda, since its denotational content is necessarily quite similar to the lemmata found in the hymnic text, but it includes no reference to the comments found in the hymn and makes no use of second person addressee-oriented grammatical forms. This avoidance of the ekphrastic dimension is carried even further in the following Body Description Text, where the entity being described is a defeated, monstrous enemy and the order of lemma and comment is reversed.

<sup>22</sup> Köcher 1953, 66, apud Pongratz-Leisten 2015, 126. The original reads as follows:

51'. SAG.DU S[<sup>1</sup>] u<sub>3</sub> š[u-ku-su]

52'. pa-nu L[U<sub>2</sub>]

53'. li-ta GAR-[in]

54'. pur-sa<sub>3</sub>-sa<sub>3</sub> GAR-[in]

55'. ri-it-ta-šu L[U<sub>2</sub>]

...

8. GIR<sub>3</sub>-MIN-šu ša<sub>2</sub> KAB pu-ri-da pi-ta-at-ma

9. GIR<sub>3</sub>-MIN-šu <sup>d</sup>IM.DUGUD<sup>mušen</sup> ka-bi-is

10. MU.NI <sup>d</sup>NIN.URTA

*Body Description Text (KAR 307, 1–18)*<sup>23</sup>

7. The scorpion is his lip. The whet-stone is his tongue. The leek is the hair of his armpits.
8. The drum is his lower jaw.
9. The lion is his larger intestines. The dog is his smaller intestines. The raven is his mole.
10. The poplar is [his] stature.
11. The kettledrum is his heart. The date palm is his backbone. The reeds are his fingers.
12. Silver is his skull. Gold is his sperm.

This inversion of body-part and its equation in this text, so that the “lion” is equated with the “large intestine” of the defeated deity rather than the parts of the deity being equated with other mythical beings, presumably reflects the well-known trope from *Enuma Elish*, where the slain Tiamat is refashioned into the perceivable cosmos. Pongratz-Leisten wants to see in this series of texts the “presencing and the active process of assigning agency to divine beings,” and in the Ninurta hymns above the “major . . . gods were . . . unified into a single divinity, thus maximizing the potential of Ninurta’s agency.” But she does not carry this program of evaluating each text in terms of its “agency” through to the *Göttertypen* and Body Description Texts, so we can only guess how she might have described the presencing effect and the agency of these texts.<sup>24</sup>

In my view, however, the texts assembled by Pongratz-Leisten offer us an unambiguous cline of decreasing divine presence, in a discursive rather than a theological sense. *The Syncretic Hymn to Ninurta*, though written in Akkadian a millennium or so later, exhibits all of the features of ekphrastic description outlined above and, consequently, represents a full-strength act of divine presencing, while in contrast the blunting and removal of the type of presencing effects that we saw in *Šulgi and Ninlil’s Barge* and *The Syncretic Hymn to Ninurta* eventually leads to texts such as the

**23** Livingstone 1989, 99, apud Pongratz-Leisten 2015, 132–133. The original reads as follows:

7. GIR<sub>2</sub>.TAB NUNDUN-su<sup>na4</sup>mu-ši-el-tu<sub>2</sub> EME-šu<sub>2</sub> u<sup>2</sup>GA.RAŠ SIG<sub>2</sub>.UZ<sub>3</sub> su-ḥa-ti-šu<sub>2</sub>
8. [zabar]ma-an-zu-u la-aš<sub>2</sub>-ḥu KI.TA-u<sub>2</sub>
9. UR.MAḤ ḤAR.MEŠ-šu<sub>2</sub> GAL.MEŠ UR.GI<sub>1</sub> ḤAR.MEŠ-šu<sub>2</sub> TUR.MEŠ u<sup>2</sup>UGA<sub>x</sub>(NAGA)<sup>mušen</sup> ki-pil-šu<sub>2</sub>
10. <sup>si5</sup>ASAL<sub>2</sub>.A la-an-[šu<sub>2</sub>]
11. LILIZ<sup>li-li-su</sup> ŠA<sub>3</sub>-šu<sub>2</sub> <sup>si5</sup>GIŠIMMAR GU<sub>2</sub>.MUR<sub>7</sub>-šu<sub>2</sub> GI.MEŠ ŠU.SI.MEŠ-šu<sub>2</sub>
12. KU<sub>3</sub>.BABBAR UGU-šu<sub>2</sub> KU<sub>3</sub>.SIG<sub>17</sub> ri-ḥu-su

**24** Pongratz-Leisten’s statement in reference to the *Göttertypentext* for Ninurta, to the effect that “. . . through its materialization in the statue, divinity in the scope and spectrum of its agency disclosed itself and came to life in the viewer’s mind” (Pongratz-Leisten 2015, 127), is deeply ekphrastic in tone and conceptualization, although she does not use the term. The best overview of these materials, including numerous other Akkadian examples of what I would term ekphrastic description and Civil-style enumeration, is in Livingstone’s summary statement (Livingstone 1986, 98–112).

*Göttertypen* and Description Texts, where no presencing or other vivid involvement seems to be at work. In the terminology I am advocating here, each of these modalities of description (Ninurta hymn, *Göttertypentext*, and Body Description Text) would represent a distinct kind of paradigmatic description, defined by its grammatical and discursive structure and oriented to well-defined contexts of use and audience. And while a broader history of descriptive paradigms in Mesopotamia would demand a literary history of each of these modalities, our focus here is on only one of these types, namely the ekphrastic description, and in particular its instantiation in the Classical Sumerian literature of the Old Babylonian period. With that goal still in mind, let us turn to the best evidence for contexts of use and the role of the audience in Sumerian ekphrastic descriptions, above all in the carefully constructed performative context of the Tigi Hymns.

## Year names, votive objects and their ekphrastic context

For much of early Mesopotamian history, the names given to individual years were descriptions of a momentous achievement of the crown that had taken place in the previous year. Some of our best examples of this practice come from the Third Dynasty of Ur, otherwise known as the Ur III period, at the end of the third millennium BCE (ca. 2100–2000 BC). Šulgi's year names are relatively well understood and offer the best context for understanding royal votive offerings, and it is this well-studied context that offers the best possible set of conditions for defining the context of ekphrastic description in Mesopotamia. As Šulgi's year names demonstrate, year names could be based on either "cultic" or what we might call "political" actions such as a specific military campaign. It should be kept in mind, however, that regardless of their seemingly religious, political or military character, the stages on which nearly all of these different royal actions would have come to their conclusion were the temples of the major Mesopotamian gods. Even military campaigns, for example, were meant to acquire booty, much of which would find its way into the temples. There are actually very few non-cultic, non-military events that qualify as the basis for a year name: the construction of an 'ice house' in Šulgi year 13 comes to mind, but some years may have been judged unfit for major cultic dedications.

If we focus on the first half of Šulgi's unbelievably long 48 year reign, however, the majority of the year names in his first two decades are transparently cultic: the restoration of temples, priestly appointments and – crucially for our purposes here – the dedication of votive objects. Here we can see Walther Sallaberger's list of the royal actions commemorated by year names during the first twenty-one years of Šulgi's reign as well as, in a couple of cases, the letter (A, R and B) assigned to a specific Sumerian hymn that was performed alongside the dedication of the votive object in question.

Year	Event	Šulgi Hymn
1	Šulgi enthroned	
2	Dedication of throne for Enlil	
3	Dedication of chariot for Ninlil	
4	Dedication of temple for Ninurta	
5	Restoration of the city of Dēr	
6	Road built to Nippur	
7	<b>Round trip between Ur and Nippur</b>	<b>A</b>
8	<b>Dedication of a boat for Ninlil</b>	<b>R</b>
9	Statue of Nanna of Karzid brought into the temple	
10	<b>The building of the Ehursag palace</b>	<b>B</b>
11	Ištarān of Dēr brought into the temple	
12	Numušda of Kazallu brought into the temple	
13	Building of the royal icehouse	
14	Nanna of Nippur brought into the temple	
15	En-priestess of Nanna chosen by oracle	
16	Dedication of a bed for Ninlil	
17	En-priestess of Nanna installed	
18	King's daughter becomes queen of Marḥaši	
19	Restoration of the city of BAD <sub>3</sub> <sup>ki</sup>	
20	Ninhursag of Nutur brought into the temple	
21	Ninurta gives Šulgi permission to reorganize the empire	

The twenty-first year of Šulgi's reign, at the end of his third heptad, as it were, was special: Šulgi receives permission from the gods to completely overhaul the financial and administrative structure of the Ur III empire, and it seems that nearly all of Šulgi's year names from then on celebrate military campaigns. Moreover, in his first twenty years, we find only a few royal actions that are not directly related to the temples of the great gods: the city of Dēr is restored in year 5, the Ehursag palace is built in year 10, the royal icehouse is built in year 13 and one of the king's daughters is installed as queen in Marḥaši in year 18. Still the vast majority of the events are indeed cultic. More to the point, in no less than four of the year names the highpoint of the preceding year was an event that took place as part of the New Year festivities, namely the dedication of a votive offering by the crown: in year 2, Enlil receives a throne, Ninlil receives a chariot in year 3, a boat in year 8 and a bed in year 16.

In all likelihood each of these dedications was also accompanied by a royal hymn, but to date only a couple of these royal hymns have been identified and matched up with a year name. The alignment of particular hymns with particular year names is somewhat disputed, but of these the most certain is undoubtedly the alignment between the hymn known as *Šulgi and Ninlil's Barge*, which we looked at earlier (otherwise known as Šulgi R) and the name of Šulgi's eighth year: "Year: The boat of Ninlil was sealed up," the final stage in the production of a boat. Within the vast textual record of the Ur III period – nearly 100,000 tablets are known from the century or

so it covered – the eighth year of Šulgi’s reign is a particularly well-defined and rich context for investigating early Mesopotamian ekphrasis. Largely relying on Hallo’s ground-breaking work on votive contexts, Sallaberger notes in his survey of the Ur III period that:

The three aforementioned types of text for the self-representation of the king, namely (i) year names, (ii) building inscriptions, and (iii) royal hymns, all make use of the same conceptual apparatus.<sup>25</sup>

Put somewhat differently, three different genres of written textuality all speak to historical moments such as Šulgi’s dedication of a boat or “barge,” as it is usually translated, to the goddess Ninlil in the eighth year of his reign. Hallo, more pointedly, argues that these interlocking genres act as a kind of *Gesamtkunstwerk*, leveraging the talents of the finest practitioners of both the plastic and literary arts in the last century of the third millennium BC.

If the resumption of the symbols of royal authority, during the New Year festivities, was the primary context for royal votive offerings, it should really come as no great surprise that the most highly skilled artists, in each domain of artistic production, were commanded to contribute to this single event. It was undoubtedly the pinnacle of activity in the royal household each year.

At the conclusion of the hymn, the king is blessed by the god and takes up [again] the royal insignia, the scepter and the throne. There is no evidence, however, that this event is linked to the beginning of the king’s reign. The annual reassumption [of the insignia] at the [New Year’s] festival shows that the authority of the king was renewed on an annual basis.<sup>26</sup>

The basic idea is simple enough: the specialists in boatbuilding, metalwork, sculpture and the other mechanical and figurative arts fashioned a royal barge of unsurpassed beauty and quality, and, at the same time, one of the great poets or scholars of the age was tasked with composing a hymn that celebrated the new barge for the goddess Ninlil, both through a panegyric on the individual features or elements of the votive object and also the cultic contexts in which it was dedicated to the deity, here Ninlil.

The two passages from *Šulgi and Ninlil’s Barge* (lines 1–4 and 11–15) that we looked at earlier are repeated here and formed the bulk of the first major section of this Tigi Hymn, only the rest of the framing text and the full set of lemmata are left out here.

*Šulgi and Ninlil’s Barge* 1–4 and 11–15

- [<sub>frame</sub> 1. O Barge! Enki decreed for you a quay of abundance as (your) fate,  
2. Father Enlil looked upon you with true benevolence,  
3. Your lady, Ninlil, ordered your construction,

<sup>25</sup> Sallaberger and Westenholz 1999, 144, citing Hallo 1970.

<sup>26</sup> Sallaberger and Westenholz 1999, 144.



4. To the faithful provider, to the king Šulgi, she gave instructions concerning you,]

...

11. [lemma As for your large reed mats,]

[comment they are daylight, spread widely over the pure countryside,]

12. [lemma As for your timbers,]

[comment they are *muššatur*-serpents, crouching on their limbs,]

13. [lemma As for your punting poles,]

[comment they are dragons, sleeping sweetly in their lair,]

14. [lemma As for your oars,]

[comment they are *sigsig*-snakes, whose bellies are pressed against the waves,]

15. [lemma As for your floor planks,]

[comment they are the currents of the flood, sparkling together in the pure Euphrates,]

And on and on it goes for nearly thirty lines. We can be certain that this is an example of ekphrasis, rather than an odd one-sided conversation with a boat, not only because the singer addresses it in the second person, but also because the literary genre in which our hymn was formulated was the favorite genre of Sumerian poets for exploring alternations between first, second and third person forms. It was through these experiments with “presencing” the addressee, and thereby transcending the seemingly recondite barrier between quotidian reality and the realm of the gods, that the Tigi Hymns achieve their most important literary and theological effects.

The Tigi Hymn, as a literary genre, takes its name from a stringed instrument, but the genre is also defined, in terms of textual structure, by a change in the tuning or tension of the strings of the Tigi at the mid-point in the hymn. At the end of the first half of a Tigi, texts belonging to this genre regularly add a subscript that reads {sa gid<sub>2</sub>-da}, meaning “the string(s) have been lengthened,” while at the end of the entire composition we find a similar statement that “the string(s) have been placed or replaced” {sa ġar-ra}, presumably back to their original level of tension. Specialists in the history of Mesopotamian music such as Anne Daffkorn Kilmer, R. J. Dumbrill, Th. Krispijn or Dahlia Shehata, have written extensively about the different ways in which strings were “tuned” in Mesopotamia, and I will leave to them a precise definition of a what a “lengthened string” {sa gid<sub>2</sub>-da} manner of playing sounds like. The key passage in the so-called “Old Babylonian retuning text from Ur,” in Kilmer’s recent 2014 description, reads as follows:

If the instrument is (tuned) as X, and the (interval) Y is not clear, you tighten the (string) N, and then Y will be clear.” The preceding procedures were summed up as “tightening.” The second tuning section of the same text is now translated as follows: (lines 13–20) ‘If the instrument is (tuned as)

X, and you have played an (unclear) internal Y, you loosen the string N and the instrument will be (in the tuning) Z. The second section was presumably and logically summed up as “[loosening]”.<sup>27</sup>

Now as Kilmer, Krispijn and Mirelman have made fairly clear, the instrument that is being described in these texts is not the Tigi that gives its name to our genre, but the centrality of the tightening and loosening of musical strings, if not already obvious, is actually the central preoccupation of one of the few Sumerian literary texts that actually describe the manipulation of the Tigi.

Šulgi E 34

zi-zi šu<sub>2</sub>-šu<sub>2</sub> tigi za-am-za-am-ma-ka ki bi<sub>2</sub>-zu-zu-a

That I (= Šulgi) know the points at which to raise and lower the tigi and zamzam songs

As Shehata goes on to point out:

The oppositional conceptual pair {zi-zi} ‘raising’ and {šu<sub>2</sub>-šu<sub>2</sub>} ‘laying down, covering’, where {ĝa<sub>2</sub>-ĝa<sub>2</sub>} ‘setting down, laying down’ occasionally replaces {šu<sub>2</sub>-šu<sub>2</sub>}, refers to the way in which both the instrumental and voice components of the performance are carried out. As has often been noted previously, both terms correspond to the hymnic rubrics {sa gid<sub>2</sub>-da} ‘long/stretched string (mode)’ and {sa ĝar-ra} ‘laid down / resting string (mode)’ in terms of the way in which the music was performed. This passage therefore refers to the two parts of the [Tigi and Adab] hymns, the sagida and the sagara, at least in terms of the way in which the musical accompaniment was performed.<sup>28</sup>

So the way in which these hymns are performed changes dramatically at the midpoint in the text and, crucially, the written text of these hymns is also organized, so as to fit into the musically defined two halves of the composition.

In run-of-a-the-mill hymns, this contrast between the first half (the {sa gid<sub>2</sub>-da} section) and the second half (the {sa ĝar-ra} section) is visible in the organization of the hymn into strophes and other purely poetic patterns, but in some Tigi Hymns, and in particular in those that offer ekphrastic descriptions of a votive object, we see a much more dramatic shift: the ekphrastic description of the votive object – addressed to the votive object itself in the second person – occupies the first half (the {sa gid<sub>2</sub>-da} section), while the second half (the {sa ĝar-ra} section) switches to the third person

<sup>27</sup> Kilmer 2014, 94.

<sup>28</sup> Shehata 2009, 256. The original reads: “Das oppositionelle Begriffspaar zi-zi „anheben“ und šu<sub>2</sub>-šu<sub>2</sub> „niederlegen, abdecken“, wobei zuweilen auch ĝa<sub>2</sub>-ĝa<sub>2</sub> „hinsetzen/niederlegen“ anstelle des šu<sub>2</sub>-šu<sub>2</sub> treten kann, bezieht sich auf die instrumentale und vokale Aufführungspraxis. Wie bereits mehrfach vermutet, stehen beide Termini aufführungstechnisch in Zusammenhang mit den Liedrubriken sa-gid<sub>2</sub>-da „lange(r)/gestreckte(r) Saite (Modus)“ und sa-ĝar-ra „niedergelegte(r)/ruhende(r) Saite (Modus)“. Die zitierte Textpassage bezieht sich damit wohl konkret auf die zwei Teile dieser Lieder, den sagida and saĝara, sowie ihre musikalische Aufführungspraxis.”

and offers a description of the use of the object by the gods from the point of view of the audience. Since we looked at the ekphrastic description a moment ago, let's quickly walk through the kind of audience-oriented description that we find in the second half of a text like *Šulgi and Ninlil's Barge*.

*Šulgi and Ninlil's Barge* 41–48

41. The holy festival and the great rituals
42. were put in place by the faithful shepherd Šulgi.
43. The great gods bathe in holy water in Nippur.
44. He assigns the fates to the places in the city and allocates the right divine powers.
45. The mother of the Land, Ninlil the fair, comes out (?) from the house,
46. and Enlil embraces her like a pure wild cow.
47. They take their seats on the barge's holy dais, the provisions having been lavishly prepared.
48. The lofty barge ..., the ornament of the Tigris,
49. enters the rolling river ....<sup>29</sup>

Here, in the second half of *Šulgi and Ninlil's Barge*, the votive object that was described in the first half is depicted in action, as it carries the divine couple, Ninlil and her spouse Enlil, between the great cities of the Mesopotamian alluvium.

If we then look at the eleven known examples of Tigi Hymns that name a real, historical ruler as the key human figure, it quickly becomes apparent that a number of Tigi Hymns are innovative in the way that they align the shift between the two musical modalities – loose string ({sa gid<sub>2</sub>-da}) and normal string ({sa ġar-ra}) styles of playing – with a shift in grammatical person, the perspective of the audience and even the relationship between the mundane world of ordinary experience and the divine realm.

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29 The original reads:

41. ezen ku<sub>3</sub> bi<sub>3</sub>-lu<sub>2</sub>-da gal-gal
42. sipa zi šul-gi-re ki<sup>1</sup>-bi-še<sub>3</sub> mu-ġa<sub>2</sub>-ar-ġa<sub>2</sub>-ar
43. nibru<sup>ki</sup>-a diġir gal-gal-e-ne a ku<sub>3</sub> mu-tu<sub>17</sub>-tu<sub>17</sub>-u<sub>3</sub>-eš<sub>2</sub>
44. iri<sup>ki</sup>-a nam ki-bi-še<sub>3</sub> mu-tar<sup>ar</sup>-e me zi mu-ħal<sup>r</sup>-ħal<sup>r</sup>-[e]
45. [ama] kalam-ma <sup>d</sup>nin-lil<sub>2</sub> lu<sub>2</sub> sa<sub>6</sub>-ga e<sub>2</sub>-ta<sup>1</sup> nam-x [. . . e<sub>3</sub>]
46. [<sup>d</sup>en]-lil<sub>2</sub>-le ab<sub>2</sub>-šilam ku<sub>3</sub>-gen<sub>7</sub> gu<sub>2</sub>-da mu<sup>r</sup>-ni<sup>r</sup>-[in-la<sub>2</sub>]
47. <sup>r</sup>bara<sub>2</sub><sup>r</sup> ku<sub>3</sub>-bi dur<sub>2</sub> im-mi-in-ġa<sub>2</sub>-re-eš<sub>2</sub> niġ<sub>2</sub> mi-ni-ib<sub>2</sub>-<sup>r</sup>gu<sup>r</sup>-[ul]-gu-ul-ne
48. [ma<sub>2</sub>]-<sup>r</sup>gu<sup>r</sup><sub>8</sub><sup>r</sup> maħ [x x] DU <sup>id</sup>idigna-a ħe<sub>2</sub>-du<sub>7</sub>-bi
49. [id<sub>2</sub>] <sup>r</sup>ħal<sup>r</sup>-ħal-la [i<sub>3</sub>]-ku<sub>4</sub>-ru x a mul-mul-la<sup>r</sup> [x x] x x x [x]

Ruler (Hymn No.)	Person/Perspective ({sa gid <sub>2</sub> -da})	Person/Perspective ({sa ġar-ra})
Gudea (#1)	2° (= Bau)	2° (= Bau)
<b>Ur-Namma (#3)</b>	<b>3° (= Enlil)</b>	<b>1°/2° (dialogue)</b>
<b>Šulgi (#11)</b>	<b>2° (= barge)</b>	<b>3° (audience perspective)</b>
Šulgi (#14)	2° (= Ninurta)	2° (= Ninurta)
Šulgi (#19)	2° (= Šulgi)	2° (= Šulgi)
Šu-Sîn (#15)	2° (= Ninurta)	2° (= Ninurta)
<b>Ibbi-Sîn (#18)</b>	<b>3° (= Su'en)</b>	<b>3° (audience perspective)</b>
Išbi-Erra (#9)	2°/3° (= Nanaya)	2° (= Išbi-Erra)
<b>Išme-Dagan (#4)</b>	<b>2° (= chariot)</b>	<b>3° (audience perspective)</b>
Išme-Dagan (#20)	3° (= Ninurta)	3° (= Ninurta)
Ur-Ninurta (#2)	2° (= Enki)	2° (= Enki)

Most of the Tigi Hymns operate in the usual way for a hymn, describing the deity that is being addressed in the second person throughout. The hymns in bold, however, including *Šulgi and Ninlil's Barge*, which corresponds to Šulgi #11 above, operate somewhat differently. In Ur-Namma #3, for example, the first half offers a third person description of Enlil, while the second half has a dialogue between god and king, while in Ibbi-Sîn #18 we find a description of the people of the city praising both god and king in the second half. Still the two examples most relevant to us here are the hymns celebrating Ninlil's barge and the description of a chariot dedicated by Išme-Dagan. Both of these ekphrastic hymns address the votive object in the second person in the first half of the hymn, while the second half depicts the social and cultic contexts in which the deity makes use of the votive object.

The alignment of sculptural elements and the terms within each act of ekphrasis would have required a thorough collaboration between the *métiers* of the different technical specialists. As a number of the Tigi Hymns inform us, the “plans” for these votive objects were regularly vouchsafed to the ruler in a dream (wherein the divine command to construct the votive was issued as well) and it was the responsibility of the ruler, indeed a proof of his “wisdom,” that he was able to support and coordinate the different types of craftsmen and poets who produced both the votive object itself and the hymn that accompanies it. The coordination of sculptural features and textual attributes that we saw in the Gudea statues at the beginning of the paper is one of the very few examples in which we have both votive object and ekphrastic description. In contrast, for the far more numerous ekphrastic descriptions in the Tigi Hymns and other types of Sumerian literature, we have no corresponding objects today. Nonetheless we must assume a substantial amount of coordination between the different teams of specialists responsible for different parts of the votive package, and consequently the set of lemmata operative within any given ekphrasis should probably be taken as a kind of checklist of essential elements for the type of votive object in question. No doubt, some votives are more detailed than others and some ekphrastic descriptions are more expansive, but overall the set of lexical items provided by any relatively well

contextualized ekphrastic descriptive should be taken as evidence for an informal, yet culturally real ontology of that type of object within the “space” of Classical Sumerian literature. As it happens, however, ekphrastic description was not a freely available rhetorical mode for any and all objects of description. In order to see this, however, we need to quickly survey the known instances of ekphrastic description in Classical Sumerian literature and the following section offers a relatively compact collection of such examples, arranged in terms of both formal criteria (nouns modified by second person pronouns in line-initial position) and the semantic coherence of the checklist in question.

## Surveying ekphrastic descriptions in Classical Sumerian literature

Building on the foregoing definition of ekphrastic description in this paper, I briefly survey below approximately two dozen examples that meet a kind of minimum threshold: at least three second person possessive phrases in sequential lines that form a coherent semantic field. The titles given to these sequences in the following are more-or-less arbitrary, but they do strive to capture both the semantic field that unifies the lemmata and the object that they describe. Since, for our purposes here, the sets of lemmata that define a given instance of ekphrasis are more important than the literary features of any individual occurrence, I have not reproduced the full passages in transliterations or translation. Instead, I have extracted the lemmata that serve as the skeleton for each of these moments of ekphrastic description, listed these lemmata in sequence, and reorganized the list of ekphrastic descriptions into a sequence from least to most complex.

3×

Features of Inanna: (1) ‘augustness’ {nam-mah}, (2) ‘opening of the mouth’ {ka ba}, (3) ‘divinity’ {nam-diĝir} (Hammurabi F 7–9)

Features of princely rule: (1) ‘word’ {inim}, (2) ‘command’ {a<sub>2</sub> aĝ<sub>2</sub>-ĝa<sub>2</sub>}, (3) ‘princeliness’ {nam-nun} (Ur-Ninurta E 34–36)

Features of royal praise: (1) ‘praise’ {za<sub>3</sub>-mi<sub>2</sub>}, (2) ‘kingship’ {nam-lugal}, (3) ‘shepherdship’ {nam-sipa} (Iddin-Dagan B 52–54)

Features of royal appearance: (1) ‘interior’ {ša<sub>3</sub>}, (2) ‘flesh’ {su}, (3) ‘external appearance’ {bar} (Rim-Sîn G 43–45)

4×

Parts of a city: (1) ‘interior’ {ša<sub>3</sub>}, (2) ‘exterior’ {bar}, (3) ‘external appearance’ {su-bar}, (4) ‘location’ {ki} (Ishme-Dagan W 57–62)

Parts of a temple: (1) ‘gate’ {ka<sub>2</sub>}, (2) ‘platform’ {gi-ša<sub>3</sub>}, (3) ‘interior’ {ša<sub>3</sub>}, (4) ‘offerings’ {nidba} (Ur-Namma E 9–16)

5×

Characteristics of a goddess: (1) ‘fearsomeness’ {ni<sub>2</sub>}, ‘face’ {igi}, ‘forehead’ {saĝ-ki}, ‘mouth’ {ka}, ‘arm’ {a<sub>2</sub>} (Iddin-Dagan D 29–33)

Characteristics of a heroic king: (1) ‘heroism’ {nam-ur-saĝ}, (2) ‘strength’ {nam-kalag-ga}, (3) ‘seed’ {a}, (4) ‘birth-mother’ {ama ugu<sub>2</sub>}, (5) ‘personal god’ {diĝir} (Shulgi D 38–42)

Corpse of the Bull of Heaven: (1) ‘corpse’ {ad<sub>6</sub>}, (2) ‘intestines’ {ša<sub>3</sub>-maḥ}, (3) ‘hide’ {kuš}, (4) ‘meat’ {uzu}, (5) ‘horns’ {si} (*Gilgamesh and the Bull of Heaven*, segment B 79–83, repeated in segment D 28–32)

Features of the god Numušda: (1) ‘arm/strength’ {a<sub>2</sub>}, (2) ‘claw’ {umbin}, (3) ‘authority’ {nam-nir-ĝal<sub>2</sub>}, (4) ‘augustness and magnitude’ {nam-maḥ nam-gur<sub>4</sub>}, (5) ‘good word’ {inim du<sub>10</sub>-ga} (Sin-iqisham A 25–30)

Gathering places for herds, people or deities: (1) ‘sheepfolds’ {ama}, (2) ‘(herds of) sheep’ {udu}, (3) *giguna*-building {gi-gun<sub>4</sub>-na}, (4) ‘just temple’ {e<sub>2</sub> zid}, (5) ‘the midst of the Anunna deities’ {<sup>d</sup>a-nun-na-ke<sub>4</sub>-ne ša<sub>3</sub>} (*Enki and the World Order* 206–209)

7×

The gate of Enki’s Temple in Eridu: (1) ‘lock’ {<sup>giš</sup>saĝ-gal}, (2) ‘bolt’ {<sup>giš</sup>si-ĝar}, (3) ‘roof beam’ {giš-ur<sub>3</sub>}, (4) ‘reed mat’ {<sup>gi</sup>kid}, (5) ‘vault’ {nir-gam-ma}, (6) ‘door’ {ka<sub>2</sub>}, (7) ‘stairway’ {kun<sub>4</sub>} (*Enki’s Journey to Nippur* 26–32)

8×

Limbs and body-parts of the Anzu bird: (1) ‘hand’ {šu}, (2) ‘foot’ {ĝiri<sub>3</sub>}, (3) ‘wing’ {pa}, (4) ‘claw’ {umbin}, (6) ‘spine’ {murgu}, (7) ‘ribs’ {ti-ti}, (8) ‘paunch’ {ša<sub>3</sub>-sud} (*The Return of Lugalbanda* 119–124)

10×

Materials for the cult: (1) ‘song’ {en<sub>3</sub>-du}, (2) ‘*tigi*-hymn’ {tigi}, (3) ‘bull’ {gu<sub>4</sub>}, (4) ‘ram’ {udu}, (5) ‘oil bearer’ {i<sub>3</sub> gur<sub>3</sub>-ru}, (6) ‘ghee bearer’ {ga gur<sub>3</sub>-ru}, (7) ‘temple fish bearer’ {šu-peš ku<sub>6</sub> gur<sub>3</sub>-ru}, (8) ‘fowler bearing birds’ {mušen-du<sub>3</sub> mušen gur<sub>3</sub>-ru}, (9) ‘watercourses suitable for barges’ {id<sub>2</sub> ma<sub>2</sub>-gur<sub>8</sub>-ra ba-ab-du<sub>7</sub>-a}, (10) ‘roads built for chariots’ {ḥar-ra-an <sup>giš</sup>gigir-ra ba-ab-ĝar-ra} (*Ur Lament* 359–368)

15×

Raw materials debased in Akkad: (1) ‘clay’ {im}, (2) ‘barley’ {še}, (3) ‘wood’ {giš}, (4) ‘slaughterer of oxen’ {gu<sub>4</sub> gaz-gaz}, (5) ‘sacrificer of sheep’ {udu šum-šum}, (6) ‘pauper’ {ukur<sub>3</sub>}, (7) ‘prostitute’ {kar-kid}, (8) ‘mother priestess’ {ama nu-gig}, (9) ‘cultic prostitute’ {nu-bar}, (10) ‘gold’ {ku<sub>3</sub>-sig<sub>17</sub>}, (11) ‘silver’ {ku<sub>3</sub>-babbar}, (12) ‘copper’ {uruda}, (13) ‘powerbroker/strongman’ {a<sub>2</sub>-tuku}, (14) ‘choice equids’ {<sup>anše</sup>ni-is-kum}, (15) ‘citizens who eat fine bread’ {dumu-gi<sub>7</sub> ninda sa<sub>6</sub>-ga gu<sub>7</sub>-gu<sub>7</sub>} (*The Curse of Agade* 231–250)

23×

Components of Ninlil's barge: (1) 'woven . . . ' {tug<sub>2</sub><sup>?</sup> x sig<sub>10</sub>-ga gu-a tag<sup>?</sup>-ga}, (2) 'covering reed-mats' {KID.MAḤ-ḫal}, (3) 'timbers' {ḡiš-šu-dim<sub>2</sub>}, (4) 'punting poles' {gi-muš}, (5) 'strakes(?)' {ḡiš-mi-ri<sub>2</sub>-za}, (6) 'floor-planks' {ḡiš-eme-sig}, (7) 'side-planks' {ḡiš-u<sub>3</sub> ḡiš-ḫar-ra KEŠ<sub>2</sub>-KEŠ<sub>2</sub>-ra<sub>2</sub>}, (8) 'holy . . . ' {ḡiš-LU ku<sub>3</sub>}, (9) 'bench' {ḡiš-ḫum}, (10) ' . . . ' {ḡiš-IGI.x}, (11) 'door, facing the sunrise' {ka<sub>2</sub> u<sub>4</sub> ed<sub>2</sub>-še<sub>3</sub> ḡal<sub>2</sub>-la}, (12) 'glittering golden sun-disc' {aš-me ku<sub>3</sub>-sig<sub>17</sub>-ga gun<sub>3</sub>-a}, (13) 'banner, adorned with the divine powers of kingship' {an-ti-bal me nam-lugal-la-ka še-er-ḫa-an dug<sub>4</sub>-ga}, (14) 'small reed mats' {KID.ŠU<sub>2</sub>}, (15) 'carefully tended small gizi reeds with numerous twigs (?)' {gi-zi di<sub>4</sub>-di<sub>4</sub> pa<sub>12</sub>-pa<sub>12</sub>-al il<sub>2</sub>-la saḡ sig<sub>10</sub>-ga}, (16) 'rudder' {ḡiš-zi-ganan}, (17) ' . . . ' {[. . .]}, (18) 'tow-ropes' {eš<sub>2</sub><sup>?</sup>(TUG<sub>2</sub>) ma<sub>2</sub>-gid<sub>2</sub>}, (19) 'mooring pole' {ḡiš-targul}, (20) 'longside beams' {ḡiš-ad-us<sub>2</sub>}, (21) 'prow' {ma<sub>2</sub>-saḡ}, (22) 'stern' {ma<sub>2</sub>-eḡer}, (23) 'hold(?)' {a<sub>2</sub><sup>?</sup>-bur<sub>2</sub><sup>?</sup>} (*Shulgi and Ninlil's Barge* 10–39)

28×

Components of Enlil's Chariot: (1) ' . . . ' {[. . .] x x x}, (2) 'furnishings' {ḡiš-šu-kar<sub>2</sub>}, (3) 'pole' {ḡiš-ma-dul<sub>10</sub>}, (4) ' . . . ' {su-din}, (5) 'yoke' {ḡiš-eren<sub>2</sub>}, (6) 'rope-fastened pegs' {ḡiš-gag-si<sub>4</sub>-la<sub>2</sub>}, (two lines missing), (9) ' . . . of the side-poles' {[...]-ka-a sig<sub>10</sub>-ga}, (10) ' . . . ' {x ḡiš-saḡ-kul-ḫuš-ba}, (six lines missing), (17) 'mud-guard' {saḫar-gi<sub>4</sub>}, (18) 'front of mud-guard' {saḡ-ki saḫar-gi<sub>4</sub>}, (19) 'implements' {a<sub>2</sub>-šita<sub>4</sub>-a}, (20) 'axle' {ḡiš-gag-a}, (21) 'pole-pin' {ḡiš-DUB}, (22) 'farings' {gaba-ḡal<sub>2</sub>}, (23) 'platform' {<sup>u2</sup>ḫirin}, (24) 'side beams' {gab<sub>2</sub>-il<sub>2</sub>}, (25) 'cross-beams' {šag<sub>4</sub>-su<sub>3</sub>}, (26) 'side-boards' {da-da}, (27) 'foot-board' {ḡiri<sub>3</sub>-gub}, (28) 'seat' {ḡiš-gu-za} (*Ishme-Dagan and Enlil's Chariot* 9–40)

Though the shorter ekphrastic sequences might conceivably occur in both sacred and secular contexts, as we move into the longer examples of ekphrasis, the objects being described lie exclusively within the domain of the gods: attributes of the deities themselves or their temples, raw and processed materials used in the cult, and not least, major votive objects dedicated to the most important deities. It is, consequently, no accident that the lengthiest examples that we have correspond to votives presented to the chief deities of the pantheon: Ninlil's barge and the chariot of Enlil. Stated somewhat differently, the use of full-form ekphrastic description is not an ideologically uninflected rhetorical choice; it is by its very instantiation a clue that we are concerned with the manifestation of the realm of the gods rather than the quotidian existence of mere mortals. (And in this regard ekphrastic descriptions in Classical Sumerian literature differ fundamentally from the example of Civil's enumeration that we looked at earlier, with their focus on the cataloguing of an entire domain of the natural or social world, ranging from domesticated grasses suitable as fodder to the attributes of birds.)

Even if the ekphrases in *Ninlil's Barge* and *Enlil's Chariot* constitute the most elaborate examples within the originating context of the Tigi Hymns (and other similar genres meant to accompany the votive object itself), the most famous implementation of ekphrastic description in the Classical Sumerian literary corpus occurs in a rather different type of text: the Lugalbanda epics. *The Return of Lugalbanda*, the second of the two epics in which the eponymous hero figures, represents one of our best sources for the creative manipulation of ekphrastic ideals, including the notion – mooted a moment ago – that ekphrastic description is inherently linked to manifestations of the divine in observable reality, otherwise known as a theophany. The story goes something like this: the eighth and youngest of a group of brothers (the other seven modeled in part on the *daimons* later known as the *Sebettu*) goes on a military campaign to the mythical city of Aratta, falls ill on the way, and is left behind in a kind of nest, to live or die as the gods decide. This eighth brother, namely Lugalbanda, not destined to rule and left to die in the mountains on his first campaign, recovers and seeks to win over the Anzu(d)-bird, a mythological being who is able to decide his fate. Lugalbanda secures the blessing from the Anzu(d)-bird and eventually becomes, as we would expect in the epic logic at work here, the king of Uruk.

The way in which Lugalbanda receives the blessing from the Anzu(d)-bird is too involved to present here in full, but in essence Lugalbanda performs a series of kindly and humble ritual actions on behalf of the Anzu(d)-bird's young, still in its nest, and Lugalbanda is then rewarded, first with a theophany of the Anzu(d)-bird itself and later on with a blessing that will make it possible for him to perform the duties of empire. The description itself reads as follows:

*The Return of Lugalbanda* 115–124<sup>30</sup>

[<sub>frame</sub> 115. O Bird with beautiful eyes, born in this *Zwischenraum*!

116. O Anzu(d)-bird with beautiful eyes, born in this in-between-zone!]

117. [<sub>lemma</sub> As you bathe in the pools,]

[<sub>comment</sub> you frolic,]

<sup>30</sup> Vanstiphout 2003, 142–143. The original reads as follows:

115. mušen šu-ur<sub>2</sub> SIG<sub>7</sub> LAL<sub>2</sub>.LAGAB-a tu-da

116. anzu<sup>mušen</sup> šu-ur<sub>2</sub> SIG<sub>7</sub> LAL<sub>2</sub>.LAGAB-a tu-da

117. aya<sub>x</sub>(SUG)-a a tu<sub>5</sub>-tu<sub>5</sub>-zu a a-ne du<sub>11</sub>-du<sub>11</sub>

118. pa-bil<sub>2</sub>-ga-zu nun ḫal-ḫal-la-ke<sub>4</sub>

119. an šu-zu-še<sub>3</sub> ki ḡiri<sub>3</sub>-zu-še<sub>3</sub> mu-un-ḡar

120. pa-zu an-na sa am<sub>3</sub>-ši-im-la<sub>2</sub>-la<sub>2</sub>-en nu-mu [. . .]

121. ki-še<sub>3</sub> umbin-zu am kur-ra šilam kur-ra <sup>ḡis</sup>es<sub>2</sub>-ad<sup>l</sup>-am<sub>3</sub> ba-nu<sub>2</sub>

122. murgu-zu dub sar-sar-re me-en

123. ti-ti-zu <sup>d</sup>niraḫ dar-a me-en

124. ša<sub>3</sub>-sud-zu kiri<sub>6</sub> sig<sub>7</sub>-ga u<sub>6</sub>-e gub-ba me-en



118. [lemma Your forebearer, prince of all domains,  
119. [comment placed heaven at your hands and earth at your feet.]  
120. [lemma Your wingspan]  
[comment is a net stretched across the sky, it cannot . . .]  
121. [lemma (On the earth)<sup>31</sup> your talons]  
[comment are a trap laid for the wild bulls and cows of the highlands.]  
122. [lemma Your spine]  
[comment is (straight like) a writer of tablets.]  
123. [lemma Your chest]  
[comment is Nirah, parting the waters.]  
124. [lemma As for your paunch,  
[comment it is a verdant garden, a wonder to behold.]  
(translation after Vanstiphout)

Whereas in the canonical examples that we looked at earlier the ekphrastic description is attached to a votive object that passes from the quotidian world of mankind into the divine realm, here Lugalbanda bears witness to a theophany of the deity and offers an ekphrastic description of this act of divine manifestation. The Anzu(d)-bird is directly addressed in the first two lines, as we have come to expect, and, in the remaining eight lines, we have exactly the same type of piece by piece, body-part by body-part description that we had for the votive objects dedicated by the crown during the New Year's festival. And, not incidentally, just as Šulgi's presentation of Ninlil's boat at the New Year festivities in his eighth year serves as the basis for his reinstatement as king, here as well Lugalbanda's very perception of the theophany seems to legitimate Lugalbanda as a future king of Uruk.

As we learn from Robert Alter's still magisterial exposition in *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, it is often the inversion or transformation of an expected motif or type-scene that truly demonstrates its reality and artistic power. Here as well in the Lugalbanda epics we should probably recognize an inversion of the usual rhetorical expectations associated with a votive offering: rather than the ruler receiving the plans for a votive object in a dream, which he then constructs and offers back to the deity, we have a would-be usurper king lost in the wilderness who provides an ekphrastic description of the theophany of the deity. And then, in yet another reversal, it is Lugalbanda himself who proposes a series of votive offerings for the Anzu(d)-bird:

<sup>31</sup> In lengthier ekphrases such as this a midpoint is often marked, as here, by an interruption of the line-initial position of the elements of the ekphrasis. Here in line 121, precisely midway between the first three items in lines 117–120 and the following three items in lines 121–124, {ki-še<sub>3</sub>} is placed at the beginning of the line, even though it could, just as well, have followed {umbin-zu} (the next term of the ekphrasis), thereby allowing the line-initial pattern to continue without interruption. (The apparently anomalous character of line 119 results from the fact that it is actually the comment to line 118 rather than a separate item in the description.)

*The Return of Lugalbanda 178–183*<sup>32</sup>

178. If Utu allows me to reach my city Kulaba,  
 179. may those who despise me not rejoice!  
 180. May those who have a quarrel with me not say, “Come on then!”  
 181. Then I shall have the sculptors make statues of you, a wonder to behold!  
 182. Your name shall be revered throughout Sumer,  
 183. and they (= the statues) will become an emblem in the temples of all the great gods!”

(translation after Vanstiphout)

In his response in lines 195–202, the Anzu(d)-bird repeats the same lines – now in a future perfect rather than a precative mood – and thereby agrees to Lugalbanda’s terms. Thus, rather than humbly receiving the deity’s design for a votive object, the usurper Lugalbanda has forced a manifestation of the fate-determining deity Anzu(d), through his kind treatment of the Anzu(d)’s young, presented a formally perfect ekphrastic description of the Anzu(d) and then negotiated the right to present votive objects corresponding to this ekphrasis of the Anzu(d) theophany “in the temples of all the great gods.” Although various details could be taken and argued differently, Lugalbanda’s sequence of actions seems to represent a clear inversion of the usual sequence of actions associated with a votive object and its accompanying ekphrastic description.<sup>33</sup>

## Conclusion

So where does this brief survey of ekphrastic descriptions in Classical Sumerian literature leave us? First and foremost, I offer here a formal definition of ekphrastic description in Classical Sumerian literary sources, namely a relatively fixed discursive structure in which an observer first addresses the entity or object being described,

<sup>32</sup> Vanstiphout 2003, 144–145. The original reads:

178. <sup>d</sup>utu iri-<sup>ĝ</sup>u<sub>10</sub> kul-ab<sup>ki</sup>-<sup>še</sup><sub>3</sub> am<sub>3</sub>-ku<sub>4</sub>-ku<sub>4</sub>-de<sub>3</sub>-ne-a

179. lu<sub>2</sub> aš<sub>2</sub> du<sub>11</sub>-ga-<sup>ĝ</sup>u<sub>10</sub> nam ba-e-ši-<sup>ĥ</sup>ul<sub>2</sub>-e-en

180. lu<sub>2</sub> du<sub>14</sub> mu<sub>2</sub>-a-<sup>ĝ</sup>u<sub>10</sub> <sup>ĥ</sup>e<sub>2</sub>-du-<sup>ĝ</sup>u<sub>10</sub> nam-me

181. alan-zu <sup>ĝ</sup>iš-dim<sub>2</sub>-ba um-mi-dim<sub>2</sub> u<sub>6</sub>-e gub-ba me-en

182. mu-zu ki-en-gi-ra pa e<sub>3</sub> ba-ni-ak

183. e<sub>2</sub> di<sup>ĝ</sup>ir gal-gal-e-ne-ka me-te-aš bi<sub>2</sub>-[x]-<sup>ĝ</sup>al<sub>2</sub>

<sup>33</sup> I have dealt with the blessing that Lugalbanda is seeking here, namely the ability to run without tiring, in another forthcoming paper, but in essence this ability allows Lugalbanda to rule over a number of different traditional states in the context of an imperial state: each local pantheon required the local king to be present at cultic occasions defined by the lunar calendar and the ability to run without tiring was taken as a symbolic affordance, making it possible for the ruler to perform his cultic role at more than one major temple on the same day of the lunar calendar.

and then follows this vocative address by a list of lemmata that refer to the key parts, elements or features of the described object. An epithet or short comment or both is appended to each of these lemmata, and somewhat surprisingly these comments do not draw, in a slavish way, on the lexical list tradition, with its plethora of lists, but rather seek to collect a fresh body of paradigmatic equivalencies for the fixed sequence of lemmata that define the object of description. Although this rather specific form of ekphrastic description, which I take as definitive here, lives on into later phases of Mesopotamian literature, as we saw above in the Akkadian *Syncretic Hymn to Ninurta*, I have not attempted to trace out this subsequent development here. In purely formal terms, consequently, ekphrastic description can be clearly contrasted with what Civil termed “enumeration,” which modifies the lemmata with a first person possessive pronoun (or none at all) and repeats the framing element in conjunction with each term, as we saw above in examples drawn from *Feeding Dumuzi’s Sheep* and *Nanše and the Birds*.

In contrast to the Graeco-Roman forms of ekphrasis described elsewhere in this volume, ekphrastic description in Classical Sumerian literature is used in the relatively circumscribed context of the manifestation of the divine presence in a form visible in the mundane world. The prototypical context for this type of manifestation is the presentation of a votive offering by the crown in the context of the New Year celebrations, where the rule of the king is confirmed and authorized for the coming year. The donation of this kind of votive object counts as a manifestation of the divine in that the command and plan for the votive are communicated beforehand to the ruler who will present the object to the deity and the object will become the property of the deity when it is dedicated, a visible manifestation of the creative wisdom of the gods. As we saw a moment ago, however, this originating literary context also served as a foil for the reuse of the literary convention in the Lugalbanda epics (with an inversion of the usual process of inspiration and production that we see in Tigi Hymns, an inversion that lines up nicely with Lugalbanda’s untoward status as a future usurper).

What makes ekphrastic description such a powerful literary device in both of these rather different contexts is its role in “presencing” a deity or object for use by a divine being. Thus, if we think of the mundane world of human existence and the realm of the gods as two distinct ontological zones, the votive offering commanded by the deity and presented back to the deity by the crown moves back and forth between these two zones: the impetus and plan originates in the divine zone, the votive object and the accompanying ekphrastic description are crafted by the leading technical specialists in the mundane workshops and schoolrooms of the royal palace, and finally the votive package as a whole is then (re)presented to the deity who ordered its construction. This movement of the votive object in its different phases of physical manifestation back and forth between these two ontological zones highlights the “presencing” of the divine in the mundane world and, not fortuitously, constructs the royal offering of the votive as the crucial locus for human interactions with the

divine. The ritual context in which the votive passes back into the realm of the gods is often carefully represented in the second half of the Tigi Hymn that accompanies it, and in these instances we have a particularly beautiful *mise en abyme* where the ritual context of the votive package is reiterated in the second half of the hymn that is performed as part of the votive package. As elsewhere in Sumerian literature, the occurrence of a *mise en abyme* is used to signal the key performative moment in the text, what I have elsewhere spoken of as indexical iconicity.<sup>34</sup>

While we have offered a largely formal contrast between enumeration and ekphrastic description in Classical Sumerian literature up to now, it should also be apparent that these two modalities of paradigmatic description – in spite of the fact that they are two variations on the use of possessive pronouns and the framing co-text – are actually used and conceptualized quite differently by the Sumerian literati at the beginning of the second millennium BC. If ekphrastic description is so resolutely focused on manifestations of the divine sphere in the quotidian or interactions between a human audience and the non-quotidian realm of the gods, the examples of enumeration provided by Civil and now supplemented by Veldhuis's extensive work on *Nanše and the Birds* are equally resolute in their focus on the observable variety of certain mundane types, whether the fodder consumed by domesticated animals or the sight and sound of avian life. In light of the stark contrast between these two rhetorical devices, we should probably recognize that each of these devices regularly brought in its wake a set of literary expectations. In my discussion of the creative reuse of literary expectation in the Lugalbanda epics, a moment ago, I referenced Robert Alter's famous discussion of the betrothal type-scene in the first few books of the Hebrew Bible, and it may be worthwhile to reiterate Alter's thesis here:

A coherent reading of any artwork, whatever the medium, requires some detailed awareness of the grid of conventions upon which, and against which, the individual work operates. It is only in exceptional moments of cultural history that these conventions are explicitly codified, as in French neoclassicism or in Arabic and Hebrew poetry of the Andalusian Golden Age, but an elaborate set of tacit agreements between artist and audience about the ordering of the artwork is at all times the enabling context in which the complex communication of art occurs.

If nothing else, therefore, we should recognize that ekphrastic descriptions in Classical Sumerian literature would have produced an expectation on the part of the reader or hearer that some kind of theophantic manifestation of a deity of deified object is in the offing. And we are not disappointed when we turn from the canonical instantiation of this device in the Tigi Hymns to its creative reuse in the Lugalbanda epics.

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<sup>34</sup> See Johnson 2013. It is noteworthy that the critical moments in the Lugalbanda epics are each marked by a carefully constructed *mise en abyme* of one kind or another.

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## 2 Mesopotamian and Indian physiognomy

This paper summaries the current state of exploration into the relationship between Mesopotamian and Indian omen texts that deal with the marks on the body of a human being, commonly called by its Greek-derived name, physiognomy. The groundwork was laid in my previous study of the Indian system of human marks and will be taken a bit further in an article to appear in the journal of the German Oriental Society (ZDMG).<sup>1</sup> This study brings together my research and examines both the structure and the content of two ancient collections of physiognomic omens. One is found in parts of the Indian literature devoted to the human marks, dating from about the first century BCE to eight century CE; the other is composed in Akkadian and inscribed in cuneiform script on clay tablets recovered primarily from the royal libraries of Assurbanipal in Nineveh (Kouyunjik mound) from 668–627 BCE and now housed in the British Museum.<sup>2</sup>

The paper aims to illustrate that a transmission of Babylonian physiognomic knowledge reached as far east as the north-western and western parts of the Indian subcontinent, from where the earliest Indian documented physiognomic omens derive. At this early point in the research, I am unable to establish a “paper-trail,” as it were, of the transmission, so I can only point to possible fruitful avenues of exploration for understanding the pathways by which information was passed from one culture to another.

Essential elements of the earliest system from Mesopotamia can be traced in Indic documents composed in both Sanskrit and the vernacular Prakrit. My research has shown that Sanskrit versions derive in part from texts originally composed in the Prakrit language. This suggests that the earliest written record in India probably derived from the tongues of kings and rulers rather than the speech of priests and scholars. Structural similarities date from a few centuries before and after the Common Era, but the first clear evidence of linguistic closeness comes as part of a popular novel from the eight century CE.

Not being an Assyrologist and with a limited knowledge of Akkadian, I can only explore the Akkadian documents from the perspective of structure and content based largely on translations, supplemented with some of my own observations that could lead eventually to more detailed philological studies of Indian and Mesopotamian documents on omens.

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1 Zysk 2016; Zysk 2019 (forthcoming).

2 For an excellent account of the Mesopotamian texts in the British Library and their history, see Fincke 2003/2004; and for a shorter version Fincke 2004.



## The Indian sources

The first systematic presentation of the bodily marks is found in one chapter in the *Gārgīyajyotiṣa*, compiled from around the first century BCE to the first century CE. This treatise is the earliest extant Sanskrit work outlining the Brahmanic system of Astral Science (*Jyotiḥśāstra*), which contains several chapters on omens. The mineral and animal terminology in the omen series dealing with the marks of men and women (*puruṣa-strīlakṣaṇāni*) indicate that the text probably derived from the north-western and western parts of the Indian subcontinent, what today corresponds to Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the western parts of India (Gujarat, Sindh, and Rajasthan).

This seminal collection of omens is followed by a series of physiognomic omens in two gender-based chapters from the Great Collection [of Astral Science] (*Bṛhatsaṃhitā*), composed in the sixth century CE by Varāhamihira in the city of Ujjain located in the modern Indian state of Madhya Pradesh, which is also where the novel, *Kuvalayamālā* (see below), was composed. Both Garga's and Varāhamihira's compilations establish the principal doctrines of Indian physiognomy through a circumscribed series of Sanskrit omens concerned with the marks on the human body. Being part of Brahmanic knowledge, the omens were preserved in different enumerations through time. Moreover, the system of human marks from astral literature finds some correspondences in the earliest Sanskrit treatises on Indian medicine, Āyurveda, especially in the formulation presented in the *Carakasamhitā*, whose compilation corresponds in time to Garga's treatise. It too may have associations with the north-western part of the ancient Indian subcontinent. Medicine and physiognomy probably shared a common basis of knowledge in ancient India.

Besides the early compilations of *Jyotiḥśāstra*, versions of the omen series of human marks were collected and preserved in the literature called, *Old Stories* (*Purāṇa*), which are known to be traditional storehouses of timeless Indian folklore and local customs, gathered together by different Hindu sectarian groups over many centuries. Although many of the purāṇic transmissions of the human marks derive from early *Jyotiḥśāstra* versions, some of the verses come from different, as yet unidentified sources, which might well have been composed in a local vernacular (Prakrit) and translated into Sanskrit for inclusion in the religious corpora. The purāṇic versions occur as individual chapters fitted into sections that deal with the Astral Science (*Jyotiḥśāstra*) or Law and Customs (*Dharmaśāstra*). In this way, the physiognomic omens were able to find a niche in the literature of two important Brahmanic systems of knowledge, so that the Indian omen series on human marks could be transmitted and preserved through time.

The final and most revealing source was not composed in Sanskrit, but in the vernacular language of Prakrit. Further, the transmission is not part of didactic Sanskrit literature of the priests, but occurs as an episode in a novel relating the story of a prince wandering through the western part of India in search of his beloved. It is called the *Kuvalayamālā*, "The Garland of Prince Kuvalaya." composed by the Jain

Uddyotana and completed in what is modern Madhya Pradesh on 4 March 779. This Indian version best illustrates the structural and linguistic similarities in the formulation of the omens themselves.

## The Mesopotamian sources

The principal source for Babylonian physiognomic omens is the Akkadian omen series called *Šumma alamdimmû*, “If the form.”<sup>3</sup> The text of this series derives from Assurbanipal’s libraries in Nineveh in the middle of the seventh century BCE; but in all likelihood the omen series is considerably older. It is mentioned in the so-called “Exorcist’s Handbook” of the Babylonian *āšipu Esagil-kīn-apli*, who was a Babylonian scholar under the King Adad-apla-iddina (1068–1049 BCE) in Borsippa.<sup>4</sup> The series was named, defined, and arranged in a system from head to foot and occurs after the medical series that deals with diagnosis and prognosis (SA.GIG or *sakikkû*).<sup>5</sup> It is, therefore, likely that both series, along with other omens in the “Handbook,” derived from an earlier period in time.<sup>6</sup> Here too medicine and physiognomy occur together. We do not know for certain who might have been the professional skilled in physiognomic divination, but the likely candidate would be the *āšipu*, or “exorcist,” who carried out both exorcisms and read the signs of disease, as well as being a scholar who could both write and read the Akkadian omens impressed on the clay tablets.<sup>7</sup> His academic expertise grew over time and included, among others, the terrestrial and astrological omens.<sup>8</sup>

The palace libraries in Nineveh also housed the terrestrial omens of *Ālu ina mēlē šakin* and the astrological omens of *Enūma Anu Enlil*, which David Pingree previously studied in connection with Indian omens.<sup>9</sup> In this way, we notice that three of the omen series preserved in Nineveh and mentioned in the Exorcist’s Handbook find

<sup>3</sup> The literature is classified according to the grammatical structure that characterises the material. Here it is the first part of the conditional sentence or the protasis expressed in its simplest linguistic form.

<sup>4</sup> Another old version of the first two tablets of the *Alamdimmû* series occurs on Neo-Assyrian tablets from Aššur (Heeßel 2010). For a discussion of the two versions, Nineveh and Aššur, see Zysk 2019 (forthcoming). In this paper, we shall focus on the oldest and more complete version. The Aššur version is interesting for several reasons, but adds nothing much new to the text and translation of the omens.

<sup>5</sup> Geller 2000, 225–58, where according to KAR 44, compiled by Esagil-kīn-apli, the physiognomic books: *Alamdimmû*, *Kataduggû*, *Nigdimdimmû*, and the diagnostic book SA.GIG, are mentioned together on line 6 (pp. 256–58). See also Heeßel 2010 and Jean 2006, 62.

<sup>6</sup> Heeßel 2010.

<sup>7</sup> See, in particular, Fincke 2003/2004, 117–18 and Parpola 1983, 8–9, 16, and Jean 2006, 15.

<sup>8</sup> Robson 2011, 16. Cf. also Schwemer 2011.

<sup>9</sup> See, in particular, Pingree 1973, 1–12; 1981; 1987a, 91–99; 1987b, 293–315; 1989, 439–45; 1992, 375–379; 1997; and 1998, 125–137.

a place in early Indian scientific literature about the heavenly bodies and folktales about kings of old.

The Akkadian physiognomic texts were investigated first by Franz Rudolf Kraus<sup>10</sup> and more recently by Barbara Böck.<sup>11</sup> The works of these scholars provide the points of departure for the following discussion about the Babylonian physiognomic omens.

The Mesopotamian physiognomic omens occur in two forms. The first is a series of twenty-seven tablets, beginning with the so-called *Alamdimmû* series, and the second is a group of miscellaneous tablets from various sources that contain physiognomic content, some which probably belongs to the *Alamdimmû* series.

## Akkadian physiognomic omens

These omens are divided into six different groupings and bear the name of the first series, *Alamdimmû*. The overarching structural principle seems to have been the division into men's and women's marks and the method for organising the anatomical parts is head-to-foot (*ištu muḥḥi adi šēpē*).<sup>12</sup> The groups are as follows:

1. *Šumma alamdimmû* ("If the form") are tablets 1–12 (the contents of tablet 12 is not extant),<sup>13</sup> dealing with male anatomy. They begin with the image of the gods and moves systematically from the head to the foot. The first nine tablets are devoted to the head, including the right/left twists of the hairs on the head. One tablet deals with the upper body, one with the toenails, and one with men's appearance.
2. *Šumma nigdimdimmû* ("If the shape") are tablets 13–14. Because of their damaged state, little is known other than that they deal with the overall shape of the body. Böck's examination of the tablets indicates that the man's body is being addressed, beginning with the head.<sup>14</sup>
3. *Šumma kataduggû* ("If the speech") is tablet 15. It deals with men's utterances and habitual conduct and aims at determining a man's character and suitability as a ruler.<sup>15</sup>
4. *Šumma sinništu qaqqada rabât* ("If a woman's head is big") is tablet 16. It is devoted to women and contains composite omens of several body parts from head-to-toe.
5. *Šumma liptu* ("If the blemish") are tablets 17–26, which treat the blemishes, including pimples, moles, etc., on men in 17–25 and on women in 26, beginning with the

<sup>10</sup> Kraus 1935; 1939; 1947, 172–205.

<sup>11</sup> Böck 2000; 2010, 199–219. Mladen Popović provides a useful summary of the salient points in his study of physiognomic omens from Qumran and follows the conclusions of Böck (Popović 2007, 72–85).

<sup>12</sup> Böck 2000, 15–17; cf. Popović 2007, 73–76.

<sup>13</sup> According to Böck, tablets 1–3, 7, 8, 10, and 11 are known by colophon, and themes of 4, 9, and 12 by catalogue entries and the tablets with *aḥū*-omens (Böck 2000, 16)

<sup>14</sup> Böck 2000, 128–29.

<sup>15</sup> Böck 2010, 214.

head. These blemishes are grouped according to the following types: *liptu*, *kurāru*, *umṣatu*, *pindû*, *urāšu*, *tirku*, *ibāru*, and *kittabru* (for both men and women).

6. *Šumma šer'ān pūt imittišu ittenebbi* (“If the muscles on the right side of his forehead throb”) is tablet 27, which deals with involuntary twitches of muscle, veins, and nerves, beginning with man’s head.

Along with these ordered tablets, there are others, out of sequence, which contain physiognomic omens. Among them, the so-called “Commentary Tablets,” “*aḥû*-tablet,” and “Stevenson omen-tablet” deal with a man’s gait or deportment and the lines on man’s forehead. The *aḥû*-tablet which, based on the contents, probably belongs to *Šumma alamdimmû*’s tablet 11, compares the man’s walk to the movements of different animals.

This cursory examination of the Akkadian physiognomic tablets reveals striking similarities as well as differences between the Mesopotamian and the Indian systems of physiognomy in both the overall structure of the omen series and its content. The basic resemblances between the two sets of omens would point historically to an original Akkadian version, which over time was adapted and changed to fit the ideas and customs of the early Indians. The following discussion details the key points of correspondence and divergence between the two series and their significance.

## Structure

Gender separation that results in individual sections of men’s and women’s marks is a structural feature common to both sets of physiognomic omens, and to my knowledge, is found nowhere else in collections of physiognomic omens from antiquity. Moreover, the separation of genders characterises the Indian system of human marks from the first century BCE. Akkadian omens also make a clear distinction between men and women, as seen above in groups of tablets 1, 3–5. It would appear, therefore, that the principle of gender division was inherited by the Indian compilers and users of the system of human marks.

Although both share the division of man and woman, it is only in the Indian tradition from the time of Garga onwards that the physiognomic omens for women were further classified into auspicious and inauspicious types. The Akkadian series does not include this additional arrangement, pointing to an original development in the Indian formulation.

In addition to gender, Babylonia scholars arranged their omens in a system that began at the head and moved down to the feet. This was the method followed throughout ancient and mediaeval Europe and the Middle East with two exceptions.

The first is the earliest Greek treatise on physiognomy, the Aristotelian *Physiognōmonika*, dating from about 300 BCE, and the other is the *Physiognomy* of the

sophist Polemon, written in the mid-second century CE, where the omens are structured in the exact opposite manner, from foot to head, which dominates the Indian system of physiognomy from its earliest attestation in the *Gārgīyajyotiṣa*. It is possible, therefore, that the two Greek versions, therefore, owe their bottom-to-top orientation to Indian sources.<sup>16</sup> After the second century, the Babylonian-based system of head-to-toe, adopted by the medical authors, prevailed in European physiognomic literature.

The syntactical structure for the Indian omens, like that of all the Akkadian omens, is protasis followed by apodosis in a straightforward conditional “if ... then” relationship. The Akkadian uses a simple prose style where the relationship is either single, i.e., one protasis to one apodosis, or multiple, i.e., one or more protases (usually 2 or 3), which can be different body parts or characteristics of a single part, to one or more apodoses. Only in the fourth group devoted to women are multiple or composite omens found.

The basic conditional style is not so common in Garga’s versified omen transmission, which uses metres with eight and eleven syllables per foot to allow for the inclusion of greater geographically and culturally specific information. As a result, the syntax is rarely expressed in a simple conditional “if ... then” construction. One of the most common ways the condition is expressed in Indian verse is through the relative-correlative construction. Verses in even more complex metres occur in Vahāramihira’s collection, allowing for ever increasing amounts of local nuances. Although a conditional structure of the sentences is shared by both omen formulations, the Sanskrit and Prakrit (see below) versions used primarily relative-correlative sentence construction to accommodate the metrical styles used to record them. The more syllables used in the formulation of an omen, the more culturally specific information could be added, giving the appearance from content that the two series derive from entirely different systems of thought. The overall structure of the collections, however, points to a common starting point.

The apodoses reveal the purpose of the Akkadian omens. For the man, they are aimed at determining his future in society and included his longevity and economic status, followed by his family life, manner of death, relations with neighbours and relationships with tutelary deities, where character seems to play a minor role. For women, the focus is primarily fertility and childbearing, followed by marriage and domestic relations.

From the time of Garga, the focus of female physiognomy in India was procreation especially of male offspring and marriage. The reproductive role of women lies at the heart of the Brahmanic understanding of woman’s principal function in society. Male physiognomy emphasised vitality and strength necessary for the reproduction of virile young men, as well as future power, social status, and longevity. Character as such played a greater role in Garga than in most other Indian versions.

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<sup>16</sup> Zysk 2018.

Both sets of physiognomic omens, therefore, are concerned with the same basic issues related to men and women, although Garga includes character, which, as in the Mesopotamian omens, plays a lesser role in later Indian versions. It too points to another source. In fact, the role of character in Garga harmonises better with Greek than with Mesopotamian physiognomy and may mark a later development in the Indian system.<sup>17</sup>

## Content

Similarities in content between Babylonian and Indian physiognomic omens as revealed through the protases are not numerous, but they are rather significant. Furthermore, the similarities occur in the different transmissions of the Indian omens, rather than in one specific text, indicating that physiognomic knowledge most likely permeated the local Indian culture from where it was transmitted and preserved principally in Sanskrit collections of Astral Science at different points in time.

Although a few of the basic marks are common to both sets of physiognomic omens, the greater number of similarities occurs between the early Indian and Greek physiognomic formulations. Therefore, it would appear that a basic set of physiognomic omens reached the western parts of the Indian subcontinent in antiquity and developed into its own omen series by incorporating both original customs and practices and early Greek notions about the divination practice of physiognomy.<sup>18</sup>

Of the eight basic marks first mentioned among Garga's male marks,<sup>19</sup> only one, voice, occurs as the third subseries of the Akkadian omens; but gait and deportment are treated in the out-of-sequence *ahû*-tablet, which could belong to *Alamdimmû*'s table 11, and in the Commentary Tablets. Likewise, both appearance and overall size are found as the first and second sections of the physiognomic omens. Although mentioned in the Akkadian omens, these basic marks on a man have a more clear and distinct connection to ancient Greek physiognomy.<sup>20</sup> Again, the Indian material derives from a variety of different sources in both Sanskrit and Prakrit, which is indicative of the disparate nature of the practice and its literature.

## Bodily movement/deportment or gait

In Garga's chapter on the marks of men, the man's gait or bodily movement/deportment ranks among the basic marks and is often compared to the movement of

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Zysk 2016, vol. 1, 44–46, 60.

<sup>20</sup> Zysk 2018.

different animals, especially water-birds, but also a tiger, cat, bull, and elephant.<sup>21</sup> As a protasis it also occurs in the later transmission of the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*,<sup>22</sup> *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*<sup>23</sup> for men and in the *Skandapurāṇa*'s *Kāśīkhaṇḍa*<sup>24</sup> and *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*<sup>25</sup> for women.

In Mesopotamia, omens devoted to the man's bodily movement or gait occur in another series of physiognomic omens.<sup>26</sup> One of the so-called *aḥû*-tablets uses animal similes that occur in protases dealing with a man's movement, where it is compared to that of a duck, a goose, a raven, a lion, and a cat.<sup>27</sup> Others appear in the so-called Commentary series,<sup>28</sup> but none is devoted to the woman's bodily movement. Both in Garga and in physiognomic omens from Mesopotamia, a specific protasis involving a man's deportment and bodily movement is formed with comparisons to certain animals, some of which are the same in both collections. Their overall similarity could again point to the Akkadian version as the original inspiration for the Indian omens pertaining to the man's bodily movement, but closer study of the text is required to substantiate a connection. In India, omens pertaining to the woman's movement were formulated on the basis of the series pertaining to a man's bodily deportment.

## Voice

The third subseries of Akkadian physiognomic omens, *Šumma kataduḡgû*, devotes a single tablet to the topic, among others, of the man's voice.<sup>29</sup> Although these omens deal with a man's speech, the overwhelming focus is more on what he says than how he says it, which is the main feature of the voice in the Indian physiognomic omens from the time of the *Gārgīyajyotiṣa*. Although both traditions include omens about the man's voice, the emphasis is different, so they share little more than the category.

Beyond the basic marks, there are other protases that the Indian and the Babylonian series have in common. They include blemishes on the skin, lines on the body, and curling of the bodily hairs, especially the hairs of the head.

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<sup>21</sup> 1.41–42.

<sup>22</sup> 68(67).115.

<sup>23</sup> 1.24.39–42.

<sup>24</sup> 37.18cd–19d.

<sup>25</sup> 1.5.96–97, 102.

<sup>26</sup> Böck 2000, 21–22.

<sup>27</sup> Böck 2000, 272–77.

<sup>28</sup> Böck 2000, 246–47.

<sup>29</sup> Böck 2000, 130–145.

## Skin blemishes

The entire fifth subseries of the Akkadian physiognomic omens, the *Šumma liptu* (“If the blemish”), dedicates ten tablets to the blemishes on the bodies of both men and women, beginning with those on the head. This type of omen is absent from Garga’s account of the human marks and most of the later Indian physiognomic literature, except for a late series found in the *Skandapurāṇa*’s *Kāśikhaṇḍa*<sup>30</sup> and in the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa*,<sup>31</sup> where in both texts omens addressing blemishes occur in sections devoted to women’s marks. It should be pointed out, however, that both the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*<sup>32</sup> and the Buddhist *Śārdūlakarṇāvadāna*<sup>33</sup> contain separate chapters devoted to blemishes (*piṭaka*), which are not part of the series of human marks (*striṭpuruṣalakṣaṇāni*). The blemish omens, therefore, in both Akkadian and Sanskrit constitute a separate series of bodily omens, which at a later time became part of the general series of the Indian system of human marks. A fruitful study in this regard could involve a close examination of the Akkadian and Sanskrit versions of the blemishes on the body

An example of the practice of such a divination occurs in the post-canonical Pāli Buddhist treatise, *Milinda’s Questions*, dating from around the beginning of Common Era. In this work, which entails a conversation between a Greek ruler from north-western India, King Menander, and the Buddhist monk, Nagasena, a fortune-teller or diviner (*nemittaka*) predicts a man’s future by reading his moles (*tilaka*), boils (*piḷaka*) and cutaneous eruptions (*daddu*) on his body (*sarīra*).<sup>34</sup> The inclusion of the Greek interlocutor in connection with divination by the examination of skin blemishes does not establish a link between Indian and Greek physiognomy, but it does indicate familiarity with the practice of reading blemishes as omens in the north-western part of the Indian subcontinent from at least the beginning of the Common Era. Moreover, I have not (yet) found a separate category of skin blemishes in other physiognomic literature from antiquity. The uniqueness of this protasis as a separate omen series, therefore, again points to a likely transmission from Mesopotamia to north-western India where, at some point in time, a version of the series was incorporated into the main series of physiognomic omens devoted to women. Even though they appear in independent and more recent Sanskrit compilations, they probably reflect an older tradition which, as we shall see, included the curling of the hairs of the head, which again is preserved in both Akkadian and in Prakrit as well as Sanskrit versions. Since the

<sup>30</sup> 37.125–136b.

<sup>31</sup> 1.28.16.

<sup>32</sup> Chapter 51.

<sup>33</sup> The chapter entitled, *Piṭakādhyāyaḥ*, pp. 151–54 in Mukhopadhyaya’s edition.

<sup>34</sup> The *Milindapañho*, 1997 [1810], 298–299; cf. Horner 1999 [1964], vol. 2, 129.



omens occurred in numerous Sanskrit versions, they were likely a part of the early Indian collections of astral knowledge and therefore found their way into both Buddhist and Brahmanic literature. The blemish omens were present in India at least from early centuries of the Common Era.

We turn now to a brief look at an Akkadian term for a type of skin blemish with an eye towards a possible Sanskrit and Indo-European connection.

## Specialised terminology for skin blemishes

Certain specific Akkadian words used to define the blemishes have puzzled Assyriologists who have examined these tablets. One of the expressions, however, appears to have Indo-European roots. The Akkadian *pindû* could be related to Sanskrit *piṅḍa*, “ball of rice,” referring to the shape of the mark and perhaps, *bindu*, “a spot or mark,” which is usually located on the forehead.<sup>35</sup> Both fit the semantic range of the Akkadian word. Similarly, Sanskrit *piṭaka* or Pāli *piḷaka* (blemish), indicating a boil in the medical literature, comes from the *√piṭ*, “to assemble or heap-up.”<sup>36</sup> Other of the difficult words may come to have the same meaning in both Akkadian and Sanskrit/Indo-European.

## Lines on the body

The two basic premises of the Mesopotamian physiognomy were that the gods communicated to humans via signs and that the diviner’s role was to interpret the will of the gods from these signs. The examination of the lines on the body, especially the lines on the forehead for men and the lines on the hands for women, was an important means to discover the gods’ plan for a particular person.<sup>37</sup>

The same division of lines on men and women occurs in Garga, where there is but a single occurrence of reading the lines on a man’s forehead,<sup>38</sup> but for women there are interpretations of the lines on both the palms and the soles.<sup>39</sup> From the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* onward, reading the lines on the forehead, soles, and palms becomes an integral part of the later Indian transmission of the human marks for both genders. On women, attention is paid to the lines on the soles and palms, but not

<sup>35</sup> Mayrhofer Wb II, 275–76; 430–31.

<sup>36</sup> MW 625.

<sup>37</sup> Böck 2007, 92–95 (men); 157–159 (women). Cf. Popović 2007, 80.

<sup>38</sup> Garga 1.63.

<sup>39</sup> Garga 2.9–11 and 32–34, 79.

on the forehead.<sup>40</sup> Although palmistry developed in different parts of the ancient and medieval worlds, we cannot overlook the contributions of the early Babylonian omens dealing with lines on the body to the early forms of palmistry's found in Indian sources.

In Garga's version, the attribution of divine origin is a secondary development, connected to a mythology-based legitimising process for the priests. The physiognomic omens that have a relationship to early Indian medicine reveal that one's character in a past life carries over into the present life.<sup>41</sup> This implies that the basic belief in the pan-Indian concept of action (*karman*) and rebirth was probably integral to the Indian physiognomy as well.

The reading of the lines on different parts of the body, which is part of the omens from the earliest series in India, has a parallel in the Babylonian series. Both series reveal a person's future, whether it is the will of the gods or the result of actions in a past life. In India, however, palmistry is also part of the Romani tradition, whose roots lie in India, so that its ultimate origins in Indian palmistry are not entirely clear. The Indian Romani language can be classified as a vernacular (Prakrit), unknown to most speakers of Sanskrit, so that the reading of the bodily lines might well derive from Mesopotamia, which, like other aspects of Indian physiognomy we have seen and will see, was transmitted via the vernacular languages including Romani. Further investigation into this interesting aspect of physiognomy is, however, required.

We now examine a protasis that demonstrates perhaps the clearest similarity between Indian and Babylonian physiognomy. It is the closest to a "smoking gun" that we have to date.

## Twists of the body parts and the right and left dichotomy

Signs based on the right and left twists of the body (*tīrānū*), including the hairs on the man's head, are part of the *Alamdimmū* omen series. Use of the Sanskrit equivalent *āvarta* in reference to bodily twists and natural curling of hair finds a parallel in texts as early as Garga particularly in reference to women.<sup>42</sup> From the physiognomic omens in the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, onward, the twists applied to both men and women.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>40</sup> See in particular BS 68(67).43ab,44–50,75–78; BS 70(69).2ab,10,12ab,13–14; and Garga 1.49–50, 97–110; 2.19,21,23–27. Forehead lines on women occur at SPK 37.119ab and 132c–133b.

<sup>41</sup> Garga 1.88–89.

<sup>42</sup> Garga 2.18–20, 24, 26, 44, 47, 68. They also occur in the later transmission: SPK 37.134c–142; BhvP 1.28.26–27; and ŚkāK 8 and 41.

<sup>43</sup> For men: BS 68 (67).11–12 (stream of urine), 22 (navel), and 26 (body hairs); for women: BS 70 (69) 4 (navel), 5 (folds of the belly), 17 (pubic hairs). See also Utpala's *Samudra* 1.8, 15, 26, 43; 2.8, 31, which have correspondence in *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*.

However, it is the small group of omens pertaining to the curling of the hairs of the head that provides perhaps the clearest association between the Indian and Babylonian physiognomic omens.

## Curling of the hairs of the head

A more detailed discussion of this topic can be found in my forthcoming article, entitled “Mesopotamian Physiognomic Omens in India,”<sup>44</sup> so I shall only summarise the key points here.

### The Akkadian version

The second *Alamdimmû* tablet deals with various aspects of the head, including the different kinds of formations, quantities and colour of the hairs on the head; the face; and includes the form of the head. Beginning in the top-down manner, the first four lines of tablet 2 give the predictions for the four basic types of curling of the hairs on the head:

1. If the curls (of the hair) on the head of a man turn to the right: his days will be short.
2. If the curls (of the hair) on the head of a man turn to the left: his days will be long.
3. If the curls (of the hair) on the head of a man are situated on the left side: ....
4. If the curls (of the hair) on the head of a man turn both right and left: his circumstances will be reduced.<sup>45</sup>

Although the remaining six omens (lines 5–10) are damaged, some important information can be gleaned from them. Lines 5–8 have the same style of protasis: “If the curls (of the hair) on the head of a man,” except for 8, which shifts to the back of the head; 9 has “If ... on the right, that man will be poor;” and 10 is very fragmented. It is clear that lines 1–10 use the same, standardised formulation to describe the effects of right and left turning curls on the right and left sides of the man’s head.

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<sup>44</sup> Zysk 2019 (forthcoming).

<sup>45</sup> *Alamdimmû* II, lines 1–4 (after Böck 2000, 72; translation of J. Cale Johnson in Johnson and Stavru 2016, 25–27). The omens about the curling of the head of the head also occur in omen series from Aššur VAT 10493 + 10543 tablet 2 reverse col. III, lines 8–23 (Heeßel 2010, 146, 150).

## The Indian version

A remarkably similar omen construction occurs in a Prakrit version of the men's physiognomic omens found in Uddyotana's eight century novel, the *Kuvalayamālā* (131.2–5)<sup>46</sup>:

He, whose left-curling hair appears on the left side of the head, is devoid of family, wealth, and property.

He, who somehow or other has a left-curling hair on the right side, he has a share in Lakṣmī (prosperity) in the form of wealth, property, and well-being.

If there is a left-curling hair on the right side or a right-curling hair on the left side, without doubt, he later has a share in well-being.

If there are two left-curling hairs, he becomes one who is devoted to the earth. A left-curling hair is auspicious; but on the left side, it is inauspicious.

A little later version in Sanskrit occurs in Siddharṣi's *Upamitibhavaprapañcā kathā* (739.12–14), which dates from 905 CE:

He, whose left-curling hair should be on the left side of the head, being devoid of auspicious marks, emaciated by hunger, will eat morsels of coarse alms food.

But, to him, whose right-curling hair is on the right side of the head, would always have prosperity that rests in his hands (i.e., by his own hands?).

If there should be a left-curling hair on the right side and a right-curling hair on the left side, then, without doubt, eventually he has pleasures.

## Similarity in structure and content

The overall similarity in structural and formulation of these two sets of omens is striking. Although the apodoses show slight variation, due to style and cultural custom and belief, the protases are fundamentally the same in both versions.

A closer examination of the protases of each formulation can, perhaps, give us an idea of the way in which Indians could have assimilated the Akkadian omen series in the common language.

*Alamdimmû* 2.1.C.

**Šumma(DIŠ)** *ti-ra-nu ina SAG.DU LÚ ZAG saḥ-ru*

“If the curls (of the hair) on the head of a man turn to the right ....”

*Kuvalayamālā* 131.4ab:

*vāmāvatto jai dāhiṇammi aha dāhiṇo vva vāmammi/*

“If there is a left-curling hair on the right side,....”

<sup>46</sup> For information about this work and its relevant content, see Zysk 2016, vol. 1, 23–24.

*Upamitibhavaprapaṅcā kathā* 739.14:

**yadi** syād dakṣiṇe vāmo .../

“If there should be a left-curling hair on the right side,...”

*Kuvalayamālā* 131.2ab:

vāma-disāe vāmā āvatto **jassa** mathae dittho/

“On whose head is seen a left-curling hair on the left side, he...”

*Upamitibhavaprapaṅcā kathā* 739.10:

vāmāvarto bhaved **yasya** vāmāyāṃ diśi mastake/

“He, whose left-curling hair should be on the left side of the head,...”

Focusing just on the syntax, we can begin to understand how the Akkadian original could have been eventually transmitted into Prakrit and then into Sanskrit. Both versions contain examples of the simple conditional construction (“if ... then”: indicated in **bold** in the examples above). It is the only structure used for Akkadian omens, expressed in this case by “*šumma...*” followed by an apodosis. The Prakrit and Sanskrit illustrate both the original construction and a further development. The Indian versions have the simple conditional construct, expressed by *jai* (Prakrit) and *yadi* (Sanskrit), meaning “if”; but they also introduce a relative-correlative construction, as an alternative to the conditional sentence. It is expressed by the relative pronouns *jassa* (Prakrit) and *yasya* (Sanskrit), “whose,” followed by the correlative “he” in the apodosis. The relative-correlative construction is found often in Sanskrit physiognomic omens, where the conditional clauses are translated into relative and correlative clauses. Unlike Prakrit and Sanskrit, Akkadian *šumma* may ultimately derive from the noun *šumu*, “name”. In the Indian transmissions, the Prakrit version served as the basis of the Sanskrit.

## The predictions and their outcomes

Since the method for formulating the conditional statements varies in each version, the corresponding predictions and outcomes appear to be different. Although, the Akkadian version is fragmented, due to damage to the tablets, a basic pattern seems to emerge. When viewed from the perspective of the fundamental “sinister-dexter” dichotomy, where left is inauspicious and right is auspicious, the Indian and Akkadian versions seem to be in opposition to the norm. In different ways, they seem to reflect the mirror image of what is expected. The idea of mirroring reveals a fundamental sense of symmetry in the thinking of both the Babylonian and Indian series of the omens, so that we should not be too far wrong in thinking that the apodoses represent for the most part the point of view of the diviner facing his client.

Although the fragmented and incomplete nature of the cuneiform tables prevents us from determining more precisely the relationship between the two series of omens, the way in which they were formulated strongly points to a common origin. Moreover, the starting point for both formulations in most cases was the diviner's perspective, built on the symmetry of opposites that relied on a norm of right and left.<sup>47</sup>

We now leave the examples of similarities in the protases of omens in the physiognomic literature from Indian and Mesopotamian and take up the topic of the apodoses or results.

## Apodoses

As in the case of the auspicious and inauspicious outcomes of the curling of the hairs of the head, the two sets of physiognomic omens used culturally specific ideas and terms to express what was considered to be auspicious and what was inauspicious. As mentioned above, the focus in Garga is on both the man's present character and his future qualities as a warrior and prince. The apodoses in the female omens stress fertility in the form specifically of male offspring, femininity, as well as both social and economic status and domestic life, namely, her fitness for marriage. Although perhaps not as explicit as in the Indian omens, apodoses from the Akkadian omens pertaining to both men and women imply an intention that might well have been, as Böck suggests, the determination of suitable partners in marriage,<sup>48</sup> which, as we have noticed, is the basic purpose of Indian physiognomy at least from the *Bṛhatsamhitā*, where it is specifically expressed.<sup>49</sup>

The Babylonian physiognomic omens that make up the exorcist's basis of knowledge were on all accounts restricted to a specific segment of the aristocracy. Similarly, the omens from India appear to have formed the knowledge meant for the nobility, i.e., princely and warrior classes. When it became integrated into Brahmanic lore, the omens could have pertained to larger segment of Hindu society, including the priestly Brahmins. Although the exact purpose of the Babylonian physiognomic omens remains uncertain, Böck suggests that they might have been used as part of marriage alliances to assess the eligibility of individuals to enter the service of the royal court and were, therefore, restricted to the elite.<sup>50</sup> The human marks from Garga aim at describing the ideal warrior and noble man and the women suitable for him. Thus, the omens probably also functioned as a means of delineating people of the princely social class in western India and distinguishing them from the other orders

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<sup>47</sup> For an examination of the right/left dichotomy in ancient Mesopotamia, see Guinan 1996.

<sup>48</sup> Böck 2001, 215.

<sup>49</sup> BS 70(69).1.

<sup>50</sup> Böck 2000, 1, 58–59; 2010, 215.

of society. In later times, the physiognomic based classification of character types was adopted for use in dramaturgy to portray the different ladies of the harem.<sup>51</sup>

The purpose of the women's omens is the same in both series: to identify fertility and future domestic tranquillity. Although they occur in separate sections corresponding to men and to women in both sources, in India from Garga onwards the physiognomic omens for women are further divided into auspicious and inauspicious, a classification that, as mentioned earlier, is absent in the Mesopotamian omens.

Broadly speaking, the respective male apodoses differ only slightly in purpose. The Babylonian omens probably pertained to the nobility; while the early Indian omens refer exclusively to members of the princely class and only later probably to other segments of society. Babylonian physiognomy aims predominantly to divine a man's future; while Indian physiognomy addresses his future in terms of his length of life and socio-economic status, it also includes his present character, a feature that might rely on influences from ancient Greek physiognomics. The female apodoses, on the other hand, express essentially the same purpose in both Mesopotamia and western India.

## Summary and conclusions

Both Babylonian and Indian physiognomic omens have common characteristics that include both structure and content, which in most cases likely look to the Akkadian versions for their original inspiration. Over time, parts of these omen series appear to have been transmitted through the *lingua franca* of ancient north-western and western India and eventually became translated into and preserved in the priestly literature of Sanskrit. The points of similarity between these two systems of thought are significant and indicate a process of intellectual transmission between the two cultures in antiquity. None of the material thus far examined permits us to trace precisely when and how the exchange of information might have taken place, so, until further evidence comes to light, we can but offer informed speculations.

### What we know

1. Akkadian cuneiform tablets containing physiognomic omens occurred at least from the 11th century BCE, with concrete textual evidence from 7th century BCE, where the sources were the libraries of the king Assurbanipal in ancient Nineveh and in Aššur.

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<sup>51</sup> Zysk 2018b.

2. Sanskrit and Prakrit physiognomic omens began to appear in India from the beginning of the Era, with remarkable text similarity from the 8th cent.

The gap in time of between the written records from each culture is rather large with nothing to show for the interval of nearly 500 years, during which there is scant evidence of direct trade or military encounters between the two cultures.

It is difficult to see that such an intellectual encounter could have taken place before the 11th century BCE, when the *āšipu*, *Esagil-kin-apli*, lived. It would seem most likely to have taken place after the Neo-Assyrian period (i.e., 7th century BCE), when we find the first textual evidence. These dates essentially exclude the possibility that an intellectual exchange happened when the Indus Valley people were engaging in trade with the ancient Near East. Even though the trade with Gujarat continued into the Late Harappan Period (19/1800–1300 BCE), by 1000 BCE sea trade between India and Mesopotamia had all but ceased.<sup>52</sup> Moreover, we still do not possess a deciphered understanding of the written documents from Indus Valley sites.

On the other hand, we know that the royal libraries of Nineveh were destroyed and burned by invading Babylonians and Medes in 612 BCE, which marked the end of the Neo-Assyrian period. According to Fincke, these great repositories of Mesopotamian science and knowledge were likely looted before they were destroyed.<sup>53</sup> In this way, some of the tablets from the library could have made it out, but we do not have indications where they might have ended up. However, if we consider for a moment that, according to Eleanor Robson, the profession of the *āšipu* or *mašmaššu* or exorcist was mentioned in the cuneiform documents in late 2nd century Uruk,<sup>54</sup> we might well presume that this knowledge in the form, among others, of physiognomic as well as diagnostic and prognostic omens also survived through the Parthian Empire (150 BCE–270 CE), which ruled as far east as western India, including the intellectual centre of Taxila.

Although the evidence is meagre, we know that Babylonian omens and oracles reached the Hittite libraries in the capital Ḫattuša (modern Boghazköy) in ancient Anatolia during the Middle Kingdom (c. 1500–c. 1300 BCE). Among the Babylonian material discovered there were birth omens, liver omens, and *tīrānu* oracles with Hittite translations, which came directly from Mesopotamia. In the Empire Period (c. 1380–c. 1191 BCE), other texts on divination and medicine, as well as incantations also derived from Mesopotamia, so that there was a direct intellectual contact between Ḫattuša and Mesopotamia from about 1350 BCE.<sup>55</sup> The occurrence of Babylonian omen literature in Indo-European speaking Hittite libraries indicates

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<sup>52</sup> On the dating and connections between Mesopotamia and the Indus Civilisation, see, in particular, McIntosh 2008, Maekawa and Mori 2011, 249–78; and A. Parpola 2011, 279–378.

<sup>53</sup> Fincke 2003/2004, 112, 114–15; cf. Reade 1986, 219–220.

<sup>54</sup> Robson 2011, 2, 16.

<sup>55</sup> Beckman 1983, 99–102, 112.



that such knowledge was not confined to Mesopotamia, but, in fact, travelled out to other cultures and peoples. The Hittites made some of the first translations into an Indo-European language of *tīrānū* or oracles about the twists, which pertained to the coils of the colon but as a general group of omens included the curls of the hairs of the head. These omens have equivalents in Indian Prakrit (*āvatta*) and Sanskrit (*āvarta*). In this specific connection, it should be interesting to know how the Hittite's translated the Akkadian word.

Based on his examination of Mesopotamian and Indian omens, David Pingree suggested that an intellectual exchange could have taken place by way of land conquest rather than trade when the Achaemenids between 538–331 BCE controlled Gandhāra in north western India and the Indus Valley [modern Pakistan, Baluchistan and Afghanistan].<sup>56</sup> Harry Falk's reservations about Pingree's claim of India's indebtedness to Mesopotamian science concerning the water clock and gnomon notwithstanding, Pingree has also pointed to similarities between Mesopotamian and Indian science.<sup>57</sup> In a general way, he has indicated similarities between certain omens series. These include the *Ālu ina mēlê šakin* and the *Enūma Anu Enlil* which, like the *Alamdimmū* and other physiognomic omen series, were part of the "Exorcist's Handbook," and found in Assurbanipal's library, and the omens present in the Pāli text of the Buddhist's *Brahmajāla Sutta* from the early centuries BCE. He also noticed resemblances between the Akkadian omens and the Indian omens to Venus in the *Gārgīyajyotiṣa*. The lack of a paper-trail from Mesopotamia to western India currently prevents us from being more precise about the when and the how of the transmission, but the most probable scenarios seem to favour the Achaemenid or even Parthian period, when there was contact with Mesopotamian and western Indian via the intermediary of foreign invaders. We can only hope that further investigation will begin to clarify this fascinating story of intellectual exchange in antiquity.

## List of abbreviations (references in Zysk, 2016)

BhvP	<i>Bhaviṣyapurāṇa</i>
BS	<i>Bṛhatsaṃhitā</i>
Garga	<i>Gārgīyajyotiṣa</i>
Mayrhofer Wb	Mayrhofer, Manfred. <i>Kurzgefasstes etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindischen</i> . 3 vols. Heidelberg: Carl Winter, Universitätsverlag, 1956–1976.

<sup>56</sup> Pingree 1992, 376.

<sup>57</sup> Falk 2000, 107–32

MW	Monier-Williams, <i>Sanskrit-English Dictionary</i>
ŚkāK	Śārdūlakarṇāvadāna, Kanyākakṣana
SPK	Skandapurāṇa, Kāśīkhaṇḍa

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### 3 *Umṣatu* in omen and medical texts: An overview

**Abstract:** The aim of the present study is to analyse the different types of texts in which the Assyro-Babylonian word *umṣatu* is attested. It probably denotes a skin mark and/or lesion, generally occurring on different parts of the body (of men, women, and sometimes also newborn children). This term is present not only in omen texts (physiognomic, teratologic, and terrestrial), but also in medical texts (both diagnostic and therapeutic). By analysing them, the present article will propose a more detailed interpretation of the word, so as to obtain a clearer idea of the type of skin problem indicated by *umṣatu*.

**Keywords:** *umṣatu*, skin mark/lesion, omens, medical texts

## Introduction

The word *umṣatu*<sup>1</sup> probably indicates a skin mark and/or lesion, commonly appearing on adults (both male and female) and sometimes also on newborn children. It occurs especially in *omina* (in particular those belonging to the physiognomic type), and in a few cases also in medical texts (both diagnostic and therapeutic). Its translation – as for other skin issues<sup>2</sup> – has always been problematic. Modern scholars have proposed many widely differing interpretations, such as those of H. Holma<sup>3</sup> and E. Ebeling<sup>4</sup> who translated *umṣatu* as “Brandmal” (Eng. brand) and “Aussatz” (Eng. leprosy) respectively, or those of P.B. Adamson<sup>5</sup> (*pigmented naevus*), and J. Scurlock and B.R. Andersen,<sup>6</sup> and also Geller<sup>7</sup> (“haemorrhoids”).

The aim of the present article is to examine the different kinds of texts in which *umṣatu* is attested, in order to offer a more detailed analysis of the term. The examples and charts given – based on the most recent text editions – will help to record some of the characteristics of this mark/lesion, especially those related to the body parts on

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1 CAD U/W, 135; AHw, 1418.

2 See, for example, the article by Geller “Skin Disease and the Doctor” (JMC 15, 2010).

3 Holma 1913, 6.

4 Ebeling 1928–1932, 321.

5 Adamson 1984, 8.

6 Scurlock/Andersen 2005, 148–150, 152, 207, 230, 241.

7 Geller 2005. In his article “Nieren-, Darm- und Afterkrankheiten”, however, he translates it as “Geschwür” (Geller 2010, 67).

which it might appear, in an attempt to gain a better understanding of the kind of skin problems that *umṣatu* might refer to.

## Umṣatu in omina

For the Assyro-Babylonians, the act of divination was fundamental;<sup>8</sup> thanks to its arts, professionals (the intermediaries between gods and mankind)<sup>9</sup> were able to read, decipher, and interpret the coded messages (or signs)<sup>10</sup> left both in the sky and on earth<sup>11</sup> by deities. Divination was divided into many disciplines, which dealt with very different phenomena.<sup>12</sup>

The word *umṣatu* is found especially in omens related to a man's appearance, and sometimes in those concerning unusual births and common occurrences of daily life, as explained in the following paragraphs.

## Physiognomic omina

The most ancient examples of omens relating to *umṣatu* date from the beginning of the 2nd millennium BC, and consist of four physiognomic tablets – Si 33 (TBP 62), YBC 4646 (YOS 10 54), YBC 5074 and VAT 7525 (YOS 10 55).<sup>13</sup> According to these texts, *umṣatu* might be observed all over the body, or in particular on some of its parts, as the following lines show:

- (1) DÍŠ LÚ SAMAG-*tim ma-li i-na da-an-na-tim [a-ka-lam ik-kal]*  
DÍŠ LÚ SAMAG-*tim šu-tu-qá-tim ma-li la tú-ub li-ib-bi*

‘If a man is covered with *umṣatus*, he will have bread to eat in a famine.  
If a man is covered with deeply-cut *umṣatus*, unhappiness.’<sup>14</sup>

<sup>8</sup> See, for instance, Noegel 2010, 147.

<sup>9</sup> See, for example, Lambert 1957, 1–14 and Lenzi 2008, 57.

<sup>10</sup> See Lenzi 2008, 67 and Koch 2005.

<sup>11</sup> The following passage from the “Diviner’s Manual” is famous: “The signs on earth just as those in the sky give us signals. Sky and earth both produce portents though appearing separately, they are not separate (because) sky and earth are related. A sign that portends evil in the sky is (also) evil on earth, one that portends evil on earth is evil in the sky” (Oppenheim 1974, 204, ll. 38–42).

<sup>12</sup> For a classification of the arts of Mesopotamian divination, see Maul 2003, and Rochberg 1999.

<sup>13</sup> See the recent translation by Böck (2000, 296–305), and also Bottéro (1984, 174–176), Köcher/Oppenheim (1957–58, 63–67).

<sup>14</sup> See Böck 2000, 301–303, ll. 2–3, and Köcher/Oppenheim 1957–58, 66, ll. 11–12.

- (2) BE SAMAG *i-na ap-pi-i-šú GAR qá-bi le-mu-tim ir-ta-na-a-a[d-di-šu]*

‘If an *umšatu* is located on his nose, bad speech will continually pursue him.’<sup>15</sup>

- (3) [i-n]a tu-li [Ú.GÍ]R šu-me-lam KI DINGIR šu-uk-lu<sub>4</sub>-ul  
[i]-na tu-li [Ú.GÍ]R e-mi-tam KI DINGIR-šú sà-ki-ip

‘An *umšatu* on the breast, left: he is perfect with (his) god.  
An *umšatu* on the breast, right: he is rejected by his god’<sup>16</sup>

The majority of textual material from physiognomic omens featuring *umšatu*, however, dates to the 1st millennium BC,<sup>17</sup> and belongs to the series known from its incipit as *Šumma alamdimmû* “If the form”,<sup>18</sup> which is devoted to the analysis of a person’s appearance. Probably composed of 27 tablets and divided into 5 parts,<sup>19</sup> it seems to have been rearranged and edited during the 11th century BC by Esagil-kīn-apli,<sup>20</sup> who ordered the material according to the principle “from head to foot” (*ištu muḥḥi adi šēpi*).<sup>21</sup> *Omina* concerning *umšatu* are present in various sections of the series, often in sequences listing cases related to different kinds of marks and lesions.

In the following examples from the 1st subseries, *omina* concern the life and death, wealth and poverty of a man who has *umšatu* on his face:

- (4) DIŠ ḥa-li-e MIN ina tū-ub LA-šú UG<sub>7</sub>,  
DIŠ MIN pu-ul-lu-šú NA BI NÍG.TUKU-šú ÚKU-in  
DIŠ kīt-ta-bru MIN É NU DÛ ḤUL ina É AD-šú ZĀḤ  
DIŠ um-ša-ti MIN NÍG.TUKU.MEŠ IBILA za-kir MU TUKU-ši

<sup>15</sup> See Böck 2000, 297, l. 14, and Bottéro 1974, 174, l. 14.

<sup>16</sup> Böck 2000, 303, ll. 9–10, and 2010, 205. See also Böck 1999, 61.

<sup>17</sup> The majority of such texts come from the renowned libraries of Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal at Nineveh. Other copies have been found at Assur, Nimrud, Sultantepe, Babylon, Sippar, Kiš, Uruk and Ur (see Böck 2000, 7–9, and 2010, 200).

<sup>18</sup> The edition of the complete standard series has been published by Böck (2000). In general see, among others, Böck 2010, Heeßel 2010a and Koch 2015.

<sup>19</sup> The first part (*šumma alamdimmû*) describes signs occurring on the whole body. While the second and third subseries (*šumma nigdimdimmû* and *šumma kataduggû*) are devoted to omens regarding a man’s behaviour and speech, respectively, the fourth (*šumma sinništu qaqqada rabât*) considers omens related to features occurring on a woman’s body. The fifth and last part (*šumma liptu*) examines marks, moles, warts and the like appearing all over the body.

<sup>20</sup> He was the *āšipu* of the Babylonian king Adad-apla-iddina (1068–1047 BC). See Finkel 1988, Böck 2000, Heeßel 2000, 104 and 2010a, 140, Rutz 2011.

<sup>21</sup> He applied this schema – already used in the Sumerian list UGU.MU – to medical texts for the first time, as he emphasizes in his *Catalogue* while explaining the new edition he made of both *šumma alamdimmû* and SA.GIG (see Heeßel 2000, 109).

‘If DITTO (=his face is full of) *ḫalûs*, he will die in the prime of his life.

If DITTO (=his face) is pierced with (*ḫalûs*), this man will become poor despite his wealth.

If DITTO (=his face is full of) *kittabrus*, he will not build a house (and) evil will disappear from the house of his father.

If DITTO (=his face is full of) *umṣatus*, he will obtain riches, (and) a heir who will invoke (his) name.’<sup>22</sup>

- (5) DIŠ *ina* UGU *pa-ni-šú* ZAG *um-ša-tum* DINGIR-*ni* LÚ.BI ÚKU  
DIŠ GÛB MIN NA.BI SIG<sub>5</sub> IGI : U<sub>4</sub>.MEŠ-šú *qer-bu*

‘If on the upper part of his face, on the right, (there is) an *umṣatu*, he is blessed by a god, this man will be poor.

If DITTO (=on the upper part of his face), on the left, (there is an *umṣatu*), this man will see good things; *var.* his days will be near.’<sup>23</sup>

In the subseries *šumma sinništu qaqqada rabât* – which contains omens concerning the bodies of women – there are also cases related to *umṣatu*. In the following lines, for instance, its presence is observed on the ears, the navel, and the nipples:

- (6) DIŠ GEŠTUG 15-šá SAMAG SA<sub>5</sub> GAR-*at* *muš-te-na-at mu-sap-pi-<ḫa>-at*  
DIŠ 150 MIN *muš-te-na-at [ta]-ar-ša-at*  
DIŠ GEŠTUG 15-šá SAMAG SIG<sub>7</sub> GAR-*at* *muš-te-na-at u mu-sap-<pi>-ḫat*  
DIŠ GÛB MIN *bi-šit* GEŠTUG-šá ZÁḪ

‘If her right ear has a red/brown *umṣatu*: she is nubile, (but) she is wasteful.

If her left DITTO (=ear has a red/brown *umṣatu*): she is nubile, she is honest.

If her right ear has a yellow/green *umṣatu*: she is nubile, but she is wasteful.

If her left DITTO (=ear has a yellow/green) *umṣatu*: she will lose her focus of attention.’<sup>24</sup>

- (7) DIŠ SAMAG BABBAR GAR-*at* MÍ.BI GISKIM-šú *lem-ne-et*  
DIŠ SAMAG GE<sub>6</sub> GAR-*at* MIN SIG<sub>5</sub>-*at*

‘If (a woman) has a white *umṣatu* (on her navel), as for this woman, her omen is bad.

If (a woman) has a black *umṣatu* (on her navel), DITTO (= as for this woman, her omen) is good.’<sup>25</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Böck 2000, 109, ll. 8–11.

<sup>23</sup> Böck 2000, 115, ll. 111–112.

<sup>24</sup> Böck 2000, 153, ll. 4–7, and 2010, 206. She renders the last line as “sie wird unaufmerksam sein”.

<sup>25</sup> Böck 2000, 165, ll. 197–198.

## (8) DIŠ SAMAG.MEŠ DIRI [NU MIN?]

‘If *umṣatus* fully cover (her nipples), [DITTO (= she is barren)].’<sup>26</sup>

In the 5th and last subseries – entitled *Šumma liptu* “If a spot (on the skin)” and devoted to the observation of marks, moles, warts, and lesions appearing all over the human body – there is one entire chapter (*Šumma umṣatu* “If an *umṣatu*”), unfortunately not completely preserved, dedicated to the examination of this particular mark/lesion. Its presence is attested in different areas of the body, but especially on the head; indeed, it is worth noting that 95 of the tablet’s 156 entries concern signs occurring there.<sup>27</sup>

(9) [DIŠ S]AMAG *ina* SAG.DU LÚ ZAG GAR ḪUL ŠÀ GIG *di-ḫu ana* IGI-šú GAR KIMIN *du-us-su* KAR-ir

DIŠ GÛB : MURUB<sub>4</sub> SAG.DU GAR *ki-lum* GIG *iš-šar-rak-šú*

DIŠ SAG.DU-*su ma-la-a* ḪUL GIG *uḫ-tam-maṭ-su ma-la-a* ÍL.MEŠ

‘[If *u*]*mṣatu* is located on the right side of a man’s head: before him will lie destruction of the heart, sickness, and *di’u*-illness; *var.* his potency will be taken away.

If (*umṣatu* is located) on the left side, *var.* in the middle (of a man’s head): painful imprisonment will be given to him.

If his head is full (of *umṣatus*), hate will continually make him restless, he will continually wear dishevelled hair (as if in mourning).’<sup>28</sup>

The head is analysed not only as a whole, but also in its various parts, such as the forehead, the back of the head (occiput?), hair, eyes, nose, mouth, lips, tongue, etc. Some examples follow:

(10) [DIŠ *ina*] SAG SAG.KI-šú GAR *šá ú-ša-am-mar* KUR-ád

[DIŠ *ina*] SAG.KI ZAG GAR <sup>mi</sup>KALA.GA DAB-*su qa-lal* LÚ

[DIŠ *ina* SAG].KI GÛB <sup>mi</sup>KALA.GA EN INIM-šú DAB-*bat* [...] x IGI

‘[If (*umṣatu*)] is located [on] the upper part of his forehead: he will achieve what he has been striving for.

[If (*umṣatu*)] is located [on] the right side of the forehead: he will be seized by hard times. Disrepute of the man.

<sup>26</sup> Böck 2000, 163, l. 170, and 2010, 203.

<sup>27</sup> On the importance of the head in medical texts in general, and in SA.GIG in particular – the diagnostic series generally listed together with *Šumma alamdimmū* – see Heeßel 2010c, 45–46, and 2004, 103.

<sup>28</sup> Böck 2000, 185, ll. 1–3, and 2010, 209. For parallels, see VAT 11982, published by Heeßel (2007, 124, Text no. 52).



[If (*umṣatu*)] is located [on] the left side [of the fore]head: hard times will seize his adversary [...].<sup>29</sup>

- (11) [DIŠ *ina* KI.T]A IGI 15 GAR DUMU.MEŠ-šú DINGIR NU [TUKU.ME]Š  
DIŠ *ina* KI.TA IGI 150 GAR DUMU.MEŠ-šú DINGIR T[UKU.M]EŠ

‘[If (*umṣatu*)] is located [belo]w his right eye, his sons [will not hav]e a god.  
If (*umṣatu*) is located below his left eye, his sons wil[l hav]e a god.’<sup>30</sup>

- (12) DIŠ *ina* UGU EME 15 GAR *ina* ŠUB KA DAB-*bat*  
(...)

DIŠ *ina* KI.TA EME 150 GAR *i-tam-ma-ma* DINGIR NU DIB-*su*

‘If (*umṣatu*) is located on the surface of his tongue on the right side, he will be overwhelmed by blasphemy.

(...)

If (*umṣatu*) is located below his tongue, he will swear and a god will not seize him.’<sup>31</sup>

After the section devoted to the head, the chapter – unfortunately very fragmentary in this part – examines cases in which *umṣatu* occurs on other areas of the human body, such as the region of the clavicles, the navel, the belly, and so on. In the following lines, for instance, it appears on specific areas of the feet:

- (13) DIŠ *ki-ša-al-la-šu* DIRI.MEŠ *me-si-ir* N[Á DAB-*su*]  
DIŠ *ina a-si-id* ĞİR ZAG GAR *a-da-an da-ma-qí-šú* KI<sup>d</sup>UTU *úḫ-ḫur* : *ap-pu-ti piš-ti*

‘If (*umṣatus*) fully cover his ankles, he will be confined to bed.

If (*umṣatu*) is located on the heel of his right foot, the time of his health will be delayed by Šamaš, *var.* difficult situation, insult.’<sup>32</sup>

## Other kinds of *omina*

Apart from the physiognomic omens, some occurrences of *umṣatu* may be found in other types of *omina*, for instance in *Šumma izbu*<sup>33</sup> “If an *izbu*”,<sup>34</sup> devoted to the

<sup>29</sup> Böck 2000, 185, ll. 11–13.

<sup>30</sup> Böck 2000, 187, ll. 31–32.

<sup>31</sup> Böck 2000, 189, ll. 70 and 73, and 2010, 202.

<sup>32</sup> Böck 2000, 193, ll. 146–147, and 2010, 202.

<sup>33</sup> See De Zorzi 2014 and Leichty 1970.

<sup>34</sup> The term identifies the “malformed newborn human or animal” (CAD I/J, 371). Cf. also AHw, 408 (“Missgeburt”).

observation of unusual births and malformations in human and animal fetuses. The standard edition of the teratologic series – found in the library of the Neo-Assyrian king Assurbanipal (7th century BC) – is composed of 24 tablets, and divided into 4 parts.<sup>35</sup> In the first part, which is dedicated to the malformations of children, there is an omen relating to the presence of *umšatu* all over the body of a newborn baby:

(14) [BE SAL Û.TU-*ma* KIMIN-*ma*] *um-ša-tú* DIRI É BI ÚKU

‘[If a woman gives birth and DITTO (= at birth) (the child)] is full of *umšatus*, that house will become poor.’<sup>36</sup>

A case of people affected by *umšatu* is attested also in the terrestrial omen series *Šumma ālu ina mēlê šakīn* “If a city is set on a height”,<sup>37</sup> which deals with many aspects relating to ancient Mesopotamians’ daily lives, and more precisely in a list of omens regarding various types of skin lesions and diseases:

(15) [DIŠ *ina*/TA É] LÚ *ša* NIR.DA SA<sub>5</sub> GÁL-*ši e-neš* É LÚ

[DIŠ KI.MIN] *ša* SAḪAR.ŠUB.BA SA<sub>5</sub> GÁL-*ši* KI.MIN

[DIŠ KI.MIN] *aš um-ša-ti* SA<sub>5</sub> GÁL-*ši* KI.MIN

[DIŠ KI.MIN] *ša a-ga-nu-ti- $\langle$ la $\rangle$*  SA<sub>5</sub> GÁL-*ši* KI.MIN

‘[If, in] a man’s [house], there is someone full of “punishment”,<sup>38</sup> weakening of the man’s house.

[If, DITTO], there is someone full of the *saḫaršubbû*-disease, DITTO.

[If, DITTO], there is someone full of *umšatu*, DITTO.

[If, DITTO], there is someone full of *aganutillu*, DITTO.’<sup>39</sup>

<sup>35</sup> The first part (tablets 1–4) contains *omina* concerning malformations of newborn children. The second (tablet no. 5) is dedicated to newborn sheep that resemble lions. The third (tablets 6–17) and the fourth parts (tablets 18–24) are devoted to the malformations of sheep, and on malformations, appearance and behaviour of animals, respectively (see De Zorzi 2014, 38–41; Leichty 1970, 2–7).

<sup>36</sup> De Zorzi 2014, 441, Tab. IV, l. 2, and Leichty 1970, 66, Tab. IV, l. 2. The protasis has a parallel in MDP 57, 9: 5.

<sup>37</sup> The series – standardized during the 7th century BC – is composed of 107 tablets that deal with an extensive range of subjects, which “gives the series almost the scope of an encyclopaedia of the physical surroundings and common occurrences of daily life in ancient Mesopotamia” (Freedman 1998, 2). See also HeeBel 2007.

<sup>38</sup> The Sumerogram NIR.DA has been read by CAD N/2: 174 as *nerdû* “sin”, and Š/2: 324 as *šertu* “punishment”. Freedman (1998, 309, l. 20) translates it as “divine punishment”.

<sup>39</sup> See Freedman 1998, 310–311, ll. 20–23, and HeeBel 2007, 24–26. ll. 11’–14’. It is important to note that Freedman’s interpretation (1998, 310–311, l. 22) *ša kiššati* has been corrected to *ša umšati* – based on VAT 9900+VAT 11322 – by HeeBel (2007, 25–26, l. 13’).

So as to give a more complete overview of the omen texts considered above,<sup>40</sup> the following chart lists some specific aspects concerning *umṣatu*, like the area of the body (of men, women, or babies) on which it might be observed, and, when recorded, the colours<sup>41</sup> which it might take on:

Tab. 1

Text	Lines	Body's area	Man	Woman	Child	Colour
YOS 10 54	1–3 (fragmentary)	Back of the head (occiput?)	x			
	4–6	Forehead	x			
	7–13	Eyes region	x			
	14	Nose	x			
	15–16	Eyes region	x			
	17–18	Cheek	x			
	19	Nose	x			
	20–21	Cheek	x			
	22–27	Tongue	x			
	28–30	Chin	x			
	31–?	Neck	x			
	?–49	Hands	x			
	50–51	Genitalia	x			
	52–55	Penis, testicles	x			
	56	Thigh	x			
	57	Anus	x			
	58–59	Thigh	x			
	60–61	(Lower) abdomen	x			
	62–63	Thigh	x			
	64–67	Shin	x			
	68–69	Feet	x			
	70–71?	Ankle	x			
	75–77?	Ears	x			

<sup>40</sup> It is worth noting that *umṣatu* is also considered as a mark in extispicy (see Koch 2005, 104, Tab. 1, l. 109).

<sup>41</sup> On colours in Mesopotamia, see in particular Landsberger 1967, and among others Verderame 2004. Furthermore, for an interesting observation about colours from an ethno-linguistic perspective, see Cardona 2006, 97–103.

(continued)

Text	Lines	Body's area	Man	Woman	Child	Colour
YOS 10 55	2–5	Body (in general)	x			
TBP 62	9–12	Breast	x			
	13–24	Arms region	x			
	25–26	Ribs	x			
	27–30?	(Lower) abdomen	x			
	31–32	Glans	x			
	33–34	Thigh	x			
	35–36	?	x			
	37–38	Legs region	x			
	39–40	Groin	x			
	41–48 (fragmentary)	?	x			
<i>Šumma alamdimmû</i>	<i>Šumma alamdimmû V</i>	31 (fragmentary)	Nose	x		
		11	Face	x		
		111–112	Face	x		
		142–143	Face	x		
	<i>Šumma alamdimmû X</i>	95–96 (fragmentary)	Glans	x		
		101 (fragmentary)	Penis	x		
		3–9	Ears		x	
		150	Shoulder blade (scapula)		x	
		151	Hips/waist		x	
		170	Nipples		x	
	182–183	Hypogastric region		x		
	197–200	Navel		x		white; black; red/brown

(Continued)

Text	Lines	Body's area	Man	Woman	Child	Colour
	252	The whole body		x		
<i>Šumma sinništu qaqqada rabât V</i>	14 (fragmentary)	?		x		
	15–16 (fragmentary)	Genitalia		x		
<i>Šumma liptu – Šumma umšatu</i>	1–3	Head	x			
	4–5	Hair	x			
	6–10	Back of the head (occiput?)	x			
	11–?	Forehead	x			
	30?–40?	Eyes	x			
	41–59	Nose (and its parts)	x			
	60–68	Mouth?	x			
	69–83	Tongue	x			
	84–95	Lips	x			
	96–98	Clavicles	x			
	99–?	Neck	x			
	?–126	Navel	x			
	127–?	Hypogastric region	x			
	?–138?	Penis, testicles	x			
	?–146	Ankle	x			
	147–156	Feet (and its parts)	x			
<i>Šumma izbu</i>	IV	2	Body (in general)		x	
<i>Šumma ālu</i>	XXI	22	Body (in general)	x		

<sup>a</sup> While AHW 964 interprets it as “Viereck; Unterleib”, CAD R 321 does not offer a definite translation (“a part of the body”).

The contents of this chart together with the examples discussed above demonstrate that *umšatu* might be present on almost every part of the human body, of both

male and female adults, and in one case of a newborn child. It is mostly attested on the head – especially of men – and in the genital region of both men and women. In a few cases the colour which it might acquire is also described: on a woman’s ears it may be red/brown or yellow/green, and on a woman’s navel white, black or red/brown. In the texts examined above it does not seem to have particular characteristics, except in the Old Babylonian text TBP 62 (ll. 3–5), where it is specified that it is “deeply cut” and “moist”. Otherwise, only the place where it occurs is specified – left, right, on both sides, and so on – focusing on the decipherment of the messages left by the gods. As a matter of fact, divination “is certainly a practical means of obtaining otherwise inaccessible information perceived by its users as coming from supernatural or superhuman forces”.<sup>42</sup> In particular, the human body, which was created from clay, the same material as writing tablets, was believed to be a clay tablet itself, on which divinities could write positive or negative signs<sup>43</sup> that referred to the individual’s future or present. Thus it is not surprising that we don’t have descriptions of *umṣatu* per se, but rather information about its presence on the body.

## Umṣatu in medical texts

The whole corpus of Assyro-Babylonian medical texts can be divided into three main categories: diagnostic, pharmaceutical, and therapeutic. The first group offers brief descriptions of symptoms followed by the diagnosis – which gives either the name of the disease or, in some cases, the aetiology – and sometimes by a prognosis, while the second group deals with information about plants, stones and minerals, and their curative effects. The third category mostly offers different kinds of prescriptions for curing the patient, in some cases followed by prayers, incantations, and/or instructions for ceremonial rituals.

A few cases regarding *umṣatu* are attested in both diagnostic and therapeutic texts, as explained in the following paragraphs.

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<sup>42</sup> Koch 2015, 3.

<sup>43</sup> See, for example, Bahrani 2008, 74.

## Diagnostic texts

The word *umṣatu* is also present in SA.GIG<sup>44</sup> “Symptoms”,<sup>45</sup> the diagnostic series probably reorganized and edited by Esagil-kin-apli, also the author of *Šumma alamdimmû*.<sup>46</sup> The series – composed of 40 tablets, and divided into 6 parts – deals with diagnoses and prognoses assigned according to symptoms observed on the human body.

The first example relating to *umṣatu* is on tablet no. 33,<sup>47</sup> and concerns the diagnosis of *nipištu*, probably a skin lesion or disease<sup>48</sup>:

(16) DIŠ GIG GAR-šú GIM *um-me-di u* DIŠ È-su SAMAG DAB-bat *ni-piš-tum* MU.NI

‘If the nature of the illness is like *ummedu*, and if *umṣatu* seizes its exit, its name is *nipištu*.’<sup>49</sup>

The other example is from tablet no. 36, dealing with pregnant women:

(17) DIŠ SAMAG.MEŠ BABBAR.MEŠ DIRI SI.SÁ PEŠ<sub>4</sub>-át  
DIŠ SAMAG.MEŠ SA<sub>5</sub>.MEŠ DIRI NU SI.SÁ PEŠ<sub>4</sub>-át  
DIŠ SAMAG.MEŠ GI<sub>6</sub>.MEŠ DIRI NITA PEŠ<sub>4</sub>-át

‘If it (=the tip of a woman’s breast) is fully covered with white *umṣatus*, the delivery will be easy.

If it is fully covered with red/brown *umṣatus*, the delivery will not be easy.

If it is fully covered with black *umṣatus*, she is pregnant with a male child.’<sup>50</sup>

<sup>44</sup> The first subseries (*enūma ana bīt marši āšipu illaku*) interprets the signs that could be observed by the *āšipu* while going to the house of the patient. The second (*ana marši ina teḥêka*) concerns symptoms appearing on the body. The third and the fourth subseries (*šumma ūm ištēn marišma šikin lipti* and *šumma miqtu imqussuma sakikkī*) are respectively devoted to the duration of illnesses and their symptoms, and to cases of epilepsy, while the fifth subseries (*šumma šētu imḥussuma*) concerns the symptoms related to *šētu*. The last part (*šumma ālittu arātma*) deals with pregnant women and newborn children. See, in particular, Labat 1951, Stol 1993, Heeßel 2000, 19; 2010a, 16, Scurlock/Andersen 2005, 575–677, Attinger 2008, 33, and Koch 2015, 279.

<sup>45</sup> The meaning of SA.GIG (or *sakikkū*) has been interpreted in many ways by modern scholars. For an in-depth analysis, see in particular Heeßel 2000, 95–96, and Böck 2014, 27. Scholars have been debating for decades whether SA.GIG belongs to medical or divinatory texts. See, for instance, Stol 1991–1992, 49, Heeßel 2000, 3, Böck 2000, 3, n. 22, who propose that the diagnostic series should not be considered as an omen series, but rather as a “diagnostic handbook”, and Koch (2015, 274), who states that it belongs to the omen literature, because the procedure followed by *āšipus* was perceived as divinatory.

<sup>46</sup> See the paragraph above on physiognomic omens.

<sup>47</sup> This is the only SA.GIG tablet that names the diseases following the schema “If the nature of the illness is so and so, then its name is so and so” (see Heeßel 2000, 34).

<sup>48</sup> CAD N/2 247, AHW 778. See also Scurlock/Andersen 2005, 241.

<sup>49</sup> Heeßel 2000, 354, l. 17, Scurlock/Andersen 2005, 241, no. 10.182, Scurlock 2014, 236, l. 17.

<sup>50</sup> Adamson 1984, 15, n. 43, Scurlock/Andersen 2005, 230, nn. 10.120 and 10.121, Scurlock 2014, 249, ll. 33–35.

While in the latter example the only characteristic concerning *umṣatu* is the colour which it may acquire, in the former – describing an illness (*nipištu*) associated with abscesses or boils (*ummedu*)<sup>51</sup> – it is used to indicate something that “seizes its exit”, probably the anus.

## Therapeutic texts

The word *umṣatu* can also be found in therapeutic texts,<sup>52</sup> which offer different kinds of recipes (that is, directions for the preparation of drugs and the application of medications) useful for curing the patient, especially those related to diseases occurring close to the anus.<sup>53</sup> It may appear alone or together with other terms, such as *uršu*,<sup>54</sup> a lesion projecting from the anus area.

Some examples follow:

- (18) DIŠ NA KA DÚR-šú MÚ.MÚ-ḥu ú-na-paq qer-bé-nu GIG *um-ša-tu*<sub>4</sub> ILLU  
[...] ILLU LI.DUR NUMUN <sup>ú</sup>*ak-tam* ŠE<sub>10</sub> UR.GI<sub>7</sub> SUḤUŠ <sup>giš</sup>NAM.TAL NÍTA <sup>ú</sup>KUR.  
RA<sup>sar</sup>  
(...)

‘If as for a man the opening of his anus is bloated and blocked, (his) inside is ill: *umṣatu*. Resin of [...], resin of *abukkatu*, seed of *aktam*, dog excrement, root of male *pillû*, *ninû*, (...).’ (AMT 47,1 + duplicates)<sup>55</sup>

- (19) DIŠ NA *ur-šu dan-nu* KÁ MUD-šú DAB-*ma* KÁ MUD ÚŠ-ḥi NUMUN <sup>giš</sup>G[L.  
ZÚ.LUM.MA] šá UGU NINDU [...] NAGA.SI <sup>ú</sup>KUR.RA DIŠ-*niš* SÚD *ina* Ì.UDU  
ÉLLAG UDU.NÍTA ḤE.ḤE *a*[*la-nu DÛ-uš*] *ana* DÚR-šú G[AR-*an*] *a-na ur-še* GAZ  
*um-ša-a-ti qut-tu-pi* KÁ MUD-šú *mu-uš-[ši ...]* ÚKUŠ.ḤAB GE<sub>6</sub> [...] <sup>ú</sup>KUR.RA *saḥ-*  
*lu-u* Ú BABBAR U<sub>5</sub>.GAR.IB<sup>mušen</sup> MUN.KÛ.PAD DIŠ-*niš* GAZ S[IM ...] *ana* DÚR-šú  
GAR-*an*  
DIŠ NA DÚR-šú *ḥa-niq-ma* DÚR-šú *ur-še u um-ša-a-ti* DIRI *ana* TI-šú <sup>ú</sup>KUR.[R]A  
<sup>šim</sup>LI <sup>šim</sup>GIG <sup>ú</sup>NA[M.T]I.LA *mal-m[a-liš* DIŠ-*niš* SÚD] *ina* Ì.UDU *u* ILLU <sup>šim</sup>BULUḤ  
ḤE.ḤE *u* DÛ-uš *ana* DÚR-šú GAR-*an-ma* TI

51 CAD U/W 119, AHw 1416.

52 Although we are not well informed about their composition, we know that there are some collections of medical prescriptions devoted to specific parts of the human body and to different symptoms, such as those dealing with the head, and the *kis libbi* disease. In general, see Heeßel 2010b, 31–35.

53 For an in-depth study of the question, see especially Geller 2005; 2010.

54 CAD U/W 252. See, for instance, Scurlock/Andersen 2005, 230–231.

55 Geller 2005, 155, no. 24 iv 1’–3’.



‘If as for a man *uršu* seizes the opening of his anus, so that the opening to his anus is blocked: you pound together *kūru*-seed, which is over the oven, [...], horned alkali (salicornia?), (and) *nīnū*, mix (them) in fat from the kidney of a male sheep, make a suppository, and insert it into his anus. In order to break the *uršu*, (and) to cut off the *umṣatu*, (and) to spread out the opening of his anus, you pound and sieve together [...], black cucumber, [...], *nīnū*, *saḥlū*, ‘white’-plant, bat guano, (and) block-salt, [... (and)] insert it into his anus.

If as for a man his anus is constricted, and his anus is full of *uršus* and *umṣatus*, to cure him you pound together in equal measures *nīnū*, *burāšu*-juniper, *kanaktu*, ‘health’-plant, mix (them) with fat and *baluḥḥu*-resin, make (a suppository), (and) insert it into his anus. He will recover.’ (BAM I 95:10–15)<sup>56</sup>

- (20) DIŠ NA DŪR-šú *um-ša-ti* [DIRI] KĀ-šú ÚŠ-ḥi *ana um-ša-t[i] qut-tu-pi* [...]

‘If a man, his anus [is full of] *umṣatu*, (and) his opening is closed off, to remove the *umṣatu* [...].’ (STT 97 iii 19)<sup>57</sup>

- (21) *šum-ma ur-še* GAZ.MEŠ *šum-ma um-ša-a-tú uq-ṭa-ta-pa*  
GIG *up-ta-šaḥ* DŪR-šú *ur-tap-pa-áš mar-ḥa-šu an-nu-u*  
*ša* NAM.RI.BŪR.DA GIG DŪ.A.BI

‘If *uršus* have been broken, if *umṣatus* have been cut off, the illness will be relieved, his anus will be widened. This lotion is (good for curing) from oath, (and) all the diseases.’ (BAM II 168: 51–53)<sup>58</sup>

In the above cases *umṣatu* is described – in some lines together with *uršu* – as something protruding from and blocking the anus that must be cut off and removed in order to cure the patient.

As already mentioned, this lesion might also be observed on the penis, as in the following lines, unfortunately very fragmentary:

- (22) DIŠ *i-na* KA GIŠ-šú *um-ṣ[a-tu ...]*  
(...)  
DIŠ *ina* ŠÀ GIŠ-šú *um-ša-tum* [...]

‘If at the opening of his penis there is an *umṣatu* [...]

(...)

If in the middle of his penis there is an *umṣatu* [...].’ (AMT 22,1: 13; 19)<sup>59</sup>

<sup>56</sup> Geller 2005, 131, and 2010, 67, and Scurlock/Andersen 2005, 150, nn. 6.171 and 6.175.

<sup>57</sup> Scurlock/Andersen 2005, 149, no. 6.170.

<sup>58</sup> Adamson 1984, 15, no. 45.

<sup>59</sup> Adamson 1984, 15, no. 45.

*Umṣatu* might also occur in a man’s nostrils, as in the following example from the series *Šumma amēlu muḥḥašu umma ukâl*,<sup>60</sup> in which it is accompanied by the word *ḥīlu*<sup>61</sup>:

(23) DIŠ NA *na-ḥi-ri-šú um-ša-at ḥi-li it-tab-li* NA<sub>4</sub> *gab-ú* <sup>šim</sup>ŠEŠ Ū BABBAR 1-niš [...] *ana* UGU MAR-[*ma ina-eš*]

‘If as for a man his nostrils have an exuding *umṣatu*, [...] alum, myrrh, (and) white plant together, spread it over (the lesion), [and he will recover]’ (SpTU I: 44, l. 34)<sup>62</sup>

So, although example no. 22 – to my knowledge, the only therapeutic text attesting the presence of *umṣatu* on the penis – is too fragmentary to furnish a description of this mark/lesion, example no. 23 informs us that it is “exuding” something.

The following chart may help us to perform a more detailed analysis; it contains a list of the body parts on which *umṣatu* might be observed, and – when specified – its possible colour, according to all the medical texts to my knowledge in which this word is attested:

Tab. 2

Text	Lines	Body’s area	Man	Woman	Child	Colour
SA.GIG	33	17 Anus?	x			
	36	33–35 The tip of the breast		x		white; red/brown; black
AMT	17,5	1; 10 ?	x			
AMT	18,3	1 ?	x			
AMT	22,1	13; 19 Penis	x			
AMT	40,4 + 57,5	27’; 29’ Anus	x			
AMT	40,5	iii 5’ Anus	x			
AMT	47,1	iv 1’ Anus	x			
BAM I	95	12; 14 Anus	x			
BAM I	96	iii 3’ Anus	x			
BAM II	104	42; Anus 64	x			
BAM II	168	51; 66 Anus	x			
BAM II	182	7’–8’ Anus	x			

<sup>60</sup> The series, probably composed during the reign of Assurbanipal, deals with diseases affecting the head. For an in-depth analysis, see in particular Attia/Buisson 2003, Worthington 2005, 2006, and 2007, Heeßel 2009, 2010b, and 2010c. For a case study, see Salin 2016.

<sup>61</sup> CAD H 188. See also Scurlock/Andersen 2005, 150.

<sup>62</sup> Hunger 1976, 51, Tab. 44, l. 34, and Scurlock/Andersen 2005, 150, no. 6.172.

(Continued)

SpTU I	44	34	Nostrils	x
STT 97		iii 10;	Anus	x
		15; 19		

From the chart and the examples given above it emerges that the majority of the medical texts record *umṣatu* on (or close to) the anus. It is described as something projecting from it, and that has to be removed. It might also occur on the penis, in the nostrils, or on the tip of a woman's breast, assuming different colours, such as white, black, and red/brown.

## Interpretations by modern scholars

As already mentioned, the interpretations of *umṣatu* given by scholars over time are various and divergent. Most commonly, it has been understood as “mole”<sup>63</sup> or simply “spot/mark”,<sup>64</sup> but also as “lesion”, and “abscess, boil”.<sup>65</sup>

The translations suggested in the first half of the last century by H. Holma, E. Ebeling and R. Labat<sup>66</sup> – “Brandmal” (brand), “Aussatz” (leprosy), and “Bläschen” (blister), respectively – are now considered very unlikely,<sup>67</sup> and other hypotheses have been proposed. For instance, a brief analysis of the term is offered by P.B. Adamson in the article “Anatomical and Pathological Terms in Akkadian”.<sup>68</sup> Considering all the types of text in which this term is attested, he theorized that in the cases where it appeared on (or around) the nipples of a pregnant woman it could be considered “a proper description of the small swellings of the areolar tissue of the breast which occur normally during pregnancy”, while its presence “on other parts of the body cannot however be considered normal tissue”.<sup>69</sup> Additionally, in his opinion, instances of one (or more) *umṣatu* on the penis could refer to a *pigmented naevus*, probably a congenital malformation (*hamartoma*) that “may undergo malignant change”.<sup>70</sup> In their study of

<sup>63</sup> See, for instance, Leichty 1970, 66.

<sup>64</sup> Böck 2000 (“Hautmal”), and Heeßel 2000, 359, (“Mal”), and 2007, 26 (“Hautmal”).

<sup>65</sup> Hunger 1976, 51, (“Geschwür”), and Geller 2010, 67, (“Geschwür”).

<sup>66</sup> Holma 1913, 6, Ebeling 1928–1932, 321, Labat 1957–1971, 232.

<sup>67</sup> See, in particular, Scurlock/Andersen 2005, 721–722, no. 108.

<sup>68</sup> Adamson 1984.

<sup>69</sup> He also points out that “however, it may very occasionally be confused with Paget’s disease of the nipple” (Adamson 1984, 8).

<sup>70</sup> Adamson 1984, 8–9. His suggestion is based on the lexical texts, such as that edited by Leichty (1970, 216, comm. 128): *pi-in-du-u = um-ša-tú sa-an-du* (“*pindû* = a flecked *umṣatu*”). For a discussion

Assyro-Babylonian medicine J. Scurlock and B.R. Andersen give a concise analysis of *umṣatu*,<sup>71</sup> suggesting that in cases where it is present in the anal region, it is used to indicate haemorrhoids<sup>72</sup>; they also noted that when it occurs in the nostrils it could describe nasal turbinates. In their opinion, “in allergies due to inhaled substances such as pollen, the turbinates may become enlarged and covered with mucus. It seems likely that the *āšīpu* saw a resemblance between the appearance of haemorrhoids and enlarged nasal turbinates”.<sup>73</sup> Regarding its presence around the nipples of pregnant women, they agree with P.B. Adamson in saying that it may indicate swellings of the areolar tissue.<sup>74</sup>

## Conclusion

The analysis offered above is divided into two main parts: in the first different types of omens were examined, and in the second medical texts considered.

According to both kinds of text *umṣatu* can be observed on different parts of the human body. While on men it is attested on almost every area of the body – especially on the head – on women it is recorded on the ears, shoulder blade, hips, nipples, hypogastric region, and navel. Furthermore, in one case it is described as covering the whole body of a newborn child. This bias is not surprising, for it is well known that Assyro-Babylonians mostly registered observations of the male body, turning their attention to the females in just a few cases, e.g. during pregnancy.

It has also been noted that, in only a few cases, *umṣatu* might take on different colours; for instance, respectively on women’s ears and navel, it might be yellow/green or red/brown, and white, black, or red/brown.

Moreover, it has been stressed that in omens it is difficult to find a description of its characteristics, while in medical texts there is some indication of these. As already noted, divinatory and medical texts have different purposes. The former aim, in general, to observe, register and decipher the different kinds of phenomena, i.e. the signs left by deities, in order to understand what to do in particular circumstances, or to determine the will of the gods, while the latter offer different kinds of information – diagnoses, prognoses, instructions for the preparation of drugs and the application of medications – that serve for treatment of the patient.

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of the term *pindû*, see Adamson 1959, 2–3; Labat 1957–1971, RLA 3.233; Scurlock/Andersen 2005, 231. <sup>71</sup> Scurlock/Andersen 2005, 148–150, 152, 207, 230, and 241.

<sup>72</sup> Haemorrhoids could also be indicated by the words *uršu* and *baškiltu* (see Scurlock/Andersen 2005, 149–151). Even Geller translates it as “haemorrhoids” in his study devoted to renal and rectal diseases (Geller 2005).

<sup>73</sup> Scurlock/Andersen 2005, 207.

<sup>74</sup> Scurlock/Andersen 2005, 230.

Considering 1) in general, the problem of retrospective diagnosis, as noted by N.P. Heeßel,<sup>75</sup> and 2) in particular, the information we have about the word *umṣatu* – in truth, not a lot – it is very difficult to find a reliable definition of it.

P.B. Adamson's hypothesis of *pigmented naevus*, for instance, seems unlikely. As already pointed out by J. Scurlock and B.R. Andersen, "this interpretation will not, however, account for the uses of this term in many of the references to this lesion in medical texts".<sup>76</sup> Moreover, although in medical texts *umṣatu* could probably be understood as the swellings of the areolar tissue of a pregnant woman's breast – in agreement with P.B. Adamson's hypothesis – in omen texts it is not possible to verify this identification. Furthermore, the suggestion by J. Scurlock and B.R. Andersen that it could indicate haemorrhoids seems not unreasonable; nevertheless, they assign the same meaning to other two words: *uršu* and *baškiltu*. Even though they specify that "in contrast to *umṣatu*, these terms seem to be used exclusively to describe haemorrhoids", while *umṣatu* "is also used to describe other similar lesions",<sup>77</sup> it seems to me unlikely that three words – in some cases found together in the same text – were used to indicate the same thing. They more probably designate some lesions, swellings (or *similia*), the descriptions of which appear to be the same to us, but that from an Assyro-Babylonian point of view were thought different.

Considering all these aspects, the above reflections on the possible meanings of the word *umṣatu* would benefit from integration with further analyses, in order to extend the scope of this work. The present article may be considered a first step in a more complex study involving the analysis of other words related to problems concerning the skin (at times connected with *umṣatu* itself).<sup>78</sup> Basing such a study on a similar approach – that is, examining all the texts in which these terms occur, and recording all the characteristics described in these texts – will hopefully lead to a more complete view of the matter. This wider analysis will aim to clarify not only the meanings assigned to specific words, but also the way in which these words were classified, opening the way to a deeper understanding of Assyro-Babylonian thought.

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<sup>75</sup> Heeßel 2004, 6. Furthermore, see, among others, also Robson 2008, 461, and Fales 2015, 8–12.

<sup>76</sup> Scurlock/Andersen 2005, 721–722, n. 108.

<sup>77</sup> Scurlock/Andersen 2005, 230–231.

<sup>78</sup> It is worth noting that in some cases it is used to describe other skin lesions, such as *ḫalū* and *pindū*. See, for instance, Scurlock/Andersen 2005, 231, and Böck 2010, 84–85.

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## Abbreviations

- AHW *Akkadisches Handwörterbuch*, Wiesbaden.
- CAD *The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago*, Chicago.

Eric Schmidtchen

## 4 The series *Šumma Ea liballiṭka* revisited

### The physiognomic standard series (*Alamdimmû*) and supplementing texts

An exceedingly interesting aspect of the first millennium Mesopotamian physiognomic standard series (*Alamdimmû*)<sup>1</sup> is the extensive supplementary literature that grew up around it, in the form of commentaries as well as excerpts. Both of these formats might, on the one hand, document non-serialized or non-standardized (*aḥû*) contents,<sup>2</sup> or, on the other hand, list contents already known from the standard series, but which had been arranged within new textual contexts.

In this sense a library record that documents Assurbanipal's project of acquiring authoritative texts and series for his library is telling and reads as follows:

“[... ?]+37 (tablets) of the series(ÉŠ.GÀR) *Alamdimmû* /  
[...] including *aḥû*-tablets(?), (and the sub-series) *Nigdimdimmû*, /  
[...] (and) *Kataduggû*.”  
(K. 13818: 10–12 = TBP 51)<sup>3</sup>

### **Alamdimmû**

According to the text catalogue of the Borsippean scholar Esagil-kīn-apli,<sup>4</sup> who is recognized as the compiler of the diagnostic-prognostic standard series (*Sakikkû*)<sup>5</sup> as well as the physiognomic standard series (*Alamdimmû*) during the reign of the

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1 See generally Kraus 1935 and 1939 as well as the latest edition of the series in Böck 2000. A useful introduction is now provided by Koch 2015, 285–290.

2 Koch 2015, 288 notes that texts labelled as *aḥû* differ especially in the arrangement of their entries and not or just conditionally regarding the content of their entries.

3 Cf. Parpola 1983, 24–25 and Böck 2000, 18 with additional literature.

4 See Finkel 1988 as well as Schmidtchen 2018a; 2018b.

5 See the short introduction in Koch 2015, 273–282 and the *editio princeps* in Labat 1951 (= TDP) as well as the recent edition of the chapters 3 to 5 in Heeßel 2000. Cf. also the overview in Scurlock 2014, chapter 1 which gives a composite transliteration but offering some at least interpretative readings, presumptions and reconstructions.

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Babylonian king Adad-apla-iddina (11th century), the physiognomic standard series should consist of ca. 25 tablets.<sup>6</sup>

The first sub-series, which is named after its last (i.e. 12th) tablet (*Šumma Alamdimmu* “If the shape”, resembling the overall title *Alamdimmu*, lists omens over twelve tablets pertaining to the human body *a capite ad calcem*.<sup>7</sup> The listed signs are mainly concerned with the outer appearance, the shape and features of body parts and the different regions of the body as well as resemblances and similarities, especially with the features of animals. The interpretations given in the apodoses almost exclusively address the fate, character as well as the economic outcome and status of the person on which the signs in question are found. It is therefore reasonable to expect a practical context for the use of the series within the general framework of investitures and (politically as well as economically important) marriages.

The second sub-series, named *Nigdimdimmu* “deeds; actions”, is only fragmentarily preserved but should have consisted originally of two tablets according to the text catalogue mentioned above.<sup>8</sup> Following the traces of the first incipit given in the Esagil-kin-apli text catalogue,<sup>9</sup> the first tablet might have been concerned with ethical and/or moral evaluations and interpretations of certain behaviour and actions. The second tablet, in as far as it is possible to judge from the fragmentary traces within the catalogue as well as the also fragmentarily preserved textual witness, lists omens regarding unintentional behaviour while speaking.

The third sub-series, *Kataduggu* “utterance(s)”, which is far better preserved than its preceding sub-series, consists of one tablet.<sup>10</sup> Similar to the last tablet of *Nigdimdimmu*, it is concerned with speech-omens and other unconscious behaviour. Even though it is similar to *Nigdimdimmu*, most of the entries in *Kataduggu* seem to be concerned with moral as well as ethical ideas and beliefs. Thus, some interesting connections to so-called wisdom literature are also noticeable.<sup>11</sup>

Sub-series four “If a woman has a big head” (*Šumma sinništu qaqqada rabât*) lists omens concerning anatomical features and the appearance of a woman, using again the *a capite ad calcem* structure.<sup>12</sup> One should emphasize that the interpretations of the observable signs on the feminine body point mainly towards an analysis of a woman’s character and her traits as a potential spouse and keeper of the household.

<sup>6</sup> See for the problems regarding the last sub-series *Šumma liptu* and its uncertain tablet number Schmidtchen 2018a, 2.1.2.

<sup>7</sup> According to the extra-serial excerpt BM 1993-11-8, 1 = TBP 64 (BE 13618) the first just fragmentarily preserved tablet might have been concerned with the general appearance of a man which resembles in some way the appearance of a deity or the iconography of its divine statue.

<sup>8</sup> See Böck 2000, 128–129 and Kraus 1936–1937.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. the commentary to ll. 78a–b in Schmidtchen 2018b.

<sup>10</sup> See Böck 2000, 130–145 as well as Kraus 1936.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Kraus 1936 and Böck 2010.

<sup>12</sup> See Böck 2000, 148–173.

According to the catalogue the sub-series consists of two tablets. Otherwise, some serial witnesses suggest an abridgement of both tablets on one physical tablet with a different positioning of the tablets in the first millennium.<sup>13</sup>

The last sub-series *Šumma liptu* “If a *liptu*-mole”<sup>14</sup> deals with the observation of different moles and (birth) marks<sup>15</sup> – again structured *a capite ad calcem* in each tablet. Since the overview of the incipits of this sub-series within the catalogue is only fragmentarily preserved, the suggested number of 5 to 6 tablets is merely an approximation. On the other hand, the manuscript witnesses to the series indicate a slightly higher number of 8 tablets. Thus, an explicit answer to this essential editorial question would require new textual finds or identifications.

Thus, it is uncertain how to classify the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian witnesses of a tablet concerning *kittabru*-moles on women as well as a tablet on jerking and moving blood-vessels or sinews.<sup>16</sup> The ordering structure is once again from head to toe and the colophon of the *kittabru*-tablet refers to the following tablet on jerking sinews. Nevertheless, there is no indication of these two tablets within the *Alamdimmû*-catalogue of Esagil-kīn-apli, so it can be assumed that these tablets represent earlier supplementary material which has been added to the standard series in the Neo-Assyrian period or somewhat earlier.

## Supplementary material and commentaries on *Alamdimmû*

The texts which have been designated as extra-serial by Assyriologists differ significantly from one another, depending on their chronological as well as textual contexts. The rubric of the extra-serial text BM 1993-11-8, 1 (TBP 64, BE 13618), for example, describes the text as *alamdimmû imitta*(15) *u šumēla*(150) *ištu*(TA) *libbū*(ŠĀ) *liqtī aḥūti* “*Alamdimmû*-(omens concerning the) right and left (side), (taken) from extra-serial excurses”.

Another text which has been preserved in several manuscripts, in which the arrangement of entries differs significantly in the different witnesses, is labelled in one preserved colophon simply as a *Vorlage* from Aššur.<sup>17</sup> Of particular interest are the interlinear commentaries which have been added to some entries, and whose specific method of notation is also known from an early Neo-Assyrian text from Aššur (VAT 10493 + VAT 10543).<sup>18</sup> According to N. P. Heeßel, this text can be ascribed to an older recension of a

<sup>13</sup> See the commentary to l. 84 in Schmidtchen 2018b as well as Schmidtchen 2018a, 2.1.1.

<sup>14</sup> See Böck 2000, 174–229.

<sup>15</sup> The preserved incipits of the catalogue regarding this sub-series mention the following moles: *liptu*, [*kurāru*?], *umṣatu*, *pindū*, *urāšu*, [...] *ibāru*(?) [...]. In slight contrast, the serial witness list omens concerning *liptu*, *kurāru*, *umṣatu*, *pindū*, *urāšu*, *tirku*, *ibāru* and *kittabru*-moles.

<sup>16</sup> Böck 2000, 230–237.

<sup>17</sup> Böck 2000, 274 the Babylonian witness C (BM 38597).

<sup>18</sup> See Heeßel 2010, 143ff.

physiognomic compilation or even handbook which continued to exist, at least in Aššur, besides the standard series of Esagil-kīn-apli until the first centuries of the first millennium.<sup>19</sup> Two further texts with interlinear commentaries are known, whose partially serial and partially extra-serial content overlap with each other in certain instances.<sup>20</sup>

In addition, an excerpt series, exclusively in landscape format and known from Neo-Assyrian Nineveh, designates itself in the respective rubrics as “x-th *liḡinnu*-excerpt tablet of extra-serial *Alamdimmû*-omens (*alamdimmê aḥûti*),<sup>21</sup> which have not been recorded on a wax tablet (*ša ina lē'i ul šaḡir*)”.<sup>22</sup> A very similar text, also written in landscape format, might likewise be attributed to this excerpt series, although it labels itself as the “6th *liḡinnu*-excerpt tablet from (the series) *Alamdimmû* (ŠĀ-ú *alam-dīm-mu-û*); completed”.<sup>23</sup> Note, furthermore, that none of these tablets make use of interlinear commentaries.

Another highly unusual extra-serial text is TBP 27<sub>a+b</sub>,<sup>24</sup> which compares the wrinkles on the forehead with archaic cuneiform signs, which are graphically reproduced and inserted alongside the interpretations.<sup>25</sup>

Besides the above mentioned extra-serial texts, interlinear commentaries are also known for serialized tablets.<sup>26</sup> The explanations given in these commentaries refer especially to the signs within the protasis, most likely to clarify the exact visual nature or appearance of the described phenomena. Additionally, one *šātu*-commentary is known from Late Babylonian Uruk, which mainly explains certain words. As far as the state of preservation of this tablet allows, the commentary describes and comments on conspicuous and difficult spellings attested in several tablets of the first sub-series. One should note that, in general, no further commentary is attested for the remaining sub-series of *Alamdimmû* on behavioural omens (*Nigdimmimmû* and *Kataduggû*), physiognomic omens for women<sup>27</sup> as well as for the sub-series on body marks, moles (*Šumma liptu*) and the additional materials that follow.

<sup>19</sup> The Assur-tablet VAT 10155 might likewise belong to this recension. See Böck 2000, 290–295.

<sup>20</sup> Böck 2000, 274–279, “Omina über Hals und Gang” as well as “die sog. Stevenson Omen Tablet”.

<sup>21</sup> Böck 2000, 280–287.

<sup>22</sup> Tablets 2 and 3 are attested.

<sup>23</sup> See Böck 2000, 288–291.

<sup>24</sup> See Böck 2000, 258–261.

<sup>25</sup> The unpublished fragment BM 76301 represents a newly identified duplicate of this text which has been generously made known to me by Jeanette Fincke.

<sup>26</sup> See Koch 2015, 288–289 (4.8.4.–4.8.6.) and in particular Böck 2000, 238–256. See further TBP 17 (K. 9222) “If he has the head of a chameleon” a commentary to *Alamdimmû* tablet 2. See also the text TBP 21 (K. 8140) which is a commentary to *Alamdimmû* tablet 8. It is uncertain how to classify the extensive text TBP 12a–e, which lists interlinear commented as well as not commented entries. The structure is furthermore *a capite ad calcem*. Due to the fragmentary preservation of the first sub-series of *Alamdimmû* the identification as overall commentary for instance is uncertain.

<sup>27</sup> The only exception is the 6th excerpt tablet on *Alamdimmû* (Böck 2000, 288–291) which lists physiognomic as well as few behavioural signs concerning men and women of which some entries show likewise interlinear commentaries.

In comparison with the heavily standardized recension of the *Diagnostic Handbook* (*Sakikkū*) in the Neo-Assyrian period, there seems to be particular interest, among the scholars who participated in the library programme of Assurbanipal in Nineveh, in the collection of not only standard recensions of the physiognomic series *Alamdimmū* but also any extra-serial texts as well as additional supplementary material like commentaries or other explanatory texts, such as the above mentioned text with illustrations of wrinkles on the forehead and their resemblance with cuneiform signs.

The small and scarcely mentioned series *Šumma Ea liballiṭka*, which I will discuss here, stands likewise in a rather uncertain position vis-à-vis the main series *Alamdimmū*.<sup>28</sup>

## The series *Šumma Ea liballiṭka*

The first partial edition of the series *Šumma Ea liballiṭka* (tablet 2) was published by W. von Soden in 1981,<sup>29</sup> after the earlier publication of some witnesses in copy by F. Kraus in 1939 (TBP 13–16).<sup>30</sup> The primary occasion for von Soden's publication was the join of TBP 13 (K. 3679+) to the larger fragment K. 3953 whose column ii offered interestingly content which is rather similar to the animal omens within the extensive terrestrial omen series *Šumma ālu ina mēlê šakin* “If a city has been built on a height”,<sup>31</sup> and which stood in sharp contrast with the physiognomic omens within the tablet's first column. Its identification as a series consisting of two or possibly more tablets that stand in some kind of relation with the physiognomic series *Alamdimmū* can be demonstrated by the only witness of tablet 1 BM 122626 (CT 51, 147), whose rubric notes:

DIŠ *šil-la-šú ki-ma ri-mi i-na-ṭal ina* <sup>gis</sup>TUKUL GAZ

DUB 1.KĀM DIŠ <sup>d</sup>É-a TI.LA-ka ŠĀ-bu-ú DIŠ *alam-dīm-me-e*

“(Catchline:) If his shadow looks like an ox: he will be killed by weapon. /

Tablet 1: If (he says) ‘Ea may let you live’ out of (the physiognomic series) *Alamdimmū*”

(BM 122626 Rs. lines 23–24)

**28** For unknown reasons this excerpt series has been left out in the last edition of the physiognomic standard series in Böck 2000.

**29** See von Soden 1981. See *ibid.* 109–110 for further remarks regarding the identification of the single witnesses.

**30** See Kraus 1939, texts TBP 13–16, Pl. 22–23. Although the content corresponded with some passages in *Alamdimmū* tablet 8 it was impossible to position the fragments within the main series. The fragments have been therefore correctly attributed as excerpts by Kraus.

**31** See for a short discussion of this curious phenomenon point 4 below.

Therefore, this tablet had to be the first tablet of a series that deals with excerpts from *Alamdimmû*, since the rubric clearly states the tablet number (which is 1), the name of the series or compilation (“If (he says) ‘Ea may let you live’”) and the origin of the text (“out of (the physiognomic series) *Alamdimmû*”). Furthermore, the rubric refers to the second tablet by its catchline (“If his shadow looks like an ox: he will be killed by weapon”), which allowed von Soden to link this tablet with the previously published but not yet positioned fragments TBP 13, 15 und 16.<sup>32</sup> The fragments published by von Soden (see above) must therefore have belonged to the second tablet of the respective excerpt series *Šumma Ea liballiṭka*.

The first edition of CT 51, 147 (Tablet 1) was published a year later by E. Reiner in the *Festschrift* for F. Kraus in 1982.<sup>33</sup> The text is concerned mainly with speech and behavioural omens. Hence, it is reasonable to assume that most of the excerpts come from the *Alamdimmû* sub-series *Nigdimmû* and *Kataduggû*, which likewise show numerous overlaps with the topics of the higher tablet numbers of *Šumma ālu*.<sup>34</sup>

As was the case with the first edition of the second tablet by W. von Soden, the occasion for the present contribution is the discovery of three new joins for the witnesses A and B of the alleged second tablet, which I will present here in transliteration, translation as well as a short commentary. Additionally, the content of the first tablet will be presented here in transliteration, translation and with some supplementary remarks on the edition of E. Reiner.

## The textual witnesses

All of the witnesses (for both tablets 1 and 2) stem, as far as it is evident from the accession numbers of the Kuyunjik Collection, in particular from the context of the so-called Ashurbanipal’s Library (7th century, nA, Nineveh).

The new joins concern the alleged witnesses A and B of tablet 2. The fragments K. 5934 and K. 8149 belong to witness A (K. 3679+, nA). While K. 5934 joins directly the broken part in the middle of column i, K. 8149 should be considered an indirect join.

Fragment K. 9878 directly joins witness B (K. 10349, nB) and gives us the bottom of the obverse as well as the top of the reverse of this one column tablet. This fragment is particularly important since the entries from this passage are mostly broken in witnesses A and D. Furthermore, it provides the connection with fragment K. 8149 in witness A, which otherwise would not have been attributed to this tablet.

<sup>32</sup> See von Soden 1981, 110.

<sup>33</sup> See Reiner 1982.

<sup>34</sup> See thereto also Böck 2000, 13–14.

**Šumma Ea liballiṭka, Tablet 1****Tablet 1:** *šumma Ea liballiṭka* “If (he says) ‘Ea may let you live’: (...)”

A: BM 122626	CT 51, Nr. 147	Reiner (1982)
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(break of approximately 5 to 10 lines)

- 1' A<sub>obv1'</sub> [x x (x)] ʾTIʾ [...]  
 2' A<sub>2'</sub> [x x (x)] TI.ʾLAʾ [...]  
 3' A<sub>3'</sub> [x x] x TI.LA-ʾk[a ...]  
 4' A<sub>4'</sub> [x x] x<sup>35</sup> TI.LA-k[a ...] ʾxʾ  
 5' A<sub>5'</sub> [x x] ʾud<sup>2</sup>ʾ<sup>36</sup> TI.LA-k[a ... ZI]-ʾaḥʾ  
 6' A<sub>6'</sub> [DIŠ <sup>d</sup>GUʾ].LA TI.LA-ʾkaʾ [i-ḥa]d-du  
 7' A<sub>7'</sub> [x (x)] ʾgu/kur<sup>2</sup>ʾ GAL<sup>37</sup> TI.LA-ka ʾina<sup>2</sup>ʾ [x (x)] ʾZIʾ-aḥ  
 8' A<sub>8'</sub> DIŠ ʾd<sup>1</sup>ʾIŠ<sub>8</sub>.TÁR TI.LA-ka ŠĀ.ḤUL(*lumun libbi*)  
 9' A<sub>9'</sub> DIŠ NINDA i-na pi-i NU DU<sub>10</sub>.GA a-na <sup>d</sup>UTU ka-rib  
 10' A<sub>10'</sub> DIŠ tam-ṭa-tu<sub>4</sub> šak-na-šú a-na DINGIR-šu ka-rib  
 11' A<sub>11'</sub> DIŠ ŠĀ ú-ḥa-maṭ-an-ni 30 UGU-šu ʾTUKʾ-ši  
 12' A<sub>12'</sub> DIŠ GĪR ú-za-qat-an-ni 20 UGU-šu TUK-ši  
 13' A<sub>13'</sub> DIŠ SAG.DU iṣ-ša-nun-dan-ni <sup>d</sup>AMAR.UTU UGU-šu TUK-ši  
 14' A<sub>14'</sub> DIŠ i-na-a-a it-ta-na-za-za ina-ziq  
 15' A<sub>15'</sub> DIŠ i-na-a-a iṣ-ša-nun-du ŠĀ-bi iḥ-ḥe-ʾpiʾ  
 16' A<sub>16'</sub> DIŠ i-na-a-a it-ta-na-az-qa-pa U.BAR-rù KU<sub>4</sub>-ʾšuʾ  
 17' A<sub>17'</sub> DIŠ SIG<sub>7</sub>.IGI-šu GU<sub>4</sub>.GU<sub>4</sub> i-ḥad-ʾduʾ  
 18' A<sub>18'</sub> DIŠ ŠU.MEŠ-šu i-ra-ú-ba kiš-pi šu-kul  
 19' A<sub>19'</sub> DIŠ uz-ni GÛ.GÛ-si ana SIG<sub>5</sub>-tì i-da-ab-bu-ub-šú  
 20' A<sub>20'</sub> DIŠ i-gir-re-e SIG<sub>5</sub>-iq di-bi-ri GAR-šú  
 21' A<sub>21'</sub> DIŠ TE-su ṣa-bit ŠĀ.ḤUL IGI-mar  
 22' A<sub>22'</sub> DIŠ ru-a-ti-šu i-šal-lu ŠĀ.ḤUL IGI ŠU-su NÍG ZI.GA  
 23' A<sub>23'</sub> DIŠ SAG.DU-su ú-na-a-aš a-šar DU<sub>11</sub>-ú NU TE  
 24' A<sub>24'</sub> DIŠ SAG.DU-su us-sà-na-ḥar ÚŠ TAG-it  
 25' A<sub>25'</sub> DIŠ KI ŠĀ-šu DU<sub>11</sub>.DU<sub>11</sub>-ub ŠE-am TUK-ši  
 26' A<sub>26'</sub> DIŠ KI NÍ-šu DU<sub>11</sub>.DU<sub>11</sub>-ub É DÛ-uš  
 27' A<sub>27'</sub> DIŠ na-su-us KAR-ta<sub>5</sub> DU-ak

35 The traces could be read either IŠ, LU or GUR, which might belong to the spelling U.GUR for Nergal.

36 Maybe AMAR.UTU.

37 Maybe NIN.GAL.

28'	A <sub>28'</sub>	DIŠ <i>i-na</i> SAG.DU LÚ <i>ḥa-zu</i> <sup>1</sup> (URU)- <i>úr</i> <sup>ki</sup> <i>qá-lál</i> LÚ
29'	A <sub>29'</sub>	DIŠ <i>i-na</i> E.SÍR URU 20 <i>ú-qá</i> GE <sub>6</sub> - <i>šú/ú-qá-mi-šú i-ḥal-liq</i>
30'	A <sub>30'</sub>	DIŠ <i>pá-riḍ ina-[ziq]</i>
31'	A <sub>31'</sub>	DIŠ <i>ba-a-a-áš ina-[ziq]</i>
32'	A <sub>32'</sub>	DIŠ <i>qar-rad</i> ŠĀ.BI <sup>1</sup> NU <sup>1</sup> [DU <sub>10</sub> (.GA)]
33'	A <sub>33'</sub>	DIŠ <i>mu-ḥi ma-ḥi-iṣ</i> NIN.DINGIR <i>i-[ni-ik]</i>
34'	A <sub>34'</sub>	DIŠ <i>ṭe-e-ma ma-qiṭ</i> DUMU <sup>munus</sup> .A.NI <i>i-[ni-ik]</i>
35'	A <sub>35'</sub>	DIŠ KA <i>na-ṣir</i> DINGIR TUK ŠĀ.BI NU <sup>1</sup> D[U <sub>10</sub> (.GA)]
36'	A <sub>36'</sub>	DIŠ KA NU <i>na-ṣir ina di-bi-<sup>1</sup>r<sup>1</sup> <sup>1</sup>DU<sup>1</sup>-[ak]</i>
37'	A <sub>37'</sub>	DIŠ <i>iz-ze-né-en-ni</i> TIL-it <sup>1</sup> UD <sup>2</sup> . [MEŠ]
38'	A <sub>38'</sub>	DIŠ <i>u<sub>4</sub>-mi-šam iḥ-ta-na-ad-du</i> TIL-it <sup>1</sup> UD.MEŠ <sup>1</sup>
39'	A <sub>39'</sub>	DIŠ <i>a-na</i> DINGIR- <i>šu di-na sa-dir šib-<sup>1</sup>sat<sup>1</sup></i> DINGIR
40'	A <sub>rev 1</sub>	DIŠ <sup>1</sup> DINGIR <sup>1</sup> <i>ina-ad šib-sat</i> DINGIR
41'	A <sub>2</sub>	DIŠ <sup>1</sup> DINGIR <sup>1</sup> <i>ú-sap-pi</i> DINGIR TUK
42'	A <sub>3</sub>	DIŠ <sup>1</sup> <i>i-šar<sup>1</sup> im-ṭú-ú</i> GAR-nu- <i>šú sa-dir</i> EGIR-su <i>šal-mat</i>
43'	A <sub>4</sub>	DIŠ ḤUL SIG <sub>5</sub> EGIR-su ZĀḤ
44'	A <sub>5</sub>	DIŠ <i>la-la-a-ni mim-ma</i> NU <i>ut-tú</i>
45'	A <sub>6</sub>	DIŠ <i>lum</i> <sup>1</sup> (I)- <i>na-ni mim-ma</i> NU <i>i-kāṣ-šar</i>
46'	A <sub>7</sub>	DIŠ <i>muš-tap-pit ú-kul-li</i> KA- <i>šú LĀ-<sup>1</sup>ṭi<sup>1</sup></i>
47'	A <sub>8</sub>	DIŠ <i>mu-šab-bir ina</i> NU <i>šat-ti-šu i-še-ú-šú</i>
48'	A <sub>9</sub>	DIŠ <i>kam-ma i-ta-<sup>1</sup>nam<sup>1</sup>-da-ru-šu lu-ḥu-um-ma-a ṣa-<sup>1</sup>bit<sup>1</sup></i>
49'	A <sub>10</sub>	DIŠ <i>šul-ma-<sup>1</sup>nam lid<sup>1</sup>-di-nam</i> NUMUN- <i>šu i-ḥal-liq</i>
50'	A <sub>11</sub>	DIŠ <i>mu-šal ma-la i-šu-ú</i> <sup>1</sup> ZĀḤ <sup>1</sup>
51'	A <sub>12</sub>	DIŠ <i>a-na tam-ṭi-a-ti sa-niq</i> TAG-sú <i>ana</i> IGI- <i>šú</i> DU
52'	A <sub>13</sub>	DIŠ <i>tam-ṭi-a-ti ú-la-qat e-ka-a-am</i> GAR-un DU <sub>11</sub> .GA
53'	A <sub>14</sub>	DIŠ <i>šú-ḥa-a-ni</i> ŠĀ.ḤUL ÚS.ÚS.MEŠ- <i>šú</i>
54'	A <sub>15</sub>	DIŠ <i>na-mu-ta<sub>5</sub> DÛ-uš</i> TAG-sú <i>me-ḥu-ú</i>
55'	A <sub>16</sub>	<sup>1</sup> DIŠ UGU <sup>2</sup> ? LÚ.MEŠ <i>sa-bu-us i-qá-lil</i>
56'	A <sub>17</sub>	[DIŠ UG]U <sup>2</sup> LÚ.MEŠ <i>i-ga-ša-aṣ</i> TIL-it <i>u<sub>4</sub>-mi</i>
57'	A <sub>18</sub>	[DIŠ <i>ṇ</i> ] <sup>é<sup>2</sup>-eḥ</sup> NINDA <i>sad-ra</i> GU <sub>7</sub>
58'	A <sub>19</sub>	[DIŠ <i>i</i> ]- <i>na</i> SILA <i>i-nam-din e-tel-lu-ta<sub>5</sub> ú-šak-lal</i>
59'	A <sub>20</sub>	[DIŠ <i>a/ta</i> ]- <i>dir-tu<sub>4</sub> ina</i> ŠĀ LÚ <i>ma-da-at</i> KUR ÁŠ
60'	A <sub>21</sub>	<sup>1</sup> DIŠ <i>na<sup>1</sup>-a-ik mim-mu-šú LĀ-ṭi muš-ke-nu-ta<sub>5</sub> DU</i>
61'	A <sub>22</sub>	DIŠ MUNUS- <i>šu ú-na-qá-as-su di-nu ḥe-pi eš-<sup>1</sup>šú<sup>1</sup></i>

## Catchline:

A<sub>23</sub>DIŠ *šil-la-šú ki-ma ri-mi i-na-ṭal ina* <sup>giš</sup>TUKUL GAZ

## Rubric:

A<sub>24</sub>DUB 1.KĀM DIŠ <sup>dĒ</sup>-*a* TIL.LA-*ka* ŠĀ-bu-ú DIŠ *alam-dim-me-e*

Colophon<sup>38</sup>:

A <sub>25</sub>	É.GAL <sup>m</sup> AN.ŠĀR-DÛ-IBILA <sup>39</sup> LUGAL ŠÚ LUGAL KUR aš- <sup>r</sup> šur <sup>ki<sup>r</sup></sup>
A <sub>26</sub>	ša <sup>d</sup> MUATI <sup>d</sup> taš-me-tu <sub>4</sub> GEŠTU <sup>ll</sup> DAGAL-tu iš-ru-ku- <sup>r</sup> uš <sup>2<sup>r</sup></sup>
A <sub>27</sub>	i-ḫu-uz-zu IGI <sup>ll</sup> na-mir-tu ni-siq tup-šar-ru-ti
A <sub>28</sub>	ša ina LUGAL.MEŠ a-lik maḫ-ri-ia má-ma šip-ru šu-a-tu <sup>r</sup> la <sup>2<sup>r</sup></sup> i-ḫu-uz-zu
A <sub>29</sub>	<sup>r</sup> ne <sup>2<sup>r</sup></sup> -me-qi <sup>d</sup> MUATI ti-kip <sup>r</sup> sa <sup>r</sup> -a[t-tak-ki ma] <sup>r</sup> - <sup>r</sup> la ba <sup>r</sup> -áš-mu
A <sub>30</sub>	[ina] <sup>r</sup> DUB <sup>r</sup> .MEŠ áš-ṭ[ur <sup>2</sup> ...] x

## Translation:

- 1'–5' (broken)
- 6' If (he says) “May [Gula?] let you live!”: he will be happy.
- 7' [If (he says)] “May [...] let you live!”: he will be removed [from his office?].
- 8' If (he says) “May Ištar let you live!”: grief.
- 9' If (he says) “The bread in (his) mouth is distasteful (lit. not good)”: he has made a blessing/dedicatory offering(?) to Šamaš.
- 10' If deprivation is assigned to him: he has made a blessing/dedicatory offering(?) to his personal god.
- 11' If (he says) “The belly burns me!”: (the anger?) of Sîn is above him.
- 12' If (he says) “The foot is stinging me!”: (the anger?) of Šamaš is above him.
- 13' If (he says) “The head is spinning around for me (viz. I am dizzy)!”: (the anger?) of Marduk is above him.
- 14' If (he says) “My eyes are standing still!”: he will be worried.
- 15' If (he says) “My eyes are spinning around”: the “heart” will get broken.
- 16' If (he says) “May eyes are opened wide (lit. erected)”: a stranger will enter (into his household).
- 17' If his eyebrow twitches: he will be happy.
- 18' If his hands are trembling: he was given bewitched (food?).
- 19' If (he says) “My ear is constantly ringing”/If he constantly cries “My Ear!”: they (will) speak well of him.
- 20' If (he says) “My utterance/omen(?) is good!”: harm is assigned to him.
- 21' If his cheek is seized/he seized his cheek(?): he will experience grief.
- 22' If he spews his spittle: he will experience grief; his hand is raised(?) (towards) wealth(?).
- 23' If he moves his head uncontrollably: he will not approach the place (he has been) told of.
- 24' If he keeps on turning his head: he has touched a dead person/is touched by death(?).
- 25' If he speaks (constantly) with his heart: he will have barley.

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38 BAK 319d.

39 Note the different forms of TUR here and in obv. 34'.



- 26' If he speaks (constantly) with himself: he will establish a household (lit. make a house).
- 27' If he is a sniveller: he will have to flee (constantly) (lit. he takes flight).
- 28' If (he is) on/has a head(?) (like) a man (from) Ḥazor(?): denigration of the man(?).
- 29' If the sun has burned him on the main street of the city: he will (have to) flee.
- 30' If he is fearsome: he will be worried.
- 31' If he is timid: he will be worried.
- 32' If he is brave: his heart will [grieve].
- 33' If he is *affected* on the head: he has had [sexual intercourse with] an *ēntu*-priestess.
- 34' If he is fallen (in his) reasoning: he has had [sexual intercourse with] his daughter.
- 35' If (lit. he is continually concerned about the mouth/speech) he is cautious: he will have a (personal) god; his heart will not be [happy].
- 36' If he is not cautious: with harm/in disaster he will walk.
- 37' If he gets constantly angry: end of days.
- 38' If he rejoices all day: end of days.
- 39' If he is constantly going to his god for an oracular decision: anger of the god.
- 40' If he worries because of a god: anger of the god.
- 41' If he prays/supplicates the god: he will have a (personal) god.
- 42' If he is straight (but) losses are constantly assigned to him: his “inheritance” will remain intact.
- 43' If he is (sometimes) evil/treacherous, (sometimes) good/straight: his inheritance will perish.
- 44' If (he is) cheerful: he will find nothing.
- 45' If he is doleful/ill-natured: he will collect nothing.
- 46' If he is intimidating: the ration for his mouth will be small.
- 47' If he is a gossip: they will frequent him outside the “season”.
- 48' If one steadily fears him: he is afflicted with mud (*luḥummû*).
- 49' If (he says): “He shall give me a greeting-present!”: his descendant will perish.
- 50' If he is quarrelsome: all that he owns will perish.
- 51' If he checks (his) losses: his work will prosper.
- 52' If he gathers losses: he will say (to himself): “Where I can put it down”.
- 53' If he is often smirking: grief will follow him constantly.
- 54' If he is mocking (someone): his work is (just) wind (i.e. naught).<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Suggestion by H. Stadhouders.

- 55' If he is angry against “fellow-citizens” (lit. people): he will be denigrated.
- 56' If he rages against people: end of (his) days.
- 57' If he is calm: he will eat regular food.
- 58' If he is selling in the street: he will achieve a state like a sovereign.
- 59' If a dark mood is plenty in the heart of a man: achieving of a wish.
- 60' If he is one who has (illicit) sexual intercourse: his possessions will be diminished; he will become a *muškēnu*.
- 61' If his wife makes him worry: a lawsuit(?) {new break}.

Catchline tablet 2: “If his shadow looks like an ox: he will be killed by weapon”.

(Assurbanipal colophon BAK 319d)

### Commentary:

1'–6' Reiner 1982, 288 understandably hesitates to restore the broken deity names but suggests possible restorations for l. 3' *Sîn* or *Šamaš* ([... <sup>d</sup>(X)X]<sup>r</sup>X<sup>r</sup>), l. 4' *Nergal* ([... <sup>d</sup>U.G]UR), and l. 5' *Marduk* ([... <sup>d</sup>AMAR].UTU) as well as l. 7' *Ningal* ([... <sup>d</sup>N]IN<sup>r</sup>.GAL). However, according to the traces in l. 7' I would instead restore [(x)]<sup>r</sup>GU/KUR<sup>r</sup>.GAL. For the omission of a possible *verbum dicendi* in these and later lines, see *ibid.* 283. The respective verb should be expected in the first entry of this tablet.

7' According to Reiner 1982, 288, the missing word in the gap might be the term *tērtu* ((<sup>uzu</sup>)HAR(.BAD) or KIN) “office; function”. For the possible restoration of *ina*<sup>r</sup> [*tērti*(KIN)-šú] (*innassah*)BIR-ah, see also *Kataduggū* 34 for the same apodosis.

9'–10' The term *kāribu* might describe the wish of a deity to be provided with a dedicatory prayer as well as an offering or a dedication which has already be done. See CAD K, 216f. esp. sub 1. See also the comparable formulations within the *Diagnostic Handbook* such as *qāt Šamaš ana ikrib qibūt pīšu* (*Sakikkū* 10:3; 11:1), *ikriba ana il ālišu iqbi* (4:27), *ilišu u il ālišu izzur ikrib ilišu iqbi* (*Sakikkū* 4:29), *ikribū Šamaš elišu ibaššū* (*Sakikkū* 6:19).<sup>41</sup> Besides the city god mentioned here, these entries also list the two deities mentioned in our text ll. 9'–10' (*Šamaš* and the personal god of the respective client).

11'–13' The formulation *elišu irašši* is reminiscent, following Reiner 1982, 288<sup>42</sup> referring to Harris 1960, 126ff., of the formulations used for temple loans in the Old Babylonian period. Note as well the aforementioned and comparable formula-

<sup>41</sup> See TDP I, 34 l. 27 (*Sakikkū* 4:27) and p. 36 l. 30 (*Sakikkū* 4:29) p. 54 l. 14 (*Sakikkū* 6:19), p. 80 l. 7 (*Sakikkū* 10:3), p. 88 l. 1 (*Sakikkū* 11:1). See for the broken passage in *Sakikkū* 4:29 Scurlock 2014, 30 l. 30.

<sup>42</sup> In Reiner 1982, 288 mistakenly referred to as ll. 12'–14' instead of ll. 11'–13'.

tion (*ikribū Šamaš*) *elišu ibaššū* (6:19) in connection with the preceding apodoses. There are similar aetiologies within the *Diagnostic Handbook* about retained payments to the temple or to a god (i.e. the temple of this particular god) – especially to Šamaš.<sup>43</sup>

15' See the similar Middle Babylonian entry PUM 4501 in Kraus 1936–1937, 223 l. 20 which differs only in its apodosis: [DIŠ] IGI.MEŠ-šu *iš-ša-nun-da i-na-ziq*. This text might be seen as a possible forerunner to *Nigdimdimmû*, tablet 2.

16' Pace Reiner 1982, 285, the spelling U.BAR-rù should stand for *ubāru* “stranger; foreign guest, resident alien; guest-friend” (CAD U, 10f.) or “Ortsfremder, Beisasse; Schutzbürger” (AHw III, 1399). The term has been positively interpreted by E. Reiner as “an honored guest” but it might likewise refer to a stranger or unwanted guest inside the house.

17' The frequently used logogram for *šahātu* “to jump, twitch” is GU<sub>4</sub>.UD, of which the form we have here (GU<sub>4</sub>.GU<sub>4</sub>) might be considered a variant.

20' See Reiner 1982, 288 which refers to the similar entry *Kataduggû* 74: DIŠ *šu-na-tu-ú-a dam-qa* NE *šul-me* NA x).

22' See the similar Middle Babylonian entry PUM 4501 in Kraus 1936–1937, 223 l. 74: [DIŠ *ru-a*]s-su *i-šal-lu* KA-šu *i-na-šar ši-il-la-an-ni*. E. Reiner hints regarding the difficult apodosis ŠU-su NÍG/šá ZI.GA at a possible connection to the expression ZI.GA ŠU (*šit qāti*) “debit” which is known from other divinatory contexts as apodosis. See CAD Š, 219ff. sub 4b–1'.

28' The protasis is obscure. Especially the beginning *ina qaqqad (amēli)* can only rather ineptly be applied to the alleged characteristic of a “head like(?) a man from Ḥazor(?)” which seems to lack a proper verb.<sup>44</sup> Thus, it is very likely that this present passage has been corrupted in some way.

29' E. Reiner translates differently “he waits (*ú-qá*) for the sun to rise: he will perish that same night (GE<sub>6</sub>-šú)”. In connection with the surrounding entries (esp. ll. 27'–28' and maybe likewise the fear in l. 30'), that touch more or less frequently the topics of capture, degradation and escape, the present entry should refer to these key aspects as well. The “burning on the main street” might therefore also be seen as a metaphoric degradation or denunciation in the midst of the public area of a city, which is why the man has to flee.

30' See the similar Middle Babylonian entry PUM 4501 in Kraus 1936–1937, 223 l. 31: DIŠ *pa-riḍ la ka-šad* ÁŠ.

<sup>43</sup> See especially the aetiology *qāt Šamaš aššu kasap ešerti* (*Sakikkû* 4:39, 40; 10:80'; 11:19; 14:187').

<sup>44</sup> This assumption seems likewise to underlie the translation in Reiner 1982, 287 l. 28'.

32' See the similar passage in *Kataduggû* 65: DIŠ *ana-ku qar-ra-da-ku i-ba-āš*.

33' E. Reiner translates literally “If he is struck on the head”. Since the construction “(*ina*) body part + *maḥiṣ*” is also a frequent expression in diagnostic entries, describing most likely the location of an affection, it might be reasonable, in connection with other symptom-like phenomena (cf. ll. 11'–19', 21'–24'), to translate it likewise as “he is *affected* on the head”. The uncommon spelling *mu-ḥi* (maybe for *muḥḥi* “my head(?)” might be a mistake for *muḥḥa* “on the head” (accusative of relation).<sup>45</sup> Note the possible *double entendre* of *mu-ḥi* “my cranium” and *mu-šar*<sub>2</sub> “penis” which might point to the connection of protasis and apodoses (viz. an illicit sexual relation), resulting from the similar sign form of 𐎶I and ŠĀR in Neo-Assyrian palaeography.

33'–34' Both apodoses refer to an illicit sexual relationship (*niāku* G preterit) either with an *entu*-priestess (which might refer to the client's mother?) or with his daughter. See the similar aetiological expressions *ana aḥātišu iṭḥi* “he approached his sister (sexually)” (*Sakikkû* 12:138'), *ana enti ilišu iṭḥi* “he approached the *entu*-priestess of his god (sexually)” (*Sakikkû* 13:19; 14:130, 133–134),<sup>46</sup> and *mār iliša'(-šū) iṭḥiši* “the son of his/her(?) god approached her (sexually)” (*Sakikkû* 37:19–20)<sup>47</sup> from diagnostic contexts.

35' See the similar entry in *Kataduggû* 61 (see Böck 2000, 134): DIŠ *na-šir pi-šu ka-ba-tu UN na-mur(-šū) : GAR-šū*. “To protect the mouth” should be regarded as an idiom for “fine speech” or the like. See also the Middle Babylonian PUM 4501 in Kraus 1936–1937, 223 l. 74: [DIŠ *ru-a*]s-su *i-šal-lu KA-šu i-na-šar ši-il-la-an-ni* where fine speech in combination with spitting could be seen as an abomination since both actions seem to contradict each other on an ethical level.

36' The damaged traces *ina di-<sup>r</sup>NE<sup>r</sup>* should most likely be read *ina di-bi-<sup>r</sup>ni<sup>r</sup> DU<sup>r</sup>-[ak]* (coll.) referring to the term *dibiru* “harm/disaster” together with the common expression *alāku* “to walk; experience/change into (in future)” as already suggested by Reiner 1982, 288.

37' See the similar protasis in the *Alamdimmû*-excerpt 3 (see Böck 2000, 288, K 105) l. 14: DIŠ *iz-ze-nen-ni* [...].

42' E. Reiner interprets the traces at the beginning of the protasis differently, as <sup>r</sup>*a-šar*<sup>r</sup>. But see the similar entry in *Kataduggû* 145: DIŠ *i-šar im-ṭu-ú GAR-šū EGIR-su SI[G<sub>5</sub>-iq]*.

43' See the similar entry in *Kataduggû* 146: DIŠ *le-mun šu-šur EGIR-su Z[ÁḤ]*.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>45</sup> Suggestion by H. Stadhouders.

<sup>46</sup> See TDP I, 108 l. 17 (*Sakikkû* 12:138'), p. 112 l. 24' (*Sakikkû* 13:19), p. 136–138 ll. 62, 65–67 (*Sakikkû* 14:130, 133–134). See for the broken passages also Scurlock 2014, 123 ll. 134, 137–139.

<sup>47</sup> See TDP I, 214 l. 20 (*Sakikkû* 37:19–20).

<sup>48</sup> Consider the semantically varying translation of the protasis by B. Böck “Wenn er ins Unglück gerät und dann auf dem richtigen Weg ist (...)”.

46' See also the Gt adjective *muštaptu* “treacherous”. The meaning of the rare term *muštappit* is applied more or less according to the semantics of the term *muššabru* “rapidly moving, prattling, gossiping, malicious” (CAD M/2, 245) and *\*mušabb/ppiru* “gossiper(?)”, used in the following protasis.

47' See also *šapparrû* “Tuschler” (AHw III, 1082) as well as the qualification of a witch as *šabburitu* in *Maqlû* III:53 (see Abusch 2015, 72, with the slightly varying translation “mutterer”).

52' Reiner 1982, 287 rev 13 translates differently “he will say: where shall I store (*luškun*) it”. E. Reiner refers further to similarities with the Parable of the Rich Fool (Lk 12:16ff.) as well as the comparable apodoses in CT 39, 33:62(!)<sup>49</sup> (*Šumma ālu*, tablet 88: *e-ki-a-am lu-uš-kun i-qab-bi*), CT 40, 47:15 (*Šumma ālu*, tablet 61: *e-ki-a-am lu-uš-kun i-qab-[bi]*) and CT 38, 36:68 (*Šumma ālu*, tablet 22: *e-ki-a-am KÛ.BABBAR' GAR-un GÛ-si*).<sup>50</sup>

55' See the possible parallel in Böck 2000, 288 (excerpt 3, K 105) l. 16: DIŠ UGU LÛ.MEŠ *sa-bu-us* [...].

56' For the transferred meaning of *gašāšu* “to gnash (the teeth)” with the meaning “to rage” see CAD G, 52 sub 3.

57' See the slightly differing entry in *Nigdimdimmû* tablet 2:11': [DIŠ] ṛ<sup>ne</sup>-eḥ bu ṛ<sup>uš</sup>/da<sup>2</sup> [...]. In this case, one should consider the preceding phrase *dabāba ma'da* (l. 2'), which may likewise precede the signs in the following entries. Cf. also the comparable entry Böck 2000, 283ff. (excerpt 2) l. 12: DIŠ *ina* DU<sub>11</sub>.DU<sub>11</sub>-šú *ne-[e]ḥ* NA BI *ka-bat* SAG. DU TUK-ši and the Middle Babylonian entry PUM 4501 in Kraus 1936–1937, 223 l. 85: DIŠ *ne-eḥ* [k]a-š[ad Áš]. All variants of the apodoses including the one in our text are positive.

58' See Reiner 1982, 289 arguing that the protasis “selling on the (main) street” should be seen as an echo of Old Babylonian practices. But this phenomenon might be likewise seen as a common feature of the Mesopotamian *sūqu* in general and must therefore not necessarily hint on an Old Babylonian origin of this omen entry.

59' See the very similar entry in *Kataduggû* 123: DIŠ *ta-di-ir-tu ina* ŠĀ-šú *ma-da-at* x [...].

<sup>49</sup> Reiner 1982, 288 notes mistakenly l. 11.

<sup>50</sup> See also Freedman 2006, 18–19, l. 82.

**Šumma Ea liballiṭka, tablet 2**

**Tablet 2:** *šumma šillašu kīma rīmi inaṭṭal ina kakki iddak* “If his shadow looks like an ox: he will be killed by weapon”.

A: K. 3679 + K. 3953 + K. 3961 + K. 4119b (+) K. 5934 (+) K. 8149	K. 3679 + K. 3961 + K. 4119b: Kraus 1939, nr. 13	K. 3679 + K. 3953 + K. 3961 + K. 4119b: von Soden 1981	1–55 (i), 69’–99’, 100’–104’ (ii), 105’–132’ (iii), catchline(?), rubric, colophon (iv)
B: K. 9878 + K. 10346	K. 10346: Kraus 1939, nr. 14	K. 10346: von Soden 1981	19–48 (+ 16 more entries not attested in A and D)
C: K 16371	Kraus 1939, nr. 15	von Soden 1981	1–3
D: K 6280	Kraus 1939, nr. 16	von Soden 1981	1–23 (i), 56’–68’ (?) (ii, 61’ might be connectable with A ii 1’–3’), rubric(?) (iv)

- 1 A<sub>i1</sub> DIŠ *šil-la-šú ki-ma ri-mi i-na-ṭal ina* <sup>ṛgiš</sup>TUKUL GAZ  
C<sub>1</sub> [ ]-*šú, ki-ma ri-mi i-na-ṭal* [...]  
D<sub>i1</sub> <sup>ṛ</sup>DIŠ <sup>ṛ</sup>*šil-la-šú* <sup>ṛ</sup>*ki* <sup>ṛ</sup>*m[a ri-mi i]-ṛna-ṭal* [...]
- 2 A<sub>i2</sub> DIŠ IGI GÍR.TAB.LÚ.U<sub>18</sub>.LU GAR GABA.RI NU TUK-*ši*  
C<sub>2</sub> [ ] LÚ.<sub>18</sub>.LU GAR GABA.RI [...]  
D<sub>i2</sub> [DIŠ IGI] I GÍR.TAB. <sup>ṛ</sup>LÚ.U<sub>18</sub>.LU <sup>ṛ</sup>GAR GABA.RI <sup>ṛ</sup>NU <sup>ṛ</sup>T[UK-*ši*]
- 3 A<sub>i3</sub> DIŠ IGI.MEŠ-šú SIG<sub>7</sub> *maḥ-šu u la-ḥu-šú paṭ-ra ina* LA-šú ÚŠ  
C<sub>3</sub> [ ]-*šu u la-ḥu-šú* [...] <sup>ṛ</sup>šú [...]  
D<sub>i3</sub> [DIŠ] <sup>ṛ</sup>IGI.MEŠ-<sup>ṛ</sup>šú <sup>ṛ</sup>SIG<sub>7</sub> <sup>ṛ</sup>*maḥ-šu* <sup>ṛ</sup>*u* <sup>ṛ</sup>*la-ḥu-šú paṭ-ra ina* LA-šú ÚŠ
- 4 A<sub>i4</sub> DIŠ IGI ÁB.ZA.ZA GAR NÍG.TUK DUGUD-*it* UD. <sup>ṛ</sup>MEŠ-šú LÚGUD.DA.MEŠ  
D<sub>i4</sub> [DIŠ IGI] IGI ÁB.ZA.ZA <sup>ṛ</sup>GAR <sup>ṛ</sup>NÍG.TUK <sup>ṛ</sup>[DUGUD-*it*] <sup>ṛ</sup>UD.MEŠ-šú LÚGUD.DA.MEŠ
- 5 A<sub>i5</sub> DIŠ IGI *pa-zu-zu* GAR NINDA NU ZU GU<sub>7</sub> *ina* <sup>ṛ</sup>giš TUKUL GAZ  
D<sub>i5</sub> [DIŠ IGI] *pa-z[u-z]u* GAR <sup>ṛ</sup>NINDA <sup>ṛ</sup>N[U Z]U <sup>ṛ</sup>GU<sub>7</sub> *ina* <sup>ṛ</sup>giš TUKUL GAZ
- 6 A<sub>i6</sub> [DIŠ IGI] *ku<sub>6</sub>-sa-rik-ki* GAR NÍG.TUK DUGUD *ina* <sup>ṛ</sup>giš TUKUL GAZ  
D<sub>i6</sub> <sup>ṛ</sup>DIŠ <sup>ṛ</sup>IGI *ku<sub>6</sub>-sa-rik-ki* <sup>ṛ</sup>GAR <sup>ṛ</sup>[NÍG].<sup>ṛ</sup>TUK <sup>ṛ</sup>[DUGUD-*it* *ina* <sup>ṛ</sup>giš TUKUL GAZ
- 7 A<sub>i7</sub> [DIŠ IGI] I *la-bi* GAR *ga-mi-ru-ta<sub>5</sub>* DÛ-uš  
D<sub>i7</sub> [DIŠ] IGI *la-b[i]* GAR *ga-mi-ru-ta<sub>5</sub>* DÛ-uš
- 8 A<sub>i8</sub> [DIŠ IGI] I *kal-bi* GAR ÚKU UD.MEŠ-šú *i-šu*  
D<sub>i8</sub> [DIŠ] IGI *kal-[bi]* GAR <sup>ṛ</sup>ÚKU <sup>ṛ</sup>UD.MEŠ-šú *i-šu*
- 9 A<sub>i9</sub> [DIŠ IGI] Š[AḤ] GAR ḤUL IGI *ina* *la-li-šú* BA.ÚŠ  
D<sub>i9</sub> DIŠ IGI <sup>ṛ</sup>š[AḤ] <sup>ṛ</sup>GAR <sup>ṛ</sup>ḤUL IGI *ina* <sup>ṛ</sup>*la-ṛli-ṛšú* <sup>ṛ</sup>BA <sup>ṛ</sup>ÚŠ
- 10 A<sub>i10</sub> DIŠ IGI [K]A<sub>5</sub>.A GAR *ina* *at-ṛmé-e* GÛ-šú *iḥ-ḥa-ših*  
D<sub>i10</sub> DIŠ IGI [ ] GAR *ina* <sup>ṛ</sup>*at-ṛmé-e* <sup>ṛ</sup>GÛ-<sup>ṛ</sup>šú <sup>ṛ</sup>*iḥ-ḥa-ših*
- 11 A<sub>i11</sub> DIŠ IGI.MEŠ-šú *ši-i-ṛli* <sup>ṛ</sup>DIRI.MEŠ NÍG.TUK *na-an-da-ṛ-ṛú* *ina*  
NAM NU SUMUN-*bar*

- D<sub>i11f</sub> DIŠ ʾIGI.MEŠ-ʾ-š[ú ši-i-l]i ʾDIRIʾ.MEŠ {(x)} NÍG.TUK / na-ʾan-da<sup>2-ʾ</sup>-ú ina ʾNAMʾ NU SUMUN-bar
- 12 A<sub>i12</sub> DIŠ IGI.MEŠ-šú um-ša-a-ti DIRIʾ.MEŠ ENʾ TI NÍG NU ut-tú  
D<sub>i13</sub> DIŠ IGI.MEŠ-šú um-ša-a-ti DIRI.MEŠ EN TI NÍG NU ut-tú
- 13 A<sub>i13</sub> DIŠ IGI.MEŠ-šú GUG.MEŠ DIRI.MEŠ NÍG.TUK  
D<sub>i14</sub> DIŠ IGI.MEŠ-šú ʾGUGʾ.MEŠ DIRI.MEŠ NÍG.TUK
- 14 A<sub>i14</sub> DIŠ IGI.MEŠ-šú UGU.DIL.MEŠ DIRI.MEŠ NÍG.TUK ʾUL IGI  
D<sub>i15</sub> D[IŠ IGI]M.MEŠ-šú UGU.DIL.MEŠ DIRI.MEŠ NÍG.TUK ʾUL IGI
- 15 A<sub>i15</sub> DIŠ IGI.MEŠ-šú šur-ru-pu ʾUL IGI  
D<sub>i16</sub> [ ]-ru-pu ʾUL IGI
- 16 A<sub>i16</sub> DIŠ IGI.MEŠ-šú ha-šu-ú ÚŠ ŠÀ.GAR ÚŠ  
D<sub>i17</sub> [ ]š[u<sup>12</sup>(-s)u<sup>2</sup>]-ú ÚŠ ŠÀ.GAR ÚŠ
- 17 A<sub>i17</sub> DIŠ ÚNU 15-šú GÍD.DA DINGIR-ʾšú Á<sup>1ʾ</sup>.TAḤ-šú  
D<sub>i18</sub> [ ]GÍD]M.DA DINGIR-šú Á.TAḤ-šú
- 18 A<sub>i18</sub> DIŠ ÚNU 150-šú GÍD.DA DINGIR-ʾšú KIʾ-šú ze-ni  
D<sub>i19</sub> [ ]x DINGIR-šú KIʾ-šú ze-ni
- 
- 19 A<sub>i19</sub> DIŠ na-ḫi-ra-šú KI-šú DU<sub>11</sub>.DU<sub>11</sub> ina <sup>giš</sup>TUKUL GAZ  
B<sub>Vs1ʾ</sub> DIŠ ʾn[a-ḫi-ra-šú ...]  
D<sub>i20</sub> [ ]DU<sub>11</sub> ina <sup>giš</sup>TUKUL GAZ,
- 20 A<sub>i20</sub> ʾDIŠ<sup>r</sup>na-ḫir<sup>2ʾ</sup> ʾ[5-šú<sup>2</sup> ...]x ra ʾḫi<sup>2ʾ</sup>-ʾṭam<sup>2ʾ</sup> TUK-ši  
B<sub>Vs2ʾ</sub> DIŠ ʾn[a<sup>2</sup>-ḫir ...]  
D<sub>i21</sub> [ ]ra ḫi-ṭam TUK [(x)]
- 21 A<sub>i21</sub> DIŠ na-ḫir [150-šú<sup>2</sup> ...] NÍG.TUK ina [<sup>giš</sup>TUKUL] ÚŠ  
B<sub>Vs3ʾ</sub> DIŠ ʾn[a-ḫir ...]  
D<sub>i22</sub> [ ]T]UK ina <sup>giš</sup>TU[KUL x]
- 22 A<sub>i22</sub> DIŠ šu-ra-niš ʾD[U<sup>2</sup> ...] x ina<sup>2</sup> lu-up-nu u ba-kiʾ[(x)] ÚŠ  
B<sub>Vs4ʾ</sub> DIŠ šu<sup>2</sup>-[ra-niš ...]  
D<sub>i23</sub> [ ]x<sup>1</sup>-up-ni u ba-k[i ...]
- 23 A<sub>i23</sub> DIŠ bi-ni-it KIR<sub>4</sub> ʾx<sup>1</sup> [(...)] x NU<sup>2</sup> TUK DUMU [...] x  
B<sub>Vs5ʾ</sub> DIŠ bi-[ni-it ...]  
D<sub>i24</sub> [ ] (blank) x [...]
- 24 A<sub>i24</sub> DIŠ ku-tal na-ḫi-ri ba-ʾx [...] ziq i-...]  
B<sub>Vs6ʾ</sub> DIŠ ku-tál[ na-ḫi-ri ...]
- 25 A<sub>i25</sub> DIŠ i-si nu-ut-tur ma-la GU<sub>7</sub> i-na-ṭal ina ÚŠ<sup>2</sup> [...] ...]  
B<sub>Vs7ʾ</sub> DIŠ i-si nu-ut-ʾtur<sup>1</sup> ma-la GU<sub>7</sub><sup>1</sup> i-ʾna-ṭal ina ÚŠ<sup>2</sup> ḫi<sup>2ʾ</sup>-ʾma [x(x)]
- 26 A<sub>i26</sub> DIŠ ap-pi TI<sub>8</sub><sup>mušen</sup> GAR DU<sub>11</sub>.DU<sub>11</sub>-ma iq-qap<sup>21</sup> mé-tel-lu-ta DU<sup>2</sup>.  
UD.M[E(Š) ...]  
B<sub>Vs8ʾ</sub> DIŠ ap-pi TI<sub>8</sub><sup>mušen</sup>[GAR] DU<sub>11</sub>.DU<sub>11</sub>-ma ʾiq.qip/qa<sup>2</sup>-ʾap<sup>2</sup> mé-tel-lu-ta  
DU-ak UD.MEŠ-ʾšú<sup>1</sup> LÚGUD.ʾDA.MEʾ
- 27 A<sub>i27</sub> DIŠ SUḤUŠ KIR<sub>4</sub>-šú pa-ri-is ÚŠ ha-[an-ṭa ]  
B<sub>Vs9ʾ</sub> DIŠ SUḤUŠ KIR<sub>4</sub>-ʾšú<sup>2ʾ</sup> pa-ʾri<sup>1</sup>-is ÚŠ ha-an-ṭa ÚŠ

- 28 A<sub>i</sub> 28 DIŠ KIR<sub>4</sub> *ša-ru-uḫ i* [...]  
 B<sub>Vs</sub> 10' DIŠ KIR<sub>4</sub> *ša-ru-uḫ i-šár-rù*
- 29 A<sub>i</sub> 29 DIŠ MUNUS KIR<sub>4</sub> *šar-ḫat É KU<sub>4</sub>* [EN]  
 B<sub>Vs</sub> 11' DIŠ MUNUS KIR<sub>4</sub> *šar-ḫat É KU<sub>4</sub>* EN
- 30 A<sub>i</sub> 30 DIŠ MUNUS KIR<sub>4</sub> *ša mit-ḫur DUMU.MEŠ* [...]  
 B<sub>Vs</sub> 12' DIŠ MUNUS KIR<sub>4</sub> *ša<sup>r</sup> mit-ḫur DUMU.MEŠ TUK-ši*
- 31 A<sub>i</sub> 31 DIŠ KIR<sub>4</sub> *kà-pí-ip NÍG* [...]  
 B<sub>Vs</sub> 13' DIŠ KIR<sub>4</sub> *kà-pí-<sup>r</sup>ip NÍG ut-tú*
- 32 A<sub>i</sub> 32 DIŠ KIR<sub>4</sub> *su-um-ma-ti GAR da-ma-ma ul i* [...]  
 B<sub>Vs</sub> 14' DIŠ KIR<sub>4</sub> *su-um-ma-<sup>r</sup>ti<sup>r</sup> GAR<sup>r</sup> da-ma-ma ul i-kal-lu<sup>1</sup>(ŠU)*
- 33 A<sub>i</sub> 33 DIŠ *pi-sa-an* KIR<sub>4</sub> *šú<sup>r</sup> šur<sup>r</sup>-du* [...]  
 B<sub>Vs</sub> 15' DIŠ *pi-sa-an* KIR<sub>4</sub> *šú<sup>r</sup> šur<sup>r</sup>-du<sup>r</sup> ḫi<sup>r</sup>-ṭam TUK-ši*
- 34 A<sub>i</sub> 34 DIŠ KIR<sub>4</sub> *ša-pir* [...]  
 B<sub>Vs</sub> 16' DIŠ KIR<sub>4</sub> [*ša-pir*] (leer) *ḫi-ṭam TUK-ši*
- 35 A<sub>i</sub> 35 DIŠ *na-ḫi-ir šil(NUN)<sup>r</sup>* [...]  
 B<sub>Vs</sub> 17' DIŠ *n[ā-ḫi-ir<sup>r</sup>] (leer) šil-ta<sub>5</sub> DÛ-uš ÚŠ*
- 36 B<sub>Vs</sub> 18' [...] GABA.RI NU TUK-ši
- 37 B<sub>Vs</sub> 19' [...] *x<sup>r</sup> nam EN TI NÍG NU ut-tú*
- 38 B<sub>Vs</sub> 20' [...] NÍG<sup>2</sup>-ma NU *tar-šu-šú*
- 39 B<sub>Vs</sub> 21'a [...]
- 40 B<sub>Vs</sub> 21'b [...] : DIŠ<sup>2</sup>] KIR<sub>4</sub><sup>2</sup> GÍD. DA *ina-an<sup>r</sup>-ziq UD.MEŠ-šú GÍD.DA*
- 41 B<sub>Vs</sub> 22' [...] UD.MEŠ-šú LÚGUD.DA
- 42 B<sub>Vs</sub> 23' [...] *ta<sup>r</sup> mu ina GAL-šú ÚKU*
- 43 A<sub>2,1</sub>' [ ] ÚKU<sup>r</sup>
- B<sub>Rs</sub> 1 [...] lu NÍG.TUK ÚKU
- 44 A<sub>2,2</sub>' [...] NÍG<sup>r</sup>. TUK<sup>r</sup>-ma ÚKU
- B<sub>Rs</sub> 2 [...] NÍG.TUK-ma ÚKU
- 45 A<sub>2,3</sub>' [...] *te<sup>2</sup> šam-ḫat ARḪUŠ LUGAL IGI-mar*
- B<sub>Rs</sub> 3 [ ] *x<sup>r</sup> ḫat<sup>2</sup> ARḪUŠ<sup>r</sup> LUGAL IGI*
- 46 A<sub>2,4</sub> [ ] SUHUŠ<sup>2</sup> *i-kab-ba-as/aš ina* <sup>giš</sup>TUKUL ÚŠ
- B<sub>Rs</sub> 4 DIŠ *ki-bi-[ir<sup>2</sup> IGI<sup>2</sup> i-kab-]<sup>r</sup>ba<sup>2</sup>-as/aš ina* <sup>giš</sup>TUKUL ÚŠ
- 47 A<sub>2,5</sub> [DIŠ *ziq-<sup>r</sup>ni<sup>r</sup> DAGAL-áš GABA.RI-šú ina IGI-šú DU<sub>8</sub>-ár*
- B<sub>Rs</sub> 5 DIŠ *ziq-n[i<sup>2</sup> DAGAL-áš GABA].<sup>r</sup>RI<sup>r</sup>-šú ina IGI-šú DU<sub>8</sub>-ár*
- 48 A<sub>2,6</sub> [DIŠ *šap-ti ku-ši-i GAR GABA.RI NU TUK-ši*
- B<sub>Rs</sub> 6 DIŠ *šap-ti [ku-ši-i] GAR GABA.RI NU TUK-ši*
- 49b B<sub>Rs</sub> 7 DIŠ KIR<sub>4</sub>/KA *kal-bi<sup>r</sup> GAR UD.MEŠ-šú LÚGUD.DA.ME*
- 50b B<sub>Rs</sub> 8 DIŠ ZÚ.MEŠ-šú *ma-ḫa<sup>r</sup> [(x)]<sup>r</sup> x<sup>r</sup> tu/KU<sub>4</sub><sup>2</sup> ana ŠÀ NU GUR.ME-ni*  
*qa-a-a-pa-nu-ta<sub>5</sub> DÛ-uš*
- 51b B<sub>Rs</sub> 9 DIŠ SIG<sub>7</sub>.IGI<sup>II</sup>-šú *ana<sup>r</sup> kak<sup>2</sup>-kul-ti IGI<sup>II</sup>-šú ŠUB-ú MIN*
- 52b B<sub>Rs</sub> 10 DIŠ IGI *šik-ke-e GAR ge-ra-nu-šú NU TUK*
- 53b B<sub>Rs</sub> 11a DIŠ SAG.DU GU<sub>4</sub> GAR NÍG.<sup>r</sup>TUK<sup>r</sup> :



- 54<sub>b</sub> B<sub>RS</sub> 11b DIŠ GÍR GU<sub>4</sub> GAR NINDA *i-šeb-bi ina* <sup>giš</sup>TUKUL <sup>r</sup>RA<sup>2</sup><sup>1</sup>  
 55<sub>b</sub> B<sub>RS</sub> 12 DIŠ *ša-pu-li pa-<sup>r</sup>lu-<sup>r</sup>uk haṭ-ṭi-<sup>2</sup>i ina* <sup>giš</sup>TUKUL RA  
 56<sub>b</sub> B<sub>RS</sub> 13 DIŠ UGU LÚ.MEŠ <sup>r</sup>ša-<sup>r</sup>qu ina <sup>giš</sup>TUKUL GAZ  
 57<sub>b</sub> B<sub>RS</sub> 14 DIŠ <sup>he-pí</sup>ik-bir-<sup>r</sup>ma<sup>r</sup> ki-i-si-šú <sup>r</sup>im<sup>2</sup> xx ni<sup>2</sup><sup>r</sup> NÍG.TUK  
 58<sub>b</sub> B<sub>RS</sub> 15a DIŠ <sup>he-pí</sup>ina <sup>giš</sup>TUKUL [x] <sup>r</sup>(x)<sup>r</sup> :  
 59<sub>b</sub> B<sub>RS</sub> 15b DIŠ <sup>he-pí</sup>GAR <sup>r</sup>DIRI/SA<sub>5</sub><sup>2</sup><sup>r</sup> [...] <sup>r</sup>ti<sup>r</sup>  
 60<sub>b</sub> B<sub>RS</sub> 16 DIŠ <sup>he-pí</sup>ra x [...]  
 61<sub>b</sub> B<sub>RS</sub> 17 DIŠ <sup>he-pí</sup>IGI/<sup>r</sup>Ú<sup>2</sup><sup>r</sup> [...]  
 62<sub>b</sub> B<sub>RS</sub> 18 DIŠ <sup>he-pí</sup>ina<sup>2</sup> x [...]  
 63<sub>b</sub> B<sub>RS</sub> 19 DIŠ *tuḥ-r*[i<sup>2</sup> ...]  
 64<sub>b</sub> B<sub>RS</sub> 20 DIŠ <sup>r</sup>ḥe<sup>2</sup><sup>r</sup> [...]

- 49 A<sub>2,7</sub>' [DIŠ *na-ḥ*]i/tu]ḥ<sup>2</sup>-ri *qú-up-pu-ti u* KIR<sub>4</sub>/KA-šú *ana* 15 *zi-ir ina* GIŠ RA  
 50 A<sub>2,8</sub>' [DIŠ x x]-ri-is *up-pi a-ḥi-šú* BAL-at *ḥi-ṭam* TUK  
 51 A<sub>2,9</sub>' [DIŠ MI]N<sup>2</sup> *tuḥ-ri-šú* (leer) MIN MIN  
 52 A<sub>2,10</sub>' [DIŠ]šá<sup>2</sup> *-pu-li* SA<sub>5</sub> *ì-šarru*(LUGAL)  
 53 A<sub>2,11</sub>' [...] x *i-ḥa-šu-šu* Úš *le-mé-ni* Úš  
 54 A<sub>2,12</sub>' [...] x MEŠ ÚKU *dan-nu* TI.LA<sup>2</sup> 72<sup>2</sup> MU<sup>2</sup> [(x)]  
 55 A<sub>2,13</sub>' [...] x (leer) MU<sub>1</sub>.BI<sub>2</sub> x [x (x)]

(break of unknown length)

- 56' D<sub>ii</sub> 1 <sup>r</sup>DIŠ<sup>r</sup> [...]  
 57' D<sub>ii</sub> 2 DIŠ <sup>r</sup>pa-an<sup>2</sup><sup>r</sup> [...]  
 58' D<sub>ii</sub> 3 DIŠ ŠU <sup>giš</sup>/is<sup>2</sup><sup>r</sup> [...]  
 59' D<sub>ii</sub> 4 DIŠ GÍR<sup>ll</sup>-<sup>r</sup>šú<sup>r</sup> [...]  
 60' D<sub>ii</sub> 5 DIŠ MUNUS <sub>1</sub>SUḤUŠ<sup>2</sup> [...]  
 61' D<sub>ii</sub> 6 DIŠ GEŠ[TU<sup>2</sup> ...]  
 62'–68' D<sub>ii</sub> 7–13 DIŠ [...]

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- 69' A<sub>ii</sub> 1 DIŠ GEŠTU-šú š[á 15<sup>2</sup> ...]  
 70' A<sub>ii</sub> 2 DIŠ GEŠTU-šú šá [150<sup>2</sup> ...]  
 71' A<sub>ii</sub> 3 DIŠ GEŠTU<sup>ll</sup>-šú MIN [...]  
 72' A<sub>ii</sub> 4 DIŠ LÚ *ina* N[Á<sup>2</sup> ...] x  
 73' A<sub>ii</sub> 5 DIŠ KL.MIN *ana* [... SUMUN]-<sup>r</sup>bar<sup>2</sup>  
 74' A<sub>ii</sub> 6 DIŠ NA *ina* KL.[NÁ<sup>2</sup> *ana* 15<sup>2</sup> ... k]al<sup>2</sup>  
 75' A<sub>ii</sub> 7 DIŠ KL.MIN *ana* 1[50 ... SUMUN<sup>2</sup>]-bar  
 76' A<sub>ii</sub> 8 DIŠ MUŠ.DÍM.GURUN.[NA ... DAGAL<sup>2</sup>]-aš  
 77' A<sub>ii</sub> 9 DIŠ *ḥu-mu-ši-ru* [...] kal  
 78' A<sub>ii</sub> 10 DIŠ KL.MIN TUŠ<sup>2</sup> [... k]al<sup>2</sup>

- 79' A<sub>ii</sub> 11 DIŠ lu SA.A lu ka[l-bi<sup>2</sup> ... GI]G ÚŠ  
 80' A<sub>ii</sub> 12 DIŠ KI.MIN [...] rTI  
 81' A<sub>ii</sub> 13 DIŠ NIM<sup>na4</sup>ZA.G[ĪN<sup>2</sup> ...]rKU<sub>4</sub>  
 82' A<sub>ii</sub> 14 DIŠ ḫa-ma-ši-ru [... k]al<sup>2</sup>  
 83' A<sub>ii</sub> 15 DIŠ KI.MIN [... SUMUN<sup>2</sup>]-bar  
 84' A<sub>ii</sub> 16 DIŠ KI.MIN TA e [...] am<sup>2</sup>  
 85' A<sub>ii</sub> 17 DIŠ GĪR.TAB TA ú-r[i ...] rDIRI<sup>2</sup>.MEŠ  
 86' A<sub>ii</sub> 18 DIŠ GĪR.TAB TA TÙR [...] r x x<sup>2</sup> DIRI/NUN<sup>2</sup>.MEŠ  
 87' A<sub>ii</sub> 19 DIŠ MUŠ [ina 1]50 NA [...] rDU<sup>2</sup>-lik<sup>2</sup> rDINGIR<sup>2</sup>.BI i-dal-laḫ<sup>51</sup>  
 88' A<sub>ii</sub> 20 DIŠ na-an-[du-ru<sup>2</sup> (x)] lú/rap<sup>2</sup>, r(x) a<sup>2</sup>-na GURU[Š<sup>2</sup>] sik-ka-ta ina KA-šú i-  
 rat-tu-u  
 89' A<sub>ii</sub> 21 DIŠ x [...] ina UGU<sup>giš</sup>NÁ<sup>2</sup> DÚR.RE<sup>2</sup> ina MU<sup>1</sup>(DU<sub>8</sub>) BI ÚŠ  
 90' A<sub>ii</sub> 22f DIŠ [x x x M]UŠ.MEŠ lu 2 lu 3 lu 4 EGIR a-ḫa-meš / [x x x x (x)] ḫa-al-qa  
 EN qin-ni-šú IGI-mar  
 91' A<sub>ii</sub> 24 [DIŠ ... Z]I-šú GAR-un ZI-šú in-na-šar  
 92' A<sub>ii</sub> 25f [DIŠ ...] lu ru-us-su lu KĀŠ-šú / [x x x x (x)] e-šir NA BI ip-pa-ṭar  
 93' A<sub>ii</sub> 27 [DIŠ ... it-t]a-na-r la<sup>21</sup>-r ku<sup>21</sup> DÚR-šu iz-zí NA BI BIR-šú<sup>2</sup> ZI-ḫa
- 
- 94' A<sub>ii</sub> 28 [DIŠ ...] bad EN TIL.A UGU-šú ba-ši  
 95' A<sub>ii</sub> 29 [DIŠ ...] UD/BABBAR.MEŠ ḪA.LA GU<sub>7</sub>  
 96' A<sub>ii</sub> 30 [DIŠ ...] UD/BABBAR.MEŠ i-dir-tu<sub>4</sub>
- 
- 97' A<sub>ii</sub> 31 [DIŠ ...] i-dam-mi-iq  
 98' A<sub>ii</sub> 32 [DIŠ ...] i-dir-tu<sub>4</sub> ÚS-šú  
 99' A<sub>ii</sub> 33 [DIŠ ...]x<sup>d</sup>NIN.URTA

(break of unknown length)

100' A<sub>2 ii</sub> 1' DIŠ rKI.MIN<sup>2</sup>[...]

101' A<sub>2 ii</sub> 2' DIŠ SÚR.DÙ[<sup>mušen</sup> ...]

102' A<sub>2 ii</sub> 3' DIŠ a-ri-b[u ...]

103' A<sub>2 ii</sub> 4' DIŠ ši-ka<sup>2</sup> [...]

104' A<sub>2 ii</sub> 5' DIŠ x [...]

(break of unknown length)

51 Von Soden 1981 notes mistakenly *id-da-laḫ*.

105'	A <sub>iii</sub> 1'	[...] ʾKI.MIN :?ʾ
106'	A <sub>iii</sub> 2'	[...] TI
107'	A <sub>iii</sub> 3'	[...] TIL/SUMUN
108'	A <sub>iii</sub> 4'	[...] GUR.MEŠ
109'	A <sub>iii</sub> 5'	[...] GI.NA
110'	A <sub>iii</sub> 6'	[...] <i>ut-tú</i> ?
<hr/>		
111'	A <sub>iii</sub> 7'	[... GI]G TI- <i>uṭ</i>
112'	A <sub>iii</sub> 8'	[...] DÁBDA/TIL.TIL?
113'	A <sub>iii</sub> 9'	[...] x <i>ina</i> É NA GÁL
114'	A <sub>iii</sub> 10'	[...] x ŠĀ.BI NU DU <sub>10</sub> .GA
115'	A <sub>iii</sub> 11'	[...]-šú TAR- <i>as</i>
116'	A <sub>iii</sub> 12'	[...] ŠĀ.BI NU DU <sub>10</sub> .GA
117'	A <sub>iii</sub> 13'	[... Š]Ā.BI TA NU ÍL
118'	A <sub>iii</sub> 14'	[... <i>ina</i> ʾ?] ʾg <sup>is</sup> TUKUL ÚŠ
119'	A <sub>iii</sub> 15'	DIŠ KI.MIN x x [...] x EN DU <sub>11</sub> -šú ÚŠ
120'	A <sub>iii</sub> 16'	DIŠ MUŠ TA KÁ [x x (x)] <i>ana</i> É NA KU <sub>4</sub> <i>qa-a-pa-nu-ta<sub>5</sub></i> DÙ
121'	A <sub>iii</sub> 17'	DIŠ MUŠ TA ḤABRUD <i>ul-ta-nar-ra</i> ZI.GA <i>dan-nu ina</i> É NA GÁL
122'	A <sub>iii</sub> 18'	DIŠ MUŠ <i>iz-qup-ma</i> IGI NA <i>ina-ṭal</i> ZI.GA ZI-šú
123'	A <sub>iii</sub> 19'	DIŠ MUŠ <i>iz-qup-ma ku-tál-la-šú ana</i> IGI NA GAR-un <i>ti-bu-šú</i> È
124'	A <sub>iii</sub> 20'	DIŠ <i>ina šu-pa-al ma-a-a-al-ti</i> NA MUŠ <i>iq-nun-ma NÁ-iš</i> NA BI <i>ina</i> g <sup>is</sup> TUKUL GAZ
125'	A <sub>iii</sub> 21'	DIŠ MUŠ g <sup>is</sup> PA NA NIGIN- <i>ma</i> SAG.DU- <i>su ana</i> IGI KI GAR <i>ana</i> EN DU <sub>11</sub> -šú IGI
126'	A <sub>iii</sub> 22'	DIŠ KI.MIN- <i>ma ana e-le-nu</i> GAR EN DU <sub>11</sub> -šú IGI-šú
127'	A <sub>iii</sub> 23'	DIŠ <i>ina</i> TUŠ NA <i>bir-šu ib-ru-uš ma-ru-uš-ta</i> IGI- <i>mar</i>
128'	A <sub>iii</sub> 24'	DIŠ <i>lil-lu la še-mu ina</i> É NA Û.TU É BI BIR
129'	A <sub>iii</sub> 25'	DIŠ UZU.DIR <i>ina ḥar-ba-ti</i> IGI <i>ḥar-ba-tu ši-i</i> TUŠ- <i>ab</i>
130'	A <sub>iii</sub> 26'	DIŠ UZU.DIR <i>ina</i> É <i>ina</i> KAŠ? IGI É BI ŠUB- <i>di</i>
131'	A <sub>iii</sub> 27'	DIŠ <i>an-zu-zu ina</i> É NA IGI É BI ŠUB- <i>di</i>
132'	A <sub>iii</sub> 28'	DIŠ UZU.DIR <i>ina</i> É NA IGI- <i>ma</i> ZI-šú <i>la</i> [x x] / SIG <sub>5</sub> (leer) [x (x)]

(break of unknown length)

Catchline(?):

A<sub>iv</sub> 1' ʾDIŠ é? xʾ [...]

Rubric und colophon A:

A<sub>iv</sub> 2' DUB 1? .,KÁM, [...]

A<sub>iv</sub> 3' KURʾ [ʾAN.ŠĀR-DÛ-A MAN ŠÚ KUR AN.ŠĀR<sup>ki</sup>] /

(not inscribed for the length of ca. 20 lines)

## Rubric and colophon D:

D<sub>iv</sub>1' [... *nis*<sup>2</sup>]-*ḫu* DIŠ ALAM'.<sup>2</sup>D[*ÍM-mu-ú*<sup>2</sup> (x)]

D<sub>iv</sub>4<sup>ff</sup> (BAK 319d)

## Translation:

- 1 If his shadow looks like an ox: he will be killed by weapon.
  - 2 If he has (lit. it is set) the face of a scorpion man: he will have no opponent.
  - 3 If his face is streaked with yellow-green and his chin is loose: he will die in the prime of his life.
  - 4 If he has the face of an *apsasû*-bovine: he will be rich (and) reputable; his days will be short.
  - 5 If he has the face of the *Pazuzu*-demon: he will consume food without knowing it; he will be killed by weapon.
  - 6 If he has the face of a bison: he will be rich (and) reputable; he will die by weapon.
  - 7 If he has the face of a lion: he will act competently.
  - 8 If he has the face of a dog: he will be poor; his days will be short.
  - 9 If he has the face of a pig: he will experience evil; he will die in the prime of his life.
  - 10 If he has the face of a fox: his voice fails while speaking.
  - 11 If his face is full of *holes*: he will be rich (?); by fate he will not grow old.
  - 12 If his face is full of *umšatu*-moles: as long as he lives he will find nothing.
  - 13 If his face is full of *pindû*-moles: he will be rich.
  - 14 If his face is full of *ugudilû*-moles: he will be rich; he will experience evil.
  - 15 If his face is reddish (like fire): he will experience evil.
  - 16 If his face is darkened/*gloomy*(?): he will die by starvation.
  - 17 If his right cheek-bone is long: his god (is) his supporter.
  - 18 If his left cheek-bone is long: his god is angry with him.
- 
- 19 If his nostrils *speak* with him (i.e. they move while he is speaking?): he will be killed by weapon.
  - 20 If his right nostril(?) [...] he will have a sin.
  - 21 If his [left?] nostril [...]: he will be rich; he will die by weapon.
  - 22 If he walks(?) like a cat [...] he will die either in poverty or weeping.
  - 23 If the in-between of (his) nose [...] he has not(?); a son [...].
  - 24 If on the back of the nostrils [...] he will worr]y(?), [...]
  - 25 If his jaws are widely opened, he looks at everything that he eats: he will (?) (...).
  - 26 If he has the nose (like the beak) of an eagle, (when) he speaks it/he(?) (i.e. the nose or the client) consequently leans back (lit. caves in or back): he will *live* (lit. walk) excellently; his days will be short.
  - 27 If the foundation of his nose is divided: he will die by fever.

- 28 If the nose is noble: he will be rich.  
 29 If a woman has a noble nose (lit. is noble concerning the nose): she will command(?) the household that she enters.  
 30 If a woman, her nose is *even*: she will have sons.  
 31 If the nose is curved: he will find something.  
 32 If he has a nose (like the beak) of a dove: he will not cease mourning.  
 33 If the *cartilage*(?) (lit. box) of his nose is *movable*(?) (lit. let flow, return): he will have a sin.  
 34 If the nose is crinkled: he will have a sin.  
 35 If the nose [...]: he will cause conflict; he will grow old(?).  
 36 [...] he will have no opponent.  
 37 [...] as long as he lives he will find nothing.  
 38 [...] he will be rich(?) but it will not be appropriate for him(?).  
 39 [...]  
 40 [If] the nose(?) is long: he will worry; his days will be long.  
 41 [...] his days will be short.  
 42 [...] (?), when he grows up he will be poor.  
 43 [...] he will be rich (but) become poor (later on).  
 44 [...] he will be rich but become poor (later on).  
 45 [...] (?) is extraordinary: he will have (lit. see) the mercy of the king.  
 46 If the lid-edge(?) [...] he/it treads on/constricts(?): he will die by weapon.  
 47 If the beard is wide: his opponent will be vanished (from) before him.  
 48 If he has the lips of a *crab*(?): he will have no opponent.

(just witness B)

- 49<sub>b</sub> If he has the snout of a dog: his days will be short.  
 50<sub>b</sub> If his teeth are *turned around*(?), (and the) [...(?)] does not turn to the centre(?): he will become a creditor.  
 51<sub>b</sub> If his eyebrow(s) are laid over the iris: {ditto} (he will become a creditor).  
 52<sub>b</sub> If he has the face of a mongoose: he will have adversaries.  
 53<sub>b</sub> If he has the head of an ox: he will be rich.  
 54<sub>b</sub> If he has the foot of an ox: he will consume food(?); he will *die* (lit. will be beaten) by weapon.  
 55<sub>b</sub> If his groin is divided(?): he is a sinner; he will *die* (lit. will be beaten) by a weapon.  
 56<sub>b</sub> If (he behaves like) he is high (in rank) above (other) people: he will be killed by weapon.  
 57<sub>b</sub> If {broken} (he/it) has been thickened/got thick and his money-bag(?) [...] he will be rich(?).  
 58<sub>b</sub> If {broken}: by a weapon [...].  
 59<sub>b</sub> If (he has the) {broken}: [...].  
 60<sub>b</sub> If {broken} [...].

- 61<sub>b</sub> If {broken} [...].  
 62<sub>b</sub> If {broken}: by [...].  
 63<sub>b</sub> If the Achilles tendon/heel(?) [...].  
 64<sub>b</sub> If {br[oken?] ...}.

(A continues)

- 49 [If] (he has) collapsed nostrils/heels(?) and his nose/mouth turns to the right: he will *die* (lit. will be beaten) by weapon.  
 50 [If ...] is [separated?], his upper arm is contorted(?): he will have a sin.  
 51 [If ...] is {ditto}(?), his Achilles tendon/heel(?) {ditto} (is contorted): {ditto} (he will have a sin).  
 52 If the groin is red: he will be rich.  
 53 [If ...] are swollen(?): he will have a severe(?) death (lit. die a death of evil).  
 54 [If ...] are [...]: severe poverty(?); he will live for 72 years(?).  
 55 [...] his(?) name [will be ...].

(gap of unknown length)

(D ii)

- 56' If [...].  
 57' If the face(?) [...].  
 58' If the hand(?) [...].  
 59' If his feet [...].  
 60' If a woman, the base [of her ...(?)] [...].  
 61' If [the/his] ear(?) [...].  
 62'–68' (too damaged for translation)

(gap of unknown length)

(A ii)

- 69' If his ear o[n the right side? ...].  
 70' If his ear on [the left side? ...].  
 71' If his ears {ditto} (?) [...].  
 72' If a man while sleeping [...].  
 73' If {ditto} to the [...].  
 74' If a man in his b[ed(?) to the right ...].  
 75' If {ditto} to the le[ft ... he will grow] old(?).  
 76' If a gecko [... he will] increase(?) [his wealth?].  
 77' If a mouse [...].  
 78' If {ditto} [...].  
 79' If either a cat or a dog(?) [... a sick pers]on will die(?).  
 80' If {ditto} [... he will] live(?).

- 81' If a lapis-coloured(?) fly [...] he will enter(?) [...].  
 82' If a mouse [...].  
 83' If {ditto} [...] he will grow] old(?).  
 84' If {ditto} from [...].  
 85' If a scorpion from the roof(?) [...] (?).  
 86' If a scorpion from the yard [...] (?).  
 87' If a snake [to] the left of a man [...] and we]nt (away?): his god will be concerned.  
 88' If a cent[iped(?) ...] regarding a young man(?), they will stick a nail in his mouth.  
 89' If [...] sits(?) on the top of the bed: he will die within the same year.  
 90' If [...] snakes, either 2, 3 or 4 after each other / [...] he will *find* (lit. see) a missing/fugitive person as well as his family.  
 91' [If ...] (has been) set(?) on his throat: his life will be defended.  
 92' [If ...] either his spittle or his urine / [...] is drawn/planned: this man will be released.  
 93' [If ... wherever(?)] he walks his anus is spattering: scattering (concerning him) will be torn out(?).

- 
- 94' [If ...] is present(?) as long as he lives.  
 95' [If ...] days(?)/are white: he will consume his share.  
 96' [If ...] days(?)/are white(?): distress.

- 
- 97' [If ...] will be good.  
 98' [If ...] distress will follow him.  
 99' [If ...] Ninurta(?).

(gap of unknown length)

(A<sub>2</sub> ii)

- 100' If {ditto} [...].

- 
- 101' If a falcon [...].  
 102' If a raven [...].

- 
- 103' If a mungo(?) [...].

- 
- 104' If [...].

(gap of unknown length)

(A iii)

- 105'–106' (too damaged for translation)  
 107' [If ...] he will grow old(?).

- 108' [If ...] will turn/follow (him) repeatedly(?).  
 109' [If ...] is firm(?).  
 110' [If ...] he will find [...].
- 
- 111' [If ...] he will be healed/healthy(?).  
 112' [If ...] he will grow (very?) old/defeat(?).  
 113' [If ...] will be in the house(hold) of (the) man.  
 114' [If ...] his heart will not be happy.  
 115' [If ...] his [...] will be cut off/decided(?).  
 116' [If ...] his heart won't be happy.  
 117' [If ... (of?)] his heart since he cannot bear it(?).  
 118' [If ... he will] die by weapon.  
 119' If {ditto} [...] his opponent (at court) will die.  
 120' If a snake from the gate [...] (and) enters the house of a man: he will become a creditor.  
 121' If a snake is repeatedly led(?) out of a hole: a strong claim(?) will be in/on the household of (the) man.  
 122' If a snake has been erected and looks towards the face of a man: a claim(?) will come up against him.  
 123' If a snake has been erected and its back is set towards the face of a man: a claim will fade away (lit. goes out; leaves).  
 124' If a snake has nested under the sleeping place of a man and *lurks*: this man will be killed by weapon.  
 125' If a snake entwines the stick of a man and its head *points* (lit. is set) towards the surface of the ground: he will face his opponent at court.  
 126' If {ditto} and it (i.e. the head of the snake) *points* upwards: an opponent at court will face him.  
 127' If a *shine* lit up in the homestead of a man: he will experience hardship.  
 128' If a *mentally disabled* child, incapable of hearing, is born inside the house of a man: this household will be scattered.  
 129' If *kamūnu*-fungus is seen in the wasteland: this wasteland will be inhabited.  
 130' If *kamūnu*-fungus is seen inside a (man's) house<sup>52</sup>: this household will be thrown down.  
 131' If an *anzuzu*-spider is seen inside a man's house: this household will be thrown down.  
 132' If *kamūnu*-fungus(?) is seen inside a man's house and its raising/emergence(?) is not [...] / (it is) good [...].

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<sup>52</sup> The text adds *ina* KAŠ “inside the beer” which is most likely a mistake for *ina* É NA “inside a man's house”.



**Commentary:**

2 Like the demon *Pazuzu* in l. 5 the scorpion man (maybe pronounced *girtablilu*<sup>53</sup>) is a mythological being. He is also known from the Gilgameš-epic tablet IX as well as one of the demons created by Tiamat at the beginning of the *Enūma Eliš* myth beneath others together with the *kusarikku* (“wisent” or “(European) bison”, see l. 6).<sup>54</sup>

4 See slightly varying *Alamdimmû* 8:135: DIŠ ÁB.ZA.ZA GAR NÍG.TUK DUGUD ʾMUʾ SIG<sub>5</sub>-ti UD.ʾMEŠ<sup>57</sup> [... *i-šu*]).

5 See *Alamdimmû* 8:136, interestingly with an obscure variation within its protasis: DIŠ *pi-ʾ-a-zi* GAR NINDA NU ʾZUʾ GU<sub>7</sub> *ina* <sup>giš</sup>TUKULʾ [...]. This deviation might have been caused either by miscopying or a phonological(?) association of the word *piʾazu* “a mouse” and the name of the demon *Pazuzu*.

6 See *Alamdimmû* 8:128 with variants within its apodosis: (...) *i-šarru*(LUGAL) ÚŠ <sup>giš</sup>TUKUL ÚŠ : UD.MEŠ-šú LÚGUD.MEŠ. Consider likewise the graphical peculiarity of the spelling *ku<sub>6</sub>-sa-rik-ki* in contrast to *ku-sa-rik-ki* in witness B, which is also attested in the commentary text TBP 21 (K. 8140 obv 6ʾ–8ʾ: *ku<sub>6</sub>-sa-rik-ki*).

7 See the parallel *Alamdimmû* 8:129.

8 Cf. *Alamdimmû* 8:132 with a slightly varying apodosis: (...) UD.MEŠ LÚGUD.DA.MEŠ NÍG.ŠU-šú IZI GU<sub>7</sub>-šú).

9 See *Alamdimmû* 8:133 with a slightly varying apodosis: (...) ÚKU-ʾinʾ UD.MEŠ [LÚGUDʾ(DA)].MEŠ.

10 See *Alamdimmû* 8:134 with the varying apodosis: (...) *mu-šal-li pa[r-ri-iš ...]* ÚKU-*in* “he is a lyer, [his brother] will be poor”. It is particularly interesting that the commentary TBP 21 (K. 8140) obv 17ʾ–18ʾ: [D]IŠ IGI KA<sub>5</sub>.A GAR *mu-šal-li pa[r-ri-iš ŠÉŠ-šú ÚKUʾ]* / *ina at-me-e KA-šú iḫ-[...]x* : IGI.MEŠ-šú *ḫa-[...]* seems to refer to this passage. It is therefore quite possible that our text might have interpreted the commentary remark “his voice fails while speaking” as part of the apodosis.

11 See *Alamdimmû* 8:12 which lists a variant of the same puzzling passage: (...) NÍG.TUK *na-an-ʾ-du-ú ina* NAM NU SUMUN-*bar*.<sup>55</sup> The interpretation as *ina ūmi*(UD) *ilu*(DINGIR) *da/ta-ʾu-u* “on (that/a) day a god will (?)” in von Soden 1981, 112 (ibid. 116, translating: “wenn der Gott ...”) is doubtful since the sign sequence is almost certainly to be read *na-an-* (instead of *ina* UD DINGIR) in witness A (coll.). Witness D is less clear concerning the sign form NA or AŠ UD AN, although the reading and its interpretation remains unclear.

<sup>53</sup> See CAD U, 165.

<sup>54</sup> See Lambert 2013, 58–59.

<sup>55</sup> This passage from the apodosis has not been translated or commented upon in Böck 2000, 109.

12 See *Alamdimmû* 8:11 with a considerably differing apodosis: (...) NÍG.TUK.MEŠ IBILA *za-kir* MU TUK-ši.

14 See *Alamdimmû* 8:16 with a considerably differing apodosis: (...) ÚŠ-*ma* EGIR-šú Ê-*su* BIR-*aḥ*.

16 The rare verb *ḥašû* “to darken” in connection with features of the human body is also attested in *Sakikkû* 3:98 (referring to the hair of a sick person).<sup>56</sup> The other attestation presumably referring to the eyes, i.e. the entry discussed here, in AHW I, 335 *ḥašû* VI as well as CDA, 111 *ḥašû* V should be considered a feature of the face. It might have similar transferred semantics as is the case with the meanings of *adāru* “to be dark, sombre” as well as “to fear, to be afraid”. Von Soden 1981, 120 interprets the verbal form in D according to the traces [... -s]u<sup>2</sup>-ú as *ḥesû* “to cover, to press” which might be seen as a variant to *ḥašû* “to darken; be disturbed/gloomy(?)”.

20 Von Soden 1981, 112 l. 20 interprets this passage differently, as [... i]-*ra-ḥi* DAM TUK-ši “... bekommt er eine Gattin” (ibid. p. 116). Against this the spatial distribution of *x-ra*<sup>7</sup> and *ḥi-ṭam*/DAM in the new join to witness A shows a clear division between the signs *ra* and *ḥi*.

26 Both witnesses (A and B) differ from each other in the spelling of the verbal form A: *iq-qab*<sup>7</sup> and B: *iq-qip/qa*<sup>7</sup>-*ab*<sup>7</sup>. The interpretation of these forms in von Soden (1981), 112 i 26 as *ik-zer*<sup>17</sup> “(...), wenn er spricht, sie kräuselt” is certainly improbable. The most promising verbal root would be *qâpu* “to buckle, to cave in” which is otherwise attested in reference to the nose within the *qutāru*-commentary BRM IV nr. 32:23 regarding the snout of an ape.<sup>57</sup>

28 See for the protasis *Alamdimmû* 5:21: DIŠ *šá-ru-uḥ* [...] as well as the excerpt-tablet 3:11 (DIŠ KIR<sub>4</sub>-šú *šá-ru-uḥ* x[...]) and the *Alamdimmû*-commentary 1:64: BE KIR<sub>4</sub> *šá-ru-u[ḥ ...] / šar-ḥu* [...].

29 See the similar entry in the *Alamdimmû* excerpt-tablet 3:23 (Böck 2000, 288): DIŠ MUNUS KIR<sub>4</sub> *šar-ḥat-ma šá-pa-tu šá* GÜB [...], which in most cases refer to a woman's physiognomy. The unusual construction with an accusative of relation (“a woman is noble with respect to her nose”) is also attested in the incipit of the first tablet on women's physiognomy *Šumma sinništu qaqqada rabât* “If a woman is big regarding

<sup>56</sup> CAD H, 145f. lists the verb separately with the differing meaning “to become disarranged or the like” (*ḥašû* D). It should be mentioned that the presumed meaning “to be dark” relies solely on the lexical attestation of the adj. *ḥašû* within the equation *u<sub>4</sub> šú.uš.ru = u<sub>4</sub>-mu ḥa-šû-u* “a dark/cloudy day” in the lexical list Nabnitu IV:246 (see MSL 16, 86).

<sup>57</sup> See Geller 2010, 168–173.

(her) head”. Some constructions within the main series on men’s bodily features might use a similar construction which is somewhat blurred by facilitating translations.<sup>58</sup>

31 See for the protasis the *Alamdimmû*-commentary 1:68 (Böck 2000, 242f.): BE KIR<sub>4</sub> *kà-pi-i[p ...]*.

32 See, for the apodosis, the interesting passage in the ritual for observing an eclipse BRM IV nr. 6:7 *kabtu ša di-im-ma-at da-ma-ma ul ikallu*. The symbolic connection between the dove and mourning is apparent. Likewise, see the expression *idammumū summatiš* “they mourn like a dove” in STT 68:24.

33 See AHW II, 868 sub 3c *redû* Š with the literal translation “laufen des Kastens der Nase”. It might be possible that *pisannu* describes the layer of cartilage covering the inner parts of the nose. The verbal form *šurdu* (*redû* Š stative) has been tentatively translated as “moveable” or “can be moved” even if the other attestations of the Š-stem of *redû* offer a wider range of meanings but not as such referring a particular feature of an anatomical area.<sup>59</sup>

34 See *Alamdimmû*-excerpt 3 (see Böck 2000, 288, K 105) l. 10: DIŠ KIR<sub>4</sub>-šú *ša-pir ħi-ṭam TUK-ši šá bu-u[n-na-nu-ú-šú? ...]*.

38 The meaning of *taršu* “correct; appropriate” or *tarāšu* “to spread, to stretch”<sup>60</sup> in this position is unclear. Thus, the translation provided here is provisional.

40–41 Both entries might possibly form a pair regarding the length of the nose which is indicated by the parallel construction of the apodoses l. 40b “[If the] nose(?) is long: his days will be long” and l. 41 “[If the nose? is short?]: his days will be short. See the similar pair in the *Alamdimmû* commentary 1:65–66 (Böck 2000, 242).

49<sub>b</sub> It is unclear whether one has to read *pû*(KA) “mouth” or *appu*(KIR<sub>4</sub>) “nose” but the surrounding entries, referring to the lips and the teeth, might suggest the anatomical region of *pû*(KA) “mouth”. The apodosis “his days will be short” is likewise attested in a number of other similes of the face and its resemblance with the face of a dog.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>58</sup> See for instance *Alamdimmû* 95–104 which has been regularly translated “If his face is . . .” but which has been noted as “DIŠ *pa-ni* + (verb indicating a change of colour in singular)”. Since Akkadian “face” is usually attested as *plurale tantum* (*pānū*) one might think of a similar construction with an accusative of relation (here obliquus *pāni*) as in the case of the women’s tablet. The singular verbal feature would then, being grammatically correct, refer to the man who is “so and so coloured regarding his face”.

<sup>59</sup> See the differing contexts of the attestations in CAD R, 243–244. sub 12–14 “to have (something) led, sent, driven; (idiom.) give in exchange; to advance, proceed; to make (fluid) flow, to sweep away”.

<sup>60</sup> See also CAD T, 242ff. in prepositional use with *ina* in *ibid.* p. 243 sub a 2’ (spatial, “in front of; facing”) and *ibid.* p. 244 sub b 3’ (temporal, “course of a certain (former) time span”).

<sup>61</sup> See *Alamdimmû* 8:132 as well as the *Alamdimmû* commentary 1:36 and 3:13 (Böck 2000, 240 and 252) (face of a dog)

Other similes with body parts of a dog refer mostly to loss of property and bad reputation, even in death.

52<sub>b</sub> See the similar apodoses in the *Alamdimmû*-commentary 1 (TPB 12c iii 12') l. 85 as well as the *Alamdimmû aḥû*-tablet 2 (TBP 22) l. 121 (see Böck 2000, 244 and 274). The use of TUK in our text (in comparison to GÁL in TBP 12c, see above) which might be seen as analogous to the construction GABA.RI (NU) TUK “he will have (no) opponent” suggests the interpretation *gērānu* “adversary” and not *gerrānu* “lament” as it has been proposed in Böck (2000), 245.

53<sub>b</sub>–54<sub>b</sub> See the similar entries in *Alamdimmû* 2:162: DIŠ SAG.DU GU<sub>4</sub> GAR [x x] ṽi-šarru(LUGAL) and *Alamdimmû*-commentary 2 (see Böck 2000, 248) l. 4: DIŠ SAG.DU GU<sub>4</sub> GAR *i-šār-rù* [...]. See further the physiognomic tablet TBP 22 (141+) and parallels which might have contained non-serialized physiognomic *aḥû*-omens (see Böck 2000, 267 text 2) l. 35: DIŠ GĪR GU<sub>4</sub> GAR NINDA *i-šeb-bi* ŠE u KÛ.BABBAR TUK *ana EGIR u<sub>4</sub>-me* : DAM TUK-ši.

55<sub>b</sub> See the aforementioned physiognomic *aḥû*-tablet TBP 22 in Böck 2000, 266 l. 24 with the varying spelling *i-dak* instead of RA.

56b See similar *Šumma Ea liballiṭka* Tfl. 1:55'–56' (DIŠ UGU<sup>2</sup> LÚ.MEŠ *sa-bu-us* (...) / [DIŠ UG]U<sup>2</sup> LÚ.MEŠ *i-ga-ša-aš* (...)).

57<sub>b</sub> The occurrence of *kīsu* “money-bag; money(?)” is obscure. It is unclear if the term belongs to the protasis which has been marked as “broken” or “break” or if it belongs to the apodosis. Because of the enclitic *-ma* suffixed to *ikbir* “he/it got thick” both elements are to be seen as belonging together either to the protasis or apodosis. On a contextual level, the term would be particularly unexpected within the protasis.

49 If the interpretation of the spelling [... *na-ḥ*]i-ri is correct, the entry reminds us of the *Alamdimmû* excerpt tablet 1 (K. 130 see Böck 2000, 281) l. 14: DIŠ KA.BÛN<sup>II</sup>-šú *šum-mu-ṭa-ma* KIR<sub>4</sub>-šú ṽana<sup>1</sup> 15 *zi-ir ina GIŠ RA-[aš<sup>2</sup>]* “If his nostrils are pushed in and his nose is turned to the right: he will be *killed by a weapon*(?) (lit. he will be beaten with a piece of wood)”. Consider the comparable verbal root *qāpu* “to buckle, to cave in” for the plural adjective *quppūtu*. Note further the uncommon predicative construction without verbal form in the first part of the protasis “If (he has) sunken nostrils(?)”.

50–51 The traces of the verbal form might be interpreted as stative of *parāsu* “to stop, cut off, block; to divide, severe”.

52 See the *Alamdimmû aḥû*-tablet 2 (TBP 22) l. 23: DIŠ *ša-pu-li* SA<sub>5</sub> ṽi-šarru(LUGAL). The whole entry is identical with our l. 52, especially the cryptographic writing NI.LUGAL for *išarru* “he will be rich”. Like in l. 29 (see above), the noun *šapūli* is to be seen as standing in an oblique case, so the protasis reads literally “If he is red concerning (both sides of) the groin”.

53 The traces *i-ḥa-šu-šu* might be interpretable as the present 3rd person plural of the verb *ḥašāšu* “to rejoice; to swell, inflate”,<sup>62</sup> the last of these possible meanings is otherwise, especially in connection with body parts or organs, attested only with the lung.

69–71 The arrangement of this passage on signs of the ear might be reminiscent of the obscure physiognomic passage within the *Diagnostic Handbook* 8:13–15: DIŠ NA GEŠTU 15-šú GÛ.GÛ-si me-sér D[AB-s]u : [DIŠ] GEŠTU 150-šú GÛ.GÛ-si Á.TUK IGI / DIŠ GEŠTU<sup>11</sup>-šú GÛ.GÛ.MEŠ ina-an-ziq “If a man, his right ear is constantly *ringing* (lit. screaming): confinement will seize him. If his left ear is constantly *ringing*: he will have gain. / [If] both ears are constantly *ringing*: he will worry”. But one should otherwise consider the different formulation with *šá* in our text.

87' Von Soden 1981, 113 ii 19 reads UR *gub-bi i-dal-laḥ* “... trübt das ... der Zisterne”. After collating the passage the author prefers the much more meaningful reading [...] “DU<sup>27</sup>-lik ‘DINGIR’.BI *id-dal-laḥ* “his god will be disturbed/concerned”.

88' The animal in question is certainly *nandālu*, a kind of centipede, cf. CAD N/1, 225 (partly equated with ŠĀ.TUR = *šaturru* „centipede“). See the passages regarding this animal in *Šumma ālu* tablet 38: 85'–95' (ŠĀ.TUR) without parallels.

89' The reading *ina*<sup>gis</sup>NÁ *ku-ri* in von Soden 1981, 114 ii 21 as “auf dem Bett der Depression” is highly uncertain since this expression is 1) never attested and 2) the phrase *ina*<sup>gis</sup>NÁ + (verb) is a very common pattern within the animal sections of *Šumma ālu*. Therefore, the signs *ku ri* might be better interpreted as DÚR<sup>re</sup> or DÚR.RE (referring to the verb *wašābu* “to sit; to dwell”), explaining that a certain (not preserved) animal is sitting on the bed of a man about whom it is forecasted that he will die during this year.

93' The interpretation as UR.ZÍR(ŠĒ-KA) *iš-ši-na* in von Soden 1981, 113 ii 27 “(...), ein Hund schnüffelt (...)” (ibid. 117) is unlikely due to the preserved signs which resembles [... *i-t*]a-na-la-ku<sup>1</sup>/ma<sup>2</sup> *ku šu iz zí*. The reading DÚR-šu *iz-zí* “his anus spattered (wherever he goes)” matches better the topical focus of the previous entry regarding saliva as well as urine. The following sign is certainly to be read as BI and not NU and might therefore belong to the well-known introductory phrase NA BI “(concerning) this man” of the apodosis. I have interpreted BIR as the verbal-noun *sapāḥu* “scattering” which is uncertain to some degree since it does not seem to be attested in combination with *nasāḥu* “to tear out”. Otherwise, it would again perfectly fit into the sequence of positive apodoses beginning with line 90'.

95'–96' UD.MEŠ “days”, as interpreted by von Soden 1981, 113 ii 29–30, might be, due to the spacial distribution, likewise considered as part of the protasis. In this position

<sup>62</sup> The verb is distinguished in CAD H, 138 as *ḥašāšu* B.

one would rather expect a verb than a noun which might suggest the interpretation BABBAR.MEŠ “they are white/whiten”.

99' The sign ŠU before the deity <sup>d</sup>Ninurta as it has been read in von Soden 1981, 114 ii Z. 33 is highly uncertain since the damaged sign shows traces of a *Winkelhaken* before the last vertical wedge.

121' Following the topics of the apodoses in 119'–120' (opponent at court and the position as creditor) the present author prefers to translate *tību* as “claim”<sup>63</sup> rather than as “(starker) Aufbruch”, see von Soden 1981, 118 iii 17–19. Note the non-standard orthography of -lt- > -št- within the spelling *ul-ta-nar-ra* standing most likely for the Štn-stem of *tāru* “to lead, return(?) repeatedly” which is otherwise not attested in the dictionaries.

129' See the similar but with differing apodosis *Šumma ālu* 13:13: DIŠ UZU.DIR (var. UZU.DIR.MEŠ) *ina ḥar-ba-ti* IGI.MEŠ TUŠ-*ab* URU.

130' The unusual sign of *kamūnu*-fungus in beer(!), which is unique and might be considered as scribal mistake, may be misunderstanding the spelling *ina É NA*<sup>1</sup> “inside the house of a man” or *ina É <<aš>>.BI* “inside his house”. See also l. 131' with the spelling *ina É NA*.

132' It is unclear if *ZI-šú* (*tībšú*<sup>2</sup>) refers to *kamūnu*, perhaps in the meaning “its emergence” or to another not yet mentioned item of the protasis. The interpretation of this second passage as a part of the apodosis is unlikely since it is connected with the first passage via the enclitic particle *-ma* which is usually not used to connect protasis and apodosis in divinatory texts.

## Variations or contradictions?

Some general observations regarding differences among the alleged several witnesses of *Šumma Ea liballiṭka* will be presented here.

W. von Soden pointed out that tablet 1 (see 2.3.1.), which is up to now only attested by the witness CT 51, 147, consists of just one column<sup>64</sup> (preserving 61 entries). According to the shape and distribution of the tablet, one might expect no more than 5 to 10 further entries within the broken beginning which would, together with the remaining entries of the reverse, add up to roughly 70 entries for the first tablet – maybe fewer. In contrast, at least two of the witnesses, A and D, of tablet 2 (see 2.3.2.)

<sup>63</sup> See CAD T, 388–389, sub 2.

<sup>64</sup> von Soden 1981, 110.

have two columns on each side. Both witnesses are written up to approximately the halfway point of the fourth column which indicates a possible length of around 180 to 200 entries, of which 132 are more or less preserved. This would, therefore, represent a remarkable deviation between the lengths and layouts of tablet 1 and tablet 2.

This discrepancy is enlarged by the new join of tablet 2 witness B which has, comparable to tablet 1, just one column and represents the bottom of the respective tablet. The text duplicates the already known entries from witnesses A and D, beginning after a break from l. 19 to 35, where A and D break off. Witness B goes on with 7 further entries until the new fragment K. 8149 (witness A) continues, again duplicating the course of B until l. 48. From this point on the text of A differs considerably from B, which lists 16 further lines that are not attested in the following course of A. The last legible signs at the end of witness B reverse l. 19 might read *DIŠ tuḥ-r[i ...]* a body part which is likewise mentioned in A<sub>2</sub> l. 9 (l. 51: [*DIŠ MI*]N<sup>2</sup> *tuḥ-ri-šú* (blank) MIN MIN “[If ... dit]to(?) his heel(?) {ditto} (is contorted): {ditto} (he will have a sin).”). But it is unclear if the mentioning of *tuḥru* in both texts hints at a possible textual overlap. One should bear in mind that half of these entries, which are unknown to witness A (ll. 49b–64b), mark their protases with the gloss “broken” (*hepi*).

In light of the fact that B follows in the break at the beginning of the course of A, C and D, the obverse would have contained 42 entries, which reminds us of the length of the obverse of tablet 1, with 39 preserved and possibly 5 to 10 more lines expected in the broken beginning passage. Depending on the length of a possible colophon on the reverse, witness B could have contained, in total, approximately 60 and 80 entries – likewise a number that fits better with the scope of tablet 1 with around 70 entries rather than the approximately 180 to 200 entries in A and D.

Then again, this would indicate that witness B would most likely not have contained the omens on animal behaviour which are attested for columns ii and iii in witness A (see l. 76’ff.),<sup>65</sup> and which might in consideration of the format and presumable length also be true for witness D.

In short, it is unlikely that witness B belongs to the same composition as A and D.<sup>66</sup> Both compositions share, supposedly, the same physiognomic passage at the beginning (ll.1–48). After l. 48 both texts continue with physiognomic omens that differ from each other. It is therefore probable to suppose that both compositions might share the same or a very similar *Vorlage*. Since the corresponding passage in B is extensively marked as “broken” (on the original) it might be the case that A skipped the broken passage and continued on the next undamaged text portion or reorganized it, depending on the state of preservation of the original.

<sup>65</sup> This possibility has been previously proposed by von Soden 1981, 121 col. iv.

<sup>66</sup> The status of C is uncertain since it duplicates three lines at the beginning of column i and then breaks off. It is therefore unclear if C is also a multi-column witness or not.

Tablet 1 is described in its colophon as “from amidst/out of (*libbū*) *Alamdimmū*” (reverse l. 24) and witness B of tablet 2 certainly contained only the physiognomic passages and not the terrestrial omens on animal behaviour. It is therefore likely, also due to the similar textual extant and the assumed resumption of the catchline given in tablet 1, that both tablets belong to the same excerpt series for otherwise unserialized variants associated with the standard series on (human) physiognomy and behaviour (viz. *Alamdimmū*), namely *Šumma Ea liballiṭka*.

Another piece of evidence that is not mentioned by W. von Soden in his article is the tablet number mentioned within the fragmentarily preserved colophon of witness A. It reads<sup>67</sup>:

𐎠𐎢𐎽 𐎠𐎶 𐎶𐎠[...]<sup>68</sup>  
 DUB 1<sup>2</sup>, KĀM[...]  
 KU[R<sup>m</sup>AN.ŠĀR-DÛ-A ...]  
 “If [...] / Tablet 1 [...] / Palace of [Assurbanipal ...]”  
 (A: K. 3679+ iv 1’–3’)

The colophon of A again contradicts the information given in the colophon of *Šumma Ea liballiṭka* tablet 1 (see above) since it is labelled as the “first tablet” as well. Together with the above-mentioned arguments regarding the extended content of A as well as D, this colophon shows that in Nineveh a second excerpt-series might have been compiled by adding entries from the already known excerpt series *Šumma Ea liballiṭka* or other excerpt tablets containing omens that were similar to but not serialized within the physiognomic series *Alamdimmū* and the terrestrial omen series *Šumma ālu*. Unfortunately, the partly preserved colophon of D includes a passage that mentions only excerpts of *Alamdimmū*:

[... nis<sup>2</sup>]-ḫu 𐎠𐎢𐎽 𐎠𐎶 𐎠𐎶[IM-mu-ú<sup>2</sup> (x)]  
 “[... and(?) exc]erpt(s) (from) If the shape”.  
 (D: K. 6280 iv 1’)

Since, due to its length, it is very probable that witness D might have contained *Šumma ālu*-like omens (like witness A) as well, one should probably assume that the series *Šumma ālu* or a respective excerpt series or tablet has been, likewise, included within the broken part of this passage.

<sup>67</sup> See the copy of TBP pl. 23, text 13 as well as the photo of the join of TBP 13 (K. 3679+) with K. 3953 in von Soden 1981, 111.

<sup>68</sup> The tablet needs a collation for this passage.



## Two series?

The preceding problems and contradictions seem to indicate an interpretation that involves two different compositions.

One excerpt-series (*Šumma Ea liballiṭka*; tablet 1: BM 122626; tablet 2: (B) K. 9878 + K. 10346) of the physiognomic standard series *Alamdimmū*, and one excerpt-series (*Šumma šillašu kīma rīmi*; tablet 1: (A) K. 3679+; (D) K. 6280(?))<sup>69</sup> that combines the beginning of *Šumma Ea liballiṭka* tablet 2 together with terrestrial and animal omens from or akin to omens from *Šumma ālu*. Since none of these entries within the sections of terrestrial and animal omens (preserved in witness A) parallel or duplicate entries of *Šumma ālu* exactly,<sup>70</sup> it is much more likely that these entries are non-canonical or non-standardized as well.

## Physiognomy, behaviour, and animal omens

The practise of combining topically differing kinds of omens within a larger series or collection as well as within supplementary texts is a well-known phenomenon in Assyriology. Thus, most of the later tablets of the huge omen series *Šumma ālu* list behavioural omens for the most part, although the majority of it consists of terrestrial omens regarding the city, the house, animals, gardens and fields as well as other phenomena of human life and various natural phenomena.<sup>71</sup> The overlap of physiognomic and behavioural omens is likewise attested in supplementary texts to *Alamdimmū* – probably because of the connection between the main series (*Alamdimmū*) and the sub-series *Nigdimdimmū* and *Kataduggū*, which are concerned with human behaviour, especially in connection with other humans or the gods. This contextual overlap might also hint at a connection between both sub-series and the later parts of the series *Šumma ālu*, which shares these topical foci (human-human relationships as well as human-god relationships).<sup>72</sup>

A rather curious phenomenon is the combination of physiognomic omens with omens dealing with the behaviour of animals which is seen in the alleged excerpt

<sup>69</sup> It is unclear whether the small fragment K. 16371 (witness C) belongs to *Šumma Ea liballiṭka* tablet 2 or to *Šumma šillašu kīma rīmi* tablet 1 since it preserves just parts of ll. 1–3 which are shared by both of these series.

<sup>70</sup> See the commentary on *Alamdimmū* tablet 2 ll. 76'–132'.

<sup>71</sup> See the overview of the tablet incipits in Freedman 1998, 19–23 as well as Koch 2015, 242–256.

<sup>72</sup> See also my remarks in the introduction of point 2. See further the text BM 38585 which deals with physiognomic topics like the appearance of mouth and face. Interestingly, the text attributes itself as part of *Šumma ālu* (37-ÅM MU.ŠID.BI.IM DIŠ URU ina SUKUD GAR). See further tablet 87 of *Šumma ālu* (“If a man falls from the barn”) which deals with incidents, and which parallels some entries of the second tablet of the so-called *Diagnostic Handbook* (*Sakikkū*). See thereto Moren 1978, 222–223.

series “If his shadow looks like an ox” (*Šumma šillašu kīma rīmi*, see above). A similar connection between physiognomic omens, behavioural omens and content similar or equal to content of *Šumma ālu*<sup>73</sup> is likewise present within the so-called “Lost Omen Tablet”<sup>74</sup> listing omens concerning behaviour, personal traits and certain aspects of a man’s house. See, in addition, the text BM 66963 which lists omens concerning the movement of the neck and walking on the obverse and omens concerning animals (maybe birds) entering the house of a man on its reverse.<sup>75</sup>

Recently, a late Old Babylonian text from the Schøyen Collection (MS 3104) has been published by Andrew George,<sup>76</sup> which lists on its preserved obverse (which still comprises eight columns) various omens ranging from behavioural omens (while walking, activities at night, bathing, building of a house), animal omens (which appear on different occasions), growth of plants, omens concerning the garment of a man as well as diagnostic omens. Another allegedly Old Babylonian tablet combines physiognomic omens, omens regarding the garment of a man as well as sleep omens.<sup>77</sup>

Since the status of these texts remains elusive (whether, for instance, they are excerpts or another kind of supplementary collection dependent on existing series or if they are independent series compiled from different sources) a comparison with these Old Babylonian collections of various divinatory contents remains problematic. Furthermore, these texts do not show a clear-cut division between physiognomic and animal omens as it is attested in *Šumma šillašu kīma rīmi* and BM 66963, which seems to be a phenomenon of the first millennium.

Due to the fact that the similes for certain anatomical features of man and the corresponding features of an animal (1–2, 4–10, 22, 26, 32, 48, 49b, 52b–54b) are particularly frequent within the physiognomic section (ll. 1-71’/75’(?)) at the beginning of the text of *Šumma šilla kīma rīmi* tablet 1 (or *Šumma Ea liballiṭka* tablet 2 respectively),<sup>78</sup> one might argue that one point of contact between both types of omens could be the symbolic value which is ascribed to certain animals. The passages concerning body marks or blemishes (ll. 11–13) as well as general features of some anatomical areas (ll. 3, 15–18, 19–21(?), 23–25, 27–31, 33–34, 45–47, 50b–51b, 55b–56b, 49–53) speak against this interpretation. Even more puzzling are some re-interpretations of similes that involve mythological beings like the scorpion man in l. 2 or the demon *Pazuzu*, which is derived from the reference to a “mouse” (*pi’azu*) in l. 5. Furthermore, most of the animals mentioned within the sections on animal omens (i.e. the fly,

<sup>73</sup> See generally Böck 2000, 14

<sup>74</sup> Moren 1977, 65–72. It seems probable that this fragment belongs to the first tablet of the *Alamdimmû*-sub-series *Nigdimdimmû*.

<sup>75</sup> See for the obverse *ibid.* S. 274–277 and Pl. 30; a copy of the reverse is given in Böck 2002, 361.

<sup>76</sup> George 2013, nr. 16 p. 90–100.

<sup>77</sup> See Köcher et al. 1958, 62–67.

<sup>78</sup> One should note that animal similes are frequent within the physiognomic main series as well.

the gecko, the snake or the centipede) are not mentioned within the physiognomic section. Additionally, the last preserved section in column iii includes various phenomena connected with the house of a man such as a certain shining (l. 127'), the birth of a mentally disabled child (l. 128') or the appearance of fungus (ll. 129'-130', 132'). For this reason, it seems unlikely that the similes with and symbolic values of animals play a particular role for the arrangement of this excerpt series. The same is true for the similar text BM 66963, mentioned earlier, which is concerned with signs while walking on the tablet's obverse and possibly the entering of birds into a house on its reverse.<sup>79</sup> Interestingly, the text also mentions two mythological animals, the *ušumgallu*-dragon-snake in l. 6 and the *ugallu*-hybrid creature, translated by Lambert as "the Great Demon",<sup>80</sup> in l. 7.

Thus, the question must be left open as to why certain non-serialized compositions combine physiognomic omens with animal and partly also other terrestrial omens. But it is likely that beneath the numerous fragments of the Kuyunjik Collection, which can be roughly attributed as terrestrial or animal omens, some might belong to passages of the witnesses A and D (= *Šumma šilla kīma rīmi*). And with the discovery of this new content the elusive context of this excerpt series might also be much more easily conceptualized than it has been before now.

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<sup>79</sup> See Böck 2000, 274–277.

<sup>80</sup> Lambert 2013, 59.

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## Abbreviations

AHw	W. von Soden, <i>Akkadisches Handwörterbuch</i> , 1–3 (Wiesbaden 1959–1981).
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament (Neukirchen-Vluyn 1969ff.).
BAK	H. Hunger, <i>Babylonische und assyrische Kolophone</i> . AOAT 2 (Kevelaer/Neukirchen-Vluyn).
BRM	Babylonian Records in the Library of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1–4 (New Haven etc. 1912–1923).

- CAD A. L. Oppenheim/E. Reiner et al. (ed.), *The Assyrian Dictionary of the University of Chicago* (Chicago 1956ff.).
- CT *Cuneiform Texts from Babylonian Tablets in the British Museum* (London 1896ff.).
- MSL B. Landsberger/M. Civil et al., *Materialien zum sumerischen Lexikon/* *Materials for the Sumerian Lexicon* (Rom 1937ff.).
- TBP see Kraus (1939)
- TDP Labat, René: *Traite akkadien de diagnostics et pronostics medicaux*. (Paris/Leiden 1951).

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## 5 Late Babylonian astrological physiognomy

The great importance of astrology in the first millennium BCE, in Mesopotamia, led to the combination of this science with other fields of knowledge, among them physiognomy. An important impulse for this was especially the introduction of the uniform zodiac around the year 400 BCE.<sup>1</sup> With the help of this astrological innovation a new structure and order was established that made it possible to synchronize different fields. Astrology and physiognomy are both forms of divination: their goal is to give a prognostication. The use of different divinatory methods together could have promised to be more effective, so it was simply logical to connect them, a possibility that only became available with the introduction of the zodiac. Another important element was the concept of melothesia, i.e. mainly the domination and influence of the zodiacal signs on twelve corresponding regions of the human body.<sup>2</sup> Melothesia was an essential part of astrological medicine in the Late Babylonian (=LB) period.<sup>3</sup>

But with the heavens and the human body both divided into twelve sections, and each of them related to their counterparts, it was also a useful tool for physiognomy.

This contribution aims at providing an overview of the extant textual evidence and the different ways in which astrology and physiognomy were combined and correlated with each other by Mesopotamian scholars. It will close with a short comparison of LB Astrological Physiognomy with the Zodiacal Physiognomy known from Qumran.

No traditional tablet series dealing with the field of Astrological Physiognomy existed, only different astrological, physiognomic and also medical texts that contained elements which can be classified as astro-physiognomic. Nearly all of the material is from the LB period, consisting almost entirely of commentary, compilations and combination texts. These text formats are typical for the first millennium: Commentaries first appear in the 8th century BCE.<sup>4</sup> Compilations and combinations<sup>5</sup> emerge for the most part from the Achaemenid period onwards.

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**1** For the zodiac, see van der Waerden 1953; Brack-Bernsen and Hunger 1999; Steele 2007; Steele and Gray 2007; Britton 2010.

**2** The concept of melothesia is mostly known from Hellenistic astrology, but it was of Babylonian origin. Cf. below, section 3) Zodiacal Physiognomy. Hellenistic astrology also made use of more complex and elaborated versions, for example, in addition to zodiacal melothesia, a planetary variant was also known (e.g. Ptolemy, *Tetrabiblos* III.12.148) There is only scarce evidence for planetary melothesia in cuneiform texts, a medical commentary that links the planets Jupiter and Mars to the spleen and the kidney (Reiner 1993, 21–22).

**3** Schreiber 2017.

**4** For Mesopotamian text commentaries in general, see Frahm 2011.

**5** These two rough categories of text formats are described by Koch 2015, 203–208. They were also the main formats for the related LB combined genre of astrological medicine.

The textual material that falls into the category of Astrological Physiognomy can be separated into four basic groups based on text types and the material will be presented here in line with these four textual types.

## Tablets with both astrological and physiognomic omens

Texts of this first category are actually not proper examples of Astrological Physiognomy in the sense of a functional combination of the two fields. Nonetheless they show that somehow a connection between the two fields was possible, although it does not seem necessary and self-evident from a modern perspective.<sup>6</sup> Both disciplines, in the form of omens (or commentaries on omens), are in this group paired together on one tablet in each case. The two omen types are separated but presumably somehow related in a way that is not comprehensible in every example at present.

Yet from the Neo-Assyrian period we have one example of a tablet (**K 105 + Sm 688**) in which a single extraneous astrological omen is inserted between physiognomic omens with commentarial notes (obv. 12–13).<sup>7</sup> Unfortunately, half of the previous physiognomic section as well as of the astrological entry is lost, making it difficult to identify the relationship between and the reason for the insertion of the latter one. The protases of the physiognomic omens of the previous section are dealing with facial features of a woman (obv. 7–11). All that is preserved from the subsequent astronomical omen is the following: (12) DIŠ<sup>mul</sup> *šal-bat-a-nu ana* <sup>mul</sup>AL.LUL [TE<sup>8</sup> ...] (13) *u ana* ÍD ŠUB-*ma* BE<sup>mul</sup> AL.L[UL ...] “If Mars [approaches] Cancer [...] and he falls into the river, if Cancer [...]”.<sup>9</sup> The subscript of K 105+ states that it is the 6th im-gíd-da-tablet of the series *Alamdimmû*. Despite the fact that some parts remain unexplained, this text shows that at least some examples of a mixture between these two divinatory methods already existed in the first half of the 1st millennium.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Böck 2000a, 8 and Frahm 2011, 258–259 mention, in addition to SpTU I 84 and the ‘Stevenson Omen Tablet’ (see below), UVB 29, no. 85 as a text that combines astrology and physiognomy. This tablet was published as SpTU III 98 (W 22660/1) and is actually neither astrological nor physiognomic, but contains some terrestrial omens from the series *šumma ālu*.

<sup>7</sup> Edition Böck 2000a, 288–289.

<sup>8</sup> For this reconstruction, see Reiner 1982, 284, n. 13.

<sup>9</sup> Other planetary omens that have the same protasis offer various apodoses: “the prince will die”, “the city will be conquered” and “booty will be taken”. Cf. Reiner 1982, 284, n. 13.

<sup>10</sup> An even older example (mid 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BCE), a Hittite tablet with a compilation of terrestrial, physiognomic and lunar omens, states in its colophon: “First tablet of man (and) moon” (KUB 29.9+10). Cf. Haas 2008, 140.

The next example is the so-called ‘**Stevenson Omen Tablet**’ (Ashm 1922–0202), housed in the collection of the Ashmolean Museum (Oxford).<sup>11</sup> On the obverse there are parts of two columns with astrological omens preserved; on the reverse only the remains of one column with physiognomic omens, while the other is completely missing. Originally the tablet consisted of two columns on both sides, each devoted to a particular type of omen. Thus the two disciplines are clearly separated, but they share a single tablet. The omens themselves are extraneous (*aḥû*), i.e. omens which were not part of the main series.

Another example of astrology and physiognomy grouped together, but not completely intertwined, is the *šātu*-commentary **SpTUI 84 (W 22307/26)**, partly on astrological and partly on physiognomic omens.<sup>12</sup> It originates from the Šangû-Ninurta library in Achaemenid Uruk.<sup>13</sup> The two differing omen types, along with commentaries dealing with each of them, are separated by a dividing line on the obverse. The first section is astrological (1–17), the second physiognomic (18–41). The base texts are *Šumma Sîn ina tāmartišu andullu arim* (“If the moon at its appearance is covered with a canopy”) and *Alamdimmû* (?), but no manuscripts for the commented texts have been identified up to now.<sup>14</sup> The fragmentary remains of the reverse cannot be identified with certainty. Traces of a subscript and a colophon can be found on the upper edge, where the subscript is referring to the astrological text of the first section. One remarkable aspect of this text is the use of logograms that are written in Emesal in some cases, followed by the Emegi forms along with the Akkadian translation. The Emesal forms are explicitly labeled as such in this text, and their use is limited to the astrological section.

## Commentaries on physiognomic texts that provide astrological explanations

The second group is made up of a physiognomic commentary which offers *inter alia* some astrological explanations for some features of the body. It is conceivable that it could also have operated in the opposite way, with astrological explanations leading us back to physiognomic features. But it is rather likely that things are interpreted in an astrological manner than vice versa, since the astral sciences were the dominant

<sup>11</sup> The tablet got its name from Col. Stevenson of the Mesopotamian Army, who brought it to Britain in 1922. The complete text is only published in a somewhat outdated edition: Langdon 1922–23, 230–236, pl. xvii–xviii. The physiognomic section is re-edited in Böck 2000a, 276–279; for a photo see CDLI: P412442.

<sup>12</sup> Edition Hunger 1976, 89–90. For further information see Frahm 2011, 258–259.

<sup>13</sup> Clancier 2009, 390.

<sup>14</sup> Frahm 2011, 258. Cf. Böck 2000a, 8 on the physiognomic section.



disciplines in the LB period. Astrological explanations outside their particular field are quite common in commentary texts at that time.<sup>15</sup> The category we are dealing with in this group can be considered as the first stage of real Astrological Physiognomy, where both disciplines are not just simply juxtaposed, but actually combined with each other.

The *šātu* commentary **BM 41623** (81-6-25, 238) originates from Babylon and is part of a consignment which contains tablets that likely date to the late Seleucid or Arsacid period (i.e. late 2nd or early 1st century BCE).<sup>16</sup> The identity of the base text remains unknown, but what is preserved indicates that it was a physiognomic text. Some lines on the reverse try to link certain features of a person to the zodiacal signs Aries and Taurus.

07' [. . .] ri<sup>2</sup> -*ša-a-ni* : <sup>d</sup>DUMU.ZI : SAG : *qaq-qa-<sup>r</sup>du* [. . .]  
 08' [. . .] x-<sup>r</sup>šú<sup>2</sup> LÚGUD.DA 150 UGU *mi-na-ti-šú* GÍD.DA BA.<sup>r</sup>UG<sub>7</sub><sup>2</sup> [. . .]  
 09' [. . .] <sup>d</sup>ALAD<sup>2</sup> NU<sup>2</sup> *sam-kát* : *áš-šú* <sup>mú</sup>GU<sub>4</sub>.AN.NA u <sup>mú</sup>lúHUN.GÁ šá x [. . .]  
 10' [. . .] *ig<sup>1</sup>-ri<sup>1</sup> ul i-šet-su* : *ana i-di-šú in-nam-gar* <sup>17</sup>: *ig-ri* [. . .]  
 11' [...] <sup>r</sup>mú<sup>1</sup>GU<sub>4</sub>.AN.NA u <sup>mú</sup>lúHUN.GÁ KÁ <sup>d</sup>LAMMA-šú-nu : I *kin-ši-šú* [. . .]

07' [. . .] . . . : Dumuzi : SAG : head [. . .]  
 08' [. . .] his [right . . .] is short (and) his left one is extraordinarily long, he will die [. . .]  
 09' [. . .] the protective sp[irit]<sup>2</sup> is not removed : because, on account of Taurus and Aries, which . . . [. . .]  
 10' [...] There will be no [wa]ge remaining for him: it means that he will be hired for pay: wage (*igru*) [refers to Aries (*agru*) . . .]  
 11' [. . .] Taurus and Aries, the gate of their protective spirits. If his shin [. . .]

Despite the fact that some things remain unclear in this text, it can be stated that Aries and Taurus are given as the rationale two times. The part that is dealing with the bodily features that are linked to the first two zodiacal signs<sup>18</sup> seems to start as early

<sup>15</sup> The increasing influence becomes apparent with two commentaries on the incantation Marduk's Address to the Demons that are dealing partly with the same lines of the text. The Neo-Assyrian text (Ass. 13955gt [A 195]) offers largely theological arguments, while just two centuries later the Late Babylonian version (BM 47529+) is almost completely based on astrology in its explanations. See for an edition and comparison of both texts Geller 2014, 60–68; Geller 2016, 394–397. Cf. Frahm 2011, 124–126. A re-edition and study of BM 47529+ is provided by Wee 2016b, 127–167.

<sup>16</sup> Edition Jiménez 2015, CCP 3.7.2.K.

<sup>17</sup> The same explanation appears in the physiognomic commentary SpTU I 83, rev 12.

<sup>18</sup> On account of the great importance and the frequent use of the zodiac in LB astrology and the fact that melothesia also seems to play a role in the following, Aries and Taurus are interpreted here as zodiacal signs, although they could just as well refer to the corresponding constellations.

as line 7'. The god Dumuzi is mentioned, and the reading for SAG “head” is given. Dumuzi is a shepherd god who is also connected to Aries; the prominent astronomical treatise MUL.APIN identifies him with the same constellation (Mulapin I I 43). The Babylonian name of the constellation was <sup>mul</sup>lúHUN.GÁ = *agru* “Hireling”. In line 10' its Akkadian equivalent *agru* is most likely to be reconstructed as the explanation for a word derived from the same root: *igru* “hire, rent, wage”.<sup>19</sup> In the astro-medical concept of melothesia the first sign of the zodiac, Aries, is ruling over the head (see below section 3). Both, the deity and the body part, are closely connected to Aries in Late Babylonian astrology. Line 8' mentions an anatomical feature broken away in our text, which is short on the right, and long on the left. This pair seems to be the reason for the fact that not only Aries, but also the following sign Taurus, are both mentioned in both cases. The two signs are designated in line 11' as KÁ <sup>d</sup>LAMMA-šú-nu “gate of their protective spirits”. References to a “gate of the *lamassu*-spirit” appear in the dictionaries several times, but they seem to refer to a real gate or refer to a representation of the *lamassu* used at the gate.<sup>20</sup>

## Zodiacal physiognomy: Texts which relate specific anatomical features, appearances and the sexes to the zodiacal signs

With a uniform structure such as the twelve divisions of the zodiac it became possible to connect the human body and the stars in a systematic way. The structure of the zodiac was mapped onto the human anatomy, dividing it into twelve (equal?) parts.<sup>21</sup> This concept is called melothesia.<sup>22</sup> It indicates which zodiacal sign rules over a specific region of the body. In astrological medicine it was used to trace diseases back to their heavenly origins via the affected body part and to find an efficacious remedy. Because of its relation to human anatomy melothesia was also applicable to physiognomy as well.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Jiménez 2015, CCP 3.7.2.K.

<sup>20</sup> CAD L 62a: 4', 65a: 2 b). See the last section of this contribution for some speculation about a possible connection with the ‘spirit’ that is mentioned in the astro-physiognomic Qumran text 4Q186 = 4QZodiacal Physiognomy.

<sup>21</sup> A zodiacal sign of 30° on the ecliptic is named after a constellation that is located in its region. Possibly the division of the human body in melothesia was constructed in an identical way. However, we lack any depictions or detailed descriptions such as the illustrations of the ‘zodiac man’ from the Middle Ages and the Renaissance (see below).

<sup>22</sup> For Hellenistic melothesia, see Bouché-Leclercq 1899, 319–325; Gundel and Böker 1972 (= RE X A), 579–582; Barton 1994, 189–190, 193–194.

The first text or rather text module to be discussed is a micro-zodiac<sup>23</sup> table which includes the Babylonian melothesia. Two texts are known that contain the table and its incorporated sequence of body parts<sup>24</sup>: BM 56605<sup>25</sup> and U 183+184.<sup>26</sup> The first is most likely from Babylon (2nd or 1st century),<sup>27</sup> while the latter is from Uruk (c. 200 BCE).<sup>28</sup> Due to the fact that the Uruk version is in a rather fragmentary state,<sup>29</sup> the following remarks will mostly concentrate on the nearly complete tablet BM 56605. Its obverse contains a section that resembles the 29th tablet of the diagnostic-prognostic omen series SA.GIG (obv. i 1–ii 47) and subsequently a text about certain stars affecting a specific part of the patient's body by touching it (in a corresponding month?<sup>30</sup>), followed by a remedy (ii 48–74).<sup>31</sup> This text could be seen as a pre-zodiacological stage of melothesia. The tablet's reverse also consists of two sections: one column on the right contains the astro-medical zodiac scheme<sup>32</sup> in combination with a hemerology, on the left (roughly three quarter of the tablet's reverse) follows the micro-zodiac table. The text about stars that touch the patient, the zodiac scheme and the micro-zodiac table were all part of an astro-medical system that can

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**23** The micro-zodiac is a more complex version of the zodiac, whereby each sign is divided into twelve micro-signs. These micro-signs repeat the zodiac but beginning in each sign with the name of the macro-sign itself. The micro-zodiac is a Babylonian invention that was adopted into Hellenistic astrology. For introductory information on the micro-zodiac, see Rochberg-Halton 1988; Koch 2015, 205–208.

**24** Another tiny fragment is extant, in which the melothesia row is not preserved, whereas it is omitted here. Cf. Heeßel 2000, 117, 470 (BM 40680).

**25** The complete tablet is edited in Heeßel 2000, 112–130, 468–469, pl. I–II. See also Heeßel 2008, 11–14; Geller 2014, 84–88; Wee 2016a, 215–217.

**26** Two unpublished fragments from the Uruk collection of the Istanbul Archaeological Museums. The material dates to the Seleucid period. The text will be published by J. M. Steele and Ch. Proust.

**27** Heeßel 2000, 112.

**28** Some fragments from the Uruk collection in Istanbul join VAT 7815 and VAT 7816 in Berlin. Both were, according to their colophon, owned by Anu-bēlšunu, VAT 7815 also has a date preserved: 14. Ṭebētu of the year 120 SE (= 191 BCE). Editions of the VAT texts (without the joining fragments) can be found in Weidner 1967, 41–48; for further information about Anu-bēlšunu and his tablets see Clancier 2009, 73–80, 86–90, 406–409.

**29** One side is completely lost, the other side preserves roughly a quarter of the original table and on the left side of it some signs of an unidentified text that is not present on BM 56605. The latter fact shows that we are dealing with two different textual compositions.

**30** Each of the twelve entries offers just MIN “ditto”, the first entry (ii 48) in the more complete form *ina* MIN “in ditto”. The scribe that wrote the tablet forgot to give the correct reading of MIN at the beginning. Possibly the MIN is to be read as a month name.

**31** The latter text is partly duplicated by another astro-medical compendium (BM 35072+47755 obv. ii 5–23). A related tablet is YBC 9833. Cf. Heeßel 2000, 124–125; Geller 2014, 84–87. Both references mention BM 47755 without the joining fragment BM 35072 (= LBAT 1622).

**32** This zodiac scheme was particularly important for astro-medical therapy. It consisted of a stone, a type of wood and a plant for each of the zodiacal signs (so-called ‘stone-plant-wood scheme’, cf. Heeßel 2005, 1–22). For a study see Schreiber 2017.

be termed the Babylonian iatromathematical calendar.<sup>33</sup> The table is formed by a horizontal row of twelve squares at the top, which contain the zodiacal signs, below that is an equal row with the corresponding body parts. Underneath each sign and body part are vertical sub-columns of squares with the names of animals, accompanied by numbers (referring to the micro-signs). The sequence of body parts in this text was first identified by J. Z. Wee, who uses the term ‘zodiac man’ or *Homo signorum* for it.<sup>34</sup> As this could be seen as a reference to some drawing similar to medieval and renaissance illustrations that depict the zodiac man<sup>35</sup> (something not known from cuneiform texts until now) the term *melothesia* is preferred here, which denotes the concept itself.

Due to the very late dating of BM 56605 (late Seleucid or early Arsacid, i.e. 2nd or 1st century BCE) J. Z. Wee argues that *melothesia* was probably a product of Hellenistic influences and not originally Babylonian.<sup>36</sup> U 183+184 was most likely written at c. 200 BCE (see above) and proves, at minimum, that the concept was already being used by Babylonian astrologers at this time. But the division of the human body and the arrangement of its body parts from head to toe are even older than these presumably very late texts. It appears in a slightly different form in some medical texts from the Bēl-rēmanni archive in Sippar, published by I. L. Finkel as text 55 and 56, dating to late 6th or early 5th century.<sup>37</sup> These tablet fragments predate the introduction of the zodiac and in its stead the body parts are combined (at least in text 55) with the twelve months of the Standard Babylonian Calendar. The Sippar texts are not physiognomic, but they show that some form of calendrical *melothesia* preceded the later zodiacal version.<sup>38</sup> Text 55 is formed mostly by three duplicate fragments (55 A–C).<sup>39</sup> The text treats the body parts in their associated months and describes a therapy for each: ointments with oils, animal fats and healing stones, herbal potions, and short ritual instructions; although a diagnosis is never mentioned.<sup>40</sup> Text 56 is documented by only two fragments.<sup>41</sup> Month names are not preserved, but the fragments mention certain days. Furthermore, a stone-plant-wood-scheme is used that is

**33** For a description of the system see Schreiber 2017.

**34** Wee 2015, 217–233. The article discusses only BM 56605, the Uruk text is not mentioned.

**35** For a study of these illustrations, see Hübner 2013.

**36** Wee 2015, 233.

**37** Finkel 2000, 212–217. Autograph copy and transliteration is offered, but no translation.

**38** For a detailed analysis of these texts as forerunners to *melothesia*, see Schreiber 2017.

**39** Finkel 2000, 212–215.

**40** For instance, the entry of the first month:

BAR<sup>na4</sup>ZĀ.GÍN *ina* Ī.GIŠ EREN IGI.MEŠ SAG.DU-*su* ŠĒŠ-*aš* Ū GAL *ina* <sup>r<sup>giš</sup></sup>GEŠTIN<sup>r</sup> NAG SÍG BABBAR  
*ina* Á 15-šú<sup>r</sup>KEŠDA<sup>r</sup>-*as*

Nisannu: lapis lazuli in cedar oil, the face (and) his head you anoint (with it). The ‘great plant’ he drinks in wine. White wool you bind around his right arm (Text 55 B 1–2).

**41** Finkel 2000, 216–217.

identical with the zodiacal scheme that appears in BM 56606 (see above). Therefore the two fragments are the oldest examples of this scheme, and parallel to the calendrical melothesia the text offers evidence for a calendrical forerunner to the zodiacal scheme as well.<sup>42</sup> Both pieces are in a fragmentary state: adjacent to the section with days and numbers and the stone-plant-wood-scheme, a sequence of body parts follows after a dividing line in text 56 A 10'–11', seemingly in accordance with text 55.<sup>43</sup> No further explanation for the sequence is given or preserved.

The Sippar texts are the forerunners to later zodiacal astro-medicine and they show that such a form of healing dates back at least to the 6th century BCE.<sup>44</sup>

The following table is a comparison of the two systems of calendrical and zodiacal melothesia.

	Calendrical Melothesia		Zodiacal Melothesia
Month/Sign	Text 55 A–C	Text 56 A	BM 56605, U 183+184 (only I–II preserved)
I	IGI.MEŠ ( <i>pānū</i> ), SAG.DU ( <i>qaqqadu</i> ) Face and head.	SAG.DU Head.	SAG.DU Head.
II	GABA ( <i>irtu</i> ), GÚ ( <i>kišādu</i> ) Chest and neck.	GABA GÚ Chest and neck.	ZI <sup>45</sup> ( <i>napištu</i> ) GÚ Throat and neck.
III	ŠU <sup>II</sup> ( <i>qātā</i> ) Hands.	ŠU <sup>II</sup> Hands.	Á ( <i>aḫu</i> ) MAŠ.SİL ( <i>naglabu</i> ) Arm and shoulder.
IV	TI.MEŠ ( <i>šelānu</i> ) Ribcage.	[...]	GABA/TI.MEŠ (?) <sup>46</sup> Chest/Ribcage (?).
V	ŠĀ ( <i>libbu</i> ) Belly.	ŠĀ Belly.	ŠĀ Belly.

<sup>42</sup> See in detail Schreiber 2017.

<sup>43</sup> [... SAG.D]U GABA GÚ Š[U<sup>II</sup> TI.MEŠ?] Š[Ā ... | *ma-ḫi*]r-tu, DU<sub>10</sub>.<sup>1</sup>GAM<sup>1</sup>-iṣ ŪR [...]

[... hea]d, chest, neck, Ha[nds, ribcage], bel[ly ... | *maḫir*]tu-bone, knee, leg [...] (Text 56 A 10'–11'). Transliteration differs from Finkel 2000, 216.

<sup>44</sup> Already I. L. Finkel categorised the fragments in his publication as “Astrological Medicine” (Finkel 2000, 212).

<sup>45</sup> Wee 2015, 227 reads ‘x’, *ibid.*, 229 he proposes ‘ZI(?)’ as possibility. U. 183+184 shows clearly a ZI.

<sup>46</sup> Following Wee 2015, 230 the remaining could be read as ‘GABA’ (= *irtu* “chest”) but ‘TI.MEŠ’ (= *šelānu* “ribcage”) would be possible too, and in accordance with calendrical melothesia.

VI	GÚ.(MURGU) ( <i>ešenšēru</i> ) [...] MURUB <sub>4</sub> ( <i>qablu</i> ) Spine and waist.		GÚ.(MURGU) <sup>47</sup> MURUB <sub>4</sub> Spine and waist.
VII	... <sup>? 48</sup> [...] ...		GU.(DU) <sup>49</sup> ( <i>qinnatu</i> ) Buttocks.
VIII	... <sup>50</sup> [...] ...		PEŠ <sub>4</sub> ( <i>biššūru</i> ) Female genitalia.
IX	<i>maḥirtu</i> <i>maḥirtu</i> -leg(bone). <sup>51</sup>	<i>maḥirtu</i> <i>maḥirtu</i> -leg(bone).	TUGUL ( <i>gilšu</i> ) Upper thigh.
X	ŠĀ/ <i>libbu</i> (?) <sup>52</sup> Belly (?).	DU <sub>10</sub> .GAM- <i>iš</i> ( <i>kimšu</i> ) Knee/shin.	<i>kimšu</i> Knee/shin.
XI	ÚR.MEŠ ( <i>pēnū</i> ) Legs.	ÚR Leg(s).	ÚR Leg(s).
XII	ŠU <sup>II</sup> .MEŠ (?) <sup>53</sup> Hands (?).	[...]	GĪR <sup>II</sup> ( <i>šēpā</i> ) Feet.

**47** Wee 2015, 230 interprets the two signs GU<sub>4</sub> and MURUB<sub>4</sub> as a compound logogram and translates “waist”. This otherwise not attested writing appears on the same tablet a second time (BM 56605, obv. ii 63). The partly duplicating text BM 35072+47755, obv. ii 19 offers in the same place GÚ<sup>I</sup>.MURGU<sup>I</sup>-šú “his spine”. The scribe of BM 56605 used several peculiar abbreviations and unorthographic writings (see Heeßel 2000, 125) thus the older writing of BM 35072+47755 is to be preferred. GÚ and GU<sub>4</sub> are two homophonic signs that resemble each other in late script and could easily be confused.

**48** In 55 B and C the relevant body part is not preserved. In text 55 A<sub>2</sub> 5 the following is present: ḫi qin me[š ...]. The sign ‘ḫi’ could be interpreted as part of the antecedent cedar oil (Ī.GIŠ<sup>54</sup>EREN DU<sub>10</sub> “aromatic cedar oil“?). Is the succeeding ‘qin’ a possible abbreviation for *qinnatu* “buttocks” which appears in the zodiacal melothesia in this place?

**49** Wee 2015, 230–231 reads ḪAR (= *kabattu* “insides“) contra Heeßel 2000, 128 who transliterates GU. But the last vertical wedge of the sign that Wee 2015, 228: Fig. 5 reconstructs is actually just a scratch on the tablet. Most likely it is an unusual abbreviation for GU.DU = *qinnatu* “buttocks“. Internal organs could also not, as a rule, be treated with an anointment.

**50** The line in question is preserved in every duplicate but the name of the body part is missing in each.

**51** “A bone of the leg, perhaps the fibula” (CAD M/1 92a). Considering the order we would rather expect some part of the upper leg.

**52** Probably an error. Text 55 B 20 *lib-ba-šú* and 55 C 17 ŠĀ-šú are presumably scribal errors for DU<sub>10</sub>.GAM (as in text 56 A 11), *kim/n-ša-šú* or the like. There are numerous errors appearing in the texts of the Bēl-rēmāni archive. Cf. Jursa 1999, 13–22; Finkel 2000, 138–140.

**53** Most likely another error; instead of ŠU<sup>II</sup>.MEŠ “hands”, we rather would expect GĪR<sup>II</sup>.MEŠ “feet”. The writing in 55 A<sub>1</sub> 3’ seems a bit odd, preceding the ŠU and partly written inside the RA sign of the previous word appear one (or two?) signs similar to a *Winkelhaken*.

An arrangement of body parts like this from ‘head to feet’, a scheme in Akkadian known as *ištu muḫḫi adi šēpē*, is also used by the diagnostic-prognostic omen series SA.GIG and the physiognomic omen series *Alamdimmū*. Both series were closely connected and often paired together.<sup>54</sup> Tablets 2–14 of SA.GIG, in total twelve tablets, are ordered according to a scheme that *inter alia* could have inspired the later concept of melothesia. As already mentioned above, the obverse of BM 56605 contains some diagnostic omens that resemble the 29th tablet of SA.GIG. More evidence for the connection of these two series with astrology will be presented in group 4). Lists of anatomical features were not uncommon in cuneiform texts (as in, for example, the lexical list ugu-mu “my skull”,<sup>55</sup> the 15th tablet of the lexical series Urra,<sup>56</sup> some medical incantations,<sup>57</sup> and so on).

Although melothesia appears in an astro-medical context from time to time, it is part of a tradition in which signs were seen as influencing the human body. The next example of zodiacal physiognomy shows that the signs not only affected the body in a harmful way (while at other times providing healing) but also formed the shape and appearance of a child. The astrological compendium **LBAT 1593**<sup>58</sup> has preserved parts of an astro-physiognomic section for the signs Libra, Sagittarius and Aquarius, from which some extracts shall be presented here<sup>59</sup>:

02' [K]I<sup>mú</sup>RÍN [. . .] meš SAG.KI *si-i-qa* : *šá-niš ap-pu ana gi x* [. . .]  
 03' *u sa-a-mu kan-zu-zu* GÍD.DA *šar-tú sa-mat al-ma-nu-tam* DU-ak (. . .)  
 02' Region of Libra: [. . .] . . . narrow of forehead; variant: the nose<sup>2</sup> to<sup>2</sup> . . . [. . .]  
 03' and red; (he will have) a long chin; red hair, he will be widowed. (. . .)

05' (. . .) KI<sup>mú</sup>GU NITA IGI<sup>I</sup>-šú *sa-a-mu* : KI<sup>mú</sup>GU *šá SIG GÉŠTU<sup>I</sup> GAL.MEŠ* (. . .)  
 05' (. . .) Region of Aquarius: (the child will be) male, his eyes red; region of Aquarius: the lower part<sup>2</sup> of the ears will be large, (. . .)

After this astro-physiognomic information is given, a short description regarding the four triplicities follows (i.e. four groups of three signs or months, each member of every triplicity at a distance of 120° on the ecliptic). The first triplicity (months I, V, IX) is male, the second (months II, VI, X) is female, and so on (LBAT 1593, obv. 6–7).

The lines that follow show that not only the influence of the month or sign alone, but also certain planetary and lunar positions combined with it could cause the aforementioned sex and decree the fate of the child in question. Here are some

<sup>54</sup> Koch 2015, 274.

<sup>55</sup> See Veldhuis 2014, 157–159 for further information on this list.

<sup>56</sup> Landsberger 1967.

<sup>57</sup> BAM 212, BAM 213, LKU 37 (see Geller 2014, 9–14).

<sup>58</sup> Reiner 2000, 421–427.

<sup>59</sup> Translation follows mostly Reiner 2000, 423.

examples: Because Saturn or Mars stands in the region of the females with the moon, a male will be born (obv. 7'–8'); because Mars stands in Gemini with the moon, twins will be born (obv. 9'); because Jupiter becomes visible in the west, one male child will die (obv. 11'–12'), and the like. The section closes with the following statement<sup>60</sup>:

12' (...) BAR DIŠ<sup>lú</sup>TUR *a-lid*  
 13' <sup>d</sup>UDU.IDIM *šá ina* IGI *šá* <sup>d</sup>UDU.IDIM.MEŠ *ana*<sup>2</sup> KI<sup>2</sup> *šu*<sup>2</sup>-*a-tú* KUR-*du-šu u šim-tum*  
*i-šá-am-šú*  
 14' SIG<sub>5</sub> *u* HUL KI <sup>d</sup>UDU.IDIM *tuš-tab-bal*  
 12' (...) Month I: if a child is born,  
 13' the planet which is in front of the planets for that region reaches it/him<sup>2</sup>, and will decree fate for it,  
 14' you make the calculation of the good and the evil with the planet.

All this indicates a somewhat more complex situation; the fate of every child was not solely determined by his or her birth under a certain sign, but was modified by the position of the moon and the planets.<sup>61</sup> The text continues with a section about astrological medicine and the micro-zodiac, as well as the two numerological schemes which are connected to it (the *Dodekatemoria* and *Kalendertext* schemes).<sup>62</sup>

Zodiacal physiognomy was part of a wider worldview in which not only the human body, which was connected to the heavens, but also constellations and zodiac signs had their own anatomy. This idea predates the zodiac: some astronomical texts mention the anatomical features of certain constellations.<sup>63</sup>

From the LB period there is one calendar text which mentions, among others, GÚ.MURGU <sup>múl</sup><UR>.GU.LA “spine of the lion“ und MAŠ.SĪL *šá* <sup>múl</sup>MAŠ EGIR-*i* “shoulder blade of the twin behind“ (LBAT 1586+1587, rev. 3 and 5).<sup>64</sup> Other examples of anatomical terminology applied to constellations are the so-called GU text (BM 78161)<sup>65</sup> and the DAL.BA.AN.NA text.<sup>66</sup> SAG “head”, MURUB<sub>4</sub> “middle”, and ĠĪR<sup>II</sup> “feet”, were also used in some astrological texts.<sup>67</sup> Parallel to zodiacal melothesia these terms stand at the beginning, the middle and the end. A text from the Seleucid era which describes the micro-zodiac contains the following statement: 12 UZU.MEŠ ĤA.LA *šá* <sup>múl</sup>lú<sup>II</sup>HUN.

<sup>60</sup> See Reiner 2000, 422, 424.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. Rochberg 2003, 35 n. 9 on this section.

<sup>62</sup> For these numerological schemes, see Brack-Bernsen and Steele 2004, 95–125.

<sup>63</sup> Cf. e.g. Hunger and Pingree 1999, 84–89, 100–111.

<sup>64</sup> For this text, see Hunger 1975, 40–45; Brack-Bernsen and Steele 2004, 99–101; Wee 2016a, 152–155.

<sup>65</sup> Hunger and Pingree 1999, 90–100

<sup>66</sup> Hunger and Pingree 1999, 100–111.

<sup>67</sup> Britton 2002, 35–36; Ossendrijver 2018, 401–420. The ‘anatomical’ terms appear in BM 37361, rev. 3–5; BM 32339+32407+32645, rev. 2'–4', 25'.



GÁ *ip-pal-ka* “Twelve body parts of the share of Aries are indicated to you” (TU 14, obv. 11’).<sup>68</sup> The term UZU.MEŠ appears several times in the text (obv. 12’, 13’, 20’)<sup>69</sup> every time accompanied by 𒄩A.LA (= *zittu* “share”), which refers to the micro-zodiacal signs.

The emergence of calendrical (c. 6th century BCE), zodiacal melothesia (after 400 BCE) and zodiacal physiognomy (4th century BCE) must be seen in the broader context of Mesopotamian conceptions of cosmic corporeality.<sup>70</sup> The basis for such conceptions can be seen, for example, in the creation myth *Enūma Eliš*, which describes the creation of the universe from the body of the defeated Tiamat by Marduk (Ee IV 135–146).<sup>71</sup>

## The fourth group exhibits an astrological calculation method for the omen series SA.GIG, *Alamdimmû* and *Šumma Izbu*

A tablet from a private collection, known as ‘Esoteric Babylonian Commentary’ (EBC),<sup>72</sup> contains the following statement:

1 *šum<sub>a</sub>-ma iz-bu* SA.GIG *alam-dím-mu-ú*  
 2 <sup>mul</sup>𒄩HUN.GÁ <sup>mul</sup>𒄩GU<sub>a</sub>.AN.NA <sup>mul</sup>𒄩SIPA.ZI.AN.NA  
 3 *ana e-la-nu ki-i ik-šu-du alam-dím-mu-ú*  
 4 *iq-ta-bi ni-šir-ti AN u KI ú-šur*

- 1 (The series) *Šumma Izbu*, SA.GIG (and) *Alamdimmû*.
- 2 Aries, Taurus (and) Orion (= Gemini),<sup>73</sup>
- 3 when they arrive above: *Alamdimmû*
- 4 is meant. Keep the secret of heaven and earth!

<sup>68</sup> The text is edited by Sachs 1952, 65–70.

<sup>69</sup> It was left without translation by the editor. See Sachs 1952, 66, 68.

<sup>70</sup> Beside texts that mention body parts of certain constellations (see above), other texts are known that are dealing with the components of the body of a deity. In these texts the different parts of the god’s body are equated with trees, fruits, plants, metals, animals and other things. Cf. Livingstone 1986, 92–112; Reynolds 2002, 215–227; 2010, 291–302; Pongratz-Leisten 2015, 119–141.

<sup>71</sup> Lambert 2013, 95. For the concept of the body in Mesopotamian cosmology and astral sciences in general, see Ossendrijver 2016, 143–158.

<sup>72</sup> This name was given to it by R. D. Biggs, who edited the text (Biggs 1968, 51–58). Further studies of this text, and the related fragment LBAT 1601 are Böck 2000b, 615–620; Gabbay 2006, 81–82; Scurllock and Al-Rawi 2006, 369–374; Wee 2017.

<sup>73</sup> In LB astrology the name for a sign could sometimes be derived from different constellations, thus Orion was sometimes the third sign (Gemini), the Pleiades the second sign (Taurus), or the ‘Field-star’ (roughly Pegasus) the twelfth sign (Pisces).

Aries, Taurus and Orion are possibly standing *pars pro toto* for the whole zodiac and the three-omen series are therefore connected in some way to all signs.<sup>74</sup> The next section in EBC explains how to calculate an *izbu* (“malformation”). Afterwards the text continues with other ‘esoteric’ content, the information for SA.GIG and *Alamdimmû* is lacking. The similar fragment LBAT 1601 partly duplicates EBC, but nothing about the method for calculating anything related to the physiognomic omen series is preserved. There is also another still unpublished tablet that seems to preserve parts of this method. The astro-medical fragment **BM 45903** also mentions SA.GIG and *Alamdimmû* as a pair<sup>75</sup>:

I 3' [...] x GÍD.DA šá SA.GIG *alam-dím-mu-ú* (...)  
I 3' [...] ... length of SA.GIG (and) *Alamdimmû* (...)

In this case the ‘length’ most likely refers to a specific period of time in which something that is mentioned in the two omens series is effective. Subsequently to this line a section with different numbers between 1 and 30 follows, certainly connected with the thirty days of a schematic month or the thirty degrees of a zodiacal sign.

## From Babylonia to Qumran: LB astro-physiognomy and 4Q186 (= 4QZodiacal physiognomy)

From the Dead Sea Scrolls of Qumran<sup>76</sup> a manuscript is known that also deals with zodiacal physiognomy: 4Q186.<sup>77</sup> In the literature the text has sometimes been called a horoscope,<sup>78</sup> but it does not contain the horoscopes of actual persons. It can be categorised as a list-like compendium with physiognomic and astrological information (rather zodiacal than astrological, because the only astrological element is a reference to the sign Taurus).

<sup>74</sup> Cf. Böck 2000b, 616

<sup>75</sup> A full edition of the tablet will be published elsewhere.

<sup>76</sup> See, for an introduction to the scrolls from Qumran and the related literature, VanderKam and Flint 2002; Xeravits and Porzig 2015.

<sup>77</sup> See Popović 2007 for an extensive study on physiognomy and astrology in Qumran and Hellenistic Judaism, and the manuscript 4Q186. M. Popović introduced for this manuscript the title 4QZodiacal Physiognomy. See Popović 2011, 221–258 for a full edition of 4Q186 with further literature. There is no indication that 4Q561 (= 4QPhysiognomy ar) the other physiognomic text from Qumran contained any astrological element with certainty. Cf. Popović 2007, 55. Thus it will not be analysed here. For a somewhat different opinion on 4Q186 see Jacobus 2015, 6–15.

<sup>78</sup> A former designation of the manuscript was 4QHoruscope. See Popović 2007, 18–19.

On palaeographic grounds it can be dated to sometime between ca. 30 BCE–20 CE.<sup>79</sup> The fragment is exceptional in the way that it is written from left to right, thus making it the only known Hebrew text among the Dead Sea Scrolls entirely written in this direction.<sup>80</sup> Another remarkable feature of it is the use of paleo-Hebrew, Greek and cryptic letters mixed with the Hebrew ones.<sup>81</sup> The astro-physiognomic text 4Q186 was used by the Qumran community but was likely not a product of it; it was rather written in a Hellenistic context influenced by Babylonian, Greek and/or other ideas, presumably through an intermediate Aramaic version.<sup>82</sup>

When 4Q186 and the Babylonian material are compared some structural similarities and parallels become apparent. Two rough parallels between them are the zodiacal rather than astrological nature (typical for LB astrology), and the arrangement of the physiognomic features according to the scheme *a capite ad calcem* “from head to toe” (used, for example, in *Alamdimmû* and melothesia). But there are other elements that appear to be similar in 4Q186 and in the LB material.

Babylonian astrological medicine is known for its use of stones, plants and woods, which were associated with the signs of the zodiac. This so-called ‘stone-plant-wood’-scheme was combined with melothesia, and this textual material was correlated with the diagnostic omen series (see above group 3), which was closely linked, in turn, to the physiognomic omens in LB astrology (see above group 4). In 4Q186 the name of a stone appears as well: “granite stone” (4Q186 1 ii 2: אבן צינום).<sup>83</sup> Interestingly these are the only two words in the manuscript that are written in the correct Hebrew order from right to left.<sup>84</sup>

In the subsequent lines, after the description of some physical features the manuscript continues as follows:

“There is a spirit for him in the house of light (of) six (parts), and three (parts) in the house of darkness. And this is the horoscope under which he was born: in the foot of Taurus. He will be humble, and this is his zodiacal sign: Taurus.” (4Q186 1 ii 6–9; translation from Popović 2011, 235)

<sup>79</sup> Popović 2007, 28.

<sup>80</sup> Popović 2007, 25. For further information on inverted writing cf. *ibid.* 227–230.

<sup>81</sup> Popović 2007, 26.

<sup>82</sup> Popović 2014, 184.

<sup>83</sup> Jacobus 2015, 12–14 sees this as “further support for a Babylonian derivation of 4Q186” (p. 12).

<sup>84</sup> Popović 2007, 51–52. See also *ibid.* 52–54, 215, 235–237 on magico-medicinal stones, and the connection with Babylonian astro-medicine.

M. Albani and M. Popović interpret the numbers assigned to the ‘houses’<sup>85</sup> as the position of parts of a zodiacal sign above and below the horizon.<sup>86</sup> Popović further connects the ‘houses’ and the “foot of Taurus” in the following sentence to the astrological concepts of melothesia and dodekatemoria.<sup>87</sup> He suggested that 4Q186 belonged to a tradition in which both concepts were merged together,<sup>88</sup> further linking it to the mixture of the two concepts that was identified by O. Neugebauer in two Vatican codices,<sup>89</sup> the Rhetorius-Teucer text and a passage in the Mathesis of Firmicus Maternus (8.4.1–13),<sup>90</sup> and finally proposing a possible Egyptian origin of this tradition.<sup>91</sup> The term “foot of Taurus” indicates that the Qumran text uses a division of the signs into different parts, which are connected to the parts of the human body and therefore governing them, as was the case in zodiacal melothesia and its calendrical forerunner. The merger of melothesia and dodekatemoria existed already in the Babylonian tradition, extant for example in texts like BM 56605 and U 183+184, the latter of which dates with some certainty to ca. 200 BCE (see above group 3). The Babylonian origin of dodekatemoria is undisputed.<sup>92</sup> For melothesia we might also consider a Babylonian origin, after J. Z. Wee’s discovery of the concept in BM 56605;<sup>93</sup> and zodiacal melothesia also had a clear calendrical forerunner already ca. 500 BCE (see above group 3). Therefore a Babylonian origin for some of the elements present in 4Q186 seems quite likely.<sup>94</sup>

There has been some discussion about the status of the “spirit” (רוח) that is mentioned together with the ‘houses’ in 4Q186 1 ii 7.<sup>95</sup> M. Popović suggests that it is probably

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**85** Popović 2007, 159 assumes that the Hebrew word בית “house” in 4Q186 had a spatial sense comparable to the Akkadian word *bitu* “house”; as used in the term *bit niširti* “house of secret,” which denotes the area of planetary exaltation. The “house of secret”-concept was the model for the hypsomata in later Hellenistic astrology. Cf. Rochberg-Halton 1988, 53–57; Rochberg 1998, 46–50; Hunger and Pingree 1999, 28–29.

**86** Albani 1999, 279–330; Popović 2007, 155–171 (see *ibid.* 129–155 for a summary of other hypotheses). Numerical schemes in astrological cuneiform texts are known, for example, from the so-called calendar texts. In this text genre a group of four numbers or a group of two numbers and two logograms signal a specific date and ecliptic position. Cf. Brack-Bernsen and Steele 2004, 95–125.

**87** Popović 2007, 166–171.

**88** Popović 2007, 169; *id.* 2011, 245.

**89** Neugebauer 1959, 270–275. Neugebauer suggests the material presented by him as the ultimate source for the Rhetorius-Teucer text. Cf. *ibid.* 274.

**90** Popović 2007, 166–169.

**91** Popović was unaware of the Babylonian origin of the concept of melothesia (cf. Popović 2007, 170).

**92** E.g. Rochberg-Halton 1988, 57–60.

**93** Wee 2015, 217–233; and see above group 3) for further information.

**94** On the other hand, the possible horoscopic interest of 4Q186 points more to a Greek/Hellenistic than a Babylonian origin (cf. Popović 2007, 170) since Babylonian astrology was not concerned with determining the ascendant at the time of birth (Greek ὠροσκόπος, Latin *horoscopum*). See Rochberg 1998, 1–2. For Hellenistic astrology its determination was essential.

**95** See Popović 2007, 172; the mention of a spirit that is partly in the ‘house of light’ and partly in the ‘house of darkness’ is also preserved in 4Q186 1 iii 8–9 and 4Q186 2 i 6.

related to the zodiac sign and to be interpreted as a “zodiacal spirit”.<sup>96</sup> Interestingly, “protective spirits” (*šēdu* and *lamassu*) appear in the astro-physiognomic commentary BM 41623, and they are somehow connected to the signs Aries and Taurus (see above group 2). If some of the elements in 4Q186 are originally Babylonian, the “spirit” in the Qumran manuscript may also be derived from the “protective spirits” in the astro-physiognomic tradition that is represented by BM 41623.<sup>97</sup>

Another parallel between 4Q186 and the LB material, again in reference to a single cuneiform text, is the term that is used to refer to a zodiacal sign. 4Q186 and the above-mentioned cuneiform tablet LBAT 1593 (see group 3) use the word ‘animal’ for a zodiacal sign (Hebr. בהמה, Akk. *umāmu* “animal, beast”).<sup>98</sup> The last sentence of the text passage above “this is his zodiacal sign: Taurus” (4Q186 1 ii 9) uses the word בהמה, which would normally be translated as “animal” but is translated by M. Popović as “zodiacal sign”.<sup>99</sup> In Hebrew the common term for “zodiac sign” is actually מזל. Despite the fact that no other Hebrew text is known that uses בהמה as a *terminus technicus* for a zodiacal sign, the content and context of 4Q186 clearly supports this meaning.<sup>100</sup> The section LBAT 1593 obv. 15’–18’ makes use of the Akkadian word *umāmu* “animal” in a medical-zodiacological context, and it follows directly after the astro-physiognomic section (1’–14’) that was discussed above in group 3). The usual term for a zodiacal sign in Akkadian is *lumāšu* (AHw I 563a–b; CAD L 245a–246b). LBAT 1593 mentions an “animal of 13” (15’, 16’: *ú-ma-mu šá* 13) as well as an “animal of 277” (17’: *ú-ma-mu šá* 4.37). In line 18’f., the text continues as follows: “The animal(s) of 13 and 277 you take together. Stone, plant, and wood for the patient; you anoint, feed him, and fumigate him (with it). Calendar Text for Nisannu, days 1 to 30” (*ú-ma-mu šá* 13 *ù* 4.37 KI *a-ha-meš* DIB-bat NA<sub>4</sub> *Ú u* GIŠ *ana* <sup>16</sup>GIG ŠĒŠ GU<sub>7</sub>-šú *u tu-qat-tar-šú bi-ib-lu šá* BAR TA 1 EN 30). The two numbers 13 and 277 are a clear reference to the *Dodekatemoria* and *Kalendertext* scheme.<sup>101</sup> These two astrological schemes are both connected with the schematic 360-day calendar, and they both consist of four numbers which are a reference to a date and an ecliptic position (e.g. 1 13 1 1 and 1 26 1 2 = Aries 13°, Nisannu (I) day 1 and Aries 26°, Nisannu (I) day 2; these are the first two entries of the *Dodekatemoria* scheme). The *Dodekatemoria* scheme moves 13° on the ecliptic every day, which corresponds to the approximate lunar motion per day. The *Kalendertext* scheme can be described as an inverted version of the

<sup>96</sup> Popović 2007, 194–195, 206–208.

<sup>97</sup> Of course, such an assumption is highly speculative and would need further evidence to substantiate it.

<sup>98</sup> 4Q186 1 ii 9, 4 3; LBAT 1593 obv. 15’–18’. Cf. CAD U/W 96b–97a (note the remark on these lines: “difficult”). See Reiner 2000, 421–427 for an edition of LBAT 1593; in particular p. 427 on the uncommon use of the word *umāmu* “animal”. Cf. Wee 2016a, 191–195 for translation and analysis of this section.

<sup>99</sup> Popović 2007, 30; id. 2011, 235. Cf. Jacobus 2015, 9–11.

<sup>100</sup> Cf. Popović 2007, 105.

<sup>101</sup> Brack-Bernsen and Steele 2004, 95–125; Steele 2015, 188–191; Wee 2016a, 143–146.

*Dodekatemoria* scheme, and it moves 277° every day.<sup>102</sup> It accompanies the genre of the calendar texts, of which two types exist.<sup>103</sup> One type combines the thirty days of each month in the schematic calendar with animal substances, depending on the corresponding sign in the accompanied *Kalendertext* scheme e.g. “4th Du’ūzu, Taurus 5°: bull-blood, or bull-fat, or bull-hair, ditto (= you anoint)” (SpTU III 104, 5).<sup>104</sup> In this form of astro-medicine the animal substance for every day was derived from the accompanying *Kalendertext* scheme as well as the corresponding zodiacal sign from the given ecliptic position.<sup>105</sup> The “animal(s) of 13 and 277” in LBAT 1593 are certainly a reference to these Iatromathematical Calendar Texts and/or the animals of the micro-zodiac table (present in BM 56605, etc.), which are *inter alia* found together with the part of the Babylonian Iatromathematical Calendar system that deals with melothesia. The term ‘animal of 13/277’ is closely linked to the zodiacal sign of the scheme that accompanies a certain entry in a calendar text, and it could have been easily used as a synonym for the sign. If this is the case, LBAT 1593 would be the only known Akkadian text that uses the word *umāmu* “animal” for a zodiac sign,<sup>106</sup> and that in turn would mean that two texts from the field of Astrological Physiognomy – 4Q186 and LBAT 1593 – are the only known examples of Astrological Physiognomy in which the word ‘animal’ is used as a *terminus technicus* for a zodiacal sign. Of course, this could just be coincidence, and further evidence that may be found in the future could change this. This in itself would not be all that remarkable, if not for its correlation with the Hellenistic terminology. The word ζῷδιον (“little animal”) from which the word ζοδιακός (“zodiac”) is derived, is the Greek term for a sign.<sup>107</sup> The fact that

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**102** Cf. Brack-Bernsen and Steele 2004, 115–118.

**103** These two types of calendar texts are termed in my thesis on astrological medicine ‘Hemerological’ and ‘Iatromathematical’.

**104** The *Kalendertext* scheme of the Iatromathematical Calendar Texts consists of two numbers and two logograms e.g. BAR 1 SUḪUR 7 “Nisannu (I) day 1, Capricornus 7°”.

**105** In the case that the sign’s name was that of an animal, the substances were taken from this animal; if not, then for example a nearby constellation with an animal name was chosen for that purpose. The frequent sign-animal combinations that appear are: Aries-ram, Taurus-bull, Gemini-francolin, Cancer-crab, Leo-lion, Virgo-raven, Libra-scorpion, Scorpius-scorpion, Sagittarius-*Anzû*-bird, Capricornus-goat, Aquarius-eagle, Pisces-dove/swallow. Cf. Reiner 1995, 115–118; Steele 2011, 337–338; Wee 2016a, 178–181.

**106** Cf. Reiner 2000, 427: “It is, however, the association of these numbers with the word *umāmu* that is puzzling. I cannot but put forward the perhaps strange and surprising notion, but one that inevitably would have occurred to the reader, that these *umāmu* ‘animals’ are to be connected with the *zōa* that make up the Greek zodiac.” In n. 41 she remarks: “Obviously, not all signs are animal shaped; however, the Greek word ζῶν also denotes ‘figure, image’, not necessarily of animals or living beings.” Cf. Wee 2016a, 191–193, who believes that the ‘animals’ mentioned in LBAT 1593 should be made of wood. He translates line 16’ as follows: “Make the animal of wood, of date palm, goose, date palm (calendar text ingredients) (as substitute) for the ‘animal of 13’ (*Dodekatemoria* scheme).”

**107** The oldest evidence for the use of this terminology in Greek can be found in Aristotle, *Meteorology* 343 a, 23 (cf. RE X A, 466).

two texts of similar content use the word ‘animal’ in the same way and in a way that is exceptional for each of the two languages, but also in accordance with the Greek terminology, makes it possible that the meaning is in every case the same.<sup>108</sup> The use of the word *umāmu* in LBAT 1593 is therefore the probable terminological forerunner of the Greek ζῴδιος.

If we can return to the Qumran text that seems to use the word בהמה for a zodiacal sign, the end of the passage in question was as follows: “And this is the horoscope under which he was born: in the foot of Taurus. He will be humble/poor,<sup>109</sup> and this is his ‘animal’ (= zodiacal sign): Taurus.” (4Q186 1 ii 8–9) In the astro-medical cuneiform compendium BM 35072+47755 many elements appear that were parts of the Babylonian Iatromathematical Calendar, in which – similar to 4Q186 – *dodekate-moria* and *melothesia* are merged (e.g. obv. ii 5–23: text about stars touching specific body parts of a patient,<sup>110</sup> rev. iii 1’–14’: Iatromathematical Calendar Text, iii 15’–26’: zodiacal animalia).<sup>111</sup> Every month and sign, which corresponded to each other in LB astrology, had their attributed animal, and in BM 35072+47755 iii 27’–33’, directly after the zodiacal animalia section, follows a section with the same animalia together with the zodiac scheme (‘stone-plant-wood’)<sup>112</sup> but now in connection with month names. At the end of every entry the name of an animal is mentioned (as it is in 4Q186 1 ii 9), followed by the name of a certain stone (which resembles the appearance of the granite stone in 4Q186). The entry for the second month Ajjaru (which corresponds to Taurus) is as follows:

28’ (...) DIŠ GU<sub>4</sub> *pu-qut-tú* <sup>gis</sup>MA.NU <sup>ú</sup>*bar-ri-rat*  
 29’ [MÚD GU<sub>4</sub> Ī MIN SÍG MIN Š]ÉŠ NA<sub>4</sub> KUR.RA GU<sub>4</sub> (...)  
 28’ (...) I Ajjaru: *puquttu*-thorn, *e’ru*-wood, *barīrātu*-plant,  
 29’ [bull-blood, fat ditto, hair ditto. You] anoint (him). Mountain-stone – Bull. (...)

At the beginning, after the DIŠ sign, the month logogram for Ajjaru is written: GU<sub>4</sub>. Without the determinative ITI (= *arḫu* “month”) it could easily have been mistaken for the zodiacal sign Taurus, in its abbreviated form: GU<sub>4</sub>. Only from the following entry which uses SIG (= Simānu, third month) does it become clear that the month

**108** Cf. Reiner 2000, 427 for a sceptical viewpoint: “As is the case with many a late cuneiform text, the direction of borrowings and influences is hard to determine.”

**109** See Jacobus 2015, 11 for a possible connection of this phrase to a similar entry in the LB astrological text TCL 6, 14 (= TU 14; edited in Sachs 1952, 65–70).

**110** Cf. Heeßel 2000, 124–125; Geller 2014, 84–87. This section is duplicated in BM 56605 obv. ii 48–74. See above group 3).

**111** A full edition and study of BM 35072(= LBAT 1622)+47755 is included in Schreiber 2017.

**112** The materials are nearly the same as in the text BM 56605 rev. iii (see above group 3) which, like 4Q186, merges together *dodekate-moria* and *melothesia*.

is intended. The final sign is again GU<sub>4</sub>, in this case with the reading *lû* “bull”<sup>113</sup> (in turn obvious from the following entries which all have the zodiacal animals that were mentioned in the preceding section of the compendium at the end). In texts like BM 35072+47755, which contains material that is partly identical or at least related to BM 56605 (see above group 3), and which merge among other things *dodekatemoria* and melothesia (like 4Q186), animal names and zodiacal signs are to a certain extent synonymous.

In conclusion it seems likely that the tradition that is present in LB astro-medical and astro-physiognomic texts (BM 35072+47755, BM 56605, LBAT 1593, EBC, etc.) was transmitted in an adapted and modified way,<sup>114</sup> presumably through an intermediate Aramaic version, to the Qumran community.<sup>115</sup> The LB material is therefore the fore-runner of 4Q186, or at least influenced it in some way with its ideas and concepts.

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<sup>113</sup> GU<sub>4</sub> has here not the reading *alpu* but rather *lû*, as e.g. in *is lê* “jaw of the bull”, part of the constellation Taurus. Cf. CAD L 227b–228a.

<sup>114</sup> There are also clear differences between 4Q186 and LB astro-physiognomy, for example, the division of the signs into nine parts that are either in the house of darkness or the house of light, instead of the twelve parts of Babylonian *dodekatemoria*.

<sup>115</sup> Cf. Popović 2014 for the transmission of knowledge between Babylonian, Greeks, and Jews. Other examples from Qumran which likely have a Babylonian origin can be found: For possible Mesopotamian background of another Qumran text (4Q318 = 4QZodiacal Calendar & 4QBrontologion) see Jacobus 2015, 44–259; see Ben-Dov and Horowitz 2005, 104–120 for the Babylonian Lunar Three in Qumran and Ben-Dov 2008 for the Qumran calendars and Babylonian astronomy. A general overview *inter alia* on the Babylonian influence of astrology in Judaism can be found in Leicht 2006, 1–38.



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## Part II: **Classical Antiquity**



Alessandro Stavru

## 6 Pathos, physiognomy and ekphrasis from Aristotle to the Second Sophistic

### Physiognomy and ekphrasis: Some methodological observations

I would like to begin with some methodological observations. The title of this chapter might seem awkward. First of all, in Greek literature the words physiognomy and ekphrasis never occur together: the first occurrence of the verb *physiognomonein* is in Demosthenes, namely in his oration *Against Aristogeiton* (98.4) which dates back to the third quarter of the fourth century BC<sup>1</sup>; while for the first technical occurrence of *ekphrasis* as a description of “persons, animated and inanimated things, occasions and places” we have to wait until much later. It occurs only in the first century AD, in the preliminary exercises for the training of orators, the *Progumnasmata* of the Alexandrian sophist Aelius Theon.<sup>2</sup> We have, for sure, plenty of texts dealing with physiognomy from the Homeric epoch onwards, and we have, also from Homer onwards, ekphrastic texts describing persons, animated and inanimated things, occasions and places.<sup>3</sup> This means that both practices – that of physiognomy and that of ekphrasis – exist in Graeco-Roman literatures much earlier than, and independently from, their explicit theorization. One could even go further and say that physiognomic and ekphrastic passages occur throughout Greek and Latin literature, and that their importance lies in the rhetorical effect they produce on the audience, not in the theories that have been conceived to explain them.

Still, we face a major problem: can we associate the two practices of physiognomy and ekphrasis? This is a tricky question, since we do not have texts that *problem- atize* physiognomy and ekphrasis in the same context, or that establish an explicit relationship between them. What we do have is a series of texts from Aristotle to the Second Sophistic in which physiognomic and ekphrastic matters are treated in a way that makes plausible, if not altogether likely, the existence of a reciprocal connection

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1 The trial for which this speech was written took place some time between 338 and 324 B.C. It is noteworthy that Demosthenes is the only 4th century author using this verb. It then occurs only in the Pseudo-Aristotelian treatises on physiognomy, which date back to ca. 300 B.C. Other occurrences listed in the TLG as early are titles that might in fact have been conceived later (cf. Anthisthenes's *Physiognomonikos*, Athen. 14.656f; and the chapters 5 and 6 of Hippocrates's *Epidemics*).

2 Aelius Theon, *Progumnasmata* 118.7: ἔκφρασις ἐστὶ λόγος περιηγηματικὸς ἐναργῶς ὑπ' ὄψιν ἄγων τὸ δηλοῦμενον.

3 The most useful survey of physiognomy *avant la lettre* is still Evans 1969. For ekphrasis, see Downey 1959 (who however rightly points out that a *comprehensive* survey of ancient ekphrasis, i.e., independently of the occurrence of the term, does not exist).

between them. Passing in review through every possible piece of evidence on this subject would easily exceed the limits of this chapter: I will, therefore, focus on the first group of texts that deal with physiognomy and ekphrasis, written either by Aristotle or by his immediate pupils, and with texts belonging, roughly speaking, to later authors, with a special focus on the philosophical and rhetoric movement of the Second Sophistic. We shall see that all of these texts tackle, on the one hand, ekphrastic issues that square with the theoretical requirements of physiognomy, and, on the other, that physiognomic matters seem to entail an ekphrastic mode of description. The working hypothesis of this chapter, then, will be that physiognomy is in itself an ekphrastic practice grounded in rhetorical theory, and that, conversely, the ekphrastic description of characters such as gods, heroes, and humans relies, to a great extent, on empirical data drawn from physiognomical analysis.

## A *pathos*-based physiognomy

I will start with the Corpus Aristotelicum. It is a well known fact that the most influential work on physiognomy written in Antiquity was a two-volume treatise that until modern times circulated under the name of Aristotle.<sup>4</sup> Most scholars think that both of these books were written within the Peripatus, possibly by direct pupils of Aristotle, as they rely heavily on what Aristotle himself wrote about physiognomy.<sup>5</sup> But it may as well be possible that the author was Aristotle himself, at least of part of these writings, as we have evidence for Aristotle being the author of “one book” on *Physiognomy*.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> The most recent commented editions of the Pseudo-Aristotelic *Physiognomonica* are: (in English) Swain 2007, 639–661; (in Italian) Ferrini 2007; (in German) Vogt 1999; (in Spanish) Martínez Manzano and Calvo Delcán 1999.

<sup>5</sup> The first modern philologists questioning the authorship of Aristotle were Valentin Rose (1854, 221–225) and Richard Foerster (1893, 696–708). The *communis opinio* nowadays is that the *Physiognomonica* were written before pseudo-Aristotelian works such as the *Problemata physica*, i.e., around 300 BC (Vogt 1999, 192–197).

<sup>6</sup> Diogenes Laertius (3rd cent. AD) lists the title Φυσιγνωμονικόν α' (“Physiognomics, *one book*”) as an Aristotelian work (5.25). P. Moraux has however made a plausible argument that this title might have been interpolated later (1951, 186–190 and 238), and then adopted in the spurious *Vita Hesychii* (6th cent. AD), which has Φυσιγνωμονικά β' (“Physiognomics, *two books*”). Earlier mentions of Aristotle's physiognomic works are by the grammarian Julius Pollux (2nd cent. AD), who refers to “Aristotle's physiognomizing” (Ἀριστοτέλης φυσιγνωμονεῖ; 2.135), and the physician Galen (also 2nd cent. AD), who alludes to “another book about physiognomic theories” (κατ' ἄλλο σύγγραμμα φυσιγνωμονικῶν θεωρημάτων, *Quod animi mores corporis temperamenta sequantur* 7) by Aristotle. The anonymous author of the Latin *De physiognomia liber* (4th cent. AD) quotes as Aristotelian passages that are not included in the extant Ps.-Aristotelic treatises, and refers to issues that are not even mentioned in them. This could entail that he draws on texts that are larger than, or altogether different from, those that came down to us as Ps.-Aristotle. The first explicit reference to the *Physiognomonica* is by the 5th century anthologist Joannes Stobaeus, who quotes a whole passage from them (805a1–18) at *Eclogae* 1.47.6.

This could entail that he wrote a second book on the topic that went lost, or, more simply, that in antiquity the two books written by his pupils were perceived as one book authored by Aristotle. What we can say for sure is that Aristotle uses physiognomical material throughout his writings, mostly in his biological works.<sup>7</sup> The passage in which he provides a theoretical basis for physiognomy is, however, contained in a work about logic, the *Prior Analytics* (70b7–32)<sup>8</sup>:

Τὸ δὲ φυσιογνωμονεῖν δυνατὸν ἐστίν,

- (1) εἴ τις δίδωσιν ἅμα μεταβάλλειν τὸ σῶμα καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν ὅσα φυσικά ἐστί παθήματα. μαθῶν γὰρ ἴσως μουσικὴν μεταβέβληκέ τι τὴν ψυχὴν, ἀλλ' οὐ τῶν φύσει ἡμῖν ἐστί τοῦτο τὸ πάθος, ἀλλ' οἷον ὄργανα καὶ ἐπιθυμίας τῶν φύσει κινήσεων.
- (2) εἰ δὴ τοῦτό τε δοθείη καὶ ἐν ἑνὸς σημείου εἶναι,
- (3) καὶ δυναίμεθα λαμβάνειν τὸ ἴδιον ἐκάστου γένους πάθος καὶ σημείον, δυνησόμεθα φυσιογνωμονεῖν.
- (4) εἰ γὰρ ἐστίν ἰδίᾳ τινὶ γένει ὑπάρχον ἀτόμῳ πάθος,

οἷον τοῖς λέουσιν ἀνδρεία, ἀνάγκη καὶ σημείον εἶναι τι· συμπάσχειν γὰρ ἀλλήλοις ὑπόκειται. καὶ ἔστω τοῦτο τὸ μέγала τὰ ἀκρωτήρια ἔχειν· ὁ καὶ ἄλλοις ὑπάρχειν γένεσι μὴ ὅλοις ἐνδέχεται. τὸ γὰρ σημείον οὕτως ἴδιον ἐστίν, ὅτι ὅλου γένους ἴδιον ἐστὶ τὸ πάθος,<sup>9</sup> καὶ οὐ μόνου ἴδιον, ὥσπερ εἰώθαμεν λέγειν. ὑπάρξει δὴ καὶ ἐν ἄλλῳ γένει τοῦτο, καὶ ἔσται ἀνδρείος [ὁ] ἄνθρωπος καὶ ἄλλο τι ζῶον. ἔξει ἄρα τὸ σημείον· ἐν γὰρ ἑνὸς ἦν. εἰ τοῖνυν ταῦτ' ἐστί, καὶ δυνησόμεθα τοιαῦτα σημεία συλλέξει ἐπὶ τούτων τῶν ζῶων ἂ μόνον ἐν πάθος ἔχει τι ἴδιον, ἕκαστον δ' ἔχει σημείον, ἐπεὶ περ ἐν ἔχειν ἀνάγκη, δυνησόμεθα φυσιογνωμονεῖν. εἰ δὲ δύο ἔχει ἴδια ὅλον τὸ γένος, οἷον ὁ λέων ἀνδρείον καὶ μεταδοτικόν, πῶς γνωσόμεθα πότερον ποτέρου [sc. πάθος] σημείον τῶν ἰδίᾳ ἀκολουθούντων σημείων; ἢ τε εἰ ἄλλῳ<sup>10</sup> τινὶ μὴ ὅλῳ ἄμφω, καὶ ἐν οἷς μὴ ὅλοις ἐκάτερον, ὅταν τὸ μὲν ἔχη τὸ δὲ μὴ· εἰ γὰρ ἀνδρείος μὲν ἐλευθέριος δὲ μὴ, ἔχει δὲ τῶν δύο τοδί, δῆλον ὅτι καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ λέοντος τοῦτο σημείον τῆς ἀνδρείας.

It is possible to make inferences from physical features,

- (1) if it is granted that the body and the soul are altered together by the natural affections: in fact, by learning music a man has altered something in his soul, but this affection is not one of those which are natural to us; but rather such natural motions as angers and desires.
- (2) If then this is granted, and also that there is one single sign for one single affection,
- (3) and if we could grasp the affection and the sign proper to each kind [of animal], we shall be able to make inferences from physical features.
- (4) For if there is an affection that belongs properly to some indivisible kind,

<sup>7</sup> See *Ar. Hist. An.* 488b12–25, 491a20, 491b12, 492a1, 491b12–18 and 23–26, 492a1–4, 7–12 and 30–b3, 494a16–18, 497a7, 538b2, 588a, 608a11–21, 608a21–b18, 610b20–614b30, 629b5–10 (for discussion of these passages, see Sassi 1988, 53–56 and 196–197; Raina 1993, 21–24; Vogt 1999, 133–144); *An.* 421a25; *Eth. Nic.* 1123b6, 1128a10; *Gen. an.* 769b18–20; 774a36.

<sup>8</sup> For discussion of the passage, see Ross 1949, 501–502; Mignucci 1969, 725–726; Burnyeat 1982, 193–238; Lloyd 1983, 126–127; Burnyeat 1994, 3–55; Manetti 1987, 126–129; Smith 1989, 227–228; Raina 1993, 20–21; Vogt 1999, 120–133; Allen 2001, 13–86; Lo Piparo 2003, 142; Ferrini 2007, 26–27; Boys-Stones 2007, 53–55; Strobach and Malink 2015, 563–569.

<sup>9</sup> Ross brackets τὸ πάθος, which I include following the manuscripts C and n<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> Here I follow the emendation of Waitz 1844, 539 (ἢ τε εἰ ἄλλῳ instead of ἢ εἰ ἄλλῳ, as in Ross).



as courage to lions, **it is necessary** that there should be some sign of it; for it is assumed that body and soul are affected together. Let's suppose that this sign is having large extremities: this sign may belong also to other kinds [of animals], although not as wholes. For the sign is proper in the sense that the affection is proper to the whole kind, though not proper to it alone, as we are used to say. Indeed, this sign will belong also to another kind, and a man may be brave as well as some other animal. Therefore, it will have the sign, for it has been assumed that there is one sign for one affection. If then these things are so, and we can collect signs of this sort referring to those animals which have only one affection proper to them, and if each affection has a sign, since **it is necessary** that it has a single sign, then we shall be able to make inferences from physical features. But if the whole kind has two properties, e.g. if the lion is both brave and generous, how will we know which of the signs that follow properly is the sign of which [sc. affection]? Perhaps if both belong to some other [kind] though not to the whole of it, and if, in those [kinds] in which each one is found though not in all of their members, some members possess one of the affections and not the other: e.g. if a man is brave but not generous, but possesses, of the two signs, that of braveness, it is clear that this sign of braveness refers also to the lion.<sup>11</sup>

Here Aristotle claims that physiognomy is possible because the soul and the body are changed together (*hama*) by the same natural affections (*phusika pathemata*). Aristotle explains the kind of affections that produce changes in both the soul and the body: these are not the result of an *activity*, like for instance learning music, but on the contrary of natural emotions *which happen* to man, such as anger and desire. The examples provided by Aristotle clarify that physiognomy deals not with what a man *actively does*, but with his *passive*, that is, with what he *passively undergoes* due to the circumstances that affect his body. Therefore, Aristotle continues, if we can find one physical sign (*semeion*) for every *pathos*, physiognomy lets us infer the affection that is proper to each kind of animal. Again, Aristotle provides an example: the body of lions, which is characterized by large extremities, is the sign for the *pathos* characteristic of the lion, which is courage. The possibility of a physiognomical inference is made available every time the sign corresponding to the *pathos* characteristic of a certain animal, in this case the large extremities, occurs in other animals or even in mankind: in such cases we know that these animals or men have the same *pathos* as the lion, that is courage. Aristotle is clear about the fact that this method is not absolutely reliable. In fact, if it is *necessary* (*ananke*) that every *pathos* corresponds to some sign (*einai semeion ti*) and that there must be one sign (*semeion . . . hen ekhein*) of courage, the univocal attribution of this very sign to courage is all but necessary, for every *pathos* may apply to a variety of animals and one animal may have more than one *pathos*.

Physiognomical knowledge is, therefore, a probabilistic kind of knowledge, since it relies on four hypotheses: 1) body and soul change together in all natural *pathemata*; 2) there is one sign for every *pathos*; 3) it is possible to grasp the *pathos* and the sign proper to each class of animals; 4) this very *pathos* applies to one class of animals. Obviously, since none of these hypotheses can be verified, physiognomy

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<sup>11</sup> All translations in this chapter are mine.

cannot yield apodeictic results, but only probable diagnoses which are sometimes fitting, other times not.

Nevertheless, even taking into consideration the shortcomings of physiognomy, the foundation Aristotle provides for it in the *Prior Analytics* is of the utmost importance. Given that physiognomy is not always reliable, and therefore not an exact science, it is nonetheless possible to practice it and to draw knowledge from it – albeit with a margin of error. But what kind of knowledge? It is a very peculiar kind of knowledge, which is related to *pathos*, if we stick to what Aristotle says.<sup>12</sup> Indeed, alone the fact that the word *pathos* occurs seven times in this passage (and is implied an eighth time, at 70b27), suggests that physiognomy is about *paskhein*, since it does not diagnose what men and animals *actively do*, but what *passively happens* to them, or, to be more precise, what happens to their bodies as a consequence of what happens in their souls.<sup>13</sup> This link to *pathos* is a core feature also in the treatises on physiognomy that have come down to us under Aristotle's name. Their common premise is, as in *Prior Analytics*, that soul and body influence each other *sympathetically*. Changes in the body, such as those caused by drunkenness and illness, affect the state of the soul, and, conversely, affections of the soul, as in cases of love and fear, appear to change the exterior features of the body (808b11–12)<sup>14</sup>:

Δοκεῖ δέ μοι ἡ ψυχὴ καὶ τὸ σῶμα συμπαθεῖν ἀλλήλοις· καὶ ἡ τῆς ψυχῆς ἕξις ἀλλοιουμένη συναλλοιοῖ τὴν τοῦ σώματος μορφήν, πάλιν τε ἡ τοῦ σώματος μορφή ἀλλοιουμένη συναλλοιοῖ τὴν τῆς ψυχῆς ἕξιν.

It seems to me that soul and body affect each other sympathetically. A changed state of the soul changes also the appearance of the body; and again, a changed appearance of the body changes the state of the soul.

This *pathos*-based interrelation between body and soul is crucial for physiognomy. We find it also in another work of Aristotle, at the beginning of *De Anima* (403a16–24)<sup>15</sup>:

<sup>12</sup> It should be noted that Aristotelian virtues are *permanent* conditions, and therefore radically different from *non-permanent* emotions (see Rapp 2002, 545). On the “pathetic” character of physiognomy and its main focus on emotional (i.e. *non-permanent*) rather than characterological (i.e. *permanent*) features, see esp. Stok 2008, 268–269. On the distinction between *ethos* and *pathos*, see Prioux 2011, 150–153. On the issue, see also Tsouna 1998, 185–186.

<sup>13</sup> For a survey on *pathein/paskhein* in Aristotle (limited however to *Categories*, *On Generation and Corruption*, *Metaphysics* V, *NE* and *EE*), see Oele 2007. For a more general discussion, see Fortenbaugh 1975; Croteau 2016, 57–73.

<sup>14</sup> On the wording of this passage, see the perspicuous observations of Raina 1993, 82, n. 51 and Ferrini 2007, 244.

<sup>15</sup> The passage has been discussed by Hicks 1907, 195–199; Ross 1961, 168–169; Wisse 1989, 64–76; Wedin 1996, 1–38; Everson 1999, 157–158; Polansky 2007, 50–55; Rapp 2002, 550–552; Shields 2016, 94–99.

ἔοικε δὲ καὶ τὰ τῆς ψυχῆς πάθη πάντα εἶναι μετὰ σώματος, θυμός, πραότης, φόβος, ἔλεος, θάρσος, ἔτι χαρὰ καὶ τὸ φιλεῖν τε καὶ μισεῖν· ἅμα γὰρ τοῦτοις πάσχει τὸ σῶμα. μὴνυεῖ δὲ τὸ ποτὲ μὲν ἰσχυρῶν καὶ ἐναργῶν παθημάτων συμβαινόντων μηδὲν παροξύνεσθαι ἢ φοβεῖσθαι, ἐνίοτε δ' ὑπὸ μικρῶν καὶ ἀμαυρῶν κινεῖσθαι, ὅταν ὀργᾷ τὸ σῶμα καὶ οὕτως ἔχη ὥσπερ ὅταν ὀργίζεται. ἔτι δὲ μάλλον τοῦτο φανερόν· μηθενὸς γὰρ φοβεροῦ συμβαινόντος ἐν τοῖς πάθεσι γίνονται τοῖς τοῦ φοβουμένου.

But all the affections of the soul seem to be found together with a body: such as anger, gentleness, fear, pity, boldness, as well as joy and loving and hating – for along with these the body is affected in some way. This is shown by the fact that sometimes, when strong and vivid affections occur, nothing provokes or frightens us, while at other times we are moved by small and faint ones, whenever the body is upset and in such a condition as it is when it is furious. And this is even clearer: when nothing frightening occurs, people have the affections of a frightened person.

Here we learn that the *pathe* of the soul follow the body (*einai meta somatos*), and that together with them (*hama*) the body is affected as well. The adverbs *meta* and *hama* illustrate well what Aristotle means here: the sole fact that the body is affected in a certain way entails, more or less automatically, that an affection is also occurring in the soul. The switch between the affection of the body and that of the soul is so immediate that a body that is affected by a strong emotion like anger or fear can move others to the same emotion that has befallen it even if no event is taking place that would justify the arising of this very emotion. An upset body conveys what cannot be seen, that is, a *pathos* of the soul. And just as the *pathe* of the soul can have an immediate effect on the body, whenever we encounter a body that bears the signs of such a *pathos*, we are automatically affected by it as well. It is important to note that the *pathos* of the soul befalls us more than any other *pathos*, even if such a *pathos* is strong and vivid (*iskhuron kai enargon*). The words used by Aristotle give us an important insight into the hierarchy of *pathe* that is implied in this passage. The *pathe* not belonging to a soul may be strong and vivid, but they will not affect us as long as they do not befall our soul.

## The vividness of bodily emotions

It should be noted that to describe the immediate visibility of these *pathe* Aristotle uses an adjective, *enargos*, that will be used in the Second Sophistic to define the vividness of ekphrastic descriptions. We will return to this peculiar *enargeia* later on; here this vividness is a feature of emotions that *can be seen* and that are weaker than the emotions of the soul, which on the contrary *cannot be seen* except through the mediation of the body. As we saw in the passage from the *Prior Analytics*, the affections of the body refer to the affections of the soul and are to be understood as physical signs of non-physical emotions. Here we learn that the way the body reacts to such emotions can however be also deceptive, since the correspondence between the appearance of the body and the circumstances occurring to the body is not always granted: bodily appearances can indeed depend on modifications of the soul which

take place independently of exterior events and circumstances. This allows us to draw an important conclusion as to the function of physiognomy. “Reading” the emotions of the soul through the “language” of the body means not only becoming aware of the sympathetic relationship between soul and body. It also means *getting involved in these emotions*, since these very emotions are emotions of a soul that will in turn affect our own soul. The physiognomic reading of the body yields, therefore, a very peculiar kind of knowledge, which is not purely objective because it necessarily involves the one who is doing the “reading”. This process might well be defined as “ekphrastic”, as one of the most important features of *ekphrasis* is precisely its ability to emotionally involve the audience in a fictional description of an absent object. I will delve into this issue later on.

For now, let me focus on another passage of Aristotle, in which the role played by emotions in describing fictitious events is explicitly thematised. In the *Poetics*, Aristotle again uses the “ekphrastic” adjective *enargos*, this time to describe the ideal plot of a narration (1455a22–33)<sup>16</sup>:

δεῖ δὲ τοὺς μύθους συνιστάναί καὶ τῇ λέξει συναπεργάζεσθαι ὅτι μάλιστα πρὸ ὀμμάτων τιθέμενον. οὕτω γὰρ ἂν ἐναργέστατα [ὁ] ὁρῶν ὡσπερ παρ’ αὐτοῖς γιγνόμενος τοῖς πραττομένοις εὐρίσκει τὸ πρέπον καὶ ἥκιστα ἂν λανθάνει [τὸ] τὰ ὑπεναντία. ... ὅσα δὲ δυνατὸν καὶ τοῖς σχήμασιν συναπεργάζομενον. πιθανώτατοι γὰρ ἂπὸ τῆς αὐτῆς φύσεως οἱ ἐν τοῖς πάθεσιν εἰσιν, καὶ χειμαίνετο ὁ χεμαζόμενος καὶ χαλεπαίνει ὁ ὀργιζόμενος ἀληθινώτατα. διὸ εὐφροῦς ἢ ποιητικὴ ἐστὶν ἡ μανικοῦ. τούτων γὰρ οἱ μὲν εὐπλαστοὶ οἱ δὲ ἐκστατικοὶ εἰσιν.

In constructing plots and working them out by the help of speech the poet should, as much as he can, put the scene before his eyes. Thus, by visualizing the events most vividly<sup>17</sup> – as if he were present at their occurrence – he will find what is appropriate and be least likely to overlook contradictions. . . . The poet should also, as far as possible, work out the plot by using the gestures. For, if their natural ability is equal, the poets who are involved in the affections are the most convincing; the one who is distressed conveys distress and the one who is angry conveys rage most truthfully. And that is why poetry needs either a gifted nature or a madman, as the former are impressionable and the latter possessed.

In order to be realistic, a fictional story must be as vivid as possible (*enargestata*): the poet should put before his eyes (*pro ommaton tithemenon*) the story he wants to represent. Furthermore, to maximize the persuasive effect of his fiction, he should make use of gestures (*skhemasin*) which show his emotions. The poet who blusters and rages is the most convincing: therefore, poetry is a matter of either impressionable

<sup>16</sup> For discussion of the passage, see Bywater 1909, 239–243; Gudeman 1934, 302–309; Rostagni 1945, 97–98; Else 1957, 486–502; Lucas 1968, 173–177; Golden and Hardison 1968, 215–220; Dupont-Roc and Lallot 1980, 278–284; Gill 1984, 152–153; Eden 1986, 71–73; Halliwell 1987, 145–148; Calame 1991, 3–22; Belfiore 1992, 136–137; Stohn 1998, 269–275; Schmitt 2008, 550–553; LaCourse Munteanu 2011, 84–90.

<sup>17</sup> I stick to the reading *enargestata* (“most vividly”) instead of *energestata* (“most actually”), which is featured only in manuscripts N<sup>a</sup> A<sup>c</sup>.

or inspired persons, that is, of persons who are potentially or actually dominated by *pathos*.

The whole passage has an ekphrastic flavor: we will see that the canonical definition of *ekphrasis* occurring in the *Progumnasmata* features not only the adjective *enargos*, but also the locution *pro ommata agein*. What is important here is again the issue of *pathos*: a fictional plot needs strong emotions in order to appear realistic, and a poet who is able to convey them. Even if physiognomy as such is not mentioned in this passage, the fact that the good poet is the one who makes use of gestures, blusters and rages, is an unmistakable hint at his outward appearance, which must be as “pathetic” as possible in order to be convincing. And this *pathos* is in itself ekphrastic, since the scope of poetry is to bring before the eyes a fictional story which does not exist but must appear as realistic as possible.<sup>18</sup>

I now move on to the next passage, which is drawn from the anonymous treatise *On the Sublime*, a work that goes back to the 1st century BC and is conventionally attributed to Pseudo-Longinus (15.1–2)<sup>19</sup>:

καλεῖται μὲν γὰρ κοινῶς φαντασία πᾶν τὸ ὀπωσοῦν ἐννόημα γεννητικὸν λόγου παριστάμενον ἤδη δ' ἐπὶ τούτων κεκράτηκε τοῦνομα ὅταν ἂ λέγεις ὑπ' ἐνθουσιασμοῦ καὶ πάθους βλέπειν δοκῆς καὶ ὑπ' ὄψιν τιθῆς τοῖς ἀκούουσιν. ὡς δ' ἕτερον τι ἢ ῥητορικὴ φαντασία βούλεται καὶ ἕτερον ἢ παρὰ ποιηταῖς οὐκ ἂν λάθοι σε, οὐδ' ὅτι τῆς μὲν ἐν ποιήσει τέλος ἐστὶν ἐκπληξίς, τῆς δ' ἐν λόγοις ἐνάργεια, ἀμφοτέραι δ' ὁμως τὸ τε <παθητικόν> ἐπιζητοῦσι καὶ τὸ συγκεκριμένον.

The term *phantasia* is used generally for any kind of thought which arouses the production of speech; but the term has also become dominant every time under the effect of enthusiasm and *affection* it seems to you that you see what you speak about and you put it before the eyes of the audience. It will not escape you that rhetorical *phantasia* wants to achieve something different from the *phantasia* of the poets: in poetry the aim is astonishment, in speech it is *vividness*. Both, however, seek <*affection*><sup>20</sup> and excitement.

This passage also deals with the link between *pathos* and ekphrasis, but is more explicit than the previous ones. The anonymous author of the treatise relies on Stoic concepts such as *phantasia* and *ennoema*,<sup>21</sup> but seems to be sticking to the above-mentioned passage from Aristotle's *Poetics* when he says that enthusiasm and emotion are capable of “putting before the eyes” what is said. In fact, this kind of

**18** On the ekphrastic aspects of Aristotelian *pathos*, see Dow 2015, ch. 10.3. ‘Aristotelian Passions Involve Exercising *Phantasia*’, at 189–198.

**19** The passage has been widely discussed: Russell 1964, 122–126; Hertz 1983, 585–586; Casertano 1983, 123–125; Meijering 1987, 42; Mazzucchi 1992, 206–208; Beil 1993, 234–236; Webb 1997, 117–118; Dross 2004–2005, 275–277; Labarrière 2006, 71–93; Goldhill 2007, 4–7; Bartsch 2007, 90; Webb 2009, 101–102; Togni 2014, 217–223; Webb 2016, 216–218.

**20** The passage needs to be integrated: παθητικόν has been proposed by L. Kayser (cf. Russell 1964, 122), while H. Lebègue (1939) has συμπαθές.

**21** On the stoic sources on which Longinus relies, see Togni 2014, 226–235.

emotional visualization affects not only the process of *conveying* rhetorical and poetic content through words, but also the process of *acquiring* that content at the hearing of those very words. Enthusiasm and *pathos* bring about a “visual effect” both in poetry and rhetoric, albeit with different outcomes: in poetry, emotional visualization arouses astonishment (*ekplexis*); in rhetoric, vividness (*enargeia*).<sup>22</sup>

As we will see in the next passage, other ancient authors do in fact link vividness to poetry. The following excerpt is drawn from the *Institutio oratoria*, a large textbook on the theory and practice of rhetoric written by the Roman rhetorician Quintilian in the first century AD (6.2.29–32).<sup>23</sup>

At quo modo fiet ut adficiamur? Neque enim sunt motus in nostra potestate. Temptabo etiam de hoc dicere. Quas φαντασίας Graeci vocant (nos sane visiones appellemus), per quas imagines rerum absentium ita repraesentantur animo ut eas cernere oculis ac praesentes habere videamur, has quisquis bene ceperit is erit in adfectibus potentissimus. [Has] Quidam dicunt εὐφραντιστοῦς qui sibi res voces actus secundum verum optime finget: quod quidem nobis volentibus facile continget; nisi vero inter otie animorum et spes inanes et velut somnia quaedam vigilantium ita nos hae de quibus loquor imagines prosecuntur ut peregrinari navigare proeliari, populos adloqui, divitiarum quas non habemus usum videamur disponere, nec cogitare sed facere: hoc animi vitium ad utilitatem non transferemus. [Ad] Hominem occisum queror: non omnia quae in re praesenti accidisse credibile est in oculis habeo? non percussor ille subitus erumpet? non expavescet circumventus, exclamabit vel rogabit vel fugiet? non ferientem, non concidentem videbo? non animo sanguis et pallor et gemitus, extremus denique exspirantis hiatus insident? Insequentur ἐνάργεια, quae a Cicerone inlustratio et evidentia nominatur, quae non tam dicere videtur quam ostendere, et adfectus non aliter quam si rebus ipsis intersimus sequentur.

But how do we generate these emotions? In fact, emotion is not in our own power. I will try to explain this. We rightly call *visiones* what the Greeks call *phantasiai*, and it is through these that images of absent things are represented to the mind in such a way that we seem to see them with our eyes as if they were present, and whoever will be in control of them will have the greatest power over the affections. Some people say that he who can imagine in himself things, voices and deeds well and in accordance with truth is *euphantasiotos* [good in summoning up *phantasiai*], and that if we want we can acquire this power easily; if it is not true that in minds at rest, in groundless hopes, and in daydreams these images of which I speak are haunting us so that we seem to believe that we travel, we cross the sea, we fight, we address peoples, we spend wealth that we do not actually possess, and we do not think but act: we will not turn this error of the soul into utility. When I am complaining that a man has been murdered will I not have in

<sup>22</sup> As it becomes clear at the end of the discussion of *phantasia* (15.8), this distinction relies on the fact that poetry implies an exaggeration that goes beyond the limits of what is credible, while rhetoric must always respect what is possible and true. Vividness is therefore related to a realism that is not guaranteed in poetry. This distinction appears however problematic, as in other passages of the treatise (especially of the same chapter 15) vividness is indeed attributed to poetical figures. On this distinction and its problems, see Ravenna 2004–2005, 25; Dross 2004, 73; Webb 2009, 101; Togni 2013, 69–79.

<sup>23</sup> Secondary literature on the passage: Webb 1997, 118–121; Webb 2016, 209–211 and 214–215; Nocchi 2016, 8–9. For a general overview of *adfectus* in Quintilian, see Schryvers 1982, 47–57; Webb 2009, 89–106; Togni 2013, 63–65; Croteau 2016, 27–32.

my eyes all the things which might believably have happened in the case under consideration? Will the assassin not burst suddenly from his hiding place? Will the victim not be terrified when it finds itself surrounded, will it not cry out or plead or run away? Will I not see the one who is delivering the blow and the one who is stricken by it? Will his blood, his pallor, his groan, his open mouth exhaling his last breath not be impressed upon my mind? This gives rise to *enargeia*, which Cicero calls *inlustratio* and *evidentia*, which seems not so much to say as to show [the actual event], and the affection will follow no less than if we were present at the actual events.

As we have already seen in the anonymous treatise *On the Sublime*, Quintilian also deals with the emotions from a rhetorical point of view.<sup>24</sup> The good rhetorician is the one who, like the poet in Aristotle's *Poetics*, is able to imagine and represent fictive stories so realistically that they are able to convince their audience. These stories have a persuasive power which is linked to their unlimited ability to stir up emotions (*in affectibus potentissimus*). As in Aristotle and Pseudo-Longinus, these emotions depend on the vividness with which the absent things being described are brought before the eyes of the audience (*rerum absentium ita repraesentantur animo ut eas cernere oculis ac praesentes habere*). Quintilian refers to Greek terms which he might have drawn from the Stoic tradition, such as *phantasiai* and *euphantasiotos*; the other seminal term we have here is that of *enargeia*, which we have already seen in Aristotle and Pseudo-Longinus. The final sentence of this passage is particularly telling: here we learn that Cicero, who lived a generation before Quintilian, translated the Greek word for vividness, *enargeia*, into the Latin nouns *inlustratio* and *evidentia*. This entails that a whole tradition dealing with issues related to *enargeia* must have existed long before Quintilian in the Latin-speaking world, and that only with Cicero the Romans became aware of it. In this passage, the ekphrastic "bringing before the eyes" has a forensic application as well: a good patron in court must be able to imagine, in great detail, the circumstances of a murder. He must be able to visualize the assassin bursting from his hiding-place, the victim trembling, crying for help, begging for mercy, and turning to run. He must see the fatal blow delivered and the stricken body fall, as well as the blood, the deathly pallor, the groan of agony, and the death-rattle. The patron must, in other words, be able to construct the physiognomical features of both the assassin and the victim, although he was not present at the murder. The description of the outward features of the persons involved in the murder transforms what is absent into reality, and thus emotionally stirs up the jurors who will have to decide about the guilt or innocence of the accused. Physiognomy in a case like this is highly fictional, and yet it still serves a rhetorical purpose: that of convincing an audience by acquiring control of its emotions.

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<sup>24</sup> The passage of pseudo-Longinus discussed above and Quintilian's passage from the *Institutio oratoria* may rely on a common source. Scholars have in fact pointed out the common features between them: Lana 1951, 44–45; Manieri 1998, 129; Dross 2004, 61–83; Webb 2009, 96–103; Togni 2013, 63–67.

## Emotional involvement in the physiognomic description

Lucian, a representative of the Second Sophistic, follows a strategy similar to that of Quintilian (*The Parasite: That Being a Parasite is an Art*, 40–41)<sup>25</sup>:

“Ἴνα τοίνυν μὴ πάνυ θαυμάζῃς μηδὲ τὸ πρᾶγμα σοὶ δοκῆ χλεύης ἄξιον, φέρε προτυπωσώμεθα παρ’ ἡμῖν αὐτοῖς ἡγγέλθαι μὲν αἰφνίδιον εἰς τὴν χώραν ἐμβεβληκέναι πολεμίους, εἶναι δὲ ἀνάγκην ἐπεξίεναι καὶ μὴ περιορᾶν ἕξω δηουμένην τὴν γῆν, τὸν στρατηγὸν δὲ παραγγέλλειν ἅπαντας εἰς τὸν κατάλογον τοὺς ἐν ἡλικίᾳ, καὶ δὴ χωρεῖν τοὺς ἄλλους, ἐν δὲ δὴ τούτοις φιλοσόφους τινὰς καὶ ῥήτορας καὶ παρασίτους. πρῶτον τοίνυν ἀποδύσωμεν αὐτούς· ἀνάγκη γὰρ τοὺς μέλλοντας ὀπλίξεσθαι γυμνοῦσθαι πρότερον. θεῶ δὴ τοὺς ἄνδρας, ὧ γενναῖε, καθ’ ἕκαστον καὶ δοκίμαζε τὰ σώματα. τοὺς μὲν τοίνυν αὐτῶν ὑπὸ ἐνδείας ἴδοις ἄν λεπτοὺς καὶ ὠχρούς, πεφρικότας, ὥσπερ ἤδη τραυματίας παρεμύοντες· ἀγῶνα μὲν γὰρ καὶ μάχην σταδιαίαν καὶ ὠθισμὸν καὶ κόνιν καὶ τραύματα μὴ γελοῖον ἢ λέγειν δύνασθαι φέρειν ἀνθρώπους ὥσπερ ἐκείνους τινὸς δεομένους ἀναλήψεως.

ἄθρει δὲ πάλιν μεταβάς τὸν παράσιτον ὁποῖός τις φαίνεται. ἄρ’ οὐχ ὁ μὲν τὸ σῶμα πρῶτον πολὺς καὶ τὸ χρῶμα ἡδύς, οὐ μέλας δὲ οὐδὲ λευκός – τὸ μὲν γὰρ γυναικί, τὸ δὲ δούλῳ προσέοικεν – ἔπειτα θυμοειδής, δεινὸν βλέπων ὁποῖον ἡμεῖς, μέγα καὶ ὕφαιμον; οὐ γὰρ καλὸν δεδοικότα καὶ θῆλυν ὀφθαλμὸν εἰς πόλεμον φέρειν. ἄρ’ οὐχ ὁ τοιοῦτος καλὸς μὲν γένοιτ’ ἂν καὶ ζῶν ὀπλίτης, καλὸς δὲ καὶ εἰ ἀποθάνοι νεκρός;

Well, to not make you wonder at all, and enable you to not take this matter as a joke, let us imagine that we have been reached by the news that the enemy has suddenly invaded our territory; that we have to face him, as we don’t want the outlying land to be ransacked; that the general issues the order of a muster of all young men; that all of them gather, including philosophers, rhetoricians, and parasites. Well, we have to strip them first, as it is necessary that those who are going to wear armour have to be naked first. Look at each one of them, my noble sir, and put their bodies to the test. You will see that some of these bodies are thin and white because they are underfed – they shiver as if they were lying wounded already. Now, isn’t it ridiculous to say that men like these, who need rest, are able to stand fights, a stand-up battle, pressure, dust, and wounds?

Now go and observe how the parasite appears like. Isn’t he first of all full-bodied, with a pleasant skin, not dark and not pale – he doesn’t look white like a woman nor tanned like a slave –, and isn’t he high-spirited, with a keen look as ours, grand and full-blooded? For it is not good to have a fearsome and feminine eye at war. Couldn’t a man of this kind have a good life as an hoplite, and wouldn’t he have a good death if he were to die too?

The text is a joke-filled description of the figure of the parasite, who turns out to be more fortunate than philosophers and rhetoricians. Philosophers and rhetoricians lead an unhealthy life, while the parasite, who avoids all dangers, turns out to be the perfect gentleman. This contrast becomes all the more evident when it comes to a physiognomic description of the two kinds of men: philosophers and rhetoricians

<sup>25</sup> A good commented translation is that of V. Longo (1993, 106–107). The most thorough study of the parasite’s dialogue is Nesselrath 1985. For discussion of the passage, and especially the physiognomic features included in it, see esp. 400–410.



look thin and pale, underfed and with goose-flesh, as if they had already been wounded in a battle. The parasite, on the contrary, is full-bodied, his flesh has a nice colour, neither too pallid nor too tanned. His outward appearance allows us to see what cannot actually be inspected, namely his appetitive spirit (*epetai thumoeides*). And this spirit is good, *kalos*, in every respect: his looks are *kalos*, *kalos* is his serving as a hoplite in a time of war, and he is *kalos* even if he were to die in battle. The moral dimension disclosed by the physiognomic description is jokingly turned upside down and has, therefore, an ironic flavor: the immediacy of the ensuing ekphrastic evidence is however extremely telling. Lucian is providing a representation of interior qualities, i.e. of *pathemata*, by making them visible through physiognomic features. This representation also involves the emotions of the audience, which is invited to side with the parasite rather than the philosophers and rhetoricians.

We can observe something similar in the next passage, which is drawn from Philostratus the Elder's *Imagines*, a text from the 3rd century AD which describes a series of paintings displayed in a villa located in Naples. Here the Persian queen Rhodogoune is described (2.5.4–5)<sup>26</sup>:

Αισθάνεσθαι μοι δοκεῖς, ὦ παῖ, τοῦ ἐν αὐτῇ κάλλους καὶ βούλεσθαι τι καὶ περὶ τούτου ἀκούειν. ἄκουε δὴ. σπένδει μὲν ἐπὶ τῇ τῶν Ἀρμενίων τροπῇ, καὶ ἡ ἔννοια εὐχομένης. εὐχεται δὲ αἰρεῖν τοὺς ἄνδρας, οὓς νῦν ἤρηκεν, οὐ γὰρ μοι δοκεῖ ἔραν τοῦ ἔρασθαι. καὶ τὸ μὲν ἀνειλημμένον τῶν τριχῶν αἰδοῖ κεκόσμηται τὸ ἀγέρωχον κολαζούση, τὸ δὲ ἄνετον βακχεύει αὐτὴν καὶ ῥώννυσι, καὶ ξανθὸν μὲν καὶ χρυσοῦ πέρα τὸ ἀτακτοῦν τῆς κόμης, τὸ δὲ ἐπὶ θάτερα κείμενον ἔχει τι καὶ ἐς αὐγὴν παραλλάττον ὑπὸ τοῦ τετάχθαι. τῶν δὲ ὀφρύων χαρίεν μὲν τὸ ἀπὸ τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἄρχεσθαι καὶ ὁμόθεν ἐκπεφυκέναι τῆς ῥίνος, χαριέστερον δὲ τὸ περιῆχθαι, δεῖ γὰρ αὐτὰς μὴ προβεβλήσθαι τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ περιβεβλήσθαι αὐτοῖς. ἡ παρεῖα δὲ ὑποδέχεται μὲν τὸν ἀπὸ τῶν ὀμμάτων ἴμερον, εὐφραίνει δὲ τῷ ἰλαρῷ, τὸ γὰρ φιλομειδὲς ἐν παρεῖα μάλιστα, καὶ οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ κέκρανται μὲν ἀπὸ τοῦ χαροποῦ ἐς τὸ μέλαν, παρέχονται δὲ τὸ μὲν ἰλαρὸν ἀπὸ τοῦ καιροῦ, τὸ δὲ ὠραῖον ἀπὸ τῆς φύσεως, τὸ δὲ γαῦρον ἀπὸ τοῦ ἄρχειν. στόμα δὲ ἀπαλὸν καὶ ἀνάεστον ὀπώρας ἐρωτικῆς, φιλήσαι μὲν ἤδιστον, ἀπαγγεῖλαι δὲ οὐ ῥάδιον. ἂ δὲ ἀπόχη σοι μαθεῖν, ὄρα, παιδίον. χεῖλη ἀνθηρὰ καὶ ἴσα, στόμα σύμμετρον καὶ παραφθγγόμενον τὴν εὐχὴν τῷ τροπαίῳ, κἄν παρακούσαι βουληθῶμεν, τάχα ἔλληγιεῖ.

You seem, my boy, to feel the beauty in her and desire to hear something about this also. So listen! Rhodogoune is pouring a libation for her victory over the Armenians, and the conception is that of a praying woman. She prays to overpower men, as she has now overpowered them; for it doesn't seem to me that she loves to be loved. The part of her hair that is fastened up is arranged with an awe that chastises her arrogance, while the part that hangs loose makes her look like a Maenad and gives her strength; the disarranged part of her hair is blond, even more than gold, while the part lying on the other side differs also somewhat in brightness because of its orderly arrangement. Charming is the way her eyebrows begin at the same point and rise together starting from the nose; even more charming is the curve they make, for they should not only stand above the eyes in order to protect them, but also form an arch around them. The cheek

<sup>26</sup> On the passage: Lehmann-Hartleben 1941, 31 n. 43; Newby 2009, 335–336; Squire 2013, 110. For an overview of the role of *pathos* in Philostratus's *Imagines*, see Prioux 2011, 160–163 (on the Rhodogoune passage, see 161–162).

takes over the yearning that emanates from the eyes, and yet it delights thanks to its joy – for it is mostly in the cheek that the love for laughter can be seen – and the eyes vary from grey to black; the joy they bring about arises from the occasion, their beauty from nature, their haughtiness from her power. The mouth is soft and full of “love’s harvest,” most sweet to kiss but not easy to describe. Observe, my boy, all you need to learn: the lips are blooming and even the mouth is symmetrical and utters its prayer before the trophy of victory; and if we endeavour to listen attentively, perhaps it will speak in Greek.

As has often been noted, we have no historical nor archaeological evidence for the existence of the gallery of paintings described by Philostratus. Most scholars agree, therefore, that the *Imagines* is a purely fictional *ekphrasis*, which was conceived by its author as a playful exercise of his rhetorical abilities.<sup>27</sup> This passage describes the picture of the Persian queen Rhodogoune, daughter of Artaxerxes II (5th cent. BC), who became famous in antiquity for having defeated the Armenians in a battle. Philostratus depicts Rhodogoune from the viewpoint of a narrator, a sophist who recounts to a young boy the picture he had admired in the Neapolitan gallery. Queen Rhodogoune is extremely beautiful, so beautiful that her charm is not without consequences for those who look at her picture. This becomes clear right at the start of the description. The sophist invites the young boy to listen to his description if he has a *feeling* (*aisthanesthai*) for the Persian queen, and a *desire* (*boulesthai*) to hear about her beauty. Rhodogoune is charming because of her eyebrows (*charien.. chariesteron*); her eyes are delightful (*euphranei toi hilaroi*). The maximum of emotional involvement is, however, stirred up by her mouth, which is most sweet to kiss (*phile-sai men hediston*) – and therefore also not easy to describe (*apangeilai de ou rhadion*). We are told that her lips are full of colour, well proportioned, and that they even come to life, potentially speaking, to those who look at the picture. It soon becomes clear that the more the picture is filled out with physiognomical details, the more the audience becomes involved in it. Eventually, the switch from visual to auditive features culminates in a synaesthesia that makes the fiction perfect. Paradoxically enough, the non-Greek-speaking Rhodogoune is about to utter some words in Greek, which shows once again that the picture does not stand on its own, but on the contrary invites the audience to interact with it notwithstanding the linguistic barrier between the audience and Rhodogoune. And this interaction is a pathetic one, as we have seen: because of her irresistible charm, Rhodogoune stirs up emotions that are difficult to describe, and require therefore to be conveyed through both visual and auditive means. In order to fully account for her beauty, Philostratus must appeal not only to the viewer, but also to the listener.

A similar involvement of the audience in the description can be observed in a passage drawn from a work that has many features in common with Philostratus’s *Imagines*, namely the *Descriptions of Statues* by Callistratus, a sophist who lived in

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27 See the detailed discussion in Bachmann 2015, 43–52.

the generation after Philostratus the Elder. The passage describes the statue of a Maenad made by the renowned sculptor Scopas (4th century BC) (2.1–4)<sup>28</sup>:

Οὐ ποιητῶν καὶ λογοποιῶν μόνον ἐπι πνέονται τέχνη ἐπὶ τὰς γλώττας ἐκ θεῶν θειασμοῦ πεσόντος, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν δημιουργῶν αἱ χεῖρες θειοτέρων πνευμάτων ἐράνοις ληφθεῖσαι κάτοχα καὶ μεστὰ μανίας προφητεύουσι τὰ ποιήματα· ὁ γὰρ δὴ Σκόπας, ὡσπερ ἕκ τινος ἐπιπνοίας κινήθεις εἰς τὴν τοῦ ἀγάλματος δημιουργίαν τὴν θεοφορίαν ἐφήκεν. τί δὲ ὑμῖν οὐκ ἄνωθεν τὸν ἐνθουσιασμόν τῆς τέχνης διηγούμαι; ἦν βάκχης ἀγαλμα ἐκ λίθου Παρίου πεποιημένον ἀλλαττόμενον πρὸς τὴν ὄντως βάκχην. ἐν γὰρ τῇ οἰκείᾳ τάξει μένων ὁ λίθος τὸν ἐν λίθοις νόμον ἐκβαίνειν ἐδόκει· τὸ μὲν γὰρ φαινόμενον ὄντως ἦν εἶδωλον, ἡ τέχνη δ' εἰς τὸ ὄντως ὄν ἀπήγαγε τὴν μίμησιν. εἶδες ἂν ὅτι καὶ στερεὸς ὢν εἰς τὴν τοῦ θήλεος εἰκασίαν ἐμαλάττετο γοργόητος διορθουμένης τὸ θήλυ καὶ εἰς ἐξουσίαν ἀμοιρῶν κινήσεως ἦδει βακχεύεσθαι καὶ τῷ θεῷ εἰσιόντι τὰ ἔνδον ὑπῆχει. πρόσωπόν γε μὴν ἰδόντες ὑπὸ ἀφασίας ἔστημεν· οὕτω δὲ καὶ αἰσθήσεως συνείπετο δῆλωμα μὴ παρουσίας αἰσθήσεως, καὶ βάκχης ἐκβακχεύων θειασμὸς ἐμηνύετο θειασμοῦ μὴ πλήττοντος καὶ ὅσα φέρει μανίας οἰστρώσα ψυχὴ τοσαῦτα πάθους διέλαμπε τεκμήρια ὑπὸ τῆς τέχνης ἀρρήτῳ λόγῳ κραθέντα. ἀνεῖτο δὲ ἡ κόμη ζεφύρῳ σοβεῖν καὶ εἰς τριχὸς ἄνησιν ὑπεσχίζετο, ὃ δὲ καὶ μάλιστα τὸν λογιζόμεν ὑπεξίστη, ὅτι καὶ τριχὸς λεπτότητι λίθος ὢν ἐπείθετο καὶ πλοκάμων ὑπήκουσεν μιμήμασιν καὶ τῆς ζωτικῆς ἔξεως γεγυμνωμένος τὸ ζωτικὸν εἶχεν. ἔφης ἂν ὅτι καὶ αὐξήσεως ἀφορμὰς ἡ τέχνη συνήγαγεν· οὕτως καὶ τὸ ὀρώμενον ἀπιστον καὶ τὸ μὴ πιστὸν ὀρώμενον.

Not only the arts of the poets and prose writers are inspired when the frenzy from the gods falls on their tongues, but also the hands of the sculptors that are seized by the gifts of more divine inspirations prophesize creations that are possessed and full of madness. So Scopas, as if he were moved by some inspiration, imparted to the crafting of this statue his own divine frenzy. But why shouldn't I describe to you the inspiration of his art from the beginning? There was a statue of a Maenad, crafted in Parian marble, which had been transformed into a real Maenad. In fact the stone, while retaining its natural order, seemed to depart from the law which governs stones; what showed itself was really an image of something, but art had carried imitation over into actual reality. You saw that the stone, although it was hard, became soft in representing the feminine, and that its vigour corrected the femininity; you also saw that the stone, although it does not have the power to move, knows how to leap in Bacchic dance and that the interior responds to the god which enters into it. But when we saw the face we stood still due to our speechlessness; so telling was the manifestation of sense perception, although sense perception was not present; and the frenzy of a possessed Maenad was shown without any shock; and all the signs of affections displayed by a soul goaded by madness shone bright, mingled by art in an unutterable speech. The hair fell free to be tossed by the wind Zephyrus, and it was divided into the flowers of the hair. But this indeed transcended reason: that although the material was stone, it followed the lightness of hair and it complied with the locks of the hair through the imitated features, and though void of the disposition of life, it nevertheless had life. You might say that art has gathered the elements of a growth, so unbelievable is what you see, so visible is what you do not believe.

Callistratus's description dwells on the frenzied nature of the Maenad and the sculptor's ability in conveying her emotions. As in Philostratus's text, the described statue

<sup>28</sup> For a detailed analysis of the passage, see Bäbler and Nesselrath 2006, 27–39. See also the chapter of Maria Gerolemou in this volume.

interacts with the audience, which stands speechless as soon as it sees the face of the Maenad. In this case, the ekphrastic effect leads us to imagine a visual perception which, in reality, does not exist (*aistheseos suneipeto deloma me parouses aistheseos*). The description of the Maenad appeals to the senses, and is therefore confined to the visible: but the liveliness it provides appeals to imagination, as it hints at what *cannot* be seen, the *pathe* of the Maenad. And as in Philostratus, the viewer becomes part of the fiction, because he is emotionally involved in the Maenad's madness (*idontes hupo aphasias estemen*).

## Conclusion

This leads us to one of the four *Progumnasmata* which have been preserved: that of Nicolaus the Sophist, who lived in the 5th century AD (*Prog.* 68.9–10)<sup>29</sup>:

μετὰ ταύτην δὲ τὴν ἔκφρασιν καὶ φαμεν· ἔκφρασις ἐστὶ λόγος ἀφηγηματικός, ὕπ' ὅψιν ἄγων ἐναργῶς τὸ δηλούμενον. πρόσκειται δὲ ἐναργῶς, ὅτι κατὰ τοῦτο μάλιστα τῆς διηγήσεως διαφέρει· ἢ μὲν γὰρ ψιλὴν ἔχει ἔκθεσιν πραγμάτων, ἢ δὲ πειρᾶται θεατὰς τοὺς ἀκούοντας ἐργάζεσθαι.

And we say that ekphrasis is a descriptive speech which brings what is described vividly before the eyes. “Vividly” is added because in this way it differs indeed from narration; the latter gives a plain explanation of actions, while the former tries to make the hearers into spectators.

The *Progumnasmata* were texts that featured preliminary exercises for students of rhetoric. The purpose of these exercises was to prepare students for writing declamations after they had completed their education with the grammarians. These exercises were carried out by students of rhetoric, who had begun their schooling between ages twelve and fifteen. Among the exercises featured in the *Progumnasmata* was that of ekphrasis, which is the reason why the *Progumnasmata* feature proper definitions of ekphrasis. Nicolaus, whose *Progumnasmata* follows on those of Aelius Theon (1st cent. AD), Hermogenes of Tarsus (2nd cent.), and Aphthonius of Antioch (4th cent.), states that ekphrasis is a descriptive speech that brings what is described vividly before the eyes. “Vividly” is added because in this way ekphrasis differs from other kinds of narration, which only provide a plain explanation of actions. The peculiar fact about ekphrasis, Nicolaus says, is that it tries to make the hearers into spectators (*peiratai theatas tous akouontas ergazesthai*).

We saw already in Philostratus and Callistratus what this means: a vivid description, especially of physiognomical features, appeals to the *pathe* of the viewer or the listener, thus involving him in the descriptive process. This idea can be traced back to Pseudo-Longinus and Quintilian. The passages from Aristotle that we looked at

<sup>29</sup> The most thorough discussion of the *Progumnasmata* is Webb 2009, 39–59.

suggest, however, that an earlier origin for a *pathos*-centered relationship between physiognomy and ekphrasis is possible. Aristotle might not have thought about physiognomy and ekphrasis in the same way as later authors did, but he certainly developed ideas about both topics that had a profound influence on his immediate successors and throughout antiquity. It is thanks to these ideas that we can suggest a fruitful connection between *pathos*, physiognomy and ekphrasis, although this connection will become evident only four centuries later, among the rhetoricians of the Second Sophistic.

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Dorella Cianci

## 7 Iconism and characterism of Polybius Rhetor, Trypho and Publius Rutilius Lupus Rhetor

Physiognomy, as is well-known, is a peculiar branch of philosophy that claims to infer moral and behavioral characteristics from physical characteristics. It is commonly thought that physiognomy was invented by Pythagoras or, in the medical field, by the famous Hippocrates.<sup>1</sup> However, physiognomy reached its decisive moment of theoretical reflection with Aristotle.

This contribution, which results from a broader, long-term work that is in progress, seeks to add to the set of well-known treatises on Greek physiognomy a number of late Byzantine texts written by authors such as Daretos of Phrygia,<sup>2</sup> John Malalas,<sup>3</sup> Tzetzes Grammaticus,<sup>4</sup> and Isaac Porphyrogenitus.<sup>5</sup>

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1 Greek translations are mine unless otherwise indicated. For an in-depth study of the topics discussed in this chapter, see Cianci 2014.

2 Another person with the same name Daretos, who is mentioned in the *Iliad* (5.9–12), is presented as a first-hand witness to the Trojan War in Photius (*Bibliotheca* 190.147a). Antipater of Acanthus refers to a Daretos who wrote the *Iliad* before Homer, was the mentor of Hector, and made him promise not to kill Achilles. This story is included within the *New History* of Ptolomaeus Chennus or Epheterion, handed down to us by Photius. Ptolomaeus Chennus mentions Antipater and the two authors as important for dating Daretos's writings. It is clear that for Daretos there is at least one Hellenistic precedent, since Ptolomaeus Chennus was from the first century AD (cf. Philostratus, *Life of Sophists*, 2.607), and Antipater, some time later, has been recalled as the preceptor of Caracalla. Erroneously, Daretos' work has been attributed to the 6th century BC.

3 Malalas lived between 490 and 570 AD. He was a Byzantine rhetorician and historian; the name "Malalas" means "rhetorician" in Syriac. He was educated in Antioch and probably worked there as a bureaucrat in his early years. Sometime between 530 and 540 he moved to Constantinople. The hypothesis proposed by Haury 1900: 337–356, who identified him with John III Scholasticus, should be rejected. Malalas's *Chronographia* is now available in Thurn's edition (2000). In chapter 5 Malalas deals with portraits of Homeric heroes (except Polyxena and Palamedes) and in chap. 7 of Roman emperors. It should be noted that in chapter 4, where the story of the Minotaur is described, two important descriptions of mythological characters occur, that of Phaedra and that of Hippolytus 4. In this chapter Pasiphaes, Ariadne and Theseus are also mentioned, but there are no descriptions of them.

4 Born in Constantinople in 1100 and died between 1180 and 1185. Georgian on his mother's side. His greatest work is the "Book of Histories", then titled *Chiliades* by the first editor (XVI sec.). It consists of a miscellaneous work of mythology, history and literature. A large philological work is represented by the *Exegesis Iliadis*, which lines up with other commentaries to Homer authored by Tzetzes, such as *Allegoriae Iliadis*, *Allegoriae Odysseae*, *Antehomerica*, *Homerica* and *Posthomerica*. His commentaries to Hesiod, Aristophanes, Licophron, Nicandrus and Porphyry are also important.

5 Biography still uncertain. Probably born in 1053. Under the Comneni dynasty Isaac was a common name, borne for example by the son of Emperor Manuel, or by the brother of Alexis I, but there is no trace of literary activity among any of these, nor of the appellative "Porphyrogenitus" in the sources. See *De Characteribus* (Hinck 1873).



The first of these texts to be considered here is that of Dictys of Crete,<sup>6</sup> which has survived, with the exception of some papyrus fragments, in a Latin translation that does not feature physiognomic descriptions. Like Dictys, also Daretes of Phrygia survives in a Latin translation which does however include portraits of mythological characters. All the other authors mentioned write in Greek. These texts are different from normal physiognomic descriptions because they do not refer to the stereotyped however real, physical and moral peculiarities of human beings, but rather to characters that are usually – but not exclusively – drawn from the Homeric poems. The specific interest of these texts lies in the fact that they combine two apparently distant disciplines: physiognomy, conceptualized as a philosophical topic, and mythology, which involves the cultural and creative environment. Mythology has the advantage of bestowing the power of *antonomasia* – the substitution of an epithet for an actual name – in a variety of situations from everyday life. It gives a recognizable name to these situations and therefore confers charm on otherwise non-attractive physiognomic cases.

In authors such as Daretes, Malalas, Tzetzes, and Isaac, there are only descriptions of people and descriptions of bodies that we cannot, strictly speaking, call *ekphrasis*. The rhetorical tradition had precise knowledge of this technique, which was called *χαρακτηρισμός*, a term passed down by two Greek rhetoricians, Polybius Rhetor and Trypho, and by a Latin rhetorician, Publius Rutilius Lupus. The dates surrounding Polybius are uncertain, but according to Spengel – in *Rhetores Graeci* – he lived before Trypho, in the first century BC. Rutilius Lupus was a writer from the age of Tiberius.

Polybius Rhetor, *De figuris*, *RhG*, III, 108 Spengel

Εἰκὼν ἔστι λόγος εἶδους εἶδει παρατεθεὶς ὀλοσχερῶς ἢ ἀπὸ μέρους· ὀλοσχερῶς μὲν Ἀρτέμιδι ἰκέλη ἢ χρυσῇ Ἀφροδίτῃ· ἀπὸ μέρους δέ, ὄμματα καὶ κεφαλὴν ἴκελος Διὶ τερπικεραύνῳ.

Ἄρει δὲ ζώνην, στέρνον δὲ Ποσειδάωνι. **Παράκειται δὲ τῇ εἰκόνι ἑννέα, εἰκονισμός, εἰκονογραφία, ὑποτύπωσις, εἰδωλοποιΐα, εἰκασία, εἰδικὴ ὁμοίωσις, χαρακτηρισμός, τοποθεσία καὶ τοπογραφία.**

<sup>6</sup> Dictys is the source indicated by Malalas (§5 Thurn, 79.63; 80.68; 89.52; 91.91; 92.72), by his associate Isaac Porphyrogene (p. 80, 21–87, 24 Hinck) and by Tzetzes (*Allegoriae* 508–744; 786–835 Jacobs) in the physiognomic sections of their works. But in the Latin version of Dictys, *Ephemeris belli Troiani from Septimius* – an otherwise unknown author – the descriptions of the characters of the Homeric heroes are missing, hence the hypothesis that the portrait gallery was included in the original Greek version which went lost. The edition currently used for Dictys is that of Eisenhut (1973), which revised and corrected the one from 1958. The one from Dederich (1833) and the other one from Meister (1872) are now outdated. The Suda mentions nine books of the *Ephemeris* (Suid. D s.v. 1117 Δίκτυς, ἱστορικός, ἔγραψεν Ἐφημερίδα· ἔστι δὲ τὰ μεθ' Ὀμηρον καταλογάδην ἐν βιβλίοις θ', Ἴταλιὰ, Τρωικοῦ διακόσμου· οὗτος ἔγραψε τὰ περὶ τῆς ἀρπαγῆς Ἑλένης καὶ περὶ Μενελάου καὶ Πάριος Ἰλιακῆς ὑποθέσεως), Septimius, instead, in the letter to his friend Aradius Rufinus (1.17–2.4) counts ten books (itaque priorum quinque voluminum ... eundem numerum servavimus, residua de reditu Graecorum quinque in unum redigimus atque ita ad te misimus).

**Εἰκονισμός ἐστι σώματος ἰδίως ἀπόδοσις ἐξ ἱστορίας γυρός ἐν ὤμοισιν, μελανόχροος, οὐλοκάρηνος. καὶ τὸ ἐπὶ Θερσίτου φολκὸς ξην, χωλὸς δ' ἕτερον πόδα. τὸ δ' αὐτὸ καὶ εἰκονογραφία ἂν εἴη, ὅταν κατὰ τὴν ἀπόδοσιν τῆς μορφῆς ὁμοιώσεως ἐφάπτηται.** Ὑποτύπωσις ἐστὶ σώματος ἰδίως ἀπόδοσις πεπλασμένου, καὶ γὰρ τε λιταὶ εἰσι Διὸς κούραι μέγαλοιο, χωλαὶ τε ῥυσαὶ τε παραβλώπες τ' ὀφθαλμῷ. Παράκειται δ' αὐτῇ εἰδωλοποιΐα, ὅταν δαιμονὰς τινας ἀπὸ πραγμάτων ἀναπλάττωμεν, ὡς τὰς λιτὰς Ὅμηρος. Εἰκασία ἐστὶ φράσεως ὑπόληψις ἰδιώσεως μορφῆν ἐμφαίνουσα, εἰ μὲν τις θεὸς ἐσσι, τοὶ οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἔχουσιν, Ἄρτεμιδί σε ἔγωγε Διὸς κούρη μέγαλοιο εἶδος τε μέγεθός τε φυὴν τ' ἄγχιστα εἶσκω. Ἡ δὲ εἰδικὴ ὁμοίωσις ἐστὶ παράθεσις ὁμοίων χαρακτήρων, οἷον κείνου γὰρ τοιοῦδε πόδες, τοιαῖδε τε χεῖρες, ὀφθαλμῶν τε βολαί, κεφαλὴ τ' ἐφύπερθέ τε χαίται. **Χαρακτηρισμός ἐστὶν ὑποτύπωσις ἰδιώματος ψυχῆς, οἷον εὖ δὲ σὺ οἶσθα, γεραιὲ διοτρεφέες, οἷον ἐκεῖνος δεινὸς ἀνήρ· τάχα κεν καὶ ἀνάιτιον αἰτίωτο.** Τοποθεσία ἐστὶ τόπων ἰδίων ἀπόδοσις ὑφροστώτων.

The *Εἰκὼν* is a speech about personal characteristics that refers to the deity or person as a whole as well as to individual body parts. In reference to the entire body, it might state, for instance, that someone is “similar to Artemis” or “similar to Aphrodite of gold”; in reference to specific body parts, instead, that someone is “similar to the eyes” or “to the head of Zeus, caster of lightning”, “to the hips of Ares” or “similar to the chest of Poseidon”. There are nine terms to indicate the image described: **εἰκονισμός, εἰκονογραφία, ὑποτύπωσις, εἰδωλοποιΐα, εἰκασία, εἰδικὴ ὁμοίωσις, χαρακτηρισμός, τοποθεσία καὶ τοπογραφία.**

The *εἰκονισμός* is, properly speaking, the definition of the body with which this line of research begins, as in examples like *ἐν ὤμοισιν, μελανόχροος, οὐλοκάρηνος* and “Thersites had crooked legs; he was lame”. This would be the *εἰκονογραφία*, that is when, through an explanation of the person, the resemblance is captured [...]; *εἰκασία* is the typical attribute of distinction, which is used to portray the person. *εἰδικὴ ὁμοίωσις* is the comparison that associates the characters; *χαρακτηρισμός* is the sketch of the peculiarities of the soul; *τοποθεσία* is the configuration of the regions; *τοπογραφία* is the description of the peculiarities of a place.

From the text of Polybius the rhetorician, the physiognomic descriptions of the portraits can be defined as iconisms, both in terms of the descriptions of the body and also for the characterization of moral qualities.

Trypho Grammaticus, *Fragmenta, RhG*, III, 201 Spengel

Χαρακτηρισμός ἐστὶ λόγος τῶν περὶ τὸ σῶμα ἰδιωμάτων ἀπαγγελτικός, ὃν καὶ τινες εἰκονισμὸν λέγουσιν, οἷον γυρός ἐν ὤμοισιν, μελανόχροος, οὐλοκάρηνος.

From the text of Trypho, however, it is clear that characterism is also a topic when it comes to peculiarities of the body, what some might call iconicism, referring to *Od.* 19.246, where Eurybates is described as “round shouldered, dark skinned, curly headed”. The difference between the two rhetorical terms, in this case, has been nullified. In a *scholion* on the *Odyssey*, this figure is called iconism, following Polybius:

*Scholia ad Odys.*<sup>vet.</sup>19.246

γυρὸς ἐν ὤμοισι] περιφερεῖς καὶ στρογγύλους ἔχων τοὺς ὤμους. ἢ κυρτός. ὁ τρόπος εἰκονισμός.

Publius Rutilius Lupus (*Rhetores Latini Minores* 1863, 16–17), in his work *Schemata dianoa et lexeos*, thus defines the characterism:

*Quem ad modum pictor coloribus figuras describit, sic orator hoc schemate aut vitia aut virtutes eorum, de quibus loquitur, deformat.*

As the painter describes the figures with the colors, so the speaker with this figure represents the vices and virtues of the characters he is speaking about.

Rutilius Lupus follows therefore the definition of Polybius Rhetor. The same applies to the works of Daretus, Malalas, Tzetzes and Isaac, which also must be read in the light of the rhetorical and sophistic tradition that refers to the iconisms and the characteristics of the *ekphrastic discourse*. In fact, the mythological portraits of these authors draw attention to other texts, neglected by strictly physiognomic studies, but still deserving to be brought into the discussion in this context.<sup>7</sup> In the *Interpretation of Dreams*, Artemidorus notes traces of physiognomy in a dream. In the *Onomasticon*, Pollux provides the names for the various parts of the body, starting from the head. In the *Heroicus*, Philostratus offers a series of portraits of mythological characters such as those of Dictys and Daretus. The description of these characters is physiognomic, as it always combines moral nuances with physical characteristics. This Philostratus is the second of the four that are known, the same one who authored the *Imagines*, a description of a gallery of paintings which also contains various descriptions of mythological characters. Philostratus is one of those leading authors who, much like Dio Chrysostom, loved to add innovations into his mythology and therefore enjoyed dwelling on the physical and moral traits of this or that character, just as Dictys, Daretus, Malalas, Tzetzes and Isaac would more systematically do centuries later. Philostratus, who had already made use of *ekphrastic techniques* when he wrote the *Imagines*, uses the same method in his *Heroicus* for portraits of epic heroes, here focusing particularly on eyebrows, beards, and nose,

<sup>7</sup> On the relationship between onomastics, dreams and physiognomy, see Cianci 2014.

since the *ekphrastic technique* requires special attention to non-random correlations and canonical rules of description.

Below are some examples from the *Heroicus*.<sup>8</sup> In fact, the following series of mythological-physiognomic portraits can be seen as exemplary for Philostratus's *ekphrasis* of physiognomic features:

### Protesilaus (10)

έγονε μὲν γὰρ ἀμφὶ τὰ εἴκοσί που μάλιστα ἔτη· τηλικός δὲ ἐλάσας ἐς Τροίαν, ἀβρῶ ἰούλω βρύει καὶ ἀπόζει αὐτοῦ ἥδιον ἢ τὸ μετόπωρον τῶν μύρτων· φαιδρὰν δὲ ὄφρῦν περὶ τὸ ὄμμα βέβληται· τὸ γὰρ ἐπίχαρι αὐτῷ φίλον· βλέπει δὲ ἐν μὲν ταῖς σπουδαῖς σύντονον καὶ σφοδρόν, εἰ δὲ ἀνεμμένου τύχοιμεν, φεῦ τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν ὡς ἐπαφρόδιτοὶ τε καὶ φιλικοὶ φαίνονται· καὶ μὴν καὶ κόμης ξανθῆς ἔχει τὸ μέτριον· ἔστι γὰρ ὡς ἐπικρέμασθαι τῷ μετώπῳ μᾶλλον ἢ κατ' αὐτοῦ πίπτειν· καὶ τετράγωνος ἡ ἰδέα τῆς ῥινός, οἷον ἀγάλματος· φθέγγεται δὲ γεγωνότερον ἢ αἱ σάλπιγγες καὶ ἀπὸ μικροῦ γε τοῦ στόματος· γυμῶ δὲ ἐντυχεῖν ἥδιστον· εὐπαγῆς γὰρ καὶ κοῦφος, ὡσπερ στόματος· γυμῶ δὲ ἐντυχεῖν ἥδιστον· εὐπαγῆς γὰρ καὶ κοῦφος, ὡσπερ οἱ δρομικοὶ τῶν ἐρμῶν· Τὸ δὲ μῆκος δεκάπηχυσ τάχα, δοκεῖ δ' ἄν μοι καὶ ὑπὲρ τοῦτο ἀναδραμεῖν εἰ μὴ ἐν μειρακίῳ ἀπέθανεν.

He is about twenty years old at most. Because he sailed to Troy at such a young age, he has a full, splendid beard and smells sweeter than autumn myrtles. Cheerful eyebrows frame his eyes, which gives him a pleasant, friendly manner. When he exerts himself, he looks intense and determined. But if we meet him at ease, ah, how lovely and friendly his eyes appear! He has blond hair of moderate length. It hangs a little over his forehead rather than covering it. The shape of his nose is perfect, like the statue's. His voice is more sonorous than trumpets and comes from a small mouth. It is most enjoyable to meet him naked, since he is well built and nimble, just like the herms set up in race courses. His height is easily ten cubits, and it seems to me that he would have exceeded this had he not died in his early twenties.

### Nestor (26)

ὁ γὰρ Πρωτεσίλεως αὐτὸν ὧδε ἐρμηνεύει, ὡς φαιδρὸς μὲν αἰεὶ φαίνοιτο καὶ ἐν ὀρμῇ μειδιάματος, γενειῶν δὲ σεμνῶς τε καὶ ξυμμέτρως, τὰ δὲ ἀμφὶ παλαίστραν αὐτῷ πεπονημένα τὰ ὦτα κατηγοροίη καὶ ὁ αὐχὴν ὑπονεάζων ἔτι· καὶ γὰρ δὴ καὶ ὀρθὸν εἶναι τὸν Νέστορα καὶ μὴ ἠττώμενον ὑπὸ τοῦ γήρωος, εἶναι δὲ καίμελανόφθαλμον καὶ μὴ ἀποκρεμώμενον τὴν ῥίνα· ταυτὶ δὲ ἐν γήρῳ μελανόφθαλμον καὶ μὴ ἀποκρεμώμενον τὴν ῥίνα· ταυτὶ δὲ ἐν γήρῳ μόνοι ἴσχουσιν οὓς μὴ ἐπιλίποι τὸ ἐρρῶσθαι.

Protesilaus describes him as always appearing cheerful, beginning to smile, and with a beard that is majestic and well-proportioned; his ears display what he went through at wrestling school, and his neck is restored to its strength. In truth, Nestor stands upright, not defeated by old age, with black eyes and without a drooping nose. And this, in old age, only those whom strength has not forsaken maintain.

<sup>8</sup> I quote from the transl. by J.K. Berenson Maclean and E. Bradshaw Aitken (2002), with slight changes.

**Antilochus (26)**

τὸν δὲ Ἀντίλοχον τὰ μὲν ἄλλα ὅμοιον φησι γενέσθαι τῷ Νέστορι, δρομικώτερον δὲ καὶ περι-επιτισμένον τὸ εἶδος καὶ μὴ φρονοῦντα ἐπὶ τῇ κόμῃ.

In other respects Antilochus resembled Nestor, but he was swifter, trim in physique, and paid no attention to his hair.

**Sthenelus, Diomedes (27)**

τὰ δὲ εἶδη ἀμφοῖν, τὸν μὲν Σθέnelον εὐμήκη ὁ Πρωτεσίλωος οἶδε καὶ ἀνεστηκότα, γλαυκόν τε καὶ γρυπὸν καὶ οἶον κομώντα, ὑπέρυθρόν τε καὶ ἔτοιμον τὸ αἶμα· τὸν Διομήδη δὲ βεβηκότα τε ἀναγράφει καὶ χαροπὸν καὶ οὐπω μέλανα καὶ ὀρθὸν τὴν ῥίνα, καὶ οὐλὴ δὲ ἡ κόμη καὶ σὺν αὐχμῷ.

With respect to the appearance of the two men, Protesilaos knows that Sthenelos is of a good size and towering, gray-eyed, with an aquiline nose, fairly long-haired, ruddy, and hot-blooded. He describes Diomedes as steadfast and having eyes that are blue-gray and not black at all and a straight nose; his hair was woolly and dirty.

**Philoctetes (28)**

ἐλθεῖν δὲ ἐς Τροίαν τὸν Φιλοκτήτην οὔτε νοσοῦντα οὔτε νενοσηκότι ὅμοιον, ἀλλὰ πολὺν μὲν ὑφ' ἡλικίας (ἑξήκοντα γάρ που ἔτη γεγονέναι), σφριγῶντα δὲ παρὰ πολλοὺς τῶν νέων, βλέπειν δεινότατα ἀνθρώπων καὶ φθέγγεσθαι βραχυλογώτατα καὶ ὀλίγοις τῶν βουλευμάτων ζυντίθεσθαι.

When Philoctetes came to Troy, he was neither ill nor like one who had been ill, and although his hair was gray because of age (he was about sixty years old), he was more vigorous than many of the young men, his gaze was most fearsome among mortals, his words most brief, and he attended few of the councils.

**Agamemnon, Menelaus, Orestes (29)**

Ἀγαμέμνονα δὲ καὶ Μενέλεων οὔτε τὸ εἶδος ὁμοίω γενέσθαι φησὶν οὔτε τὴν ῥώμην. τὸν μὲν γὰρ ἐν αὐτουργίᾳ τῶν πολεμικῶν εἶναι, μαχόμενόν τε οὐδενὸς τῶν ἀρίστων ἦττον καὶ ὀπόσα ἐς βασιλέα ἤκει πράττοντα· γινώσκειν τε αὐτὸν ἂν χρὴ τὸν ἄρχοντα, καὶ ὁ τι ἕτερος γνοιή πειθεσθαι, πρέπειν τε τῇ τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἀρχῇ καὶ δι' αὐτὸ τὸ εἶδος· σεμνὸν γὰρ καὶ μεγαλοπρεπῆ φαίνεσθαι καὶ οἶον ταῖς Χάρισι θύοντα. τὸν δὲ Μενέλεων μάχεσθαι μὲν μετὰ πολλοὺς τῶν Ἑλλήνων, ἀποχρηθῆσθαι δὲ τῷ ἀδελφῷ πάντα, καὶ τυγχάνοντα προθύμου τε καὶ εὐνου τοῦ Ἀγαμέμνονος ὅμως βασκαίνειν αὐτῷ καὶ ὧν ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ ἔπραττεν, ὑπὸ τοῦ ἄρχειν μὲν αὐτὸς ἐθέλειν, μὴ ἀξιοῦσθαι δέ. τὸν γοῦν Ὀρέστην,

Ἀθήνησι μὲν καὶ παρὰ τοῖς Ἕλλησιν εὐδοκιμοῦντα, ἐπειδὴ τῷ πατρὶ ἐτιμώρησεν, ἐν δὲ τῷ Ἄργει κινδυνεύοντα, βληθέντα ἂν περιεῖδεν ὑπὸ τῶν Ἀργείων, εἰ μὴ Ὀρέστης ἐμπεσὼν τούτοις μετὰ ζυμμάχων Φωκέων, τοὺς μὲν ἐτρέψατο, τὴν δὲ ἀρχὴν τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ ἄκοντος τοῦ Μενέλεω κατεκτήσατο. κομᾶν τὸν Μενέλεων μερικαιωδῶς φησιν, ἐπεὶ δὲ ἡ Σπάρτη ἐκόμα, ζυγγινώσκειν αὐτῷ τοὺς Ἀχαιοὺς ἐπιχωριάζοντι. οὐδὲ γὰρ τοὺς ἀπ' Εὐβοίας ἦκοντας ἐτώθαζον, καίτοι γελοίως κομῶντας

Agamemnon and Menelaus were alike neither in appearance nor strength. Agamemnon was experienced in the arts of war, was inferior to none of the best in combat, and fulfilled all the duties of a king: he knew what was necessary for a ruler, was persuaded by whatever insight someone else had, and even by his very appearance was fit to lead the Greeks. He looked majestic and magnificent and like the sort of person who offered sacrifice to the Graces. But Menelaus, although he fought along with many of the Greeks, abused his brother in every respect. And while having the goodwill and favor of Agamemnon, he nevertheless maligned him and what Agamemnon was doing for him by his desire to rule, even though he was not deemed worthy. Orestes, at any rate, was held in honor in Athens and among the Greeks [...] Menelaus wore his hair boyishly long, as was the Spartan custom, and the Achaeans made allowance for him when he was visiting, since they did not mock those who came from Euboea even though their hair was ridiculously long.

### **The Locrian Ajax (31)**

Αἴαντα δὲ τὸν Λοκρὸν τὰ μὲν πολέμια φησι κατὰ Διομήδη τε καὶ Σθένελον γεγονέναι, ξυνετὸν δὲ ἦττον δόξαι, προσέχειν δὲ οὐδὲν τῷ Ἀγαμέμνονι·

The Locrian Ajax was as capable as Diomedes and Sthenelus in the arts of war, but appeared less intelligent and paid no heed to Agamemnon.

### **Cheiron (32)**

Χεῖρωνά τε τὸν ἐν Πηλίῳ γενέσθαι μὲν φησιν ἀνθρώπῳ ὅμοιον, σοφὸν δὲ καὶ λόγους καὶ ἔργα (θήρας τε γὰρ ποικίλης ἤπτετο καὶ τὰ πολεμικὰ ἐπαίδευε καὶ ἰατροὺς ἀπέφαινε καὶ μουσικοὺς ἤρμοττε καὶ δικαίους ἐποίει).

Cheiron, who lives on Mount Pelion, resembled a human and was skilled in words and deeds, for he participated in various kinds of hunts, taught the skills of war, trained physicians, “tuned” the musicians, and made people just.

### **Palamedes (33)**

καὶ ὄρα· μέγεθος μὲν τοῖνον αὐτὸν κατὰ Αἴαντα τὸν μείζω γενέσθαι, κάλλος δὲ Ἀχιλλεΐ τε ἀμιλλᾶσθαι καὶ Ἀντιλόχῳ καὶ ἑαυτῷ φησιν ὁ Πρωτεσίλεως καὶ Εὐφόρβῳ τῷ Τρωί· γένεια μὲν γὰρ αὐτῷ ἀπαλὰ ἐκφύεσθαι καὶ ξὺν ἐπαγγελίᾳ βοστρύχων, τὴν κόμην δὲ

ἐν χρῶ εἶναι, τὰς δὲ ὀφρῦς ἐλευθέρας τε καὶ ὀρθὰς καὶ ξυμβαλλούσας πρὸς τὴν ῥίνα τετράγωνόν τε οὖσαν καὶ εὖ βεβηκυῖαν. τὸν δὲ τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν νοῦν ἐν μὲν ταῖς μάχαις ἄτρεπτόν τε φαίνεσθαι καὶ γοργόν, ἐν δὲ τῇ ἡσυχίᾳ φιλέταιρόν τε καὶ εὐπροσήγορον τὰς βολὰς· λέγεται δὲ καὶ μεγίστοις ἀνθρώπων ὀφθαλμοῖς χρήσασθαι. καὶ μὴν καὶ γυμνὸν φησι τὸν Παλαμῆδη μέσα φέρεσθαι βαρέος ἀθλητοῦ καὶ κούφου, καὶ αὐχμὸν περὶ τῷ προσώπῳ ἔχειν πολὺν ἡδίῳ τῶν Εὐφόρβου πλοκάμων τῶν χρυσῶν.

So then in height he was the same as the greater Ajax; in beauty, Protesilaus says, he vied with Achilles, Antilochus, Protesilaus himself, and with the Trojan Euphorbus. His soft beard was springing up and with the promise of curls; his hair was cut close to his skin; his eyebrows were noble, straight, and came together above the nose, which was perfect as a square and stately. The resolve of his eyes appeared unshaken and fierce in battles, but when he was at rest their gaze was full of comradely affection and affable; he also is said to have possessed the most marvelous eyes among mortals. And in truth, Protesilaus also says that when he was naked, Palamedes weighed halfway between an athlete and a lithe person, and that he had a toughness about his face that was much more pleasant than the golden locks of Euphorbus.

### **Odysseus (34)**

ἔξωρόν τε γὰρ τῶν ἐρωτικῶν εἶναι τὸν Ὀδυσσεά, καὶ ὑπόσιμον καὶ οὐμέγανκαὶ πεπλανημένον τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς διὰ τὰς ἐννοίας τε καὶ ὑπονοίας. ἐνθυμουμένῳ γὰρ ἔωκει, τοῦτο δὲ ἄχαρι ἐς τὰ ἐρωτικά. οἶος μὲν δὴ οἶον καὶ ὡς σοφώτερόν τε καὶ ἀνδρειότερον ἑαυτοῦ τὸν Παλαμῆδη ὁ Ὀδυσσεὺς ἀπέκτεινεν, ἰκανῶς ἐκ τούτου διδάσκει ὁ Πρωτεσίλεως·

Odysseus was too old for amorous affairs, was somewhat flat-nosed, short, and had shifty eyes because of his schemings and insinuations. He was like one who was always plotting, and this gracelessness extended to his amorous affairs. Therefore, Protesilaus aptly teaches that a man like Odysseus killed a man like Palamedes, who was both more clever and more courageous than he.

### **Ajax Telamonius (35)**

δηλός τε ἦν καὶ ἀπλῶς βλέψαντι μὴ ἄθει εἶ φῦναι, διὰ τε τὴν ὥραν διὰ τε τὴν ῥώμην τοῦ εἶδους, ὅθεν ὁ Πρωτεσίλεως ἄγαλμα πολέμου καλεῖ αὐτόν.

It was absolutely clear to anyone who saw him that he did not grow up without divine aid because of the beauty and strength of his physique. Hence, Protesilaus calls him the very picture of war.

### **Teucer (36)**

Τὸν δὲ Τεῦκρον νέον μὲν ἡγοῦ, μέγεθος δὲ καὶ εἶδος καὶ ῥώμην ἔχειν.

Teucer was a young man, but one who had size, a good physique, and might.

**Hector (37)**

εἶναι δὲ τοῦ μὲν Τελαμωνίου μείω, κακίω δὲ οὐδὲν τὰς μάχας, ἐν αἷς ἐνδείκνυσθαί τι αὐτὸν καὶ τῆς τοῦ Ἀχιλλέως θερμότητος. διεβέβλητο δὲ πρὸς τὸν Πάριν ὡς δειλὸν καὶ ἥττω τοῦ κοσμεῖσθαι· τό τοι κομᾶν, καίτοι σπουδαζόμενον βασιλεῦσί τε καὶ βασιλέων παισίν, ἀνάξιον ἑαυτοῦ δι'σπουδαζόμενον βασιλεῦσί τε καὶ βασιλέων παισίν, ἀνάξιον ἑαυτοῦ δι'έκεινον ἠγεῖτο. τὰ δὲ ὧτα κατεαγῶς ἦν, οὐχ ὑπὸ πάλης (τουτὶ γάρ, ὡς ἔφην, οὔτ' αὐτὸς ἐγίνωσκεν οὔθ' οἱ βάρβαροι), ἀλλὰ ταύροις ἀντήριζε καὶ τὸ συμπλέκεσθαι τοῖς θηρίοις τούτοις πολεμικὸν ἠγεῖτο· παλαιόντος μὲν γὰρ καὶ ταῦτα ἦν, ὁ δὲ τοῦτο μὲν ἠγνόει πράττων, τὸ δὲ ὑφίστασθαι μυκωμένους καὶ θαρσεῖν τὰς αἰχμὰς τῶν κεράτων καὶ ἀπαυχενίσαι ταῦρον καὶ τρωθεῖς ὑπ' αὐτοῦ μὴ ἀπειπεῖν, ὑπὲρ μελέτης τῶν πολεμικῶν ἤσκει. τὸ μὲν δὴ ἄγαλμα τὸ ἐν Ἴλιῳ νέον τὸν Ἔκτορα καὶ μεираκιώδη φέρει, ὁ Πρωτεσίλωος δὲ γενέσθαι μὲν αὐτὸν κάκεινου ἠδιδωφῆσι καὶ μείζω, ἀποθανεῖν δὲ τριακοντούτην ἴσως, οὐ μὴν φεύγοντα ἢ παρεϊκότα τὰς χεῖρας (ταυτὶ γάρ συκοφαντεῖσθαι τὸν Ἔκτορα ὑπὸ τοῦ Ὀμήρου), ἀλλὰ καρτερῶς ἀγωνισάμενον [...]

He was smaller than the son of Telamonus, but not at all inferior in fighting, in which he displayed something even of the heat of Achilles. He was filled with resentment against Paris as a coward and as one who gave in to self-adornment. In truth, Hector thought that to have long hair, even though it is treated with respect by princes and the children of princes, was despicable for himself because of that man. His ears were damaged, not by wrestling (for this sport, as I said, neither he nor the barbarians knew), but he fought against bulls and considered engagement with such beasts warlike. These activities also are a part of wrestling, but when he did them, he was ignorant of this sport, and for military exercise he practiced submitting to bellowing bulls, having no fear of the points of their horns, taming a bull by forcing back its neck, and not giving up, even though he was wounded by it. The statue in Iliion indeed presents Hector as young and boyish, but Protesilaus says that he was more pleasant and larger than that statue. He died probably at the age of thirty, and he surely did not flee or let his hands drop idly (for in these matters Hector is slandered by Homer). Rather he fought mightily [...]

**Aeneas (38)**

κάλουν δὲ οἱ Ἀχαιοὶ τὸν μὲν Ἔκτορα χεῖρα τῶν Τρώων, τὸν δὲ Αἰνεῖαν νοῦν, καὶ πλείω παρέχειν αὐτοῖς πράγματα Αἰνεῖαν σωφρονοῦντα ἢ μεμνηνότεν Ἔκτορα. ἦσθη δὲ ἰσῆλικές τε καὶ ἰσομήκεις. τὸ δὲ εἶδος τοῦ Αἰνεῖου φαιδρὸν μὲν ἦττον ἐφαίετο, καθεστηκότι δὲ ἐώκει μᾶλλον ἐκόμα τε ἀνεπαχθῶς· οὐ γὰρ ἦσκει τὴν κόμην οὐδὲ ὑπέκειτο αὐτῇ, ἀλλὰ μόνην τὴν ἀρετὴν ἐποιεῖτο κόσμημα, σφοδρὸν δὲ οὕτω τι ἔβλεπεν, ὥστε ἀποχρῶν εἶναί οἱ πρὸς τοὺς ἀτακτοῦντας καὶ οὕτω τι ἔβλεπεν, ὥστε ἀποχρῶν εἶναί οἱ πρὸς τοὺς ἀτακτοῦντας καὶ αὐτὸ τὸ βλέψαι.

While the Achaeans called Hector the hand of the Trojans, they called Aeneas the mind. He presented matters to them more prudently than did the madly raging Hector. They were both of the same age and



height, and although Aeneas's appearance seemed less radiant, he resembled Hector more when that man had settled down, and he wore his hair long without offense. He did not adorn his hair, nor was he enslaved to it. Instead, he made virtue alone his adornment, and he looked at things so vehemently that even his glance itself was sufficient against the unruly.

### Paris (40)

τοίνυν Ἀλέξανδρον Τρωσὶ μὲν ἀπηχθῆσθαι πᾶσι, κακὸν δ' οὐκ εἶναι τὰ πολέμια, τὸ δὲ εἶδος ἥδιστον ἐπίχαρὶν τε τὴν φωνὴν καὶ τὸ ἦθος ἅτε τῇ Πελοποννήσῳ ἐπιμίξαντα, μάχεσθαι δὲ πάντας τρόπους καὶ τὴν ἐπιστήμην ὁπόση τόξων μὴ λείπεσθαι τοῦ Πανδάρου.

Alexander was hated by all the Trojans, but he was not worthless in the business of war; his appearance was most pleasing, and his voice and character were charming inasmuch as he had dealings with the Peloponnesus. He could fight in all ways and, as far as knowledge of bows is concerned, he did not fall short of Pandarus.

### Achilles (48)

Φ. Ἦ καὶ δεῖξεις αὐτόν, ἀμπελουργέ, καὶ ἀναγράψεις ἀπὸ τοῦ εἶδους; Ἀ. Τί δὲ οὐ μέλλω φιληκόου γέ σου τυγχάνων; τὴν μὲν δὴ κόμην ἀμφιλαφῆ αὐτῷ φησὶν εἶναι καὶ χρυσοῦ ἡδίω καὶ εὐσχήμονα, ὅπη καὶ ὅπως κινοίη αὐτὴν ἢ ἄνεμος ἢ αὐτός, τὴν δὲ ῥίνα οὐπω γρυπὴν ἀλλ' οἶον μέλλουσαν, τὴν δὲ ὄφρυν μηνοειδῆ, τὸν θυμὸν δὲ τὸν ἐν τοῖς ὄμμασι χαροποῖς οὖσιν ἡσυχάζοντος μὲν ἀναβάλλεσθαι τινα ὀρμήν, ὀρμήσαντος δὲ συνεκπηδᾶν τῇ γνώμῃ, τοῖς τε ἐρῶσιν ἡδίω αὐτὸν φαίνεσθαι.

P. Will you portray Achilles, vinedresser, and describe him from his appearance? V. Why shouldn't I, since I have met you who are so fond of listening? Protesilaus says that Achilles's hair is thick, lovelier than gold, and becoming no matter where and how either the wind or he himself may move it. His nose is not quite aquiline, but almost so; his brow is crescent-shaped. The spirit in his eyes, which are bluish-gray, casts off a certain eagerness even when he is still; when he is rushing on, they spring out along with his purpose, and then he seems more lovely than ever to those who cherish him.

### Patroclus (49)

ἦν δὲ καὶ τὸ μέγεθος καὶ τὴν ἀνδρείαν μεταξὺ τοῖν Αἰάντοιν · τοῦ μὲν Τελαμωνίου πάντα ἐλείπετο, ἐκράτει δὲ ἄμφω τοῦ Λοκροῦ. καὶ μελίχλωρος ἦν ὁ Πάτροκλος καὶ τῷ ὀφθαλμῷ μέλας καὶ ἰκανῶς εὐοφρὺς καὶ μέτρα ἐπαινῶν κόμης, ἡ κεφαλὴ δὲ ἐβεβήκει ἐπ' αὐχένος οἶον αἱ παλαιστραὶ ἀσκοῦσιν, ἡ δὲ ῥίς ὀρθή τε ἦν καὶ τοὺς μυκτῆρας ἀνευρύνετο, καθάπερ οἱ πρόθυμοι τῶν ἵππων.

In size and bravery he was between the two Ajaxes. He fell short of the son of Telamonius in all things, but he surpassed both the size and bravery of the Locrius. Patroclus had an olive complexion, black eyes, and sufficiently fine eyebrows, and he commended moderately long hair. His head stood upon his neck as the wrestling schools cultivate. His nose was straight, and he flared his nostrils as eager horses do.

### Neoptolemus (52)

Ἄ. Γενναῖον, [...], καὶ τοῦ μὲν πατρός ἦττω, φαυλότερον δὲ οὐδὲν τοῦ Τελαμωνίου. ταῦτό δὲ καὶ περὶ τοῦ εἴδους φησί· καλὸν μὲν γὰρ εἶναι καὶ προσεοικότα τῷ πατρί, λείπεσθαι δ' αὐτοῦ τοσοῦτον ὅσον τῶν ἀγαλμάτων οἱ καλοὶ λείπονται.

He was noble [...], and, although inferior to his father, was in no way more ordinary than Telamonius. Protesilaus says the same thing about his appearance as well: he was good-looking and resembled his father, but was inferior to him in the same way that beautiful people are inferior to their statues.

## Examples of iconisms and characterisms in the Homeric poems

Going back to the origins, we know that the first physiognomist was Homer – the *protos heurtes* – as Evans suggests, and a description such as the one of the ugly Thersites confirms this, although Thersites is not the only hero described in this kind of rudimentary physiognomy. Another ugly character destined for a bad ending is Dolon, for whom the specific phrase “bad looking” (*Il.* 10.314) is used. Pasquali also notes that Homer describes Menelaus, for example, as ξανθός (“blond”), in a predominantly brown-haired population. Also, more generally, it is known that in both poems there is a continual reference to different parts of the human body: Κεφαλή “head”, πρόσωπον “face”, seemingly ... “cheeks”, ὄμματα “eyes”, μέτωπα “front” and so on. There are two other physiognomic descriptions in Homer of particular interest. The first is the teichoscopy, i.e. the “viewing from the wall” (*Il.* 3.166 s.); the second is inserted in the same scene, as a physical description based on Antenor’s remembrance: an embassy to Troy by Menelaus and Odysseus. When Priamus invites Helen, on the top of the walls of Troy, to tell her who the main heroes were, the first to be indicated – Agamemnon – is a majestic, noble man. The adjective used by an astonished Priamus is γεγαρόν, to indicate the kingship. The other one, shorter than Agamemnon (also a significant comparison, which in some cases will be found in later portraits) also has broad shoulders and chest: this one is Odysseus. Also Ajax is tall and has broad shoulders. In the Homeric teichoscopy we can see that:

- 1) The body is described in terms of size;
- 2) Speculative thoughts on the body go side by side with thoughts on the character.

Homer, according to the memories of Antenor, offers a comparison between Menelaus and Odysseus: Menelaus towers over Odysseus, but when they are seated, the one prevailing is Odysseus and not because of any physical characteristic, but rather because of his eloquence:

“But when the mighty voice from the chest played out of dense words like winter flakes  
with Odysseus no one would be in a competition  
we were no longer as surprised for him as before, for his appearance” (*Il.* 3.221–224).

The astonishing outward aspect of Odysseus is described just a few lines before, when he

“looked up, staring at the ground  
did not shake the scepter neither back and forth  
but kept it steady, as one with no experience  
you would have said it was angry or even mad, out of itself” (*Il.* 3.216–224).

This episode presents us with a really new idea in a heroic setting: even those who do not have the “physique du role” can still achieve bold, heroic results. This represents our first critical hint of a point of view that is opposed to the aristocratic cliché of *kaloskagathos*. In the *Odyssey*, the first ‘anti-heroic’ speech about the relativity of beauty is put into the mouth of Odysseus, who emphasizes that good looks do not always line up with intelligence:

“Certainly the gods do not give gracious gifts to all men alike / they do not give them beauty, nor sense, nor eloquent word. / One is weaker in appearance / but a god of beauty crowns his saying; and everyone looks at him / fascinated: he speaks safely / with sweet kindness; he shines in the meetings, and when he comes around the city, people look at him as a god. / Yet another one says ‘he’s as handsome as a god, but his words do not have a crown of grace. So you have shining beauty: nothing better / a god could create: but you have an empty mind” (*Od.* 8.167–179).

The same considerations hold for his wife Penelope:

“How would you know, foreigner, whether I am superior to other women or not, as to *wisdom and good advice?*” (*Od.* 19.325–326).

Penelope is the first heroine who declares herself superior to other women not for her beauty but for her wisdom. If we gather up even a short list of descriptions of the heroes and heroines described in the *Iliad* and in the *Odyssey*, we notice that Homer was indeed interested in the details of the body. To give some idea of this, let me provide an overview of the descriptions of Hector.

## Moral and general Features

### Beauty

*Il.* 17.142

Ἕκτορ εἶδος ἄριστε μάχης ἄρα πολλὸν ἐδεύεο.

Hector, you're the best, but very weak in the battle.

*Il.* 12.462–463

ὃ δ' ἄρ' ἔσθορε φαίδιμος Ἕκτωρ  
 νυκτὶ θοῆ ἀτάλαντος ὑπώπια· λάμπε δὲ χαλκῶ.

She immerses herself in the splendid Hector as night leaving / suddenly seeing it;  
 he shone in bronze.

### Arrogance

*Il.* 15.440

τὸν δ' Ἕκτωρ μεγάθυμος ἀπέκτανε.

He was killed by the superb Hector.

## Physical Features

### Hair

*Il.* 22.401–403

τοῦ δ' ἦν ἔλκομένοιο κονίσαλος, ἀμφὶ δὲ χαῖται  
 κύνεαι πίτναντο, κάρη δ' ἅπαν ἐν κονίησι  
 κεῖτο πάρος χαρίεν.

around him, dragged, the dust rose up;  
 his black hairs were spread around, her  
 beautiful head was surrounded by the dust.

### Eyes

*Il.* 12.466

πυρὶ δ' ὄσσε.

the eyes of fire

### Skin

*Il.* 11.351–352

πλάγχθη δ' ἀπὸ χαλκόφι χαλκός,  
 οὐδ' ἴκετο χροά καλόν·

But bronze was made from bronze itself  
Nor did it reach the beautiful skin.

It is clear how the moral features of the hero are inferred from his physical characteristics, according to the method that will be followed many centuries later by the rhetorical and physiognomic disciplines. Among the parts of the body to which Homer draws our attention, the hands and the feet are the most important. The relationship between the parts of the body at the crucial moment of the funeral is also particularly important, as in the cases of the scratched face (*Il.* 11.393), the pulled hair (*Il.* 22.405), and the head of the corpse in the hands of a relative (*Il.* 24.724).

## Characterisms and iconisms in the portraits of Daretes, Tzetzes, Malalas and Isaac Porphyrogenitus

### Synopsis

#### Daretes

30 Characters

24 Male; 6 Female

16 Greeks; 8 Trojans

1 Greek; 5 Trojans

Greeks	Greeks	Trojans	Trojans
Achilles	Helen	Antenor	Andromache
Agamennon		Deiphobus	Briseis
Ajax Locrius		Helen	Cassandra
Ajax Telamonius		Aeneas	Hecuba
Castor		Hector	Polyxena
Diomedes		Paris Alexander	
Macaon		Priamus	
Menalaus		Troilus	
Merion			
Nestor			
Neoptolemus			

Odysseus			
Palamedes			
Podalirius			
Pollux			
Protesilaus			
16	1	8	5

**Malalas***Chronographia*

34 Characters

26 Male; 8 Female

17 Greeks; 9 Trojans

3 Greeks; 5 Trojans

Greeks	Greeks	Trojans	Trojans
Achilles	Diomeda	Antenor	Andromache
Agamemnon	Helen	Deiphobus	Cassandra
Ajax Lorius	Phaedra	Helen	Chryseis
Ajax Telamonius		Aeneas	Hecuba
Chalcas		Hector	Polyxena
Diomedes		Glaucus	
Philoctetes		Parise	
Idomeneus		Priamus	
Hyppolytus		Troilus	
Menelaus			
Merion			
Neoptolemus			
Nestor			
Odysseus			
Palamedes			
Patroclus			
Protesilaus			
17	3	9	5

The characters taken into account in this chapter are those portrayed by Daretes, Malalas, Tzetzes, Isaac, as well as the ones described in anonymous Roman mythology. They show a special physiognomy attitude, since these texts are particularly interested in the portraits of people and the mythological world. Overall, there are 51 portraits, almost all of them drawn from the stories related to the *Trojan War*, and almost all of them mentioned by Homer, except Palamedes and Polyxena, Phaedra and Hippolytus. Malalas presents 24 portraits, but since Thurn (2000) takes ten additional portraits from Isaac (from Agamemnon to Palamedes), imagining a gap in Malalas's manuscript, the number of portraits by Malalas grows to 34, which is the largest gallery of portraits we have. If we exclude this integration of ten more portraits, the largest number of portraits is to be found in the work of Daretes. In every description the cataloguing of the characters follows thus two mythological criteria:

- 1) the importance of the role and
- 2) kinship;

This criterion promotes and emphasizes couples and groups. For example, the Atrids appear in couples, with the children coming in order of importance after their parents; for the Trojan deployment Priamus has a sort of fixed primacy, and among his sons Hector is the best one.

Among the characters of Daretes, the one who excels all others is Helen with her brothers Castor and Pollux. Another professional couple is that of the two Greek doctors, Podalirius and Macaon, who were already presented in pairs by Homer. Briseis the slave appears only in Daretes and in the *Prolegomena* to Tzetzes's *Allegoriae Iliadis*. In Daretes, Helena plays a strategic role, because she closes the gallery of *De excidio Troiae* balancing, eventually, the role she had at the beginning. From the series of Malalas's characters, a clear preference for Greek male heroes surfaces. Among the innovations, the presence of Hippolytus and a "wise" Phaedra are noteworthy. With respect to the royal family, Malalas's scheme is basically accurate:

- **male component:** Priamus (king), Hector (the first child in importance), Deiphobus and Helenus (brothers-in-law, always associated with each other, Helenus has the talent of forecasting the future).
- **female component:** Hecuba (queen), Andromache (wife of Hector) Cassandra (Helen's twin, who also has the ability to predict the future), Polyxena (the younger daughter).

Regarding the Greek women, Helen, the favourite, the first lady, is associated with Diomeda, a kind of "Briseis". Although it is not attested in other sources, there is a woman from Lesbos, the daughter of the king Phorbales, who becomes a solace for Achilles, after he was deprived of his favorite slave.

The Trojan women mentioned are the same ones that we find in Isaac: Andromache, Cassandra, Hecuba and Polyxena. The only innovation is Astynome Chryseis, who is also described by Tzetzes, in his *Prolegomena* to the *Allegoriae Iliadis*.

As to Tzetzes, four works should be considered: *Allegoriae Iliadis*, *Antehomerica*, *Homerica*, and *Posthomerica*. The most interesting, from the point of view of physiognomic ekphraseis, are the *Allegoriae Iliadis*, which gather a gallery of characters. Tzetzes also shows a preference for the Greek male heroes. The portrait of Alcestis's son, Eumelus, son of "the best among the mothers" is also interesting. Tzetzes describes only one ugly homeric figure, Thersites, forgotten by all the other authors, but present in the anonymous mythologic "operetta" of the Uffenbachian library, which was probably inspired by *Allegoriae Iliadis*.

In Isaac's work there is the usual prevalence of Greek male heroes (16 versus 7), but the originality of this text lies in the narrative structure: digression, *exordium*, and invocation of the final divinity. Noteworthy is the absence of any major female character such as Helen. The women described are the usual four Trojans, in the usual sequence (Hecuba, Andromache, Cassandra, and Polyxena).

The anonymous mythological "operetta" ignores women. The portraits concern only male heroes, of which 13 are Greek and only one Trojan, the only one who is indispensable because he is the best: Hector.

### Tzetzes

#### *Allegoriae Iliadis, Prolegomena*

30 Characters

24 Male; 6 Female

4 Greeks; 2 Trojans

22 Greeks; 2 Trojans

Greeks	Greeks	Trojans	Trojans
Achilles	Diomeda	Aeneas	Astunome Chryseis
Agamennon	Helen	Hector	Briseis (Hippodamia)
Antilochus	Laodamia		
Ajax Locrius	Tecmessa		
Ajax Telamonius			
Chalcas			
Diomedes			
Eumelus			
Eurialus			
Phoenix			
Idomeneus			



Menelaus				
Menesteus				
Merion				
Nestor				
Odysseus				
Palamedes				
Patroclus				
Protesilaus				
Sthenelus				
Thersites				
Toantes				
22	4	2	2	

**Tzetzes***Antehomerica*

2 Characters

1 Male; 1 Female

1 Greek

1 Greek

Greeks	Greeks	Trojans	Trojans
Protesilaus	Helen		
1	1	0	0

**Tzetzes***Homerica*

1 Character

1 Trojan

Greeks	Greeks	Trojans	Trojans
		Hector	
		1	

**Tzetzes***Posthomerica*

15 Characters

11 Male; 4 Female

4 Greeks; 7 Trojans

4 Trojan women

Greeks	Greeks	Trojans	Trojans
Agamennon		Antenor	Andromache
Philoctetes		Deiphobus	Cassandra
Neoptolemus		Helenus	Hecuba
Nestor		Aeneas	Polyxena
		Glaucus	
		Priamus	
		Troilus	
4	0	7	4

**Anonymus***Antehomerica Uffenbachiana*

14 Characters

14 Male; 0 Female

13 Greeks

1 Trojan

Greeks	Greeks	Trojans	Trojans
Achilles		Hector	
Ajax Locrius			
Ajax Telamonius			
Antilochus			
Chalcas			
Diomedes			
Philoctetes			
Nestor			

Nireus			
Odysseus			
Palamedes			
Protesilaus			
Thersites			
13	0	1	0

### Isaac Porphyrogenitus

27 Characters

23 Male; 4 Female

16 Greeks; 7 Trojans

4 Trojan women

Greeks	Greeks	Trojans	Trojans
Achilles		Antenor	Andromache
Agamemnon		Deiphobus	Cassandra
Ajax Locrius		Aeneas	Hecuba
Ajax Telamonius		Helenus	Polyxena
Chalcas		Hector	
Diomedes		Priamus	
Philoctetes		Troilus	
Idomeneus			
Menelaus			
Merion			
Neoptolemus (Pyrrhus)			
Nestor			
Odysseus			
Palamedes			
Patroclus			
Protesilaus			
16	0	7	4

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Laetitia Marcucci

## 8 Physiognomic roots in the rhetoric of Cicero and Quintilian: The application and transformation of traditional physiognomics

Physiognomics is an art, a technique, a previous stage of knowledge, which has its roots in very remote times and cultures. According to physiognomics, an individual's inner nature could be revealed and judged, and even his future forecast, on the basis of the analysis of his physical features. It relies on the idea that the visible is a faithful reflection of the invisible, and that the inner nature and the outer appearance are closely linked together, as soul with body. Physiognomics focuses on fixed, permanent, static signs, whereas pathognomics, etymologically and basically a 'gnomé' of 'pathos', namely the study and knowledge of the changing human passions and their effects, relies on ephemeral, mutable and time-varying signs. The history of physiognomics and pathognomics are connected and intertwined: they are not completely separated before Lavater's work in the 19th century of our era. In ancient times, elements of pathognomics are mostly related to physiognomic developments, as shown by the physiognomic roots of Roman rhetoric. To some extent, Graeco-Roman rhetoric supplies a focal point for oversight regarding the application and transformation of traditional physiognomics, which has been little studied from this point of view.

In this chapter, I intend to shed light on the process of incorporation of both physiognomic and pathognomic elements in rhetoric. Their connections are particularly intense and fertile in Cicero's and Quintilian's rhetorical writings, which are the inheritors of three main traditions: physiognomics, rhetoric, and the problem of passions in line with Aristotle's work. Drawing on a historical and philosophical approach, I will highlight the long-term process and the main evolutions that lead to Roman rhetoric, with an emphasis on continuities rather than disruptions. I will focus especially on chronological and logical connections. Thus, I will deal with the body of knowledge of ancient traditional physiognomics broadly, including the writings before and contemporary with Pseudo-Aristotle's *Physiognomica*, and on the other hand the main references of rhetoric until Cicero and Quintilian so as to provide key interpretations of their rhetorical works. Cicero's rhetorical work consists of the following dialogues: *De inventione*, *De oratore*, *Brutus*, *Orator*. Quintilian's rhetorical theory is primarily found in his *Institutio oratoria*, the most extensive treatise that survives from antiquity following Cicero. Moreover, the application and transformation of traditional physiognomics into rhetoric goes hand in hand with a debate on the status of signs, the passions, and body language. Within this setting, 'actio', namely the delivery of speech, is a key element to reveal the difference and proximity between

physiognomics and rhetoric. First, I shall provide an overview of Graeco-Roman rhetoric's historical legacies up to the time of Cicero and Quintilian. Then, I shall focus on the roots and focal points of physiognomics and rhetoric. Finally, I shall outline their junction and renewal, conveyed by the issue of the 'eloquent body' that is conveyed in the 'actio'.

## An overview of Graeco-Roman rhetoric: Historical legacies in Cicero and Quintilian

The word 'rhêtorikê' is first established in texts from 390 B.C., namely in Alcidamas's *Against the Sophists* and in Plato's *Gorgias*.<sup>1</sup> In antiquity, there is neither a consensus on the definition of rhetoric nor on its means and goals. In the *De Inventione*, Cicero conceives rhetoric on the one hand as a legitimate means of government, and on the other hand he suggests that it feeds stormy debates and arouses personal anger in trials.<sup>2</sup> His definition of rhetoric (*ars dicendi*) is quite different, depending on the book (*De Inventione*, *De Oratore*, *Brutus*, *Orator*).<sup>3</sup> Quintilian's reference work is *Institutio Oratoria*, characterized by a systematic approach. Rhetoric can be first defined as the art of well-speaking, '*ars bene dicendi*', according to Quintilian,<sup>4</sup> which has been developed in Ancient Greece, closer ties to political institutions, in the context of the rise of city states (*polis*), linked with skilled public speaking and controversial debates. Actually, the definitions of this art are divergent,<sup>5</sup> not least because each rhetorician had to set out his own point of view on rhetoric, before starting his career.<sup>6</sup> Secondly, the importance of persuasion (*pistis*) through speech is claimed since the beginning of its history. Rhetoric has been largely defined as the power of persuasion (*vis persuadendi*).<sup>7</sup> As the art of manipulation, it is associated with Sophistry, the art of the Sophists, specialized orators by profession, seeking to optimize the efficiency in communication. Plato accused them of confusing and sowing the seeds of doubt within the minds of citizen, drawing thus a distinction between philosophy and rhetoric. A third definition, according to Aristotle, is to be added to this brief survey: as the art of eloquence, rhetoric, deriving (*paraphues*) from dialectic but deprived of critical sense,<sup>8</sup> consists in the development of arguments and discourses that aim to

1 On the first occurrences of the word 'rhêtorikê', see Pernot 2000, 38–40.

2 Cicero, *De Inventione*, 1. 2.

3 Guérin 2015, 175–190.

4 See Quintilian's definition of rhetoric in *Institutio Oratoria*, II, 15, 1.

5 Cassin 2015, 9–38; Dixsaut 2008.

6 See Desbordes 1996, "1. Situation de la rhétorique".

7 See Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, II, 5, on the several ancient definitions of rhetoric.

8 Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, I, 2, 1356a20–30.

persuade the audience.<sup>9</sup> Cicero and Quintilian also place a great deal of importance on its impact on the spectators. According to Cicero, when the speech is properly declaimed, the orator places the audience in a state of contentment, delight, or even affliction, just as he wanted them to feel and react.<sup>10</sup>

Homer is considered by Quintilian to be the father of rhetoric, since all the elements of this art are embedded in his epics.<sup>11</sup> The poet satisfies the conditions of the well-achieved eloquence: he wins the audience's sympathy, he commands their attention and he makes listeners docile and capable of receiving what is being communicated.<sup>12</sup> The *Rhetorica ad Herennium* had already developed a theory on the style registers. Moreover, Quintilian detects in Homer's verses the three suitable modes of discourse (*genera dicendi*), embodied by the characters of Menelaus, Nestor, and Ulysses.<sup>13</sup>

Many discursive and rhetorical techniques, *technai*, may have been discovered and implemented in speeches from Corax the Sicilian and his supposed student Tisias to Aristotle's work on *rhetoric*. The contribution of the Sophists to *technê rhêtorikê* is well established although there is little written evidence for it. Corax and Tisias were considered for a long time as the inventors of rhetoric's codification by Latin authors, although the art of eloquence is already codified and still closely linked to the art of persuasion in their days.<sup>14</sup> These Sicilians put in writing an art and provided precepts, *artem et praecepta Siculos Coracem et Tisiam conscripsisse*, as Cicero puts it.<sup>15</sup> Their names are related to the fall of tyrants and to the rise of democracy by Cicero in his *Brutus*, and they are *artium scriptores antiquissimi*, to use Quintilian's words in his *Institutio Oratoria*.<sup>16</sup>

Naturally, rhetoric is first an oral discipline. Once written, the speech is the tangible medium of a possible declamation. But most speeches are precisely drafted after their declamation. For instance, it is the case of Cicero's judicial and political speeches. His *Pro Milone* has been completely restructured after being performed. Writing may be a hindrance to improvisation, according to Alcidamas.<sup>17</sup> But in most cases, writing is supposed to ensure the orator's good performance.<sup>18</sup> A fine speaker knows that it is necessary to improvise and to be attentive to the present moment, in order to catch the appropriate one (*kairos*), when it flies by, as it is shown, for example, by Dionysius of Halicarnassus in *The Arrangement of Words*.<sup>19</sup> Cicero emphasizes the need to adapt

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9 On these three main definitions of rhetoric, see Meyer 2004.

10 Cicero, *Brutus*, 184–186.

11 Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, X, 1, 46.

12 Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, X, 1, 48.

13 Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, II, 17, 5; XII, 10, 64.

14 See Desbordes 2009.

15 Cicero, *Brutus*, 46.

16 Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, III, 1, 8.

17 Alcidamas, *Against the Sophists*, 15.

18 Cicero, *De Oratore*, I, 151; *Orator*, 150.

19 Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *The Arrangement of Words*, 12, 5.



continuously to the various circumstances.<sup>20</sup> Quintilian does not deny the importance of the ability to improvise,<sup>21</sup> which is required in the formation of the perfect orator. The Latin author outlines the need for students to complete practical exercises (*progymnata*) to reach the required level of an ease in public speaking and expressing (*facilitas dicendi*).<sup>22</sup> Improvisation (*extemporalis facilitas*) is the state-of-the-art training, insofar as it clearly indicates the orator's adaptability to circumstances.<sup>23</sup> In this way, rhetoric is fundamentally an art of time and space, the space of speech as it develops beyond words.

Rhetoric has been widely criticized because of its twofold purpose, since the art of eloquence aims to convince and persuade. Not only rational but also emotional means are implied, thus creating a gap between the speaker and his audience. Therefore, they are not on an equal footing (*isēgoria*). This element of irrationality in rhetoric has been severely criticized on some occasions. In this sense, Plato condemns in his dialogue *Gorgias* the appeal to the passions, expelling the commitment to Truth from speeches and the goals of the orator. This was also the case with Gorgias's *psuchagogē*, namely a way of leading souls, which is furthermore conceived by the Sophist in his *Encomium of Helen* as a spell put on the listeners' minds.<sup>24</sup> Plato's distrust of the declamatory tricks of the Sophists is associated with his criticism of democracy, owing to the ignorance of the crowd bewitched by nice words, fascinated and unable to resist the liars.<sup>25</sup> According to Plato, the orator has little regard for Truth and much prefers plausibility. Hence, he deceives his audience, which is a part of his *psuchagogē*.<sup>26</sup> Nevertheless, Cicero and Quintilian consider this emotional power to be of central importance. As will be seen below, the part of discourse they call '*actio*', namely 'delivery', precisely depends on the capacity to touch and move, to ensure public awareness and confidence, or to trigger an appropriate action.

Besides emotional skills, in order to create a persuasive argument, the orator draws on a precise category of signs, the '*sēmeia*', which is the specific feature of what can be called the rhetorical 'demonstration'. As a matter of fact, the logic and the structure of the text run on rational interconnections between arguments and the search for evidence based on a classification of signs, given the particular nature and level of certainty their use implies. Whereas '*tekmēria*' are irrefutable signs, the degree of uncertainty conveyed by signs such as '*sēmeia*' and '*eikota*' varies according to the circumstances of the case. A counterexample can always be provided against '*sēmeia*', while '*eikota*' are probative signs based on a preponderance of evidence,

<sup>20</sup> Cicero, *Orator*, XXXVI, 123.

<sup>21</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, X, 7, 1, sqq.

<sup>22</sup> See for instance Cicero, *De Oratore*, I, 32, 147–I, 35, 160.

<sup>23</sup> See Celentano 2015, 191–212.

<sup>24</sup> Gorgias, *Encomium of Helen*, 13.

<sup>25</sup> Plato, *Gorgias*, *passim*.

<sup>26</sup> Stroh 2009, 125–141.

namely what can be called ‘a reasonable certainty’.<sup>27</sup> In the *Prior Analytics*, Aristotle takes the example of pallor and childbirth to show the discrepancy between an indubitable sign (*tekmêrion*) and an only probable sign (*sêmeion*). Pallor could be a sign of childbirth but it is not necessary the case. The causes of pallor are varied; the isolated sign of pallor, which is here a ‘*sêmeion*’, is not sufficient to prove childbirth. On the contrary, if a woman has milk, she has been certainly pregnant.<sup>28</sup> While ‘*eikota*’ are mostly used in judicial discourses, ‘*sêmeia*’ are sought by rhetoricians.

The particularity of ‘*rhêtorikê*’ relies heavily on the use of this category of signs, within a specifically structured form of argumentation, which reflects the twofold nature of the art of eloquence. In this context, the strength of an argument is provided by a complex combination, insofar as it depends on the validity of the premises and the specific characteristics of the signs. In the logical section of his work, in the *Organon*, Aristotle studies the process of logical reasoning in these terms. The rhetorical syllogism, a deductive argument called ‘enthymeme’ (*enthumêma*) is a kind of rhetorical proof, a rhetorical deduction alongside ‘*paradeigma*’ and maxims.<sup>29</sup> The audience trusts the orator on the basis of plausibility. *Pistis* is prior to the appeal to emotions. Enthymemes provide other ways of influencing the listeners.<sup>30</sup> Unlike a well-established syllogism, enthymeme is a form of faulty reasoning, which could be truncated with an unstated premise, and based on signs instead of facts. Additionally, it is always rebuttable. Naturally, the notion of ‘plausibility’ allows room for interpretation. *De facto*, the reasoning based on enthymemes does not aim to properly demonstrate, since it includes an element of irrationality.<sup>31</sup> This process touches on the imagination and emotions.

Building on this framework, besides *logos*, Aristotle describes the two other modes of persuasion to be found in rhetoric: on the one hand ‘*êthos*’ which covers the orator’s character, namely the probity he could have shown in previous situations, his reputation, and his authority, and on the other hand ‘*pathos*’, which focuses on the appeal to the audience’s emotions in order to ensure their openness, willingness, and support. This topic concerns the second book of Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*. The orator’s credibility and the confidence (*pistis*) he may inspire rely on his practical intelligence (*phronêsis*), virtuous character (*aretê*), and good will (*eunoia*).<sup>32</sup> The orator should moreover display persuasive efforts to arouse the emotions of his audience. His own

<sup>27</sup> Aristotle, *Prior Analytics*, II, 27.

<sup>28</sup> Laurand 2005, 17–44.

<sup>29</sup> On syllogisms and enthymemes, see: Aristotle, *Prior Analytics*, II, 27, 70b, 6–39, *id.* II, 2, *Posterior Analytics* I, 13, 78a28, *Topics*, *On Sophistical Refutations*, and also *Rhetoric*, I. I. 3; II, XX, 1.

<sup>30</sup> Stroh 2009, 148, 152–153.

<sup>31</sup> Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, I, 2, 1355b25–1356b.

<sup>32</sup> Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, II, 1, 1378a6–8.

character helps<sup>33</sup> in this persuasive effort to communicate emotions.<sup>34</sup> The theme of the good man (*vir bonus dicendi peritus*)<sup>35</sup> is thus developed by Cicero and Quintilian, combined with the art of speaking well and echoing Aristotle's precepts about 'eu legein'. They build on virtue as a condition of the well-performed speech and portray a perfect orator (*orator perfectus*),<sup>36</sup> who resembles the Stoic wise man. Hence, the orator's personality,<sup>37</sup> morality (*honestas*), reputation (*auctoritas*), greatness of soul (*dignitas*) play a central part in the discussion on passions, and consequently in the definitional process of rhetoric.<sup>38</sup>

As a matter of fact, Aristotle's *Rhetoric* begins with a study of passions such as anger, contempt, and hatred, carried out *kata ta pathê*,<sup>39</sup> and a delineation of characters, considering the notions of 'êthê', and 'hexis', namely someone's ethical behaviour and natural predisposition. The specific contribution of Aristotle sheds light on the central dimension of the anthropology of the passions, from which Latin authors draw inspiration, and lines up with *Rhetoric* and *Problemata*. The *Rhetoric*'s typology and case-by-case approach is far more precise than the *Nicomachean Ethics*' list of the various states that the soul experiences when it is set in motions by passions.<sup>40</sup> Aristotle creates an inventory of characters. Indeed, he delineates general categories whose scope is all of human nature. Besides, from a practical point of view, the orator needs to combine 'êthos' and 'pathos' if he wants to gain the support of the audience.

The connection Aristotle draws between 'êthos' and 'pathos' is also to be found in Latin theorization of public speaking. One finds in Cicero and Quintilian a survey of passions and characters, linked with the issue of discourse's efficiency, which is also involved in the moment of 'actio' described below. Their works show the maturity of Roman eloquence. Actually, they are at the junction of three main traditions: the issue of passions as developed by Aristotle, the body of knowledge of rhetoric, in particular since Corax and Tisias, and last but not least ancient physiognomics.

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33 On 'êthopoia', see Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, I, 1356a5–15.

34 See for instance Cicero, *De Oratore*, II, 189–191.

35 See for instance Cicero, *De Oratore*, I, 202, III, 52–55, Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, II, 1, 25, 26.

36 On 'orator perfectus', see Cicero, *De Oratore*, and *Orator*, *passim*.

37 Cicero, *Partitiones Oratoriae*, 22, on the orator's character.

38 See for instance, Cicero, *Partitiones Oratoriae*, 90.

39 Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, II, 12.

40 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, II, 4, 1105b25 sqq., for a definition of 'pathos'. The issue of passions in Aristotle's work is mainly to be found in *Nicomachean Ethics*, *Rhetoric* and *Problemata*.

## Traditional physiognomics and rhetoric: Roots and focal points

Physiognomics appears in antiquity well before the birth of the Graeco-Roman world. Its development goes hand in hand with the drafting of lexicographical lists in Mesopotamia.<sup>41</sup> Physiognomics is established in *omina* and medical books, especially for the description of skin diseases and physical deformities. It has social consequences regarding the life of an individual, for instance life and death, family and offspring, social status, poverty or wealth, and social interactions like success at court. Physiognomics consists of a method of observation and provides a tool for medical decision-making and treatment. Lists of correspondences between objective physical characteristics and diseases are drawn up; the treatises contain inventories that cover the entire surface of the human body and are tied to precise interpretations.<sup>42</sup> The organization of knowledge is conducted with elements from the multifaceted external reality of the individuals, and closer to a hermetic attempt to explain and understand the cosmos.

The transmission of the body of knowledge from the Babylonian to the Graeco-Roman world is not easy to establish from the texts themselves. Nevertheless, the tradition of body depiction and deductions based on careful observation continues with the application and transformation of the physiognomic main topics, insofar as the emphasis on characters becomes a typical feature of Graeco-Roman physiognomics since the Peripatus.<sup>43</sup>

It is important to underline that the body of physiognomic texts is heterogeneous, protean, and scattered in time and space, first of all because physiognomics relies on entire sets of practices and ancient skills which were not just restricted to divination and medicine. Indeed, it even influences aesthetic purposes such as rhetoric, as at the time of Cicero and Quintilian. Besides its scientific developments, physiognomics includes an iconic dimension, which is revealed by the forms and patterns it acquires in later texts. Such an iconic dimension is particularly evident in the Graeco-Roman context as well as in the literary devices, forms, and techniques occurring in Epic, Poetry, and Drama, not to mention its applications in the visual arts.<sup>44</sup> Indeed, evidence of physiognomic descriptions can be found in Hesiod and even more in Homer's epics,<sup>45</sup> in Simonides's poetry, in Aesop's poems, and in the great Greek

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<sup>41</sup> See *inter alia* Boisson, Kirtchuk, and Béjoint 1991, 261–315.

<sup>42</sup> See *inter alia* Goltz 1974; Labat 1951.

<sup>43</sup> On the anecdote about Socrates's character deciphered by a physiognomist of the Peripatus, see Foerster 1893, vol. 1, VIII sqq.

<sup>44</sup> Elsner 2007, 203–224.

<sup>45</sup> See *inter alia* Galhac 2007, 15–30; Joly 1962, 5–28.

playwrights.<sup>46</sup> As shown by E. C. Evans,<sup>47</sup> physiognomics in the ancient world can be found not only in treatises, but also in philosophy and medicine, drama, rhetorical theory and practice, history and biography, epic, and other literary forms.

Actually, physiognomic reflections do in fact occur also outside the books explicitly devoted to it. Strictly speaking, its theorization is rather late in the Graeco-Roman world, particularly if we take into consideration the physiognomic annotations to be found in scientific and literary texts that existed long before Pseudo-Aristotle's *Physiognomonica* (ca 3rd cent. BC).<sup>48</sup> This book is the first consistent theorization of physiognomics in the Greek world, which has come down to us. Pseudo-Aristotle's *Physiognomonica* remains influential up to the time of Cicero and Quintilian. The two other reference books of the Graeco-Roman world are later than the *Physiognomonica*, namely Polemo's treatise (2nd cent. AD)<sup>49</sup> and the *De Physiognomia Liber* of the Anonymous Latinus (4th cent. AD),<sup>50</sup> which is therefore later than these two Roman orators.

In spite of the assumed heterogeneity of physiognomics, some main trends and patterns can be identified. Hence, the case by case approach remains the basis of this understanding of the natural world, and more specifically of human nature. For this reason, traditional physiognomics first relies on a conditional form, with a *protasis* beginning with the statement of a condition – 'if...', followed by the statement of the case – and an *apodosis* showing the outcome – 'then...', even though the logical connector is not always expressed. This syntactic structure, widespread in Babylonian and Hippocratic medical treatises, and also in ancient omen collections, corresponds to the statement of the underlying principle of the physiognomic causal inference.<sup>51</sup> Although the logical structure is not identical in rhetoric, the key point is the empirical approach, and the case-by-case analysis that both Cicero and Quintilian provide in their discussions of the practise of their art, especially concerning the appeal to passions during oral argument in a court of law.

Moreover, thought processes based on analogy appear to be the best way to achieve those outcomes.<sup>52</sup> Analogies draw interconnections between specific empirical characteristics on the one hand, and expertise referring actually to a broader knowledge on the other hand. Thus, traditional physiognomic statements rely on analogy and imply a rich semiology together with a specific reasoning, as shown by Aristotle in his *Organon*. Besides, physiognomic reasoning is a rhetorical syllogism, based on the use of '*sêmeia*', marks of probability. The enthymeme obviously has

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<sup>46</sup> See Evans 1969, 1–100.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Degkwitz 1988.

<sup>49</sup> Polemo, *De Physiognomonica Liber*, in Foerster 1893 and in Swain 2007.

<sup>50</sup> Anonyme Latin, *Traité de Physiognomonie*, edited in André 1981.

<sup>51</sup> It is the form taken by the first scientific treatises. See, *inter alia*, Glassner 1995.

<sup>52</sup> See Talon 2004.

something in common with the type of demonstration used in rhetoric: they actually share the same structure and they rely on the same combination of both rational and emotional elements, supported by only probable or even plausible arguments, as seen above. ‘*Sêmeia*’ and their ambiguity are at the very heart of the Pseudo-Aristotle’s explanations, so he does not exclude the possibility of demonstrating an interpretation through the accumulation of evidence.<sup>53</sup> Cicero and Quintilian as well have retained the lessons of ‘*sêmeia*’ and ‘*eikota*’ applied to their art. In addition, according to Pseudo-Aristotle, physiognomics is made up of variations in forms, colours, specific features on the face, hairiness, voice, flesh, and body parts<sup>54</sup> – all aspects requiring the Roman orator’s attention and interest, with a focus on gesture, gait, and behaviour. Hence, the observation of the body has been applied to the technique of eloquence.

Pseudo-Aristotle defines three physiognomic methods:<sup>55</sup> firstly, the zoological method, which is based on the similarities and analogies drawn between human beings and animals – the vices and virtues associated with an animal are ascribed to an individual according to the physical similarities of this very animal; secondly, the ethnological method, which relies on an analogy between places and ethnicities, and the qualities allowed to the former are attributed to the latter; thirdly, the ‘anatomopathognomic’<sup>56</sup> method, which consists of the study of the characters, affections and states of body and soul, depending on passions. According to Pseudo-Aristotle, to practice physiognomics only on the basis of characters is a mistake,<sup>57</sup> and the ‘anatomopathognomic’ method is insufficient to encompass and decipher the inner nature of human beings, precisely because of the heterogeneity of types, in spite of some observed and characteristic features. He takes the example of the brave man and the impudent man: their characteristic features are almost the same, while at the same time their mental states are significantly different.<sup>58</sup> Moreover, the issue of temporality has to be taken into account, owing to the impermanence of some characteristics. A man who is sad by temperament may have a nice day, and yet at the end of it he may assume the features of a debonair person.<sup>59</sup> Fleeting emotional states do not apply to well-defined physiognomics.

Thus, the attention that rhetoric paid to characters can be seen as a specific case of physiognomic practice, a kind of unfinished task, focusing on the ‘anatomopathognomic’ method. The similarity and difference between physiognomics and rhetoric are due to the way they link signs such as ‘*sêmeia*’ and their respective views

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<sup>53</sup> Ps.-Aristotle, *Physiognomonica*, 807a1.

<sup>54</sup> Ps.-Aristotle, *Physiognomonica*, 806a20–34.

<sup>55</sup> Ps.-Aristotle, *Physiognomonica*, 805a20 at 805b1.

<sup>56</sup> I have chosen this specific term with reference to Elisabeth C. Evans’s works on physiognomics.

<sup>57</sup> Ps.-Aristotle, *Physiognomonica*, 805b1.

<sup>58</sup> Ps.-Aristotle, *Physiognomonica*, 805b1.

<sup>59</sup> Ps.-Aristotle, *Physiognomonica*, 805b5.

on the passing of time. Physiognomics studies signs fixed through time, regardless of duration. Indeed, the physiognomist is not interested in the fugitive appearance of an emotion, but on the contrary he tries to identify and decipher the permanent traces that display a typical character on physical bodies.

In contrast, rhetoric expressly includes the dimension of temporality, namely fleeting moments. Indeed, Cicero and Quintilian, in their appeal to emotions, enhance the suddenness and the transitory nature of the passions and related signs that they elicit, in theorizing their art of speaking. They have taken note of the emotional brutality and intensity required in an oral argument. The appeal to pathos should not be confined to peroration but should appear at every moment of the talk (*per totam causam*),<sup>60</sup> since pathos lies at the very heart of eloquence according to both Cicero and Quintilian.<sup>61</sup> The convenient ‘*êthos*’ of the perfect orator is goodness and generosity.<sup>62</sup> He knows the power of ephemeral passions (*pathê*) which he arouses as he likes. He praises the transitory emotions (*adfecti*), such as anger, hatred, greed for their violence,<sup>63</sup> as efficient means to kindle the judges’ pity or compassion.<sup>64</sup>

Furthermore, the famous pseudo-aristotelian catalogue of vices and virtues consists of special applications to human nature of a logic based on the analysis of conditionality. In this way, through the use of typologies, the study of individual specificities carves out a place inside the general Aristotelian framework,<sup>65</sup> within which priority is absolutely given to general cases.<sup>66</sup> Pseudo-Aristotle’s *Physiognomonica* seeks to establish a characterology at the crossroads of the psychological and somatic. Twenty-two character types are presented in this book,<sup>67</sup> with their specific features, outlining types such as the brave man, the cowardly man, the man with an innate goodness, the idiot, the brazen man, the choleric man, the ironic man, and so on. This methodological empiricism was already partly inspired by medicine and rhetoric.<sup>68</sup> The changes in the states of the soul are correlated with bodily postures and attitudes, since body and soul affect each other, as Pseudo-Aristotle shows in his presentation of physiognomic practice.<sup>69</sup> The Roman rhetoric of Cicero and Quintilian does not diverge from this. The rhetorical semiology of the passions deepens the theme of the

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<sup>60</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, VI, 1, 51, VI, 1, 53, and VI, 2, 2.

<sup>61</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, VI, 2, 7.

<sup>62</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, VI, 2, 13.

<sup>63</sup> On the difference of nature between mild emotions referring to *êthê*, a kind of continuous state (*habitus*) and violent ones, related to *pathos*, see Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, VI, 2, 8, with an implicit reference to Cicero, *De Fato*, I, 1.

<sup>64</sup> See, *inter alia*, Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, VI, 10, VI, 1, 23.

<sup>65</sup> Sassi 1988.

<sup>66</sup> Ps.-Aristotle, *Physiognomonica*, 805b10–30.

<sup>67</sup> Ps.-Aristotle, *Physiognomonica*, 807a31–808b10.

<sup>68</sup> Cf. Laurand 2005, 191–207.

<sup>69</sup> Ps.-Aristotle, *Physiognomonica*, 805a1–807a30.

movements of the soul and their bodily transcription, because emotions are correlated with moral attitudes and characters for the benefit of the oral argument.

Pseudo-Aristotle's catalogue of vices and virtues in the *Physiognomonica*, initially an inventory of signs which associates physical characteristics with lists of moral specifications, thus becomes a focal point for physiognomics and rhetoric. Physiognomics is in fact a starting point to study the lasting passions tied to the basic temperament and even to the transitory emotions aroused by rhetoric. Not only the general category delineated by the physiognomic type is worthy of interest for the Roman rhetoricians. They develop an interest in personal characterization through emotions, which is supported by the attention paid to the non-permanent signs. This is a kind of variation around the ambiguity of the *'sêmeion'*, the typically physiognomic sign, sometimes questionable, doubtful, shady (*anceps* and *dubius*), which paves the way for a psychological approach to human nature, a concern typically echoed in discussions of Roman eloquence. Indeed, this trend increasingly sharpens in the Graeco-Roman world, with an increasingly moral emphasis. Morality associated with psychology is a commonplace of physiognomics and rhetoric.

Physiognomic approaches deal with general categories. Regarding the 'anatomopathognomic' method, types provided by the passions mainly delimit them. The issue of morality (*êthos*) is approached in association with the crucial role of characteristic signs, and by extension, with the depiction of behaviour. Physiognomics links *'êthos'* with *'pathos'* in a discourse structured by the systematic analysis of analogical correspondences. Its specific *'logos'* is that of probability and plausibility, since it relies on *'sêmeia'* and *'eikota'*.<sup>70</sup> In rhetoric, *'êthos'* (how the character and the speaker affect the audience), *'pathos'* (the way emotions play a role in arguments and in the performed speech), and *logos* (the structure of the argument, relying on the use of logic) are closely linked together.<sup>71</sup> The *logos* of rhetoric is also that of probability and plausibility, but its purpose focuses on mutable and labile signs, and even micro-movements, instead of the ideally physiognomic fixed and permanent signs. In some ways, *'êthos'*, *'pathos'*, and *'logos'* intertwine closely in the networks of physiognomics and rhetoric.

I intend to shed light now on the precise intersection of *'êthos'* and *'pathos'* in the eloquent body (*quasi sermo corporis*)<sup>72</sup> as defined by rhetoric, particularly in the delivery (*actio*). As we will see, such intersection is most evident in Cicero's and Quintilian's rhetorical transformation and application of traditional physiognomics.

<sup>70</sup> On the use of signs in Cicero's and Quintilian's books, related to *'technê rhêtorikê'*, see Crapis 1988, 175–197.

<sup>71</sup> On *'êthos'* and *'pathos'* in rhetoric, see for instance Cicero, *Orator*, XXXVII–XXXVIII, 128–133.

<sup>72</sup> Cicero, *De Oratore*, III, 59, 222.



## The vivid language of ‘*quasi sermo corporis*’ and ‘*actio*’: An applied and transformed physiognomics

Both physiognomists and rhetoricians take careful account of the body but from slightly different points of view, though there are points of convergence. Physiognomics can be understood as a technique which enables the deciphering of the body. The grids of physiognomic correspondence and the prospect of reading signs open up the possibility that the body can be made eloquent. This can be easily turned to the idea that the eloquent body is a natural object to invest in for a rhetoric in the ‘anatomy-pathognomic’ modality, i.e. for a rhetoric understood as the proper art of public speaking, which includes gesture and behaviour, and recurs to a vivid language.<sup>73</sup> In this context, the vivid language is like a ‘*sermo corporis*’ and ‘*actio*’ appears thus as an applied and transformed physiognomics.

Besides the choice of proofs (*inventio*), several parts of the discourse aim at persuading the audience – ‘*dispositio*’, namely the arrangement of the arguments in the discourse; ‘*elocutio*’, the choice of the words and appropriate style; and ‘*actio*’, which completes the process, namely the speech’s ‘delivery’ moment (*agere* and *pronuntiare*). ‘*Actio*’ appears already in Greek rhetoric, namely in Aristotle, who uses the term ‘*hupokrisis*’ to indicate the orator’s use of voice.<sup>74</sup> The term ‘*hupokrisis*’ brings this part of speech closer to the art of actors, and of their supposed excesses, since Aristotle accuses them of enhancing the effects of pathos, just as the Sophists he criticises for the same reason. Aristotle’s remarks on delivery are mostly subordinated to accounts of style. In the Greek world, Theophrastus presumably lays the initial foundation of the rhetorical art of ‘*hupokrisis*’. Indeed, one of his books is specifically devoted to the delivery of speech, as the title (*On Delivery*) shows. In this unfortunately lost book, Theophrastus deals with the pitch of voice as well as the bodily movement.<sup>75</sup> He also pays great attention to physiognomic ideas in his *Characters*, where he displays a series of portraits which resemble the physiognomic depictions of Pseudo-Aristotle’s *Physiognomica*.<sup>76</sup> Some indications on *hupokrisis* can also be found in Athenaeus (2nd cent. BC).

Rhetoric arrives in Rome at the beginning of the second century before Christ. The Greek masters were read later on: their art of eloquence is widespread at the beginning of the first century before Christ. The *Rhetoric for Herennius* (86–83 BC), the earliest surviving Roman theorization of the five parts of rhetoric, namely invention, arrangement, style, delivery, memory (*inventio, dispositio, elocutio, actio, memoria*),

<sup>73</sup> Rhetorical theory also uses terms employed for physical description, found also in physiognomics. See Evans 1969, 40; Misener 1924, 97–123.

<sup>74</sup> Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, III, 1403b–1404a.

<sup>75</sup> See fr. 712, *Theophrastus of Eresus* in Fortenbaugh, Huby, Sharples and Gutas 1993.

<sup>76</sup> See Evans 1969, 39.

long attributed to Cicero but of unknown authorship, is written in the context of political change, after the Punic wars, and in the face of strong political opposition.<sup>77</sup> This book provides the system of classical rhetoric. It is addressed to an upper-class Roman, who didn't have the chance to read Greek authors, in order to fill in this gap. Descriptive on the whole, it deals with general principles, combining Aristotle's theory with Hellenistic devices and Roman *realia*. The discussions of delivery stem from a kind of historical synthesis. A large section of Book III investigates the several aspects of *actio*.<sup>78</sup>

In the *Rhetoric for Herennius*, Cicero and Quintilian's works are at the heart of the Roman rhetorical interpretation of the traditional physiognomic body of knowledge. In the world of written rhetoric, delivery and memory receive less attention than the other parts of speech, and they are neglected for the benefit of actors who had taken up the subject.<sup>79</sup> Nevertheless, Cicero, and Quintilian following him, claims that delivery and memory are the most important aspects of speech in several works, including *De oratore*, *Brutus*, and *Orator*. These two aspects of speech are of core importance in Roman rhetoric. According to Quintilian, Demosthenes puts the delivery in the first, the second, and even the third positions among the orator's skills and values.<sup>80</sup> Cicero considers '*pronuntiatio*' to be an essential part of the art of moving the audience (*movere*).<sup>81</sup>

Moreover, '*actio*' includes reflections on non-verbal communication. In delivery, the shaping of speeches shows the difficulty of embodiment and emotional manipulation. Voice quality, including tones, breath, volume, rhythm, namely voice as a vocal non-verbal behaviour, facial expression (*vultus*) and gesture (*gestus*) as parts of body language, are discussed, in relation with each occasion, to suit the various subjects of oratory and moods.<sup>82</sup> Cicero and Quintilian adopt a case-by-case method in accordance with general principles, within the framework of '*mediocritas aurea*', the ancient *topos* of moderation (*moderatio*). This range of considerations is associated with hypotheses on the origin of language, regarding the supposed universality of gesture and facial expression,<sup>83</sup> since this form of communication relies on a community of language.<sup>84</sup> Thus, rhetoric has a shared universal goal.

The representation or the imitation of passions is the main issue at stake, which underscores the annotations about the three ingredients of a well-performed *actio*, as

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<sup>77</sup> Kennedy 1994, 121–127.

<sup>78</sup> *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, 3, 19–23 (delivery), 3, 24–25, (delivery: voice), 3, 26–27 (delivery: gesture).

<sup>79</sup> See *inter alia* Cicero, *De Oratore*, III, 57, 214.

<sup>80</sup> Cicero, *De Oratore*, III, 56, 213; Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, XI, 3, 7.

<sup>81</sup> Cicero, *Orator*, 56; *Brutus*, 142, and Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, XI, 3, 2–7.

<sup>82</sup> On the appropriate delivery, see for instance Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, XI, 3, 63–65.

<sup>83</sup> On this particular point, see Fögen 2009, 15–43.

<sup>84</sup> Cicero, *De Oratore*, III, 59, 223.

Cicero claims in his introduction to ‘*actio*’,<sup>85</sup> which is equivalent to style in terms of body posture.<sup>86</sup> ‘*Elocutio*’ and ‘*actio*’ are complementary, but ‘*actio*’ may enhance or ruin ‘*elocutio*’ if not correctly performed.<sup>87</sup> On the distinction between ‘*actio*’ and ‘*pronuntiatio*’, insofar as these terms are often confused, Quintilian remarks that ‘*pronuntiatio*’ is more suitable for voice than gesture.<sup>88</sup> Moreover, in the *Orator* Cicero does not employ the term ‘*pronuntiatio*’. ‘*Actio*’ is thus divided into two parts: voice (*vox*) on the one hand and the movement (*motus*) of the body expressing the movements of soul (*moti animi*) on the other hand. Indeed, Cicero focuses on voice, gesture, and physiognomy, because finally all depends on physiognomy: “*Sed in ore sunt omnia*”.<sup>89</sup> The soul-body correspondence is the precondition for the success of the process, since it enables the performance to be achieved from both a conceptual and an empirical point of view.<sup>90</sup>

Thus, in his *De Oratore*, Cicero deals with the several pitches of voice (Book III, 57–58, 214–219), gesture (*gestus*) (Book III, 59, 220), the physio-pathognomic aspect of face (*vultus*) (Book III, 59, 221–223), and the voice (Book III, 60–61, 224–227). In his *Orator* (XVII–XVIII, 55–60) he deals with voice and gesture too. He examines the volume, flexibility, stability, and velocity of voice, the tones (*inflexo, acuto, gravi*) and modulations,<sup>91</sup> the speech rate appropriate to express vehemence, anger, fear, and other strong feelings. Cicero links tones to musical chords and delivery to emotion. Moreover, the inflections of voice are compared with the colours on the artist’s pallet for their capacity to render the subtleties and hues of emotions.<sup>92</sup> The notion of colour contributes to bringing harmony to the discourse. It is not only one sign among others. Colour has a concrete and a critical sense, since the art of eloquence is backed by a plastic and graphic imagination. It is as if the body of speech is itself coloured, as ‘*color*’ indicates the health of an individual.<sup>93</sup>

<sup>85</sup> Cicero, *De Oratore*, III, 56, 213–214; on the ‘*movere*’, see *De Oratore*, III, 45–50, 185–204, and on the means to arouse passions, *De Oratore*, III, 51–53, 204–216.

<sup>86</sup> Cicero, *Orator*, I, 17, 55, “*est enim actio quasi corporis quaedam eloquentia*”, and *De Oratore*, III, 59, 222 “*quasi sermo corporis*”.

<sup>87</sup> Cicero, *De Oratore*, III, 56, 13; *Orator*, XVII, 56.

<sup>88</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, XI, 3, 1.

<sup>89</sup> Cicero, *De Oratore*, III, 59, 221. See also Cicero, *De Oratore*, III, 57, 216, “Each movement of the soul is designed to be mirrored by the physiognomy, the sound of voice, and gesture; and the whole body of man, his physiognomy, the pitches and tones of his voice sound like the strings of the lyre, according to the movement of the soul, which sets them in motion” (My translation); “*Omnis enim motus animi suum quendam a natura habet vultum et sonum et gestum; corpusque totum hominis et eius omnis vultus omnesque uoces, ut nerui in fidibus, ita sonant, ut a motu animi quoque sunt pulsae*”.

<sup>90</sup> Cicero, *De Oratore*, III, 59, 221.

<sup>91</sup> Cicero, *Orator*, XVIII, 58.

<sup>92</sup> Cicero, *De Oratore*, III, 57, 217.

<sup>93</sup> On this particular point, see Lévy 2006, 185–199.

Gestures should accompany tones. In comparison with actors, excess in gesture should be avoided.<sup>94</sup> Cicero takes the art of fencing and the paelestra as his models instead.<sup>95</sup> The orator tries to be expressive without grinning.<sup>96</sup> The face is considered as a reflection of the soul, and the eyes are the windows to the soul,<sup>97</sup> because eyes express the movements of soul.<sup>98</sup> The eyes are paramount in the art of delivery. The micro-movements are of importance too and they should be well balanced. The orator should pay attention to standing upright, not too straight, to moving rarely and with moderation, to keeping his chest straight. The observation of the movements of the neck, fingers, phalanges, and arms shows his acute sense of *decorum* and codification of manliness.<sup>99</sup> The variations in physiognomy support achievement of the expression of the soul movements, with regard to Atticism and its ideal of sobriety.<sup>100</sup> The moral attitude embodied by the orator is suitable to ethics (*êthos*), namely “what is appropriate to temperaments, morals, and the conduct of life”,<sup>101</sup> while the expression of the passions is bent on ‘*pathos*’, insofar as the pathetic “troubles and excites the hearts”.<sup>102</sup>

Quintilian develops his theorization and normative recommendations in line with Cicero’s body of references. His division of ‘*actio*’ in voice and gesture, with an emphasis on physiognomy, follows and extends his predecessor’s theorization. His work contains long descriptions devoted to the bodily conditions of a fine delivery. ‘*Actio*’ should charm eyes and ears.<sup>103</sup> However, he deepens this latter field of research to open broadly rhetoric to its ekphrastic dimension. The *Institutio Oratoria*’s Books VI (especially sections 1 and 2) and XI (especially section 3) contain a lot of information on the application and transformation of traditional physiognomics for a rhetorical purpose. Besides, the expression of diversity<sup>104</sup> is correlated with the general categories of the Aristotelian framework. Thus, the pathognomic pattern developed by Roman rhetoric covers the scope of human nature from a still physiognomic point of view. The physio-pathognomic depictions are included in a set of countable species.<sup>105</sup>

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**94** Cicero, *De Oratore*, III, 59, 220.

**95** Ibid.

**96** Cicero, *De Oratore*, III, 59, 222.

**97** Cicero, *Orator*, XVIII, 60, “*Nam ut imago est animi vultus, sic indices oculi*”.

**98** See for instance Cicero, *De Oratore*, III, 221, and *De Legibus*, 27.

**99** Cicero, *Orator*, XVIII, 59. On ‘manliness’ in speech, see Gleason 1995.

**100** Cicero, *Orator*, XXV, 86.

**101** Cicero, *Orator*, XXXVII, 128, “*ad naturas et ad mores et ad omnem vitae consuetudinem accomandatum*”.

**102** Ibid., “*perturbantur animi et concitantur*”.

**103** Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, XI, 3, 13.

**104** Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, XI, 3, 17.

**105** Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, XI, 3, 18.

Quintilian also looks into the rhetorical treatment of voice,<sup>106</sup> quantitatively and qualitatively assessed,<sup>107</sup> including volume,<sup>108</sup> pitch and rhythm, all important to whether a speech is successful or not.<sup>109</sup> The manipulations of voice, breath,<sup>110</sup> and rhythm define the figure of voice, which is correlated with the movement of the body, because of the body-soul connection. An “urbane pronunciation” is required.<sup>111</sup> Glance is also part of the social codification of the face-to-face implied by physiognomics in his rhetorical application.<sup>112</sup> In the second century, Polemo, also an orator by profession, will dramatically highlight the physiognomics of the eyes,<sup>113</sup> and its social consequences.

The genuine originality of Quintilian’s transformation of traditional physiognomics relies on his explanations of micro-movements, nurtured by characters and the flow of passions, and as a natural extension of gesture and facial expression. He notably describes the micro-movements of the hands, eyelids and cheeks,<sup>114</sup> nostrils and lips,<sup>115</sup> fingers and so on. He also discusses nods,<sup>116</sup> facial mimicry,<sup>117</sup> the mobility of eyebrows,<sup>118</sup> and the like. Facial expressions are compared with the characters of comedy.<sup>119</sup> The physiognomic depiction of moral characters and attitudes is to be found in such explanations and descriptions. Moreover, what is suitable regarding style and decent behaviour in society is clearly depicted, not least because lawyers needed to remedy their bad habits.

Thus, Quintilian shapes a mental universe of micro-correspondences and significations, a grey zone between the physiognomic permanence and the mutability of bodily passions. In the same vein, in Quintilian’s rhetoric colours, such as blushes, are associated not only to physiology but also to the value system of decency and convenience,<sup>120</sup> within a broader moral framework, as mentioned above. The vivid language of eloquence covers and illustrates the ambiguities of the ekphrastic body depicted in this way. Eloquence thus provides the rhetorical portrayal of human nature. These last particular aspects of Quintilian’s rhetoric represent the highest level of the transformation and application of traditional physiognomics into rhetoric.

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**106** Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, XI, 3, 14–45.

**107** Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, XI, 3, 14.

**108** Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, XI, 3, 15.

**109** On how to make an effective use of voice: Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, XI, 2, 65–68.

**110** Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, XI, 3, 16.

**111** On the notion of *urbanitas*, see Book VI, 2.

**112** On the concept of ‘face’ and social interaction, see Swain 2007, 141.

**113** See Cairns 2005, 123–155.

**114** Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, XI, 3, 77.

**115** Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, XI, 3, 80–81.

**116** Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, XI, 3, 66.

**117** On this topic, see Bühler 1933, 227–235.

**118** Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, XI, 3, 78, 79.

**119** Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, XI, 3, 75–76, 112.

**120** Lévy 2006, 198.

The Second Sophistic will also transform and apply physiognomics with a genuine ekphrastic purpose, as for instance in Philostratus's *Imagines*.

## Conclusion

The reasons for investing in the field of rhetoric are varied, and philosophers, politicians, orators, and writers have contributed to the development and influence of this art, combining stylistic skills, bodily language, and theatrical facilities. At the time of Cicero and Quintilian, a new light was cast on rhetoric by physiognomics. Actually, physiognomics, based on analogies, conditionality, and probabilities, assesses the body-soul connection, and thus links together the quality of characters and physical attributes emphasizing permanent signs. Both rhetoric and physiognomics focus on the human body, rely on the category of 'sêmeion' – a probable and plausible sign – not an irrefutable proof, and are based on a careful observation of passions and temperaments. They associate 'logos', 'êthos' and 'pathos', as the 'anatomy-pathognomic' method shows. Hence, the grey zone of blended rationality and emotion is outlined, taking into account the ethical characterization of human nature, revealed by movements of soul and bodily significant signs, to be deciphered and interpreted. This triple articulation of principles detailed a mental map of human nature viewed from the central dimension of the anthropology of passions that both physiognomics and rhetoric delineate in their own way. Physiognomics provides rhetoric with specific strategic tools to optimize the efficiency of its theories on the eloquence of the body. The case-by-case approach enriches the understanding of the multifaceted character of human nature. In this way, rhetoric applies, develops, and transforms the traditional physiognomic material into a vivid bodily language to be performed, according to social codifications of convenience and ideals of moderation. The well-performed speech and portrayal of the perfect orator find their place in the framework of body depiction. Thus, the use of physiognomics in speech leads both Cicero and Quintilian to the study of gesture, voice and physiognomy, especially for the purpose of delivery. Delivery is a key point for the characterization of this grey-zone between physiognomics and rhetoric, between physiognomic permanence and pathognomic mutability. Micro-movements and evanescent bodily colours outline the tendency, strongly emphasised by Quintilian, toward an ekphrastic transformation of physiognomics. The rhetorical aesthetics of Cicero and Quintilian is caught in the middle: it is not completely determined by traditional physiognomic methods but it is rooted in it. For these orators, rhetoric remains an art of public speaking, and for this reason, the hermeneutic dimension of physiognomics is highlighted through word and dialogue inscribed in the body. But in another way, the concrete intermediary state in which they place bodies is characteristic of their rhetoric. In this sense, the rhetoric of Cicero and Quintilian paves the way to the properly iconistic and ekphrastic transformation of ancient physiognomics.

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Gian Franco Chiai

## 9 Good emperors, bad emperors: The function of physiognomic representation in Suetonius' *De vita Caesarum* and common sense physiognomics

Suetonius' biographies deal with the lives of the first twelve Roman emperors and try to reconstruct the historical characters and personalities of these protagonists by narrating stories about their private lives.<sup>1</sup> Typically at the end of each of the biographies, we find a precise description of the emperor's body, constructed as an ekphrasis,<sup>2</sup> which Suetonius correlates with their virtues and traits.<sup>3</sup> This paper aims at reconstructing the function of physiognomic representations within the fictional construction of Suetonius' emperor-biographies and at analysing the reception and use of the physiognomic literature and theories in his work. Furthermore, iconographic sources such as images of the emperor on coins, reliefs, and statues are also taken into consideration in order to discover possible points of contact with or divergences in the literary texts. Due to the complexity of this topic, I shall concentrate my analysis on the body descriptions of the emperors Tiberius and Caligula, examples of bad emperors, and of the prince Germanicus, who incarnates the good prince, able to dominate the passions. First of all, however, I want to introduce and explain the concept of "common sense physiognomics", its importance in Roman culture and its possible use in literature and art.

In this context, I think it is also important to emphasize the key role of ekphrasis in describing the physiognomy of the emperors. As we shall see, the use of physiognomic terms gives these images of the emperors a greater reality and vivacity, almost as if the emperors were in the presence of the reader. From this point of view, Suetonius is one of the authors who best demonstrates the links between physiognomics and ekphrasis as rhetorical techniques within ancient literature.

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1 Among the most recent works published on Suetonius' biographies, see Malitz 2003; Pausch 2004, 233–324; Rohrbacher 2010; Chong-Gossard 2010; Duchêne 2016, and the contributions in Poignault 2009; Power-Gibson 2014.

2 On this literary technique, see Graf 1995; Cianci 2014, 69–84; Stavru 2017, and the contributions in Marino and Stavru 2013; for the relationship between physiognomics and ekphrasis see the papers in this volume.

3 The texts have been collected by Evans 1963, 93–94 and Stock 1998, 109–112 (*Iul.* 45, 1; *Aug.* 79, 1–3; *Tib.* 68, 1–3; *Cal.* 3, 1; *Cal.* 50, 1; *Claud.* 30; *Nero* 51; *Galb.* 3, 3; *Galb.* 21; *Otho* 12, 1; *Vit.* 17, 2; *Vesp.* 20; *Tit.* 3, 1; *Dom.* 18, 1).

## Human physiognomy and “common sense physiognomics” in the Roman culture

Within the framework provided by Roman culture, the strong relationship between physiognomy and biography goes back to the old Republican ages. This relationship also helps us to reconstruct a “common sense physiognomics” in the context of Roman society. I use the term “common sense physiognomics” to refer to a shared common knowledge and perception of human physiognomy by ordinary people.<sup>4</sup> In the framework of literary, epigraphic, and archaeological evidence, we find an impressive number of references concerning the importance of the relationship between bodily appearance and character. To take only one example from an immense and important literature, we might briefly consider the important sentence by Sallust (*Cat.* 61), in which Catilina is said to have a face that revealed the brutality of his mind (*ferociam animi, quam habuerat vivus, in vultu retinens*). The words *ferocia animi* (ferocity of mind) and *vultus*, typical of the physiognomic lexicon, show that Catilina’s character is being examined here through a physiognomic lens.

The paradoxical portrait is another interesting example of common sense physiognomics.<sup>5</sup> A paradoxical portrait is a portrait of a person whose physical appearance and features contradict his deeds. In other words: the physical features of the person being portrayed are inappropriate to his deeds and behaviour. The Latin literature of the imperial age is particularly rich in examples of this type of portrait. To take only two examples, we might consider the portrait of the emperor Otho by Tacitus (*Hist.* 1, 2, 22), according to which “Otho’s mind was not effeminate like his body” (*non erat Othonis mollis et corpori similis animus*).<sup>6</sup> Suetonius too describes Otho (12) in a similar way: *tanto Othonis animo nequaquam corpus aut habitus competit* (Neither Otho’s person nor his bearing suggested such great courage). Plutarch (*Galba* 25, 2) tells us that his mind was not corrupted like his body.<sup>7</sup> Put somewhat

<sup>4</sup> This concept is reminiscent of the approach to common sense geography, which is seen as a lower form of geographical knowledge and is distinguished from professional or higher geography. See Dan, Geus and Guckelsberger 2014.

<sup>5</sup> On the paradoxical portrait, see La Penna 1976; 1980.

<sup>6</sup> The following passage (*Hist.* 1, 71, 1): *Otho interim contra spem omnium non deliciis neque desidia torpescere: dilatae voluptates, dissimulata luxuria et cuncta ad decorem imperii composita, eoque plus formidinis adferebant falsae virtutes et vitia reditura.*

Otho, meanwhile, contrary to everyone’s expectation made no dull surrender to luxury or ease: he put off his pleasures, concealed his profligacy, and ordered his whole life as befitted the imperial position; with the result that these simulated virtues and the sure return of his vices only inspired still greater dread.

The expression *contra spem omnium* emphasizes that the Otho’s reaction was unexpected, because Otho was devoted to the vices. See the remarks in La Penna 1976, 272–273; Stok 1995, 117–120.

<sup>7</sup> Plut. (*Galba* 25, 1): ἔνταῦθα τοὺς πρώτους ἐκδεξαμένους αὐτὸν καὶ προσειπόντας αὐτοκράτορά φασι μὴ πλείους τριῶν καὶ εἴκοσι γενέσθαι, διό, καίπερ οὐ κατὰ τὴν τοῦ σώματος μαλακίαν καὶ θηλύτητα τῆ ψυχῆ διατεθρυμμένος, ἀλλὰ ἰταμός ὦν πρὸς τὰ δεινὰ καὶ ἄτρεπτος, ἀπεδειλίασεν.

differently, Otho's body did not match his mind (*animus*) (and Otho's biographers agree on this point).

Another interesting example of a paradoxical portrait is that of the effeminate soldier by Phaedrus (*Fabulae novae* 9).<sup>8</sup> This soldier is said to have a *vastum corpus* together with a feminine bearing (*ambulando molliter*)<sup>9</sup> and a weak voice (*mollis vox*); he has a feminine appearance but the vigour of Mars (18 *cinaedus habitus, sed Mars viribus*). In spite of his effeminate appearance (*habitus*), this soldier defeats his rival before Pompeius in a duel. In this case too, the *habitus* of this man is not appropriate to his courage and true character. As the terms *habitus*, *corpus*, *mollis*, and *vastus* show, this text uses a distinctive physiognomic terminology, which makes the image of this *cinaedus* real and more vivid for the reader. In this framework, we should bear in mind that the physiognomics treatises analyse the figure of the *cinaedus* using the same terms.<sup>10</sup>

If we now turn to the archaeological evidence, an interesting case is that of the masks of the ancestors, preserved in the *atrium* of the *domus*, which were shown during public religious ceremonies such as the *funus publicum* (public funeral).<sup>11</sup> These masks, famous for their severe expressions (*severitas*), were aimed at preserving the memory of the ancestors and at stimulating younger generations to emulate the ancestors' deeds. The severe expression of these masks was, of course, meant to mirror the *animus* of the ancestors,<sup>12</sup> who through their deeds made their *domus* and Rome itself so powerful. These masks show the importance of the link between physiognomy and biography in the Roman culture of the Republican period. Furthermore, they were also a fundamental element of the identity of the Roman aristocracy, because the *ius imaginum* was a privilege reserved for few families.<sup>13</sup> Unfortunately,

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Here, as we are told, the soldiers who first welcomed and saluted him as emperor were no more than twenty-three. Therefore, although he was not sunken in spirit to match the weakness and effeminacy of his body, but was bold and adventurous in presence of danger, he began to be afraid (transl. by B. Perrin).

<sup>8</sup> La Penna 1976, 281–283.

<sup>9</sup> (1–3) *Magni Pompei miles vasti corporis / Fracte loquendo et ambulando molliter / Famam cinaedi traxerat certissimam ...* (18) *Tandem cinaedus habitu, sed Mars viribus, ...* (20) *Et voce molli: Licet? Enimvero eici.*

<sup>10</sup> Pseudo-Aristotle (*Physiogn.* 808a, 12–16 on the physiognomy and the bearing; 813a, 17–18 on the bearing, 34–35, on the voice); Anonymus Latinus (115), see remarks in Vogt 1999, 369–376 and Ferrini 2007, 238–239. On the representation of *cinaedus* in the Roman culture, see Clark 2005.

<sup>11</sup> Polybius (6, 53–54) conveys a detailed description of this ritual. On this important topic, see the stimulating monograph of Montanari 2009; for the relationship between *pompa funebris* and triumph, where the *imagines maiorum* also played a role, see Rüpke 2006 and Papini 2008.

<sup>12</sup> We can for instance remember Polybius's statement about the realism of these images: (6, 53, 10) τὸ γὰρ τὰς τῶν ἐπ' ἀρετῇ δεδοξασμένων ἀνδρῶν εἰκόνας ἰδεῖν ὁμοῦ πάσας οἶον εἰ ζώσας καὶ πεπνυμέναις τίς οὐκ ἂν παραστήσει; τί δ' ἂν κάλλιον.

<sup>13</sup> The possession of the *ius imaginum* was important for a political career (Cic. *De leg. agr.* 2, 1; *In Pison.* 1; *Pro Planc.* 18; Tac. *Hist.* 4, 39, 3 ff.); remarks in Montanari 2009, 89–106. In this context we

we do not have material evidence of these masks, because they were generally made of wax.<sup>14</sup> According to R. Bianchi Bandinelli, these *imagines maiorum* influenced the development of the realistic Roman portrait,<sup>15</sup> attested since the time of Sulla. Other scholars prefer, instead, to derive the Roman realistic portrait of the Late Republican time from Hellenistic models.<sup>16</sup> Leaving aside for the moment these discussions of the origin of the Roman portraits,<sup>17</sup> the impressive realism and pathos of these images have a huge visual impact. Indeed, the physiognomic features of these portraits express values like *severitas*, *fortitudo*, *virtus*, and the like, values that served as the foundation for the main ethical norms of Roman Society. Furthermore, the contemplation of such portraits, which incarnated these important values, could educate the young generations. Pliny the Younger,<sup>18</sup> for example, remembers an ancient tradition (*antiquitus institutum*), according to which “the old custom of Rome was for young people to learn from their elders the proper course of conduct, by watching their behaviour as well as by listening to their spoken instructions, and they afterwards and in turn, so to speak, taught their juniors in the same way” (transl. by J.B. Firth). In another passage, Pliny the Younger emphasizes the importance of the statues of ancient glorious Romans as *exempla virtutis* for the young generations.<sup>19</sup> In a similar

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should remember the following passage of Sallust (*Jug.* 85): *quia imagines non habeo et quia mihi nova nobilitas est*. According to Seneca (*ep.* 44, 5) it was a sign of belonging to the ancient nobility to have the atrium full of smoky images (*fumosae imagines*).

**14** Appropriately, Flower 1996, remarks (p. 1): “The evidence we have for the *imagines* is not physical, and their relationship with Roman portraits in other media remains obscure and disputed”. A funerary relief, on exhibit in the National Museum of Copenhagen and dated to the 30 BC, probably shows two *imagines maiorum*, kept in a shrine. On these masks, see Papini 2011.

**15** Bianchi Bandinelli 1979; 1976, 71.

**16** See, for example, Zanker 1976; Smith 1981 (Hellenistic artists as authors of the republican Roman portraits); Smith 1988 (romanisation of the Hellenistic portraits); Zanker 1995a (with a revision of his former theory, considering the individuality, which characterizes Rome’s political context of the Late Republican time, the cause of the origin of the individual portrait); Giuliani 1986, who analyses the physiognomic features of these portraits; Tanner 2000 (the portraits as expression of *patronus*’ social status).

**17** There is a good overview in Junker 2007, 85–88 and Borg 2012.

**18** *Erat autem antiquitus institutum, ut a maioribus natu non auribus modo verum etiam oculis disceremus, quae facienda mox ipsi ac per vices quasdam tradenda minoribus haberemus.*

**19** Plin. (*Ep.* 1, 17): [1] *Est adhuc curae hominibus fides et officium, sunt qui defunctorum quoque amicos agant. Titinius Capito ab imperatore nostro impetravit, ut sibi liceret statuam L. Silani in foro ponere.* [2] *Pulchrum et magna laude dignum amicitia principis in hoc uti, quantumque gratia valcas, aliorum honoribus experiri.* [3] *Est omnino Capitori in usu claros viros colere; mirum est qua religione quo studio imagines Brutorum Cassiorum Catonum domi ubi potest habeat. Idem clarissimi cuiusque vitam egregiis carminibus exornat.* [4] *Scias ipsum plurimis virtutibus abundare, qui alienas sic amat. Redditus est Silano debitus honor, cuius immortalitati Capito prospexit pariter et suae. Neque enim magis decorum et insigne est statuam in foro populi Romani habere quam ponere. Vale.*

Faith and loyalty are not yet extinct among men: there are still those to be found who keep friendly remembrances even of the dead. Titinius Capito has obtained permission from our Emperor to erect

way, referring to the portrait of L. Brutus as a symbol of freedom, Cicero mentions the didactic importance of these images.<sup>20</sup>

It should also be kept in mind that L. Giuliani, due to the public character of the Roman portraits, actually suggested replacing the term physiognomics with that of “Pathognomik”. The term “Pathognomik” refers to that set of values (or *ethe*) that a portrait can express through the construction of a facial mimicry.<sup>21</sup> I am convinced,

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a statue of Lucius Silanus in the forum. It is a graceful and entirely praiseworthy act to turn one’s friendship with a sovereign to such a purpose, and to use all the influence one possesses to obtain honours for others. But Capito is a devoted hero-worshipper; it is remarkable how religiously and enthusiastically he regards the busts of the Bruti, the Cassii, and the Catos in his own house, where he may do as he pleases in this matter. He even composes splendid lyrics on the lives of all the most famous men of the past. Surely a man who is such an intense admirer of the virtue of others must know how to exemplify a crowd of virtues in his own person. Lucius Silanus quite deserved the honour that has been paid to him, and Capito in seeking to immortalise his memory has immortalised his own quite as much. For it is not more honourable and distinguished to have a statue of one’s own in the forum of the Roman People than to be the author of someone else’s statue being placed there. Farewell. (Transl. by J.B. Firth).

**20** Cic. *Phil.* 2, 26: *Quam veri simile porro est in tot hominibus partim obscuris, partim adolescentibus neminem occultantibus meum nomen latere potuisse? Etenim, si auctores ad liberandam patriam desiderarentur illis actoribus, Brutos ego impellerem, quorum uterque L. Bruti imaginem cotidie videret, alter etiam Ahalae? Hi igitur his maioribus ab alienis potius consilium peterent quam a suis et foris potius quam domo? Quid? C. Cassius in ea familia natus quae non modo dominatum, sed ne potentiam quidem cuiusquam ferre potuit, me auctorem, credo, desideravit; qui etiam sine his clarissimis viris hanc rem in Cilicia ad ostium fluminis Cydni confecisset, si ille ad eam ripam, quam constituerat, non ad contrariam navis appulisset.*

Moreover, how likely it is, that among such a number of men, some obscure, some young men who had not the wit to conceal any one, my name could possibly have escaped notice? Indeed, if leaders were wanted for the purpose of delivering the country, what need was there of my instigating the Bruti, one of whom saw every day in his house the image of Lucius Brutus, and the other saw also the image of Ahala? Were these the men to seek counsel from the ancestors of others rather than from their own? and but of doors rather than at home? What? Caius Cassius, a man of that family which could not endure, I will not say the domination, but even the power of any individual, – he, I suppose, was in need of me to instigate him? a man who even without the assistance of these other most illustrious men, would have accomplished this same deed in Cilicia, at the mouth of the river Cydnus, if Caesar had brought his ships to that bank of the river which he had intended, and not to the opposite one (transl. by D. Yonge).

On the importance of past knowledge in order to imitate and emulate the deeds of the *summi virii* see also Cic. (*fin.* 5, 2, 6): *atque, Cicero, inquit, ista studia, si ad imitandos summos viros spectant, ingeniosorum sunt; sin tandem modo ad indicia veteris memoriae cognoscenda, curiosorum. Te autem hortamur omnes, currentem quidem, ut spero, ut eos, quos novisse vis, imitari etiam velis.* “Well, Cicero, said Piso, these enthusiasms befit a young man of parts, if they lead him to copy the example of the great. If they only stimulate antiquarian curiosity, they are mere dilettantism. But we all of us exhort you – though I hope it is a case of spurring a willing steed – to resolve to imitate your heroes as well as to know about them” (Transl. by H.H. Rackham).

**21** L. Giuliani (1986, 49–51) compares the mimicry of the Roman portraits with the *actio* of ancient rhetoric. For a definition of “Pathognomik” I refer to Marcucci’s words (Marcucci 2015, 126–127): “La

however, that in constructing this mimicry, common sense physiognomics has played a key role. For our purposes here, therefore, the portraits represent important evidence for the presence of common sense physiognomics within the Roman culture of the time. In fact, these images must express values that were not only appropriate to the man himself, but also to the class to which he belonged.

In this context, we should also mention, however briefly, the epigraphic genre of the *elogia*. The *elogia* are images of famous Romans put on display in the public spaces of a city and accompanied by a short biography and eulogy of these prominent men. According to Pliny the Elder and Gellius,<sup>22</sup> Varro probably collected this epigraphic material and composed an ensemble of 700 biographies of famous Romans, accompanied by these images. Cornelius Nepos (*Att.* 18, 6) says that Atticus, Cicero's famous friend, had also written a biographical collection of notorious Romans: *sub singulorum imaginibus facta magistratusque eorum non amplius quaternis quinque versibus descripsit* (under the individual images, he described the deeds and the offices of these men in only four and five verses). These images also aimed both at preserving the memory of these men and at stimulating the reader to emulate their deeds. Unfortunately, the archaeological evidence provides us with only a very rough idea about the features of these masks and archaic portraits. According to the literary sources, they inspired or represented values like *severitas* and *fortitudo*, which characterized the Roman *mos maiorum*. A passage in Cicero shows the importance of the *clari viri* images from the past as examples to be emulated,<sup>23</sup> and on the basis of these images as well as the images of the ancestors Cicero sketched his depiction of Demosthenes. Although from a different context, we should also consider a passage from Seneca, in which the importance of the images of well-known men from the past as a stimulus for the mind (*incitamentum animi*) was emphasized.<sup>24</sup> Unfortunately, we do not know what these pictures looked like and we can only assume that their

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pathognomonie étudie les signes qui révèlent les mouvements de l'âme. Au contraire de la physiognomonie, elle ne s'attache pas à relever la récurrence des signes qui manifesteraient une tendance fondamentale de la personnalité, comme la mélancolie. La pathognomonie se focalise sur l'expression, par exemple un rictus, un micromouvement, qui dénote le dégoût... La physiognomonie est du côté de la fixité tandis que la pathognomonie intègre le mouvement de la vie et des émotions."

**22** *Nat. Hist.* 35, 2, 10–11; Gellius, *Noct. Att.* 3, 10, 1–7; 3, 11, 3. On this work, see Norden 1990 (who speaks of this work as a "Bilderbuch"); Sonnabend 2002, 104–106.

**23** *Cic. Or.* 110: *Demosthenes quidem cuius nuper inter imagines tuas as tuorum, quod eum credo amares, cum ad te in Tusculanum venissem.*

**24** *Sen. (epist.* 64, 9–10): *Suspiciendi tamen sunt et ritu deorum colendi. Quidni ego magnorum virorum et imagines habeam incitamenta animi et natales celebrem? Quidni ego illos honoris causa semper appellem? Quam venerationem praeceptoribus meis debeo, eandem illis praeceptoribus generis humani, a quibus tanti boni initia fluxerunt. Si consulem videro aut praetorem, omnia quibus honor haberi honori solet, faciam: equo desiliam, caput adaperiam, semita cedam, quid ergo? Marcum Catonem utrumque et Laelium sapientem et Socratem cum Platone et Zenonem Cleantenque in animum meum sine dignatione summa recipiam? Ego vero illos veneror et tantis nominibus semper adsurgo.*

appearance was appropriate to the deeds of the people represented, in other words that their physical appearance inspired values like *fortitudo*, *severitas* and so on. Images must also express the values of the society of course, and according to the Roman ideology, public portraits in particular must function as *exempla*, which manifest the personality and the virtues of the man who deserved such an honour. Common sense physiognomics probably served as an important tool in the construction of these images, since they needed to communicate recognizable virtues such as *fortitudo* and *severitas*.

In this context, we should also look at an interesting passage from Pliny the Younger (*Ep.* 3, 10, 6),<sup>25</sup> according to which rich Romans often asked a painter or sculptor to retouch and improve the physiognomic traits of a recently deceased relative. In the process of retouching and improving the physiognomy of the deceased, common sense physiognomics may also have played an important role.

Common sense physiognomics may also have influenced the development of the iconic representation (*Körperdarstellung*) in Roman art. According to Tonio Hölscher's theory of *decorum*, every place must be decorated with an appropriate image.<sup>26</sup> Images of philosophers, for instance, are appropriate for libraries or for spaces dedicated to intellectual work,<sup>27</sup> while images of athletes should be located in stadia and gymnasia. If we want to contrast the images of philosophers and athletes in terms of common sense physiognomics, we must imagine the athletes with a slim physical body and with trained muscles. In ancient art, athletes (along with gods and heroes) were usually the only ones to be represented naked. According to common sense physiognomy, we should imagine the philosophers with a crowned forehead, beard and a non-athletic body in old age. Likewise, we expect the bodies of the warriors to be mighty, muscled and covered with armor. In the creation of such works of art, representing athletes, philosophers and warriors, common sense physiognomics probably played an important role in isolating the most appropriate physiognomic features in the representation.

The epigraphic evidence also provides us with noteworthy material for the investigation of the relationship and correspondence between mind and physical

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<sup>25</sup> Pliny (*Ep.* 3, 10, 6): *Difficile est huc usque intendere animum in dolore; difficile, sed tamen, ut sculptorem, ut pictorem, qui filii vestri imaginem faceret, admoneretis, quid exprimere quid emendare deberet, ita me quoque formate regite, qui non fragilem et caducam, sed immortalem, ut vos putatis, effigiem conor efficere: quae hoc diuturnior erit, quo verior melior absolutior fuerit. Valete.* "It is difficult to focus the mind on such subjects when one is in trouble, but in spite of that I want you to deal with me as you would with a sculptor or a painter who was making a model or portrait of your son. In such a case, you would advise him as to the points he should bring out and alter, and similarly I hope you will guide and direct me, for I am essaying a likeness, neither frail nor perishable, but one, as you think, which will last for ever. It will be the more durable, according to its trueness to life and correctness of detail. Farewell." (transl. by J.B. Firth).

<sup>26</sup> Hölscher 2018.

<sup>27</sup> On this iconography, see Scatozza Höricht 1986; Danguillier 2001.



appearance. We can, for instance, look at the famous *elogium Scipionis* (298 BC), in which the formula *quodius forma virtutei parisuma fuit* emphasizes such a relationship. Another epigraphic text is a funerary inscription from Rome (CIL VI 15346), in which we read *heic est sepulcrum hau(d) pulc(h)rum pulc(h)rai feminae* (this is the not beautiful grave of a beautiful woman). The beauty of this woman is described with a reserved rhetoric and posture (*sermone lepido, tum autem incessu commodo. domum servavit, lanam fecit* – she took care of her home and spun the wool). While the term *forma* and the adjective *formosa* refer to bodily beauty with an explicit erotic connotation, the word *pulcher* means a beautiful appearance, characterized by a good balance between internal and external beauty. In these inscriptions, the description is of the simplest sort, yet briefly suggests the unchanging excellence of body and character in the cases of both Scipio and Claudia.

All these examples show the importance of the relationship between physiognomy and biography within the Roman culture; furthermore, according to common sense physiognomics, the bodily features of a person usually express his or her true character and give us information about his or her mind. In this regard, common sense physiognomics seems to have played an important role in the ethical and moral judgment of people within the Roman culture.

Finally, common sense physiognomics can be used in art to create or construct the most appropriate physiognomy (for example by retouching and improving the real physical appearance of a person), while in literature it can guide the selection of key terms that are most appropriate for the physiognomy (“physique du rôle”) of a given character.

## Suetonius and the physiognomics: State of art

There is substantial disagreement about the use of the physiognomics (or of the presence of physiognomic knowledge) within Suetonius’ biographies in the work of different scholars. In his important monograph on the development of the biographic genre within the Greek and Roman literature, F. Leo suggested that in his composition of the emperors-biographies Suetonius drew on the Alexandrian model.<sup>28</sup> This model was typically used for the biographies of artists and writers and included a section with a description of the bodily appearance (*eidōs*), while a politician’s or a king’s biography normally used the “peripatetic” model, according to which a person’s true character was reconstructed (or constructed) by narrating his deeds and anecdotes from his private life.<sup>29</sup> According to Leo, Suetonius was the first to have used the Alexandrian

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<sup>28</sup> Leo 1901, 30–31.

<sup>29</sup> According to Leo’s theory, Plutarch and Cornelius Nepos used the “peripatetic” model in composing the biographies of politicians, kings, and emperors. In their biographies, indeed, we find only few

model in composing his biographies of the emperors. Furthermore, Suetonius probably utilized this model in writing his work *De viris illustribus*, as some fragments seem to show.<sup>30</sup> The authors of the *Historia Augusta* and Ammianus Marcellinus seem to have followed him in going so,<sup>31</sup> since they describe the bodily appearance of the later emperors using physiognomic terms. Since the entirety of peripatetic and Alexandrian biography are lost, scholars have criticized the rigidity of Leo's theory. D. Stuart, for example, did not exclude the possibility that the peripatetic biography also

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references to bodily appearance. In Alexander's biography Plutarch (1, 2) says that he is writing not a history but a biography and that not the deeds of a person but the anecdotes from the private life reveals the true character of a person:

οὔτε γὰρ ἱστορίας γράφομεν, ἀλλὰ βίους, οὔτε ταῖς ἐπιφανεστάταις πράξεσι πάντως ἔνεστι δῆλωσις ἀρετῆς ἢ κακίας, ἀλλὰ πρᾶγμα βραχὺ πολλάκις καὶ ῥῆμα καὶ παιδιὰ τις ἔμφρασιν ἤθους ἐποίησε μᾶλλον ἢ μάχη μυριόνεκροι καὶ παρατάξεις αἰ μέγιστα καὶ πολιορκίαι πόλεων,

For it is not Histories that I am writing, but Lives; and in the most illustrious deeds there is not always a manifestation of virtue or vice, nay, a slight thing like a phrase or a jest often makes a greater revelation of character than battles where thousands fall, or the greatest armaments, or sieges of cities (transl. by Bernadotte Perrin).

In the passage, οὔτε γὰρ ἱστορίας γράφομεν, ἀλλὰ βίους, Plutarch emphasizes the difference between the historian and the biographer. This difference, however, was not always clear in antiquity; Suetonius is for example said to be an historian by several later authors: Jerome calls him a 'historian' (Chron. praef. p. 6 Helm = p. 288 Roth: *de Tranquillo et ceteris illustribus historicis curiosissime excerpsumus*) and Johannes Malalas defines him "the most learned Roman historian" (Chron. p. 34 Dindorf = p. 266 Reiff ὁ σοφώτατος Τράνγκυλλος, Ῥωμαίων ἱστορικός). Pliny the Younger (Epist. 10, 94, 1) calls Suetonius *probissimus, honestissimus, eruditissimus*, praising his honesty.

**30** Suet. *Vita Hor.* p. 475–6 Reiff: *habitu corporis fuit [scil. Horatius] brevis atque obesus*. Suet. *Vita Ter.* 6 Wess.: *fuisse dicitur [scil. Horatius] mediocri statura, gracili corpore, colore fusco*. These texts use a remarkable physiognomic terminology. On this work, see Pausch 2004, 237–252; Power 2016; on the character of these biographies, see Dihle 1987, 64: "(Sueton) geht es nicht um die Zeichnung eines geschlossenen Lebensbildes als eines moralischen Phänomens, sondern darum, daß alle Informationen über eine Person geordnet mitgeteilt werden, die für das Gebiet, auf dem sie sich auszeichnet und zu dessen Entwicklung sie beigetragen hat, wissenswert und von Bedeutung sind".

**31** Evidence collected in Evans 1969, 75–76, 94–96; see remarks in Rohrbacher 2010, 103–113; I do not know of any monograph that analyses the use of the physiognomic terminology by these authors. In this remarkable passage, Ammianus Marcellinus, describes the first appearance of the emperor Julian: 15, 8, 16: *...quo quantoque gaudio praeter paucos Augusti probavere iudicium Caesaremque admiratione digna suscipiebant imperatorii muricis fulgore flagrantem. Cuius oculos cum venustate terribiles vultumque excitatus gratum diu multumque contuentes, qui futurus sit colligebant velut scrutatis veteribus libris, quorum lectio per corporum signa pandit animorum interna*.

It was wonderful with what great joy all but a few approved Augustus' choice and with due admiration welcomed the Caesar, brilliant with the gleam of the imperial purple. Gazing long and earnestly on his eyes, at once terrible and full of charm, and on his face attractive in its unusual animation, they divined what manner of man he would be, as if they had perused those ancient books, the reading of which discloses from bodily signs the inward qualities of the soul (transl. by J.C. Rolfe).

In this passage, the mention of physiognomic ancient books (*veteres libri*) is noteworthy. These books testify to the use of physiognomic treatises at this time.

made use of bodily descriptions, emphasizing the originality of the Roman biography of Suetonius.<sup>32</sup> J. Couissin and E. Evans have both suggested that the bodily descriptions of the emperors from Suetonius were physiognomic in character. According to J. Couissin,<sup>33</sup> Suetonius used Polemon's physiognomic treatise as a manual,<sup>34</sup> and while E. Evans agrees with the use of a physiognomic treatise, she emphasizes the iconistic quality of the Suetonian descriptions.<sup>35</sup> S. Mazzarino has argued for the influence of an artistic portrait.<sup>36</sup> The development of the artistic portrait, which took place especially in the imperial period, could have influenced Suetonius's choice to insert bodily descriptions of the emperors in his biographies.<sup>37</sup> A. Wardman formulated a similar thesis in a paper published in 1967, in which he emphasized the impressive realism of the Suetonian descriptions.<sup>38</sup> Later Suetonius scholars have often mentioned the physiognomic and the realistic thesis, avowing a critical approach to it.<sup>39</sup> A new approach to physiognomics in Suetonius's biographies has been provided by F. Stok, who in a stimulating paper argued that Suetonius, perhaps influenced by medicine, made use of diagnostic physiognomics.<sup>40</sup> Another way of putting it: the emperors' bodily features make it possible to predict their true characters. We find possible references to such physiognomics in the medical treatises since Hippocrates' times as well as in some authors from the Roman imperial period.<sup>41</sup> Furthermore, according to

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**32** Stuart 1928, 226–230; his view is shared by Steidle 1951, 166–170.

**33** Couissin 1953.

**34** The original of Polemon's treatise is unfortunately lost. We have only Arabic translations of this treatise (see Hoyland 2007 and Ghersetti 2007).

**35** E. Evans (Evans 1935, 80–84; 1950, 277–282; 1969, 51–56) quoted the studies of Fürst 1902; 1903, 370–440, about the Egyptian origin of the iconistic portraits and his use in the Greek and Roman biography. On the concept of “iconistic portrait”, see Misener 1924, who collected and discussed the evidence. In the administrative papyri from the Roman period, the term εἰκονομοῦς means a distinctive physical trait that allows the identification of a person. On the papyri, see Caldara 1924.

**36** Mazzarino 1990 II, 454–455 (concerning the importance of the individual in Adrian's time and the influence of Polemon's treatise on the literature of this time); Mazzarino 1990 III, 126 (who suggested a comparison with the reliefs of the Benevento Arch).

**37** On the relationships between art and physiognomics in the Roman imperial period, see the remarks in Elsner 2007.

**38** Wardman 1967.

**39** For example, Dihle 1956, 116; Della Corte 1967, 159–160; Alsina 1975 (who emphasizes the peripatetic and ethic character of these bodily descriptions); Cizek 1977, 139–141; Baldwin 1983, 498–499, 523 n. 53; Gascoy 1984, 598–615 (who, criticizing Couissin, thinks that Suetonius's portraits are realistic); overview by Stock 1995, 116–117.

**40** Stok 1995; 1998.

**41** A good example for the Roman time is Celsus (2,2,1: *si plenior aliquis et speciosior et coloratior factus est, suspecta habere bona sua debet*; 2, 1, 5: *corpus ... habilissimum quadratum est, neque gracile neque obesum. Nam longa statura, ut in iuventa decora est, sic matura senectute conficitur, gracile corpus infirmum, obesum hebes est*). A good example for diagnostic physiognomics is the following sentence found in Seneca's letters (*epist.* 52, 12): *omnia rerum omnium, si observentur, indicia sunt et argumentum morum ex minimis quoque licet capere: impudicum et incessus ostendit et manus mota*

the medical wisdom of his time, Suetonius thinks that some bodily features, such as Nero's paunch, may be due to the life-style of the emperors.<sup>42</sup> These bodily features are, however, a visible expression of his vices. In an article published in 2009, as part of a comparative analysis of Suetonius' text with the official portraits of Augustus, de Croizant argues that Suetonius's aim was to desacralize the official image of the emperors. In other words, de Croizant suggests that the well-known official iconographies of the emperors should be taken as a rhetorical contrast to the often denigrating descriptions.<sup>43</sup> The problem with the use of physiognomics treatises by Suetonius has been studied by Rohrbacher in an article published in 2010. He believes that the author has made use of the physiognomics literature to describe the bodies of the emperors<sup>44</sup> and that his physiognomic descriptions have influenced later authors such as the anonymous biographers of the *Historia Augusta* and Ammianus Marcellinus.

Both the physiognomic and the realistic thesis, however, do not succeed in explaining the origin of the Suetonian emperor-portraits. Concerning the physiognomic thesis, whereas Suetonius utilizes specific physiognomic terms, we do not find an exact correspondence with any treatise on physiognomics. Regarding the use of real emperor-statues and portraits as sources, we also cannot find an exact correspondence between Suetonian bodily descriptions and iconographic evidence.<sup>45</sup> Indeed, ancient

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*et unum interdum responsum et relatus ad caput digitus et flexus oculorum. Improbum risus, insanum vultus habitusque demonstrate. Illa enim in apertum per notas exeunt; qualis quisque sit, scies, si quemadmodum laudet, quemadmodum laudetur, aspexeris.* In another passage of the *Epistulae* (66, 1–4), Seneca manifests his dissent against the classical topos of the “kalokagathia”, because his *condiscipulus* Claranus has a beautiful *animus* in a weak body (*inique enim se natura gessit et talem animum male conlocavit: aut fortasse voluit hoc ipsum nobis ostendere, posse ingenium fortissimum ac beatissimum sub qualibet cute latere ..... errare mihi visus est, qui dixit 'gratior et pulchro veniens e corpore virtus' .... Claranus mihi videtur in exemplar editus, ut scire possemus non deformitate corporis foedari animum, sed pulchritudine animi corpus ornari*). Concerning Seneca's view, F. Stok (1995, 126) remarks appropriately: “La fisiognomica, in questa prospettiva, è funzionale non più alla predizione bensì al giudizio sull'individuo, un giudizio che è insieme medico e morale, per la stretta correlazione che la cultura di quest'epoca stabilisce fra la salute e regime di vita”.

**42** Stok 1995, 130: “Per questo aspetto Svetonio risulta decisamente lontano da una fisiognomica del tipo di quella esposta da Polemone. Questa distanza è ulteriormente accentuata dalla correlazione causale che Svetonio suggerisce fra il costume e il regime di vita di un individuo e tratti fisiognomici che definiremmo non-costituzionali”.

**43** de Croizant 2009, 52: “Suétone, lui, a créé une image ambiguë, dont le première objectif est le désacraliser le portrait officiel et de casser les mythes impériaux ayant trait au physique ou à la personnalité de l'empereur (superstition, talent oratoire, quotient intellectuel).”

**44** Rohrbacher 2010, 94–103, analysing the body-descriptions of Augustus, notes that the detail of *dentes raras et exiguas et scabros* (teeth wide-apart, small, and ill-kept) is not attested in the physiognomics manuals. The description of the teeth may be a “realistic” detail.

**45** Stok 1995, 117: “la comparazione fra ritratti e caratteri degli imperatori svetoniani non trova apprezzabile riscontro nella trattatistica fisiognomica. Ma neppure la tesi «realistica» risulta del tutto soddisfacente: se per «realismo» si intende l'utilizzazione di dati documentari (autoptici o iconografici o anche immaginari).” Trimble 2014, 121: “No Roman statue shows a ruler with the physical

commissioned art, especially that of the imperial official portraits, was usually flattering rather than polemical, while physiognomics mostly deals with negative cases. Furthermore, the body-types in statuary are replications of a standard repertoire.<sup>46</sup> Therefore, some scholars find it impossible to reconcile the text of Suetonius with the iconographic tradition of imperial portraits.<sup>47</sup> A new approach to this problem has been made by J. Trimble, who in a study published in 2014 highlights the rhetorical aspect both of Suetonius's descriptions and the portraits of the emperors.<sup>48</sup> She emphasizes how the physical descriptions offered by Suetonius are not neutral, but always linked to the praise or blame of the emperors, often pointing to the proportion or disproportion of the different parts of the body. In this sense, these descriptions do not intend to provide a photographic (realistic) image of the emperor, but are instead a rhetorical medium used (mostly) as invective. Imperial portrait statuary was also rhetorical, but its purpose was to honour the ruler being portrayed and not to offer an invective against him.

Another possibility is that Suetonius used caricatured portraits of the emperors that emphasized some of their particular bodily features.<sup>49</sup> Unfortunately, we do not have any portraits like this. If these existed, they must have been prohibited. Moreover, we must keep in mind that Suetonius's readers knew the physical appearance of the emperors from their official portraits, throughout the Roman Empire as well as from the coins, on the front-side of which the emperor's face was always impressed.<sup>50</sup> These portraits, which performed important communicative functions,<sup>51</sup> were also a means of propaganda which circulated the official image of the emperor. From this point of view, it does not make much sense to investigate these images as photographic documents of the emperor's true character. It makes sense to look at them from a physiognomic point of view, and to investigate whether physiognomics or common sense physiognomics played a role in constructing these images. In other words, imperial iconography (especially in the case of Augustus) does not

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problems described for Augustus, with a protruding belly and blotchy body (*Nero*, 51), or bad feet and bow legs (*Otho* 12). These written physicalities, so unflattering and specific, seem to have little to do with the idealizing ways in which the emperors were visually portrayed."

**46** See the critical remarks in Winkes 1973, 900–902 and Elsner 2007.

**47** See for example Bradley 1978, 281; Hurley 1993, 178–80.

**48** Trimble 2014.

**49** On the ancient caricature, see De Martino 2008; see remarks in Winkes 1973, 909–913.

**50** There is a good overview in Boschung 2002; Fejfer 2008, 373–429; Cesarano 2015; von den Hoff 2011; Borg 2012; Jureczko 2015, 467–477, offers a good state of the art.

**51** L. Giuliani (1986, 50) makes an interesting parallel between the task of a portrait, put on display in a public place, and that of a speaker: "Die Aufgabe, die ein öffentliches Ehrenbildnis zu erfüllen hat, läßt sich ja unmittelbar mit der eines Redners vergleichen. Beide treten an exponierter Stelle vor ein breiteres Publikum; beide tragen eine interessengebundene Aussage vor; beide versuchen für die eigene Sache oder Person Anhänger und Beifall zu gewinnen. Wo dem Redner die Sprache zur Verfügung steht, ist das Bildnis freilich stumm und ganz auf die Wirksamkeit seiner Erscheinung angewiesen."

reflect reality; it is an idealization of the emperor's figure, destined for immortality through official propaganda. It should also be noted that except for the portrait of Nero, which in fact seems to be realistic, all portraits of the Julio-Claudian dynasty show an apparent and intended resemblance to Augustus, in order to legitimise the succession. Furthermore, thanks to the studies of P. Zanker,<sup>52</sup> it is widely believed that many images of the emperors were actually commissioned by private persons and in this way – through the consecration and exhibition of the emperor's image in a private or public space – they were intended to honour the person of the emperor. These images had two recipients: the emperor, who was honoured, and the ordinary public of the people who saw these images and read the epigraph of dedication.

## Suetonius and the bad emperors

In the framework of the genre of Latin biography, Suetonius is, as said above, the first who accompanied the descriptions of the individual's life with bodily descriptions, putting them generally at the end of the biography and constructing them like an *ekphrasis*. Furthermore, he uses a precise physiognomic terminology, which refers to the individual parts of the body. He usually begins with the general features of the person (*statura, corpus, color, forma*), and then moves on to the features of the head and the face (*cervix/caput; os/vultus/facies*), lingering particularly on the features of the eyes and hair (*occuli* and *capilli*), the facial elements that are innate, according for example to the Anonymus Latinus.<sup>53</sup> This is unsurprising. According to the traditional instruction in rhetoric, the face is said to be the mirror of the mind. Cicero (*De oratore* 3, 216) says that the face reflects all movements of the mind (*omnis enim motus animi suum quendam a natura habet vultum*)<sup>54</sup>; and according to Quintilian (*Inst.* 11, 3, 65: *ex vultu ingressuque perspicitur habitus animorum*), the face reveals the aspect of the minds. Ancient medicine also shared this view. For diagnostic purposes, Hippocrates (*progn.* 2) recommended examining the face of the patient first:<sup>55</sup> “First

<sup>52</sup> Zanker 1987, 264–293.

<sup>53</sup> 13: *Sciendum etiam de capillis his qui cum homine nascuntur quod certiora sint signa, ut capitis, superciliorum et oculorum.*

It must also be known that those hairs with which a man is born are rather sure signs, such as those which belong to the head, the eyebrows, and the eyes (transl. by Ian Repath).

<sup>54</sup> See also Cic. (*De legibus* 1, 9, 26–27): “has formed the features of man's face in such a way as to express the character hidden deep within it” (*tum speciem ita formavit oris, ut in ea penitus reconditos mores effingeret*) and that “the face . . . indicates the character” (*vultus . . . indicat mores*). Cicero often draws attention to the physical features of his oratorical opponents (*Pro Rosc.* 7, 20; *de red.* 6, 15–16; *In Pis.* 1); for a collection of Cicero's passages see Evans 1969, 43–44.

<sup>55</sup> *Prog.* 2: Σκέπτεσθαι δὲ χρὴ ὧδε ἐν τοῖσι ὀξέσι νοσήμασι. Πρῶτον μὲν τὸ πρόσωπον τοῦ νοσέοντος, εἰ ὁμοίον ἐστί τοῖσι τῶν ὑγιαίνοντων, μάλιστα δὲ, εἰ αὐτὸ ἐωυτέφ.

he must examine the face of the patient, and see whether it is like the faces of healthy people, and especially whether it is like its usual self". Seneca shares a similar point of view and recommends a careful examination of facial mutations in order to recognize the appearance and the signs of anger.<sup>56</sup>

In analysing Suetonius' text, I will begin with the life of Tiberius, the first five chapters of which deal with the history of the *gens Claudia* (Tiberius was adopted by Augustus). Suetonius remembers that Tiberius' ancestors (both the men and the women) were praised for glorious deeds as well as for ignominious crimes. Tiberius is said to have had a very unhappy childhood; furthermore, he was not the favourite of Augustus and he was designated as emperor only thanks to the intrigues of his mother. His life as emperor was modest; he refused, for example, honorific titles like *pater patriae* as well as the civic crown, and he tried to reduce the luxury and the expense of the organisation of the public games. According to Suetonius, the death of his sons, Germanicus in Syria and Drusus in Rome, represented the turning point in his life.<sup>57</sup> He left Rome and went to Campania, and after a long stay in his Villa in Terracina, he retired to his luxurious residence in Capri. Here, according to Suetonius (42) "having obtained the licence afforded by seclusion, far from the eyes of the city, he finally gave in simultaneously to all the vices he had so long struggled to conceal."<sup>58</sup> To put it another way: in Capri, Tiberius revealed his true nature.

The expression *cuncta vitia male diu dissimulata tandem profudit* is noteworthy. Tiberius had a natural inclination toward vice; he was, however, able to repress it. After the death of his sons, this nature re-emerged and dominated his life. Suetonius' careful, yet perhaps exaggerated description of the corrupt life of the emperor in Capri aims at creating a negative image of Tiberius. The reader is led to hate this emperor and consider him an old, dangerous, and perverted man, who raped young girls and

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<sup>56</sup> Seneca (De ira, 1, 1, 3): *Ut scias autem non esse sanos quos ira possedit, ipsum illorum habitum intueri; nam ut furentium certa indicia sunt audax et minax vultus, tristis frons, torva facies, citatus gradus, inquietae manus, color versus, crebra et vehementius acta suspiria, ita irascentium eadem signa sunt; flagrant ac micant oculi, multus ore toto rubor, exaestuante ab imis praecordiis sanguine, labra quatuntur, dentes comprimuntur, horrent ac surriguntur capilli, spiritus coactus ac stridens.* "That you may know that they whom anger possesses are not sane, look at their appearance; for as there are distinct symptoms which mark madmen, such as a bold and menacing air, a gloomy brow, a stern face, a hurried walk, restless hands, changed colour, quick and strongly-drawn breathing; the signs of angry men, too, are the same: their eyes blaze and sparkle, their whole face is a deep red with the blood which boils up from the bottom of their heart, their lips quiver, their teeth are set, their hair bristles and stands on end, their breath is laboured and hissing" (transl. by A. Stewart).

<sup>57</sup> 39: *Sed orbatus utroque filio, quorum Germanicus in Syria, Drusus Romae obierat, secessum Campaniae petit.*

<sup>58</sup> 42: *Ceterum secreti licentiam nactus et quasi civitatis oculis remotis, cuncta simul vitia male diu dissimulata tandem profudit.*

boys and lived in a state of decadent luxury.<sup>59</sup> After the enumeration of Tiberius' misdeeds in chapter 68, the short ekphrastic description of the emperor's body follows.

*1 Corpore fuit amplo atque robusto, statura quae iustam excederet; latus ab umeris et pectore, ceteris quoque membris usque ad imos pedes aequalis et congruens; sinistra manu agiliore ac validiore, articulis ita firmis, ut recens et integrum malum digito terebraret, caput pueri vel etiam adulescentis talitro vulneraret. 2 Colore erat candido, capillo pone occipitium summissiore ut cervicem etiam obtegeret, quod gentile in illo videbatur; facie honesta, in qua tamen crebri et subiti tumores, cum praegrandibus oculis et qui, quod mirum esset, noctu etiam et in tenebris vident, sed ad breve et cum primum e somno patuissent; deinde rursum hebescebant. 3 Incedebat cervice rigida et obstipa, adducto fere vultu, plerumque tacitus, nullo aut rarissimo etiam cum proximis sermone eoque tardissimo, nec sine molli quadam digitorum gesticulatione. Quae omnia ingrata atque arrogantiae plena et animadvertit Augustus in eo et excusare temptavit saepe apud senatum ac populum professus naturae vitia esse, non animi. 4 Valitudine prosperrima usus est, tempore quidem principatus paene toto prope inlaesa, quamvis a tricesimo aetatis anno arbitrato eam suo rexerit sine adiumento consiliove medicorum.*

**He was big and strong in body, his height being above average and his chest and shoulders broad, with the rest of his body right down to his toes being well in proportion.** His left hand was the more agile and powerful and his joints were so strong that he could push one through a fresh and sound apple and with the tap of a finger he could injure the head of a boy or even a youth. **His complexion was pale and his hair at the back of his head grew far down, so that it covered his neck, which seems to have been a family trait. His face was noble though affected by sudden and violent flashes of emotion, with very large eyes, which, astonishingly, could see even at night and in darkness (though only briefly when he had just woken up; then they would lose their sharpness). When he walked, he held his neck stiffly drawn back, with a rather severe expression on his face.** For the most part he was silent, only speaking very rarely, even with those closest to him and then with no alacrity. When he spoke, he would always gesticulate rather affectedly with his fingers. All these characteristics, which were unpleasant and suggested arrogance, Augustus had observed and he often tried to make excuses for them to the senate and people, claiming that these faults were ones he was born with and not a reflection of his character. Tiberius enjoyed extremely good health, suffering from virtually no illness throughout the period of his rule, even though from the time he was thirty he had relied on his own judgement and taken no advice or help from doctors (transl. by C. Edwards).

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<sup>59</sup> On the sexual behaviour of the emperors in Suetonius's biographies, see Chong-Gossard 2010.



The terminology is noteworthy. Tiberius' body is said to have been *amplum et robustum* (large and strong). Indeed, Tiberius was a brave and victorious general, who fought against the barbarians and defeated them, as Suetonius also reports. Furthermore, he had a large and strong thorax. According to physiognomic theory,<sup>60</sup> a large and strong body with broad chest and shoulders represents an evident sign of courage. As Suetonius testifies, Tiberius gained such bodily features through hard training and discipline. They represented the signs of his glorious past, when he was a brave general. Nevertheless, the analysis of the other bodily features reveals his true nature. His complexion was *candidus* (white, clear) and his long hair covered his neck. Such a complexion is a sign of a vile character, according to Pseudo-Aristotle (812a12: οἱ δὲ λευκοὶ ἄγαν δειλοί).<sup>61</sup> Furthermore, the combination of white (or clear) complexion with long hair – unusual for a Roman – is said to be a sign of a licentious character (λάγνου σημεῖα). We also find the same characterisation of the licentious in the Anonymus Latinus on physiognomics. The colour *albus* is said to be *virtuti contrarius* (opposite the virtue). Concerning the long hair, it represents an evident sign of an *ingegnum calidum et libidinosum* as well as of a *ferum animum*. Suetonius' combination of complexion and hair is not a coincidence and emphasizes the innate cruelty of the emperor; this fact is also expressed in the sentence *quod in illo gentile videbatur*, which explains the innate true inclination of Tiberius. Indeed, complexion, hair, and particularly the eyes are said to be the main elements of the physiognomics, because they are innate in all human beings. His face looked honest and was affected by sudden and violent flashes of emotion. His eyes are said to have been very large (*praegrandibus*) and capable of seeing at night. This is another negative feature. According to Pseudo-Aristotle, large and glittering eyes betray a licentious character (812b11–12, οἱ δὲ τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς στιληνοὺς ἔχοντες λάγνοι, ἀναφέρεται ἐπὶ τοὺς ἀλεκτρυόνας καὶ κόρακας).<sup>62</sup> Moreover, Tiberius' carriage was characterised by a stiff neck, which became particularly evident when he walked. According to the Anonymus Latinus, the stiff neck is a sign of an ignorant, insolent, and arrogant person (54: *rigida et tanquam defixa cervix indoctum et insolentem significat – cervix dura indocilem hominem ostendit*). According to Suetonius, Tiberius was criticised by the senators for this reason, and Augustus himself had to defend him in the Senate, claiming that these faults were ones he was born with and not a reflection of his character.<sup>63</sup> In other words, these features were innate (*natura*) and not part of his true mind. Generally, Tiberius' bodily appearance is said to have the clear features (or

<sup>60</sup> See for example *Physiogn.* 807a31–37. See remarks in Vogt 1999, 338–345; Ferrini 2007, 231–233.

<sup>61</sup> Vogt 1999, 445–446; Ferrini 2007, 275–276.

<sup>62</sup> Vogt 1999, 452–453.

<sup>63</sup> On this passage, see the remarks of Stok 1995, 121, who identifies this discourse with that mentioned by Tacitus (*ann.* 1, 10, 7) concerning the renovation of Tiberius' tribunitian power. In this context, Augustus probably should have mentioned the virtues of Tiberius in order to convince the senators.

signs) of a licentious and cruel man. These signs are: the pale complexion, the large and glittering eyes, the long hair covering the neck, and the stiff neck. In this case, the physiognomic description of Tiberius coincides with his true character, as revealed by his misdeeds. A comparison between Suetonius' physiognomic description and the iconographic tradition of the official imperial portrait of this emperor may be useful in highlighting points of contact and divergences from this literary text. These artistic portraits represented the official images of the emperors which circulated in the empire. Furthermore, these images constituted an important medium to circulate and manifest the face of the most important person in the empire.<sup>64</sup>

We have three different kinds of sources: the portraits on coins, the busts, and the statues.<sup>65</sup> The coins display on the obverse the emperor's bust in profile; according to the iconographic tradition, the head often bears a laurel crown and the face has features that resemble those of Augustus in order to emphasize the dynastic continuity. Busts and statues, however, offer us the possibility of a better comparison with Suetonius' text. The hair covers the cervices, but we cannot establish whether the eyes were glittering or not (the largeness of the eyes is not exceptionally large in my opinion). We also cannot know whether this neck was really stiff when Tiberius walked. Anyway, the body looks big and strong. The physiognomic features of Suetonius' portraits do not contradict the iconographic tradition. Suetonius (or his source) interprets the iconographic portraits, and he adds those elements of the physiognomic tradition that are visible on a living person but not verifiable on a marble portrait. According to this new point of view, Suetonius' descriptions complete the *eikones* (the images) that imitate only the body and do not express the *ethos*, the true character of a person.

The description of Tiberius in Suetonius provides the most striking example of an emperor whose physical merits and defects correspond to the virtues and vices of his character from a physiognomic point of view. Furthermore, Suetonius' description of Tiberius' appearance does not belong to any stated period of his life.

Caligula's biography provides another remarkable example for the reconstruction of a bad emperor's personality. Caligula, Tiberius' successor, is said to have had an innate inclination to cruelty and depravity, which he, however, was able to dissimulate during his youth. Often, he attended tortures and executions in disguise in order to see the pain of the convicted without being recognised. According to Suetonius (*Cal.* 11), Tiberius recognized the true nature of his successor and used to remark that "Caligula alive would bring death for himself and all others, that he was rearing a viper for the Roman people – and a Phaethon for the world". Suetonius then goes on to recount the sexual excesses of this emperor, who raped his own sisters and had

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<sup>64</sup> On the images of Tiberius, see Hertel 2013 (Typus Ephesos, Basel, Kopenhagen (or Adophtiontypus), Berlin-Napoli-Sorrento, Chiaramonti, Kopenhagen 624).

<sup>65</sup> The small bronze statuettes represent another interesting category of emperor-images, see Dahmen 2001.

countless relationships with prostitutes and married women, in order to emphasize his depravity and to construct a negative image of him.

If we consider Caligula's description, we again find remarkable points of contact between Suetonius and the physiognomic tradition, particularly in terms of the emperor's vices.

[50] 1 *Statura fuit eminenti, colore expallido, corpore enormi, gracilitate maxima cervicis et crurum, oculis et temporibus concavis, fronte lata et torva, capillo raro at circa verticem nullo, hirsutus cetera. Quare transeunte eo prospicere ex superiore parte aut omnino quacumque de causa capram nominare, crimosum et exitiale habebatur. Vultum vero natura horridum ac taetrum etiam ex industria efferabat componens ad speculum in omnem terrorem ac formidinem.* 2 *Valitudo ei neque corporis neque animi constitit.*

**1. He was tall of stature, very pallid of complexion. His body was ill formed, his neck and legs very thin. His eyes and temples were sunken, while his brow was broad and intimidating. His hair was sparse, his crown being completely bald, while the rest of his body was hairy.** Because of this he pronounced it a crime meriting death if, when he was passing, anyone should look down on him from above, or if, for whatever reason, the word 'goat' was mentioned. Though nature had made his face hideous and repulsive, he deliberately tried to make it more so by practising all kinds of terrifying and dreadful expressions in the mirror. 2. His health, both of body and of mind, was unstable (transl. by C. Edwards).

Due to his physical appearance, this emperor can be associated with the disagreeable features of the panther and of the goat. Like a panther, Caligula shows *oculis et temporibus concavis* (sunken eyes and temples). The panther is said by Pseudo-Aristotle (809b36–810a21) to be a completely vile animal ὄλωσ δολερόν, whose eyes are small and sunken (μικροὺς καὶ ἐγκοίλους). The noteworthy expression *corpore enormi, gracilitate maxima cervicis et crurum* finds an interesting correspondence with the description of a panther as an animal without bodily proportion (ὄλον ἄναθρόν τε καὶ ἀσύμμετρον). Like a goat, the body of Caligula was completely covered by hair, which, according to the physiognomic tradition, betrays an inclination to luxury. According to Pseudo-Aristotle (808b; 812b),<sup>66</sup> the goat is the most lascivious of the animals. Finally, we should mention the following quotation from the Anonymus Latinus, according to which men whose bodies are covered by black prickly hair have a natural inclination to luxury: (103) *homo hirsutus capillis nigris directis, hirsuto ore ac mento temporibus oculis punguibus relucetibus furiosus erit pronus in libidinem.* Moreover, all *libidinosi*

<sup>66</sup> Vogt 1999, 414–419; Ferrini 2007, 255–257.

are said to have a pallid colour and the body covered by hair: (112) *libidinosi et intemperantes libidinum ita sunt: color albus, corpus hispidum rectis capillis*).

His complexion, *colore expallido*, is a sign of cowardice, as the author of the Anonymus Latinus puts it: *color vehementer albus virtuti est contrarius* (79). Furthermore, according to Pseudo-Aristotle, such a complexion betrays a lascivious character (808b: *λάγνου σημεῖα· λευκόχρωσ καὶ δασύς εὐθείαις θριξὶ καὶ παχείαις καὶ μελαίναις*; 812a12: *οἱ δὲ λευκοὶ ἄγαν δειλοὶ*).

The expression *fronte lata et torva* indicates stupidity and foolishness (17: *qui frontem spatiosam nimium habent, pigrioris ingenii sunt.*).

Just like for Tiberius, Suetonius constructs for Caligula as well a fitting physiognomic picture, which does not contradict his misdeeds.

The numismatic and the archaeological evidence can be used to reconstruct the official portrait of this emperor. Like Tiberius' head, Caligula's head on the obverse of the coins, minted both with and without the laurel crown, shows an impressive similarity to that of Augustus. This somewhat constructed similarity aimed at emphasizing the continuity of the Julio-Claudian dynasty. The numismatic evidence does not, unfortunately, provide us with any evidence that we can compare with Suetonius' description of this emperor. Furthermore, from the busts and statues, we do not know whether Caligula had a body covered with hair, nor whether his complexion was pallid. Moreover, his brow does not look particularly large, whereas his eyes are (perhaps) a bit sunken. Personally, I do not see any similarity with a goat and I do not understand why people have said him to be goat-like. Finally, his face does not look as terrible as Suetonius says.<sup>67</sup>

In this case, the physiognomic reconstruction (or construction) of Suetonius seems to have been based on a fictional construction of the personality of this bad emperor, who had an innately lascivious and cruel character. Such a portrait stands in contrast to the official iconographic type, diffused by coins and sculptures in the Roman empire.

Finally, as an example of a good and virtuous person, I would like to present the case of Germanicus. Suetonius inserts the short physiognomic description of him in the 3rd chapter of Caligula's biography. According to the idea of the perfect Roman citizen, expressed for example in the eulogium for Scipio, Germanicus united in his person all virtues of the body and of the mind, as emphasized in the description of his body.

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67 J. Trimble describes in the following manner the contrast between the iconographic evidence and the Suetonius' description of Caligula (Trimble 2014, 118): "By contrast, visual representations of Caligula show very little of this ugliness. On coins, he is depicted with large eyes, but that is a recurrent feature of Julio-Claudian dynastic portraiture and not specific to this ruler. Neither his eyes nor his temples appear particularly hollow; his neck does not look particularly thin, and he has a normal amount and distribution of hair. The portrait sculptures are even more distant from Suetonius' account. They show Caligula with plenty of hair, unremarkable temples and a reasonably sized neck. His eyes are large but not especially hollow; there is no sign of unusual height, spindly legs, or copious body hair. Rather, his full-length statues depict a standard, well-proportioned body."

[3] *Omnes Germanico corporis animique virtutes, et quantas nemini cuiquam, contigisse satis constat: formam et fortitudinem egregiam, ingenium in utroque eloquentiae doctrinaeque genere praecellens, benivolentiam singularem conciliandaeque hominum gratiae ac promerendi amoris mirum et efficax studium. Formae minus congruebat gracilitas crurum, sed ea quoque paulatim repleta assidua equi vectatione post cibum.*

**That Germanicus had all the virtues of body and spirit to a degree achieved by no other man is generally agreed. His person was striking, his valour conspicuous,** his talent for eloquence and learning, both Greek and Roman, was outstanding. He was noted for his kindness of disposition and was remarkably successful in his endeavours to secure people's goodwill and to merit their affection. **One aspect of his appearance out of proportion with the rest was the thinness of his legs but even this he gradually managed to improve through assiduous riding after meals** (transl. by C. Edwards).

He was beautiful – the term *forma* refers to bodily beauty – and courageous. The association of the terms *formam et fortitudinem egregiam* (excellent form, beauty and firmness, courage) is also noteworthy. Furthermore, he was intelligent and wise. The thin legs represented, however, the only deficiency that disturbed the symmetry of his perfect body. He is said to have reinforced his legs through regular training and discipline. It is important for us to keep in mind that an innate corporeal deficiency could be corrected through self-control and discipline. In other words, human physiognomy can be partially created or constructed throughout the course of one's life by means of the aforementioned discipline and self-control. This passage caught the attention of F. Stok, who interpreted it as a reference to the use of diagnostic physiognomics in the framework of Suetonius' work.<sup>68</sup> Thus, discipline and self-control allow for the change and improvement of innate bodily features (and deficiencies), also improving thereby the character. This use of the physiognomic tradition, in connection with one's way of life, is said to be diagnostic. Therefore, by virtue of bodily appearance, it is possible to discover the features of an individual's character. For his descriptions of the emperors, Suetonius adopted a diagnostic physiognomics, according to which the bodily appearance reflects the passions, the way of life as well as the attitudes of a person. This type of physiognomic tradition investigates the body posture, the attitudes, and the expressions of the face; it aims at expressing a judgment about a given person. This judgment is both moral and medical by virtue of the correlation between way of life and health.

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<sup>68</sup> Stok 1995, 123–131.

## Conclusions

Suetonius adopted a physiognomic method in constructing an image of the emperors that was appropriate to their deeds and misdeeds. These depictions, which often stand in contrast to the official iconographic tradition of the imperial portraits, represent the physiognomic mirror of the emperors' true nature. Unfortunately, we cannot confirm whether or not Suetonius used a specific physiognomic treatise, such as that of Polemon. Probably, like other later authors (Ammianus Marcellinus and the biographers of the *Historia Augusta*), his physiognomic knowledge goes back to some sort of “common sense physiognomics”. This knowledge enabled him to construct the most appropriate physical features for the protagonists of his biographies, in order to meet the expectations of his readers. Furthermore, it is also no coincidence that these descriptions were mostly placed at the end of the biographies, after the reader had read about the vices and misconduct of the emperors and had already made a judgment about them.

The answer to the question we began with, whether Suetonius knew and used physiognomics, is clearly yes. As both his terminology and other points of contact with the extant physiognomic treatises show, Suetonius utilised physiognomic knowledge within the fiction of his work in order to create a “physique du rôle” for the protagonists of the Roman history. Moreover, a consideration of the archaeological evidence allows us to further suppose that Suetonius had existing official models in mind and offered a picture of the emperors that contrasted with their widely disseminated official portraits.

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## 10 Physiognomy, *ekphrasis*, and the ‘ethnographicising’ register in the second sophistic

### The ‘ethnographicising’ register of writing

This chapter seeks to study ethnicised physiognomical descriptions or *ekphraseis* of both individuals and entire population groups, primarily during the High Empire. Traditionally, physiognomical *ekphraseis* have been examined through the three epistemological fields where physiognomic arguments are thought to be particularly naturalised: philosophy, medical writings, and rhetoric. There is, however, at least one broad literary and ideological register that extends over and beyond these domains, yet in which physiognomising gestures are frequent: ethnographical writing. Indeed, Mladen Popović, for instance, notes that ‘physiognomic consciousness’ can be found in several other genres of writing.<sup>1</sup> While there is no reason to regard ethnography in antiquity as a full-fledged ‘genre’ of its own, and while the term ‘ethnography’ itself was not used in ancient literature, the well-established and widely shared conventions of ancient outgroup descriptions, addressing quite distinct audience expectations, do support the view that we are dealing with a literary register that can be clearly delineated and discussed.

Scholars have made use of varied epistemic matrices each from a subtly different angle: Emma Dench and others refer to the ‘ethnographic gaze’, while Greg Woolf prefers to speak about the ‘register of ethnographic writing’. Recently, Todd Berzon has suggested the term ‘ethnographical disposition’ in order to account for the unity of formal aspects and horizons of expectation that the use of ethnographicising arguments in the Imperial era and Late Antiquity relied on, despite not forming a genre of its own. Anthony Kaldellis has opted for a distinction between ‘ethnography’ and ‘ethnology’, the latter denoting the pool of popularly shared imagery for outgroups, with which the literary ‘ethnography’ was in constant negotiation.<sup>2</sup> In what follows, I will speak of ‘ethnographicising’ register and techniques, which has the advantage of switching our attention to the toolkit of details and literary devices with which an author in almost any genre could signal to his audience that certain prior models or

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<sup>1</sup> Popović 2007, 85, 89 – in the latter instance noting how the many references to physiognomic notions testify to its generally wide spread among learned Graeco-Roman audiences. Cf. also Evans 1969, *passim*. The connections between physiognomy and astrology in the ancient world have been very well explored by Barton 1994.

<sup>2</sup> Dench 2007; Almagor & Skinner 2013; Woolf 2011; Berzon 2016; Kaldellis 2013.

*exempla* were in play. In many cases this need not have meant any proclaimed (or understood) intention to introduce new information about an outgroup: indeed, often the impact of an ethnographicising detail depends on the audience already possessing a pool of shared knowledge about a given population group.

Ethnographicising details were learned, just like ekphrastic techniques, by the members of the Imperial-era Greek and Roman elites through their basic schooling.<sup>3</sup> As an example of the ways in which young elite men of the second century were encouraged in their use of ethnographicised details about the human geography of the Empire (and the world), we can cite Maximus of Tyre's *Discourses*.

[...] the whole Asia is pressed into service to tend the pleasures of a single man. Media raises Nisaeen horses for him, Ionia sends Greek concubines, Babylon raises barbarian eunuchs, Egypt sends arts of every kind, the Indians ivory, the Arabs perfume. The rivers too tend the king's pleasures, Pactolus providing gold, the Nile wheat, and the Choaspes water. Yet not even this is enough for him; he desires foreign pleasures, and for this marches against Europe, pursuing the Scythians, banishing the Paeonians from their homeland, capturing Eretria, sailing against Marathon, and ranging everywhere. How utterly wretched is he in his poverty!<sup>4</sup>

Maximus' view of the flow of goods and services in a world-empire resembles the way in which Roman Imperial networks were perceived<sup>5</sup> – except that the empire he is referencing is that of the Achaemenids. Maximus' ethnicised *exempla* tend to be wholly Herodotean, and the products listed in this region-based ekphrasis are likewise conventional. Although the products and peoples mentioned may not have had much relevance beyond the proverbial to Maximus' notional (or perhaps real) audience of young men (*neoi*), the passage is worth bearing in mind when thinking about the kind of ethnographically cast ekphraseis that were taught to second-century elites.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>3</sup> On ekphrasis and progymnastic exercises, Webb 2009, 39–59. On verbal ekphraseis of geographical space, Eide 2016.

<sup>4</sup> Max. Tyr. *Dial.* 33.4: ἀλλ' ἡ Ἀσία ἅπασα διέλαχεν χορηγεῖν ἡδοναῖς ἀνδρός ἑνός. τρέφει μὲν αὐτῷ Μηδία Νισαῖον ἵππον, πέμπει δὲ Ἴωνία παλλακίδας Ἑλληνικάς, τρέφει δὲ Βαβυλῶν εὐνούχους βαρβάρους, πέμπει δὲ Αἴγυπτος παντοδαπὰς τέχνας, ἐλέφαντα Ἴνδοι, Ἄραβες εὐωδία· χορηγοῦσιν δὲ καὶ οἱ ποταμοὶ ταῖς βασιλέως ἡδοναῖς, Πάκτωλός χρυσόν, Νεῖλος πυρόν, Χοάσπηρ ὕδωρ· τῷ δὲ οὐδὲ ταῦτα ἰκανά, ἀλλ' ἐπιθυμεῖ ξένης ἡδονῆς, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ἐπὶ τὴν Εὐρώπην ἔρχεται, διώκει Σκύθας, ἀνίστησιν Παίονας, Ἐρετρίαν λαμβάνει, Μαραθῶνι ἐπιπλεῖ, καὶ πλανᾶται πανταχοῦ. ὦ τῆς πενίας δυστυχέστατος. (Translation M. B. Trapp).

<sup>5</sup> At least a few centuries later: cf. the *Expositio totius mundi et gentium*, from the late fourth or early fifth century.

<sup>6</sup> On Maximus' addressed audience as *neoi*, Trapp 1997, xxi.

## Progymnastic exercises

In the *Progymnasmata* transmitted under the name of (Aelius) Theon, *ekphrasis* and *topos* have similar obvious benefits for argumentation: the former is used by historical writers very frequently, while orators use the commonplace.<sup>7</sup> Characterising the uses of *ekphrasis*, Theon gives as particular examples Thucydides’ description of the plague, the siege of the Plataeans, naval battles and cavalry encounters; Plato’s description of the Egyptian city of Saïs in *Timaeus*; Herodotus’ report on the seven walls of Ecbatana; Theopompus’ description of the Valley of Tempe (which Theon himself paraphrases extensively enough to qualify as a mini-*ekphrasis*), and a few episodes from the histories of Philistus.<sup>8</sup> While these literary examples do not include physiognomical descriptions, in a further definition of *ekphrasis* Theon provides exactly this kind of ‘*ekphrasis* of persons’ (ἔκφρασις προσώπων), with Homeric and Herodotean exemplars of both people and animals.

*Ekphrasis* is descriptive language, bringing what is portrayed clearly before the sight. There is *ekphrasis* of persons and events and places and periods of time. An instance of *ekphrasis* of persons is, for example, the Homeric line [*Od.* 19.246, of Eurybates], “Round-shouldered, swarthy-skinned, woolly-haired”, and the lines about Thersites [*Il.* 2.217–18], “He was bandy-legged, lame in one foot, and his two shoulders / stooped over his chest”, and so on. And in Herodotus, the appearance of the ibis [2.76] and the hippopotami [2.71] and crocodiles [2.68] of the Egyptians.<sup>9</sup>

*Ekphrastic* description is meant to represent the described object in a way analogous to seeing the very thing itself vividly (ἐναργῶς ὑπ’ ὄψιν ἄγων), with persons cited as the primary subjects of *ekphraseis* (together with events) in all progymnastic handbooks.<sup>10</sup> The emphasis on ‘placing in front of the eyes’ is shared by other progymnastic handbooks – indeed it is firmly in the centre of the semantic field of *ekphrasis* – and

7 Ael. Theon *Prog.* 60 Spengel: πανταχοῦ τῶν παλαιῶν τῶν μὲν ἱστορικῶν πάντων ἐπὶ πλεῖστον τῆ ἐκφράσει, τῶν δὲ ῥητορικῶν τῷ τόπῳ κεκημημένων. On Aelius Theon’s date and the attribution of the earliest progymnastic handbook to him, see Kennedy 2003, 1, but for the dating cf. Heath 2003 (esp. 142 on ‘Aelius Theon’, if the author of the text, probably postdating Hadrian due to the *cognomen*). For *ekphrasis* and commonplace, see also Webb 2009, 76–78.

8 Ael. Theon *Prog.* 68 Spengel.

9 Ael. Theon *Prog.* 118 Spengel: Ἐκφρασις ἐστὶ λόγος περιηγηματικὸς ἐναργῶς ὑπ’ ὄψιν ἄγων τὸ δηλούμενον. γίνεται δὲ ἔκφρασις προσώπων τε καὶ πραγμάτων καὶ τόπων καὶ χρόνων. προσώπων μὲν οὖν, οἷον τὸ Ὀμηρικόν, γυρὸς ἔην ὤμοις, μελανόχροος, οὐλοκάρηνος. καὶ τὰ περὶ τοῦ Θερασίτου, φολκὸς ἔην, χλωλὸς δ’ ἕτερον πόδα, τῷ δὲ οἱ ὤμω κυρτῷ ἐπὶ στήθος· καὶ τὰ ἐξῆς καὶ παρ’ Ἡροδότῳ τὸ εἶδος τῆς ἰβίδος καὶ τῶν ἵππων τῶν ποταμίων καὶ τῶν κροκοδείλων τῶν Αἰγυπτίων. (Translation G. A. Kennedy).

10 Webb 2009, 56, 61–64; on vividness or ἐνάργεια 87–106.

goes back to Aristotle.<sup>11</sup> The properties of a person (*prosopon*), in Theon's manual, are said to be "origin, nature, training, disposition, age, fortune, morality, action, speech, (manner of) death, and what followed death".<sup>12</sup> Ekphrasis is closely allied to the technique of *prosopopoeia* or *ethopoeia*, the mimetic attribution of appropriate speech to different types of persons, especially when making use of stereotypical images of character types or population groups.<sup>13</sup> *Ethopoeia* was a crucial rhetorical technique of persuasion – and just as in physiognomic representation, it relied upon the audience already sharing a common pool of images about the type of person whose speech the rhetor claimed to be imitating.

Different ways of speaking would also be fitting by nature for a woman and for a man, and by status for a slave and a free man, and by activities for a soldier and a farmer, and by state of mind for a lover and a temperate man, and by their origin the words of a Laconian, sparse and clear, differ from those of a man of Attica, which are voluble.<sup>14</sup>

The superficially logical demand for every individual to show signs of their innate 'character' both in their behaviour and their physiognomy could, analogously, be applied to entire populations. Progymnastic textbooks are, as Ruth Webb has pointed out, a telling indication of how members of the Imperial-era elites were taught to think about representing the world and to conceptualise and structure both their thinking and their writing.<sup>15</sup> Theon's examples with 'ethnicised' labels are entirely classical, and the foreign peoples mentioned are the ones found in Thucydides, Herodotus, Ephorus, and Theopompus – Persians being the predictable favourite. Some Greek groups, such as Cretans or Thessalians, are used as 'out-group examples', too. In many cases, the general guidelines and recommendations given for progymnastic exercises would have been equally applicable to both Greek and non-Greek groups alike. Overall, humankind is envisioned as neatly divided into Greeks and barbarians,<sup>16</sup> with no Romans in sight to complicate the dichotomy: in this, Theon resembles Maximus of Tyre.

<sup>11</sup> Webb 2009, 51ff. (referring to Ar. *Rhet.* 1411b, which also approaches physiognomical ekphrasis).

<sup>12</sup> Ael. Theon *Prog.* 78–79 Spengel: παρακολουθεῖ δὲ τῷ μὲν προσώπῳ γένος, φύσις, ἀγωγή, διάθεσις, ἡλικία, τύχη, προαιρέσεις, πράξεις, λόγος, θάνατος, τὰ μετὰ θάνατον.

<sup>13</sup> Webb 2009, 43; cf. 53, 62, 67 on how ekphrasis transcends categories and genres (cf. Elsner 2002, *passim*); 57 on how according to the handbooks the language of ekphrasis should match the subject matter (though perhaps in rather simple metaphoric ways: flower-references for 'flowery' style, etc.).

<sup>14</sup> Ael. Theon *Prog.* 116 Spengel: καὶ διὰ φύσιν γυναικὶ καὶ ἀνδρὶ ἕτεροι λόγοι ἀρμόττειεν ἄν, καὶ διὰ τύχην δούλῳ καὶ ἐλευθέρῳ, καὶ δι' ἐπιτήδευμα στρατιώτῃ καὶ γεωργῷ, κατὰ δὲ διάθεσιν ἐρώντι καὶ σωφρονούντι, καὶ διὰ γένος ἕτεροι μὲν λόγοι τοῦ Λάκωνος παῦροι καὶ λιγέες, ἕτεροι δὲ τοῦ Ἀττικοῦ ἀνδρὸς στομύλοι. (Translation G. A. Kennedy).

<sup>15</sup> Webb 2009, 41–42: 'the *Progymnasmata* were a keystone of the education process of the elite'; 48.

<sup>16</sup> E.g. Ael. Theon 126 Spengel.

## Ekphrasis and ethnography: Late Republic and Early Empire

Ekphrasis is closely connected to ethnographicising gestures and broadly-painted stereotyping in some of Cicero's public speeches. Looking at the characterisation of the Gauls in *Pro Fonteio*, for instance, it becomes clear that for rhetorical purposes it was perfectly feasible to read provincial plaintiffs' mental states and qualities of character from their bearing and even clothing. The main reason why Cicero cautions the Roman judges to pay no heed to the Gallic testimony is their supposed history of violating both divine and human law and the sanctity of oaths, but in terms of evoking a negative response from his audience, he is certainly not above appealing to the prejudices of Romans by way of an ekphrastic description of Gallic presence at the very heart of Rome:

Or do you hesitate, oh judges, when all these nations nurture an innate hatred and wage incessant war against the name of the Roman people? Do you think that, they come to us with their cloaks and breeches in a lowly and humble spirit, as befits those who, having suffered injuries, flee to us as suppliants and inferiors to beg for judicial aid? Nothing is further from the truth. On the contrary, they are strolling in high spirits and with their heads up, all over the forum, uttering threatening expressions, and terrifying people with barbarous and ferocious language.<sup>17</sup>

The description not only purported to describe the Gauls visible to the judges in the hearing itself, but – as practically everything else Cicero wrote – also to posterity, for whose eyes the speech was edited and circulated. Bodily bearing, voice, and clothing all contribute to the overall vividness of the scene. In addition, Cicero reads the Gauls present in order to draw conclusions about their entire people.<sup>18</sup> The appeal to emotions and the heightened sense of 'being there' are very strong; this kind of ethnically flagged description can certainly be considered an expansion of the 'simple narrative', and thus ekphrastic in tone.<sup>19</sup> The Gauls in their outlandish trousers and cloaks, and with their loud voices and confident behaviour, are metaphorically represented as threatening to take over the centre stage of a Roman court. The Gauls as recalcitrant provincials are also subjects who resist the appropriate *ethopoeia*: their behaviour and looks subvert the appropriate qualities expected from supplicants for justice. The details themselves have

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<sup>17</sup> Cic. *Pro Font.* 33: *an vero dubitatis, iudices, quin insitas inimicitias istae gentes omnes et habeant et gerant cum populi Romani nomine? sic existimatis eos hic sagatos brachatosque versari, animo demisso atque humili, ut solent ei qui adfecti iniuriis ad opem iudicum supplices inferioresque confugiunt? nihil vero minus. hi contra vagantur laeti atque erecti passim toto foro cum quibusdam minis et barbaro atque immani terrore verborum [...].* See Dyck 2012, 66–69.

<sup>18</sup> Ironically, since the unitary identity of *Galli* was an entirely Roman artefact.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Webb 2009, 77–78.

many parallels in the Late Republic and the Early Empire, and clearly drawn from the broadly shared pool of stereotypes about Gauls.<sup>20</sup>

Cicero showcased other ethnicising ways of inferring qualities of a person's character from their person. In the case of a person named Aelius Ligus, Cicero was able to base a relatively complex ethnic slur on his *cognomen* by referring to how a 'Ligurian' (*Ligus*) could be bribed with mere acorns.<sup>21</sup> Here, no ekphrasis is necessary: the logic between Cicero's dismissal of Ligurians is based on the same pool of negative stereotypes as his points about Sardinians in *Pro Scauro*.<sup>22</sup> Yet against such peasant-bashing he was able to make wholehearted use of the simple rural virtues and their connection with the frugal way of living that the (Italian) countryside fostered. The land and its inhabitants' mind are indelibly linked; by describing the one you describe the other. Cicero also gestures more explicitly towards the notion of some essential connection between a place and its inhabitants, such as in *Pro Flacco*, where he takes up the conventional talking point of decadent Asia versus virtuous Europe.<sup>23</sup>

Behind Cicero and other Late Republican and Early Imperial ekphrasises of 'ethnic' physiognomies looms large the Hippocratic theory of climatic or environmental influences on the bodies and characters of both individuals and entire peoples. This has sometimes been called 'environmental determinism'.<sup>24</sup> Hippocratic influence can be detected still in later Antiquity and the various subsequent rearticulations and rearrangements of the same epistemic template. The most basic use of physiognomy for the Hippocratic physician was a medical one, as understanding the influence of local climates on people's bodies was his prime concern.<sup>25</sup> But especially in *Airs, Waters, Places* the exemplary cases switch to a wholly ethnographical mode, the contents of which are dictated by the theoretical concerns of the writer – with some additional cultural polemics thrown in, possibly reflecting Herodotus in some regards.<sup>26</sup> Having described the exceptionally marshy and misty lands around river Phasis in the western Caucasus, the Hippocratic writer proceeds to give a diagnostic reading of its inhabitants' physique:

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**20** Celtic/Gallic costume: Lucil. *Sat.* 9 *ap.* Non. 227.33; Diod. 5.30.1; Str. 4.4.3; cryptic speech and threatening voice: Acc. *Dec.* F 2 *ap.* Non. 504.29, F 8 *ap.* Non. 139.20; Diod. 5.31.1; Diog. Laert. 1.6; proud and boastful behaviour: Diod. 5.31.1–2, Str. 4.4.2, Arr. *Anab.* 1.4.6. Attacking someone's dress as a standard *topos* of invective rhetoric: Craig 2007, 336.

**21** Cic. *Clu.* 72; *De har. resp.* 5.18. *Ligures* had had a reputation as deceitful boors since Cato *ap.* Serv. *Ad Aen.* 11.715 (*FRH* 5 F 34a–b; F 31–32 Peter).

**22** Cic. *Pro Sc.* 19, 38, 41.

**23** Vasaly 1993, 253f. On the ethnic imagery in both *Pro Fonteio* and *Pro Scauro*, see *ead.* 192–198.

**24** For climatic, 'continental' and other explanation models, see Romm 2010; also Thomas 2000, 86–98.

**25** Hippoc. *Progn.* 2; *Aer.* 1.

**26** For cultural critique in *Airs, Waters, Places*, see Chiasson 2001. *Aer.* 12 sets out a Herodotean-seeming comparison between Europe and Asia, which is then carried through the rest of the text; Chiasson 2001, 45–55 compares the two.

The Phasians, as a result, have physiques very distinct from the rest of humankind. They are large and stocky, and their joints and ligaments are girded with flesh. Their skin is yellow like those suffering from jaundice, and due to breathing the moist and damp and unclear air their voices are the deepest known anywhere. They lack staying-power and become easily winded.<sup>27</sup>

The merging of the *ekphrasis* of the land into that of its people is strong within the section on the Phasians, and maintained by many verbal choices, as well as the progression from climate and landforms to the people's physique and back again to climate. Metaphoric inferences seem prominent: from the sluggish, moist air it is easy to derive the thick, deep voices of the inhabitants; the inhabitants' vigour, like the crops in their land does not sprout fully; the joints of the Phasians are wrapped in flesh, just as their country is wrapped in moisture.

The tradition of Graeco-Roman technical writing was likewise influenced by the classical form of the Hippocratic environmental determinism. Vitruvius, writing under Augustus, demonstrates some of the similarities in his ethnographically framed passages.

Contrariwise, in cold countries which are distant from the south, the moisture is not drawn out by the heat, but the dewy air, insinuating its dampness into the system, increases the size of the body, and makes the voice deeper. This is the reason why the peoples originating in northern lands are so large in stature and so light in complexion, and have straight red hair, blue eyes, and plentiful blood; they are constituted in this way because of the abundance of moisture and the coldness of their country. Those who live near the equator and are directly under the sun's course, are due to its power low in stature, dark-complexioned, with curly hair, black eyes, weak legs, and little blood.<sup>28</sup>

In *Arch.* 6.1.9–10, Vitruvius concludes that in addition to the bodily differences, the differing climates produce also distinctions manifesting in mentalities the Southern peoples are clever and quick, while the Northerners' intellect is hampered by the cooling effect of the moist air. This can be confirmed, in his view, by observing snakes,

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27 Hippoc. *Aer.* 15: Διὰ ταύτας δὴ τὰς προφάσις τὰ εἶδεα ἀπηλλαγμένα τῶν λοιπῶν ἀνθρώπων ἔχουσιν οἱ Φασιηνοί· τὰ τε γὰρ μεγέθεα μεγάλοι, τὰ πάχεα δ' ὑπερπαχέες· ἄρθρον τε κατάδηλον οὐδὲν, οὐδὲ φλέψ· τὴν τε χροίην ὠχρὴν ἔχουσιν, ὥσπερ ὑπὸ ἰκτέρου ἐχόμενοι· φθέγγονται τε βαρύτατον ἀνθρώπων, τῷ ἤερι χρεόμενοι οὐ λαμπρῷ, ἀλλὰ χνοῶδει· καὶ διερῶ· πρὸς τε τὸ ταλαιπωρέειν τὸ σῶμα ἀργότεροι πεφύκασιν·

28 Vitruv. *Arch.* 6.1.3–4: *contra vero refrigeratis regionibus, quod absunt a meridie longe, non exhauritur a caloribus umor, sed ex caelo roscidus aer in corpora fundens umorem efficit ampliores corporaturas vocisque sonitus graviore. ex eo quoque quae sub septentrionibus nutriuntur gentes inmanibus corporibus, candidis coloribus, directo capillo et rufo, oculis caesiis, sanguine multo ab umoris plenitate caelique refrigerationibus sunt conformati. qui autem sunt proximi ad axem meridianum subiectique solis cursui, brevioribus corporibus, colore fusco, crispo capillo, oculis nigris, cruribus squalidis, sanguine exiguo solis impetu perficiuntur.*



who are much more sluggish and clumsy when it is cold.<sup>29</sup> As another piece of empirical validation, Vitruvius had already demonstrated the influence of climates on different peoples' vocal pitches by way of comparing them with pots filled with different amounts of water.<sup>30</sup> The framing is not only empirical, but also hierarchic, in a passage that incorporates none-too-subtle allusions to Augustan triumphalism, Vitruvius sets out to demonstrate that Italy possesses the best possible climate as well as the most beneficial astral influences, and hence is uniquely suited to triumph over both Southerners and Northerners and to become the master of the whole *oikoumene*.<sup>31</sup> A similarly glorifying ekphrasis of Italy, linked with an explicit celebration of its natural qualities making it the suitable centre of the world, can be found in Pliny's *Naturalis Historia*.<sup>32</sup>

In Tacitus' *De origine et situ Germanorum* (*Germania*), the shapeless and hostile expanse of beyond-the-borders Europe resists ekphrastic description.<sup>33</sup> Only a native people – Tacitus is arguing for the indigenoussness of *Germani* – could tolerate living in such a sad and unwelcoming land: detailed geographical descriptions of it, the reader understands, would not be of much use, as the people and the land become more or less interchangeable. In the rest of the text, Tacitus mostly focuses on the *Germani* themselves, although their *situs* is here and there carried along. What should be borne in mind from the Tacitean ethnographicising interpretation are the essentialising tendencies informing the Graeco-Roman gaze, as it surveyed the world of peoples beyond the *limites*. Nature and humanity are particularly closely connected in the Tacitean vision of *Germania* – indeed the two get tangled and confused with each other as he moves towards the outer limits of both firm knowledge and the geographical space.<sup>34</sup> From knowledge about the lay of the land, its people can be physiognomised, and from that people's looks, their character. Where knowledge of the land fails, peoples become *fabulosae* – as in the further reaches of Tacitus' *Germania*, beyond the *Fenni* who have reached as perfect a union with their surroundings as humanly possible; here, the human and animal features of the inhabitants begin to intermingle with Tacitus' final brief mention of the *Hellusii* and *Oxiones*, who have human faces but the bodies of beasts.<sup>35</sup>

29 Vit. Arch. 6.1.9–10: *Item propter tenuitatem caeli meridiana nationes ex acuta fervore mente expeditius celeriusque moventur ad consiliorum cogitationes. septentrionales autem gentes infusae crassitudine caeli, propter obstantiam aeris umore refrigeratae stupentes habent mentes. hoc autem ita esse a serpentibus licet aspicere, quae per calorem cum exhaustam habent umoris refrigerationem, tunc acerrime moventur, per brumalia autem et hiberna tempora ab mutatione caeli refrigeratae, inmotae sunt stupore.*

30 Vit. Arch. 6.1.5–8. On Vitruvius' passage generally, see Isaac 2004, 83–85.

31 Vit. Arch. 6.1.11.

32 Plin. NH 3.39. Cf. Weisweiler 2016, 201f.

33 Tac. Germ. 2: *Quis porro, praeter periculum horridi et ignoti maris, Asia aut Africa aut Italia relicta, Germaniam peteret, informem terris, asperam coelo, tristem cultu aspectuque, nisi si patria sit?*

34 On geographical description and knowledge ordering in Tacitus, see O'Gorman 1993, 142f.; Hirstein 1995, 168–170; Woolf 2011, 42, 91, 99–105.

35 Tac. Germ. 46: *Fennis mira feritas, foeda paupertas: non arma, non equi, non penates; victui herba, vestitui pelles, cubile humus: solae in sagittis spes, quas inopia ferri ossibus asperant. Idemque venatus*

## Ekphrasis and ethnography in second-century technical genres

Ruth Webb points out that ‘[e]kphrasis, in some cases, [...] does not only make ‘visible’ the appearance of a subject, but makes something about its nature intelligible’.<sup>36</sup> This aspect of the technique is, by and large, behind the manifold uses of ekphrasis in ethnographicising writing; above, we saw several Early Imperial examples of this. Such passages did not, however, necessarily elaborate on the basic logic behind the essentialisingly portrayed qualities of population groups. It is not an unlikely assumption that the theoretical basis legitimating most of the beliefs about ethnic ‘outgroups’ in physiognomical arguments was by the High Imperial era widely shared among the educated social strata. Even so, it will be useful to review some second-century cases in which the knowledge-ordering preoccupations of technical literature seem to underpin the essentialising way of describing the ἔθνη.<sup>37</sup> In addition to Tacitus, the ekphrasis of a land becoming assimilated to the description of its people is amply demonstrated in the *Apotelesmatika* (or *Tetrabiblos*) of Claudius Ptolemy. In the theoretical part of Book 2, Ptolemy operates with the tradition-bound macrogroups of Scythians and Aethiopians,<sup>38</sup> and offers evidence from both the human and the animal world for a conventional example of environmental determinism:

The natures [of dwellers under the summer tropics] are hot and their character tends generally to be savage since their homes are continually oppressed by the heat. These people we collectively call Aethiopians. And not only do the people exhibit such a condition, but even the other animals and the plants of the region show evidence of parchedness. Those who dwell in the more northerly parallels – that is those who have the Bears directly overhead – are far from the centre of the zodiac and the sun’s heat. Consequently, they are chilled. They live in a moisture-rich region, which is especially nourishing and not desiccated by the heat of the sun. Because of this, the people are white-skinned, straight-haired, and have large and well-nourished physiques. Their natures are cold. They, too, are savage, as a general characteristic, because their homes are constantly cold. It thus follows that the wintry climate affects the size of their plants and the size of their animals the same way it affects the people. We denominate these peoples with the general name Scythians.<sup>39</sup>

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*viros pariter ac feminas alit; passim enim comitantur partemque praedae petunt. Nec aliud infantibus ferarum imbriumque suffugium quam ut in aliquo ramorum nexu contegantur: huc redeunt iuvenes, hoc senum receptaculum. Sed beatius arbitrantur quam ingemere agris, inlaborare domibus, suas alienasque fortunas spe metuque versare: securi adversus homines, securi adversus deos rem difficillimam adsecuti sunt, ut illis ne voto quidem opus esset. Cetera iam fabulosa: Hellusios et Oxionas ora hominum voltusque, corpora atque artus ferarum gerere: quod ego ut incompetum in medio relinquam.*

**36** Webb 2009, 54.

**37** On ordering knowledge, see König & Whitmarsh 2007.

**38** Which had been current at least since Ephorus: Eph. *FGrH* 70 F 30a *ap. Str.* 1.2.28.

**39** Ptol. *Tetr.* 2.2.4: καὶ φύσεις θερμοὶ καὶ τοῖς ἤθεσιν ὡς ἐπίπαν ἄγριοι τυγχάνουσι διὰ τὴν ὑπὸ τοῦ καύματος συνέχειαν τῶν οἰκήσεων· οὓς δὴ καλοῦμεν κοινῶς Αἰθιοπας. καὶ οὐ μόνον αὐτοὺς οὕτως ὀρώμεν ἔχοντας, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ περιέχον αὐτοὺς τοῦ ἀέρος κατάστημα καὶ τὰ ἄλλα ζῶα καὶ τὰ φυτὰ

Galen, who seems to have had a broadly positive view of astrology – at least when used in medicine<sup>40</sup> – echoes this broad diffusion of physiognomically inflected climatic explanations through the whole expanse of technical writing.

All of those who live below the Bears have a body and soul that are opposite in character of those who live near the torrid zone, while those who live in a well-tempered region are intermediate, and better than those other peoples in their body, the character of their soul, their intelligence and good sense.<sup>41</sup>

Both passages are entirely traditional in their contents,<sup>42</sup> but both Ptolemy and Galen demonstrate the extent to which Imperial-era technical writing had adopted the broadly humoral-based understanding of the environment's influence both on human corporeal and psychological characteristics.<sup>43</sup> In Ptolemy's case, a much broader essentialism between natural conditions and cultural traits is propounded. Notwithstanding the lack of details in the technical writers' causation and the total absence of it in, say, Tacitus' historiographical writing, both registers share the same epistemic schema for understanding the relationship between the land, the people, and their character, and how one can be read from the other.

The land, ekphrastically set before the eyes of the audience's mind, could be physiognomised in order to draw inferences about its inhabitants – or in other words, to rhetorically substantiate the commonly held stereotypes about them. The physical characteristics of either human or animal denizens of the area, or both in conjunction, would then be deployed to draw further – and this time properly physiognomical – inferences about their mental and moral qualities. These, however, were

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παρ' αὐτοῖς ἐμφανίζοντα τὴν διαπύρωσιν. οἱ δὲ ὑπὸ τοὺς βορειοτέρους παραλλήλους, λέγω δὲ τοὺς ὑπὸ τὰς ἄρκτους τὸν κατὰ κορυφὴν ἔχοντες τόπον, πολὺ τοῦ ζωδιακοῦ καὶ τῆς τοῦ ἡλίου θερμότητος ἀφεστῶτες κατεψυγμένοι μὲν εἰσι διὰ τοῦτο, δαψιλεστέρας δὲ μεταλαμβάνοντες τῆς ὑγρᾶς οὐσίας θρεπτικωτάτης οὐσης καὶ ὑπὸ μηδενὸς ἀναπινομένης θερμοῦ λευκοὶ τε τὰ χρώματά εἰσι καὶ τετανοὶ τὰς τρίχας τὰ τε σώματα μεγάλοι καὶ εὐτραφεῖς τοῖς μεγέθεσι καὶ ὑπόψυχοι τὰς φύσεις, ἄγριοι δὲ καὶ αὐτοὶ τοῖς ἦθεσι διὰ τὴν ὑπὸ τοῦ κρύους συνέχειαν τῶν οἰκήσεων· ἀκολουθεῖ δὲ τούτοις καὶ ὁ τοῦ περιέχοντος αὐτοὺς ἀέρος χειμῶν καὶ τῶν φυτῶν τὰ μεγέθη καὶ τὸ δυσήμερον τῶν ζώων. καλοῦμεν δὲ τούτους ὡς ἐπίπαν Σκύθας. (Transl. F. E. Robbins, with alterations).

<sup>40</sup> See Toomer 1985; Barton 1994, 52. On Galen's view of the Hippocratic climatology, see Strohmaier 2004.

<sup>41</sup> Gal. *Quod an. mor. corp. temp. seq.* 805 (Kühn): τίς γὰρ οὐχ ὄρα τὸ σῶμα καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν ἀπάντων τῶν ὑπὸ τοῖς ἄρκτοις <ἀνθρώπων> ἐναντιώτατα διακείμενα τοῖς ἐγγύς τῆς διακεκαυμένης ζώνης; ἢ τίς οὐκ οἶδε τοὺς ἐν τῷ μέσῳ τούτων, ὅσοι τὴν εὐκρατον οἰκοῦσι χώραν, ἀμείνους τὰ τε σώματα καὶ τὰ τῆς ψυχῆς ἦθη καὶ σύνεσιν καὶ φρόνησιν ἐκείνων τῶν ἀνθρώπων.

<sup>42</sup> Especially the classical topos contrasting pale northerners and parched southerners: Sassi 2001, 20–26.

<sup>43</sup> On environmental determinism in Galen and Ptolemy, see e.g. Isaac 2004, 85–87, 99–101. On physiognomics in Galen, cf. Evans 1945; Barton 1994, 98; on Galen's relationship with the Second Sophistic, see von Staden 1997; Flemming 2007. On Ptolemy, see Barton 1994, 120f.; Sassi 2001, 164–169, 179–181; Isaac 2011, 497f. On physiognomy and the environmental theory, see Goldman 2016.

already common knowledge; indeed, building on this sometimes unuttered basis, the physiognomical reading proper would take the commonly held stereotypes about a people’s cultural or mental characteristics, and apply them as an enthymeme to the bodily signs of any person.<sup>44</sup> Ptolemy’s take is the following:

And now in each region of these general areas certain special conditions of character and customs naturally ensue. For as likewise, in the case of the climate, even within the regions that in general are reckoned as hot, cold, or temperate, certain localities and countries have special peculiarities of excess or deficiency due to their situation, height, lowness, or adjacency; and again, as some peoples are more inclined to horsemanship because theirs is a plain country, or to seamanship because they live close to the sea, so also would one discover special traits in each arising from the natural familiarity of their particular climes with the stars in the signs of the zodiac. These traits, too, would be found generally present, but not in every individual.<sup>45</sup>

Ptolemy’s view of this astrological – or perhaps better ‘zodiological’ – determinism weds together several of the most respected ancient theoretical bases for explaining human cultural and phenotypic diversity.<sup>46</sup> Climates, zodiacal signs, physical differences and cultural particularities all are linked together, though often only with very hazily defined interrelations. The practical mechanics of causation (crucially, the one between astrology and climate) are left vague apart from the predictable foregrounding of astral influences.<sup>47</sup> Most of these models were met in a wide range of registers, and each could also serve as the sole explanation for differences between human groups.

Within such interwoven constructs, it was often the role of ethnographically pitched *ekphraseis* about physiognomies to bind together clichés about human phenotypes with similarly stereotyped behaviour models and psychological claims. The predictive qualities were only reinforced by the climatological basis. Ptolemy’s

<sup>44</sup> On enthymemic argumentation (‘this man is similar to an Egyptian, hence...’, as in e.g. Anon. Lat. *De phys.* 14) in physiognomy, see Barton 1994, 105. She notes, for instance, that already Aristotle regarded the compressed – or syllogistically incomplete – form taken by an enthymeme as ‘advisable to rhetoricians, as it was more assimilable for unlearned audiences’. Now see also Goldman 2016, 66f.

<sup>45</sup> Ptol. *Tetr.* 2.3.1: “Ἦδη δὲ τινες καὶ ἐν ἐκάστοις τούτων τῶν ὅλων μερῶν <μορίοις> ἰδιότροποι περιστάσεις ἤθῶν καὶ νομίμων φυσικῶς ἐξηκολούθησαν. ὥσπερ γὰρ ἐπὶ τῶν τοῦ περιέχοντος καταστημάτων καὶ ἐν τοῖς ὡς ἐπίπαν κατελεγμένοις θερμοῖς ἢ ψυχροῖς ἢ εὐκράτοις καὶ κατὰ μέρος ἰδιάζουσι τόποι καὶ χώραι τινες ἐν τῷ μᾶλλον ἢ ἥττον ἦτοι διὰ θέσεως τάξιν ἢ διὰ ὕψους ἢ ταπεινότητα ἢ διὰ παράθεσιν, ἔτι δὲ ὡς ἵππικοί τινες μᾶλλον διὰ τὸ τῆς χώρας πεδινὸν καὶ ναυτικοὶ διὰ τὴν τῆς θαλάσσης ἐγγύτητα καὶ ἡμεροὶ διὰ τὴν τῆς χώρας εὐθηνίαν, οὕτως καὶ ἐκ τῆς πρὸς τοὺς ἀστέρας καὶ τὰ δωδεκατημόρια φυσικῆς τῶν κατὰ μέρος κλιμάτων συνοικειώσεως ἰδιοτρόπους ἂν τις εὖροι φύσεις παρ’ ἐκάστοις, καὶ αὐτὰς δὲ ὡς ἐπίπαν, οὐχ ὡς καὶ καθ’ ἓνα ἕκαστον πάντως ἐνυπαρχούσας. (Transl. F. E. Robins, with alterations).

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Popović 2007, 89 on ‘zodiology’.

<sup>47</sup> Vagueness had been used to gloss over the exact nature of how bodies and souls interact in physiognomical treatises, too, as Popović 2007, 93 observes in the context of Pseudo-Aristotelian *Physiognomica*. See also Patzig 2009.

arrangement, whereby not only the old climatic zonal model is retained but also the opposing astral triangles of the heavenly dome could reinforce or modulate aspects of each other's influence on the human nature, enabled him to operate quite deftly among the cultural hierarchies of the peoples of the Empire. The nuances thus introduced into his provincial characterisations were expedient both in terms of authorial self-fashioning and contemporary political and cultural realities.<sup>48</sup>

In its hermeneutical basics, physiognomy is inference from signs (ἐνθύμημα ἐκ σημείων).<sup>49</sup> Together with many other 'ethopoeic' practices of reading the quality of a person's soul from theorised indications, various degrees of physiognomy – both as a commonplace and a more heavily theorised framework – saw much use as a literary device over the Imperial Period.<sup>50</sup> As in Aulus Gellius' and Iamblichus' anecdotes about Pythagoras physiognomising his potential students, the gaze of the physiognomist in a rhetorical context was often diagnostic in nature.<sup>51</sup> Through *coniectatio* – as Gellius calls it – the predictive signs of an individual could be presented as opening up their capabilities to the scrutiny of the observer equipped with the art of physiognomical reading. Pythagoras is also associated with physiognomists in Artemidorus of Daldis' attack against the 'unsubstantial' *tekhnai* of his competitors, who include many kinds of popular divinatory specialists.<sup>52</sup> It is no wonder that other purveyors of alternative methods of inference would have attacked or disparaged each other. We know that criticism of physiognomical prognostics had been a typical feature of treatises on the fate, such as in Cicero's *De fato*.<sup>53</sup> Incidentally, while Artemidorus did provide ample examples of both physiognomicised argumentation and ethnographicising elements in his dream-interpretation manual, he included only a few cases where the broadly 'ethnographic' *episteme* and the physiognomical associations of his audience both come into play.<sup>54</sup> In 1.22 he refers to an ethnic exception when dreaming about having a shaved head: it is a grievous sign to everyone else except Egyptian priests, jesters, and any others whose cultural practice it is to be shaved.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Barton 1994, 121. For politically motivated manipulation of the climatic template, see below (on *Tetr.* 2.3.16).

<sup>49</sup> The syllogistic foundation of physiognomy as inductive inference: Ar. *Eth. Nic.* 1104a13–14; An. *pr.* 70a. Armstrong 1958, 53ff.; Barton 1994, 104–116; Gleason 1995, xviii, 47 ('only serves to highlight the incoherence of [Polemo's] reasoning'); Popović 2001, 95–98; Sassi 2001, xvi–xvii, 63–76; Moatti 2005, 8, 17.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. Plut. *Alex.* 1.3 on showing 'signs of the soul in men', a similarly ethopoeic aim for inference.

<sup>51</sup> Gell. *NA* 1.9; Iambl. *VP* 17 (cf. Porph. *VP* 13, 54). Also Apul. *Plat.* 1.1; see Keulen 2006, 170.

<sup>52</sup> Artem. Dald. *Oneir.* 2.69. See Pack 1941.

<sup>53</sup> Cic. *De fato* 10–11 F 6 Rossetti.

<sup>54</sup> On Artemidorus' ethnic and cultural stances, Harris-McCoy 2012, 25–30. On *episteme*, Foucault 1980, 197.

<sup>55</sup> The special place of Egypt may correspond to the setting-apart of Egyptian animals as a distinct section in Artemidorus' discussion of animal dreams: Harris-McCoy 2012, 510–511.

## Polemo and the ethnic polemics of physiognomy

We have seen how by the second century CE the ekphrastic description of lands both inside and outside the empire had come into an essentialistically cast connection with ethnographicised arguments about cultural and physical differences of population groups. Both of these strains of argument were amenable to be given physiognomical support and validation. Value statements were inherent to this rhetorical mode, and as we turn to examine the uses of physiognomy among the sophists of the second century, praise and blame remain central components for how the stereotyped provincial characteristics are used.

At least from Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* onwards, physiognomical arguments in conjunction with ekphrastic aims were a mainstay in the Greek art of oratory, but in order to find early linkages with ethnography or ethnicisingly cast elements, a closer look is required.<sup>56</sup> The Imperial-era physiognomical handbooks – especially the Latin *Physiognomonica* purporting to summarise Polemo, Loxus, and Aristotle – for the most part uphold an earlier Pseudo-Aristotelian<sup>57</sup> trifold division of the primary physiognomical analogies.

Finally, the ancients established three methods in which they practiced physiognomy; for first they established the characteristics of peoples and provinces and compared individuals with regard to their similarity to them, so that they might say: ‘This man is similar to an Egyptian, and Egyptians are clever, teachable, fickle, rash, and prone to sex; this man is similar to a Celt, that is a German, and Celts are difficult to teach, brave, and wild; this man is similar to a Thracian, and Thracians are unjust, lazy, and drunken.’ [...] A third way was added so that they made pronouncements about the characters of men with regard to their similarity to animals. And this way seemed surer and easier, but the earlier ones were not omitted. Thus very many signs are referred to the similarity to animals.<sup>58</sup>

It is possible that the emphasis on the three hermeneutical methods of physiognomy exhibited in the Latin *Physiognomonica* reflects Pseudo-Aristotelian influence

<sup>56</sup> Ar. *Rhet.* 1411b–1412a; *An. pr.* 70b. Another famous example or early physiognomists using their arguments for polemical purposes is referred to by Cic. *De fato* 10–11 fr. 6 (Rossetti), though its source remains unclear and the whole episode may be apocryphal. On Dio Chrysostom’s use of physiognomy for invective, and his possible influence on his pupil Polemo, see Swain 2007, 189f.

<sup>57</sup> Ps.-Ar. *Phys.* 1 (805a). Dated to the late fourth or early third century BCE by Vogt 1999, 197. Physiognomic inferences are also offered in other parts of the *Corpus Aristotelicum*, e.g. *Ar. An. pr.* 70b; *Gen. Anim.* 769b has a reference to animal analogies being already used by physiognomists.

<sup>58</sup> Anon. Lat. *De phys* 9 (Repath 2007): *denique tria genera veteres instituerunt quibus physiognomoniam exercuerunt. nam primo gentium vel provinciarum propositis moribus ad similitudinem singulos quosque homines referebant, ut dicerent: “hic Aegyptio est similis, Aegyptii autem sunt callidi, dociles, leves, temerarii, in venerem proni; hic Celto, id est Germano, est similis, Celti autem sunt indociles, fortes, feri; hic Thraci est similis, Thraces autem sunt iniqui, pigri, temulentii. [...] tertium accessit ut ad similitudinem animalium de animis hominum pronuntiaretur. et certior ac facilius haec via est nec tamen omnes sunt priores. denique signa plurima ad similitudinem animalium referuntur.”* (Translation I. Repath).

rather than Polemo's text, but it is nonetheless remarkable that the earlier Pseudo-Aristotelian use of the past participle (προγεγενημένοι) has been expanded into a developmental sequence with explicitly indicated chronology, and the position of the 'ethnic' analogies within the sequence has been modified. Pseudo-Aristotle's list seems devoid of chronological implications: it simply points out how each of the three methods has had their own proponents (ἕκαστος καθ' ἓνα ... ἄλλοι δέ τινες... etc.) – the order being: a) animal analogies, b) 'ethnic' analogies (with Egyptians, Thracians and Scythians given as exemplars<sup>59</sup>), and c) analogies based on affective/emotive manifestations on the face. In the view of the Anonymus Latinus (or Polemo) regarding the three kinds of physiognomical arguments, by contrast, the 'ethnic' analogies are presented as the chronologically earliest type of physiognomical inference.

The later author's ethnic examples are entirely conventional – Egyptians, Celts, and Thracians – with Celts substituted for the earlier list's Scythians, and thus possibly representing the Polemonian stage. The glossing of Celt as 'German' (*hic Celto, id est Germano, est similis*) is plausibly an addition by the anonymous Latin translator of the piece: an explanation for the relatively little-known *Celtus*, modelled after the Greek form of the ethnonym, was probably needed due to the Latin author's avoidance of the traditionally corresponding ethnonym *Gallus*. This was done in order to pre-empt confusion with *gallus*, a cockerel, which would come across as an animal analogy. The animal analogies themselves, in Polemo's view, were the most recent addition to the range of physiognomical tools, but one that had become the most popular due to its 'surety and safety'.<sup>60</sup> The facial analogies are the second item listed by the Anonymus Latinus and are expressly said to have been introduced in temporal succession to the original 'ethnic' analogies.

The three primary analogies delineated for physiognomic arguments in both Pseudo-Aristotle's and Polemo's handbooks already existed as individually established categories in Late Classical and Hellenistic philosophy and rhetorical learning.<sup>61</sup> The proverbial aspect of such analogies, in particular, is worthy of note; as a

<sup>59</sup> The trio is also encountered as an ethnicised set of exemplars in *Gen. an.* 782b, in an early example of climates, individual humoral constitutions, and ethnic physical characteristics being linked together. Cf. Hippoc. *Aer.* with Egyptians/Libyans mentioned (13) and their description possibly lost to a *lacuna*, and Scythians given a very extensive ekphrasis (17–22). Thracians are missing, but the general description of 'inhabitants of Europe' (*Aer.* 23–24) contains many of the same themes that became associated with them; some of the negative characteristics later found among the overly-moist westerners are in *Airs, Waters, Places* given to the Phasians (15).

<sup>60</sup> In reality, morally cast animal analogies were very basic tools for Greek narrative techniques – and consequently rhetoric – as a stepping-stone between fables and the rhetoric of praise and blame: Webb 2009, 42.

<sup>61</sup> Again, *Ar. An. pr.* 70b is relevant ('courage of the lions' as an example of a group quality for which there needs to be a consistent physical sign; Aristotle chooses large extremities as that sign). See Popović 2007, 95–98.

further ‘argument from the tradition’ their usages could be anchored in the revered Homeric epics and classical literature.<sup>62</sup> Greek *ekphrasis* of persons had also contained value assessments from the very outset, and Hippocratic climato-physiognomical pronouncements (whether about ethnically undefined individuals more generally or about non-Greek outgroups in particular) exhibit a clear evaluative aspect.<sup>63</sup>

If we only chose to follow Aelius Theon’s opinion on the matter, this morally evaluative tendency could be argued to set such descriptions outside the orbit of *ekphrasis* proper: he claimed that one difference between *topos* and *ekphrasis* is that while the former allows the speaker to add his own judgement on the qualities of the described object, an *ekphrasis* should only be concerned with the ‘plain description’ of whatever is being described.<sup>64</sup> Theon’s views on this matter (as on many others, too), however, should not be taken to represent the majority opinion of the sophists, since his work shows a desire to innovate and reorder the field in ways that make him sometimes an outlier.<sup>65</sup> Besides, there are innumerable examples of *ekphrastic* descriptions found in many registers that are, in fact, evaluative in tone or contain vocabulary that evokes moralising or emotional responses from the audience.<sup>66</sup> The principles of *ekphrasis* implied a connection between the referent and the qualities of the language used to describe them: thus, in order to describe a population group as having certain characteristics, the speaker would often have opted for a set of words and concepts that reinforced the mimetic effect.<sup>67</sup> In practical terms, this would also have recommended the use of references to earlier literature, from which such linguistic cues were easily found.

If rhetorical ‘knowledge’ about the ethnicised provincials was simultaneously both somatic in character and allusive in its literary execution, there is perhaps no better example of this than Polemo’s physiognomic attack on Favorinus. The rivalry between the two has been extensively studied.<sup>68</sup> As Maud Gleason notes, Polemo’s objections seem to centre around an association between rhetorical power being the sole domain of the elite male, and the danger posed to this hegemony by allowing

<sup>62</sup> On physiognomies in epic, see Evans 1969, 58–67.

<sup>63</sup> Hippoc. *Epid.* 2.5.1; *Aër.* 24. See Sassi 2001, 149–160.

<sup>64</sup> Ael. Theon 118 (Spengel): ὅτι ἐν μὲν τῷ τόπῳ τὰ πράγματα ἀπαγγέλλοντες προστίθεμεν καὶ τὴν ἡμετέραν γνώμην ἢ χρηστὰ ἢ φαῦλα λέγοντες εἶναι, ἐν δὲ τῇ ἐκφράσει ψιλῆ τῶν πραγμάτων ἐστὶν ἡ ἀπαγγελία. Cf. Ael. Theon 106 (S).

<sup>65</sup> Kennedy 2003, 1; Heath 2003, 142: ‘Theon’s work cannot be viewed as a straightforward reflection of any given stage in the development of the tradition, since he proposes innovations’; Webb 2009, 43–44.

<sup>66</sup> Cf. Morales 2011 regarding the (perhaps exceptionally charged) *ekphraseis* of Phryne as well as other cases.

<sup>67</sup> Webb 2009, 57, 85.

<sup>68</sup> E.g. Gleason 1995, 3–81; Holford-Strevens 2003, 98–102. On Favorinus, see also Swain 1989; Beall 2001; Keulen 2009, 100–104.



a ‘less-than-fully-male’ individual to wield this power.<sup>69</sup> Favorinus’ identity as the target of Polemo’s polemics becomes clear when two surviving testimonies to his *Physiognomica* are read in conjunction. Though the passage in the Arabic ‘Leiden Polemo’ is lengthy, Robert Hoyland’s translation of it is worth citing in its entirety:

If the eye is open, and it has brilliance like that of marble and sharp sight, this indicates a lack of modesty. This nature is in the eyes of men who are not like the other men, like the eunuch who is not a eunuch but who was born without testicles. I do not know if I have seen any of this description except for one man. He was from a land called Celtas. He was greedy, immoral and beyond all description. His eyes were those of the most evil of people, and his eyes were of this description. I shall describe his body to you. He had puffed-up eyes, his cheeks were slack, his mouth was broad, his neck was long and thin, his ankles were thick, with much flesh on the legs. His neck was similar to the neck of a woman, and likewise all the rest of his limbs, and all his extremities were moist, and he would not walk erect, and his limbs and members were flaccid. He would take great care of himself and his abundant hair, and he would apply medicaments to his body afterwards. He would give in to every cause that incited a passion for desire and sexual intercourse. He had a voice resembling the voice of women and slim lips. I never before saw looks like his in the general populace or such eyes. Despite his form he would poke fun at everything and he would do whatever came into his mind. He had learned the Greek language and its discourse by virtue of speaking a great deal, and he was called a sophist. He was an itinerant visitor in the towns and markets, gathering the people so that he could display his wickedness, and he sought out immorality. He was also a deceitful magician, and would swindle, telling people that he could give life and bring death, and thereby he would dupe a group of people until the crowds of women and men around him increased. He would tell the men that he had the power to compel women to come to them, and likewise the men to the women. He would corroborate that by his words about the occult. He was a leader in evil and a teacher of it. He would collect kinds of fatal poisons, and the whole sum of his intellect was engaged in one of these matters.<sup>70</sup>

From the Latin *De physiognomonia*, it becomes clear that Polemo may not have mentioned Favorinus by name in his damning analysis, but the connection was understood at least by the commentators.

Eyes which are wide open and flashing and gently straining as if dressed up for delight and charm, if the other signs agree [*lacuna*: one can insert e.g. ‘signify impudent and audacious men’ on the basis of Adamant. A20]. The eyes of a certain Celt were reported to have been like this by our authority Polemon, who described this man as a eunuch of his own time. He did not write down his name, but it is understood that he was talking about Favorinus. He assigned the other signs of a body of this type to this man: a tense brow, soft cheeks, a loose mouth, a thin neck, thick legs, thick feet as if congested with flesh, a feminine voice, womanly words, limbs, and all his joints without strength, loose and badly connected. He says that this man suffered everything which is disgraceful by his inability to bear his desires, and that he had practiced what he had put up with; moreover, that he was abusive, rash, but also devoted to wrongdoing; for he was even said secretly to hawk deadly poison.<sup>71</sup>

<sup>69</sup> Gleason 1995, 161.

<sup>70</sup> Pol. Leid. A20 (Hoyland 2007b, 376–379; translation R. Hoyland).

<sup>71</sup> Anon. Lat. *De phys.* 40: *Oculi late patentes micantes leniter intendentes tamquam concinnati ad suavitatem et gratiam <...> congruunt <...> [tales fuisse oculi Celti cuiusdam Foerster] a Polemone quidem auctore*

Polemo crafted his physiognomical character assassination out of contemporary intellectual components and tradition-bound commonplaces, which furnished him not only with ethnographicising signs but several eminently advantageous opportunities for literary allusions.<sup>72</sup> Some of the tradition-bound elements are already visible in the above-discussed division of physiognomical analogies, where the ‘ethnic’ examples given stem from a wholly classical trio, but with ‘Celts’ being substituted for Scythians. The substitution itself is probably due to a combination of Polemo’s personal hostility towards the Gallic Favorinus, the general stereotyping of ‘Celtic’ individuals in second-century sophistic circles,<sup>73</sup> and Polemo’s confidence that many of the readers of his treatise would have known the traditional trio of Herodotean ἔθνη, and interpreted the ‘Celt’ partly through the established imagery of Herodotean Scythians.

Indeed, to explain some of the common elements in Polemo’s characterisation of Favorinus and the ancient image of Scythians, it is useful to look not only to the contemporary imagery of Celts and the obvious and well-diffused Herodotean paradigm, but also to the *Hippocratic Corpus*. An often-commented characteristic of the Hippocratic Scythians, their sexual and gender-related strangeness, takes many forms including the general barrenness of both sexes, who also resemble each other, and impotence of both medical and cultural origin among the men.<sup>74</sup> In an extensive *ekphrasis* mixing climatic, cultural, physiognomical and divine explanations, *Airs, Waters, Places* describes the Scythians matching their country’s climate (very cold all year round, with little seasonal variation), by being all similar to each other (like Egyptians but unlike Asiatics). The noble Scythian men, trying to cure themselves from the lameness caused by too much horseback riding, tend to cut a vein behind their ears, and the resulting bloodletting, according to the medical writer, has a destructive effect on their sexual capabilities, causing the cultural practice of the transgender *Anarieis* and widespread impotence among high-born Scythians.<sup>75</sup> Yet from the earlier

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*referuntur, qui eunuchum sui temporis fuisse hunc hominem descripsit. Nomen quidem non posuit, intelligitur autem de Favorino eum dicere. Huic cetera corporis indicia huiusmodi assignat: tensam frontem, genas molles, os laxum, cervicem tenuem, crassa crura, pedes plenos tamquam congestis pulpis, vocem femineam, verba muliebria, membra et articulos omnes sine vigore, laxos et dissolutos. Hunc dicit impatientia libidinum quae turpia sunt omnia passum esse et egisse quae passus est, praeterea maledicum, temerarium, sed et maleficis studentem; nam et letiferum venenum dicebatur clanculo venditare.* (Translation I. Repath).

72 Cf. Barton 1994, 97: “with physiognomics he constructed their bodies so as to destroy their characters”, and “[p]hysiognomists also drew on some of the learning common to geographical, astrological, and medical writing, in particular the ideas about the influence of the stars and the climate on physical and character types of different races”.

73 See Lucian below, as well as Lucian *Alex.* 27: ὁ ἡλίθιος ἐκεῖνος Κελτός.

74 Hippoc. *Aer.* 17–22 for the whole Scythian excursus. *Aer.* 19 on the general lack of fertility both among Scythians and Scythian animals, and on the lack of differentiation between genders; 20 for the flabby and fleshy physiques of both sexes; 21 for the reasons of male and female infertility.

75 Hippoc. *Aer.* 22. See Chiasson 2001; also Strohmaier 2004 on Galen’s view of Hippocrates’ causation.

passages it is quite clear that the fleshy bodies and lack of sexual vigour seem to have a more climatic-physiological explanation, too.

It is safe to conclude that behind the description of the Celt's flaccid body – particularly his abundant hair, large limbs, soft flesh and strange gait – stands likewise a long-tradition of descriptions of over-moist and hence flabby northerners, stretching all the way to the Scythians of the Hippocratic *Airs, Waters, Places*.<sup>76</sup> The fierceness or upsetting quality of 'Celtic' eyes, serving as the starting signifier of Polemo's reading of the 'Celt', was already a well-established talking-point by the High Empire.<sup>77</sup> The mental characteristics inferred from this, such as 'lack of modesty', impiety, or impudence, are fairly commonly found either in exactly these formulations or in forms that correspond closely enough for us to be able to surmise that they are part of the same iconosphere. 'Celtic' sexual deviance, too, had become a minor commonplace by this time, and it was fairly easy to link with the feminine astral attributes of the West.<sup>78</sup> Ptolemy demonstrates such linkages from the astro-climatological angle.

However, because of the occidental aspect of Jupiter and Mars, and also due to the first parts of the aforesaid triangle being masculine and the latter parts feminine, [these peoples] are without passion for women and look down upon the pleasures of love, but are better satisfied with and more eager to be with men. And they do not regard the act as a disgrace to the passive partner, nor do they actually become effeminate and soft thereby, because their disposition is not changed into a passive one, but they retain in their souls manliness, helpfulness, good faith, love of kinsmen, and benevolence. Of these same countries Britain, Transalpine Gaul, Germany, and Bastarnia are in closer familiarity with Aries and Mars. Therefore for the most part their inhabitants are fiercer, more headstrong, and bestial. But Italy, Apulia, Sicily, and Cisalpine Gaul have their familiarity with Leo and the sun; wherefore these peoples are more masterful, benevolent, and co-operative. Tyrrhenia, Celtica, and Spain are subject to Sagittarius and Jupiter, whence their independence, simplicity, and love of cleanliness.<sup>79</sup>

<sup>76</sup> Hipp. *Aer.* 17–22 (see above), but also cf. Galen's criticism of parts of Hippocrates' ekphrasis: Strohmaier 2004, 7. Cf. Ptol. *Tetr.* 2.2.6: οἱ δὲ ὑπὸ τοὺς βορειοτέρους παραλλήλους, λέγω δὲ τοὺς ὑπὸ τὰς ἄρκτους τὸν κατὰ κορυφὴν ἔχοντες τόπον, πολὺ τοῦ ζωδιακοῦ καὶ τῆς τοῦ ἡλίου θερμότητος ἀφεστῶτες κατεψυγμένοι μὲν εἰσι διὰ τοῦτο, δαψιλεστέρας δὲ μεταλαμβάνοντες τῆς ὑγρᾶς οὐσίας θρεπτικωτάτης οὐσης καὶ ὑπὸ μηδενὸς ἀναπνομένης θερμοῦ λευκοὶ τε τὰ χρώματά εἰσι καὶ τετανοὶ τὰς τρίχας τὰ τε σώματα μεγάλοι καὶ εὐτραφεῖς τοῖς μεγέθεσι καὶ ὑπόψυχοι τὰς φύσεις, ἄγριοι δὲ καὶ αὐτοὶ τοῖς ἦθεσι διὰ τὴν ὑπὸ τοῦ κρῦους συνέχειαν τῶν οἰκίσεων· ἀκολουθεῖ δὲ τούτοις καὶ ὁ τοῦ περιέχοντος αὐτοὺς ἀέρος χειμῶν καὶ τῶν φυτῶν τὰ μεγέθη καὶ τὸ δυσήμερον τῶν ζώων. καλοῦμεν δὲ τούτους ὡς ἐπίπαν Σκύθας.

<sup>77</sup> Northerners' eyes: Hor. *epod.* 16.1–3; Plut. *Mar.* 11.3; Tac. *Germ.* 4.3; Dio 62.2.3. Cf. Hdt. 4.108.1 on blue-eyed Budinoi in Scythia.

<sup>78</sup> Ptol. *Tetr.* 2.2.10: "Those to the west are more feminine, softer of soul, and secretive, because this region, again, is lunar, for it is always in the west that the moon emerges and makes its appearance after conjunction. For this reason it appears to be a nocturnal clime, feminine, and, in contrast with the orient, left-handed."

<sup>79</sup> Ptol. *Tetr.* 2.3.16: διὰ μέντοι τὸν ἐσπέριον συσχηματισμὸν Διὸς καὶ Ἄρεως καὶ ἔτι διὰ τὸ τοῦ προκειμένου τριγώνου τὰ μὲν ἐμπρόσθια ἠρρενώσθαι, τὰ δὲ ὀπίσθια τεθλιῦσθαι πρὸς μὲν τὰς γυναῖκας

It is interesting that Ptolemy seems to make a concession to Roman centrality and hegemony in his astro-climatological typology, just like Vitruvius did in his purely climatic one, but unlike Galen.<sup>80</sup>

From only a few decades later, we have the Syrian monotheist philosopher Bardesanes (or Bardaisan) of Edessa's response to the astrological determinism of his era. The Syriac version of the *Liber Legum Regionum*, a dialogue in which Bardaisan is the primary interlocutor but which probably was written by a disciple named Philip, represents the way in which the Edessene school of Bardaisanites sought to defend the freedom of will as opposed to total fatalism:

These were the Laws of the Orientals. In the North, however, in the territory of the Germans and their neighbours, the boys who are handsome serve the men as wives, and a wedding feast, too, is held then. This is not considered shameful or a matter of contumely by them, because of the law obtaining among them. Yet it is impossible that all those in Gaul who are guilty of this infamy should have Mercury in their nativity together with Venus in the house of Saturn, in the field of Mars and in the Western signs of the Zodiac. For regarding the men who are born under this constellation, it is written that they shall be shamefully used, as if they were women.<sup>81</sup>

Bardaisan points out that not only have different peoples made laws not solely dictated by Nature, but also that despite the variety of cultural practices all over the world, not all of the peoples holding to a given practice can be under the same zodiacal fate; nor is the adherence to culturally-coded behaviour without its exceptions. But even as Bardaisan wishes to disprove astrological determinism by showcasing the cultural differences and peculiarities of different groups and arguing that stars have nothing to do with them, he nonetheless operates with wholeheartedly essentialised examples of the ethnicised kind. The macroscopic and microscopic ethnographicising material is treated in unequal ways: Bardaisan in the text critiques the macroscopic

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ἀζήλοις αὐτοῖς εἶναι συνέπεσε καὶ καταφρονητικοῖς τῶν ἀφροδισίων, πρὸς δὲ τὴν τῶν ἀρρένων συνουσίαν κατακορεστέροις τε καὶ μᾶλλον ζηλοτύποις αὐτοῖς τε τοῖς διατιθεμένοις μήτε αἰσχρὸν ἡγεῖσθαι τὸ γινόμενον μήτε ὡς ἀληθῶς ἀνάνδροις διὰ τοῦτο καὶ μαλακοῖς ἀποβαίνειν ἔνεκεν τοῦ μὴ παθητικῶς διατίθεσθαι, συντηρεῖν δὲ τὰς ψυχὰς ἐπάνδρους καὶ κοινωνικὰς καὶ πιστὰς καὶ φιλοκίτους καὶ εὐεργετικὰς. καὶ τούτων δὲ αὐτῶν τῶν χωρῶν Βρεττανία μὲν καὶ Γαλατία καὶ Γερμανία καὶ Βασταρνία μᾶλλον τῷ Κριῶ συνοικεῖονται καὶ τῷ τοῦ Ἄρεως, ὅθεν ὡς ἐπίπαν οἱ ἐν αὐταῖς ἀγριώτεροι καὶ αὐθαδέστεροι καὶ θηριώδεις τυγχάνουσιν· Ἰταλία δὲ καὶ Ἀπουλία καὶ Σικελία καὶ Γαλλία τῷ Λέοντι καὶ τῷ ἡλίῳ, διόπερ ἡγεμονικοὶ μᾶλλον οὗτοι καὶ εὐεργετικοὶ καὶ κοινωνικοί· Τυρρηγία δὲ καὶ Κελτική καὶ Σπανία τῷ Τοξότῃ καὶ τῷ τοῦ Διός, ὅθεν τὸ φιλελεύθερον αὐτοῖς καὶ ἀπλοῦν καὶ φιλοκάθαρον. (Transl. F. E. Robbins, with alterations).

**80** Vitruv. *Arch.* 6.1.11; Gal. *Quod an. mor. corp. temp. seq.* 805.

**81** Bard. *LLR* 592 (Drijvers 1965, 49; transl. H. J. W. Drijvers), cf. Bard. *ap. Eus. PE* 6.10.27: παρὰ δὲ Γάλλοις οἱ νέοι γαμοῦνται μετὰ παρρησίας, οὐ ψόγον τοῦτο ἡγούμενοι διὰ τὸν παρ' αὐτοῖς νόμον. καὶ οὐ δυνατόν ἐστι πάντας τοὺς ἐν Γαλλίαις οὕτως ἀθῆως ὑβριζομένους λαχεῖν ἐν ταῖς γενέσεσι Φωσφόρον μεθ' Ἑρμοῦ ἐν οἴκοις Κρόνου καὶ ὀρίοις Ἄρεος δύνοντα; also cf. *LLR* 599 (Drijvers 1965, 53): 'their nativity does not compel ... the Gauls to cease from their sexual practices' (*Eus. PE* 6.10.35: καὶ οὐκ ἀναγκάζει ἡ γένεσις ... ἢ τοὺς Γάλλους μὴ γαμῆσθαι).

explanation for ethnic differences provided by astrology, but upholds the microscopic catalogue of ethnic practices and their contents for rhetorical purposes.<sup>82</sup> Passage 592 of the Syriac version (echoed closely in Eusebius' *Praeparatio Euangelica*), for instance, refers to the long-standing *topos* of Gallic homosexuality, which had been used as an ethnicised exemplar from Aristotle onwards, and was used also by Ptolemy.<sup>83</sup> One might even wonder whether physiognomical treatises, with their rhetoric of blame towards sexually deviant 'Celtic' individuals (such as Favorinus) could have either participated in an already-existing resurgence of the *topos*, or contributed to its vigour.

One of the crucial aspects of successful and emotive rhetorical persuasion through ekphrasis was ἐνάργεια, vividness. It was pursued by different techniques, but Quintilian suggests it can be obtained by including a wealth of details.<sup>84</sup> In ethnographically presented descriptions of human groups the corresponding effect often results from an emphasis on variety (ποικιλία, *varietas*), and the inclusion of examples of it. In his *Discourse 2* on divine images, Maximus of Tyre makes rhetorical use of this sort of list-ekphrasis emphasising the variety of ethnic customs.

The Celts revere Zeus, and the Celtic image of Zeus is a tall oak. The Paeonians revere the sun, and the Paeonian image of the Sun is a small disc at the top of a long pole. The Arabians revere a god, but which god I know not; their image, which I have seen, was a square stone. Among the Paphians it is Aphrodite who is honoured; their image is like nothing so much as a white pyramid, of an unknown material. Among the Lycians Mount Olympus gives out a fire which is not like the fire of Aetna, but calm and controlled, and it is this fire that serves them as their shrine and image. The Phrygians who live about Celaenae honour two rivers, the Marsyas and the Maeander. [...] What a mass and what a diversity of images!<sup>85</sup>

As elsewhere in the *Discourses*, Maximus operates in a Herodotean or Xenophontic world of peoples, but in two of his examples the 'ethnic custom' itself is unattested in the classical era: neither 'Celtic' tree-worship nor Arabic betyls are mentioned in Maximus' exemplary sources. Yet that is not the point of the list: the subject of the sophist's ekphrasis is the physiognomy of religion in all its variety among the peoples of the world.

<sup>82</sup> On 'microscopic' and 'macroscopic' in the ancient ethnographical disposition, see Berzon 2016, 10, 53, 115f.

<sup>83</sup> Ar. *Pol.* 1269b; Diod. 5.32.7; Str. 4.4.6; Ptol. *Tetr.* 2.3.13–14.

<sup>84</sup> Quint. *Inst.* 8.3.66: *ex pluribus*; cf. Demetr. *De elocut.* 209–210. See Webb 2009, 91f.

<sup>85</sup> Max. Tyr. *Dial.* 2.8: Κελτοὶ σέβουσιν μὲν Δία, ἄγαλμα δὲ Διὸς Κελτικὸν ὑψηλὴ δρυῖς. Παίονες σέβουσιν μὲν Ἥλιον, ἄγαλμα δὲ Ἥλιου Παιονικὸν δίσκος βραχὺς ὑπὲρ μακροῦ ξύλου. Ἀράβιοι σέβουσιν μὲν <θεόν>, ὄντινα δὲ οὐκ οἶδα· τὸ δὲ ἄγαλμα εἶδον, λίθος ἦν τετράγωνος. Παφίους ἢ μὲν Ἀφροδίτη τὰς τιμὰς ἔχει· τὸ δὲ ἄγαλμα οὐκ ἂν εἰκάσαις ἄλλω τῷ ἢ πυραμίδι λευκῇ, ἢ δὲ ὕλη ἀγνοεῖται. Λυκίους ὁ Ὀλυμπος πῦρ ἐκδιδοί, οὐχ ὅμοιον τῷ Αἰτναίῳ, ἀλλ' εἰρηνικὸν καὶ σύμμετρον, καὶ ἔστιν αὐτοῖς τὸ πῦρ τοῦτο καὶ ἱερὸν καὶ ἄγαλμα. Φρυγες οἱ περὶ Κελαινὰς νεμόμενοι τιμῶσιν ποταμοὺς δύο, Μαρσύαν καὶ Μαίανδρον· [...] Ὡ πολλῶν καὶ παντοδαπῶν ἀγαλμάτων· (Translation M. B. Trapp)

To return back to Polemo, it is interesting that none of his examples of very negative physiognomical interpretations comes from a decidedly ‘internal’ Greek area: even the ‘man from Corinth’ is from a harbour town resettled by Romans and perceived as a mixed city in its population.<sup>86</sup> As Maud Gleason has pointed out, it is this very tendency that makes him such a valuable source for social prejudices of his time.<sup>87</sup> Polemo’s almost obsessive patrolling of normative cultural and phenotypic Hellenicity in his physiognomical handbook is particularly intriguing when we bear in mind that he, like many other important figures of the Second Sophistic, came not from the Greek cultural heartland itself, but from its periphery – in his case, Laodicea-on-the-Lycus, where his family had furnished local dynasts and pro-Roman elites for generations.<sup>88</sup> In this, Pausanias – a periegetic writer with a heavy reliance on ekphrastic techniques – could be one point of comparison from the second century. Local details and traditions, in Pausanias’ take, are all approached from the point of view of the notional monoculture of the Greek elite.<sup>89</sup> Athenians, and the old ‘heartland Hellenes’ more broadly, are at the very centre of his *Description of Greece*, but Asia Minor follows as a close second in importance. Ethnographical passages in Pausanias include both clear outgroups of barbarians and Greek *poleis* and tribes.

From Adamantius’ *Physiognomy* we have the following description of ‘Hellenic’ or Ionian looks; its emphasis on the primacy of the ‘Hellenic race’ ‘verges on the nationalistic’, to borrow Simon Swain’s remark.<sup>90</sup>

Any who have guarded the Hellenic and Ionic race and kept it pure are sufficiently large men, rather broad, upright, strong, with a rather white colour, pale, having a moderate and rather firm mixture of flesh, straight legs, shapely extremities, a round head of medium size, a strong neck, rather pale and soft hair that curls gently, a square face, thin lips, a straight nose and moist, dark blue, fierce eyes with plenty of light in them; for the Hellenic race has the best eyes of all races.<sup>91</sup>

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**86** Cf. Swain 2007, 199 on Corinth being seen as a town ‘rendered into Greek’, as Favorinus himself characterised it – with a reference to himself, a person similarly Hellenised. See König 2001 on the identities relevant to the speech.

**87** Gleason 1995, 33.

**88** Swain 2007, 157.

**89** For Pausanias’ origins and identity, Jones 2004, 16ff.; Goldhill 2010, 50, 57. Cf. Whitmarsh 2010, 14; Woolf 2010, 194.

**90** Swain 2007, 198f.

**91** Adamant. *Phys.* B32: Εἰ δέ τισι τὸ Ἑλληνικὸν καὶ Ἰωνικὸν γένος ἐφυλάχθη καθαρῶς, οὗτοί εἰσιν αὐτάρκως μεγάλοι ἄνδρες, εὐρύτεροι, ὄρθιοι, εὐπαγεῖς, λευκότεροι τὴν χροάν, ξανθοί, σαρκὸς κρᾶσιν ἔχοντες μετρίαν εὐπαγεστέραν, σκέλη ὀρθά, ἄκρα εὐφυῆ, κεφαλὴν μέσην τὸ μέγεθος, περιαιγῆ, τράχηλον εὐρωστον, τρίχωμα ὑπόξανθον ἀπαλότερον οὐλον πράως, πρόσσωπον τετράγωνον, χεῖλη λεπτά, ῥίνα ὀρθήν, ὀφθαλμοὺς ὑγροὺς χαροποὺς γοργοὺς φῶς πολὺ ἔχοντας ἐν ἑαυτοῖς· εὐοφθαλμότατον γὰρ πάντων <τῶν> ἔθνῶν τὸ Ἑλληνικόν. (Translation I. Repath). Cf. Pol. Leid. B32 (Hoyland 2007b, 427).

Polemo may have ended up emphasising the irredeemably negative qualities evidenced by non-Hellenic physiognomies partly due to his famous rivalry with Favorinus, but he may not have been alone in his use of physiognomy in personal attacks. The many minor figures – students and sophists alike – who flocked to Athens and the rhetorical centres of Asia Minor would have brought with their presence abundant opportunities for ‘physiognomising’ their characteristics.<sup>92</sup> Such practices were also projected into the past by traditions about how Pythagoras had selected his pupils (see above): his fame for physiognomy vastly outshone that of Hippocrates, whom Galen – understandably as a medical writer – chose as an early proponent.<sup>93</sup> Polemo, on the other hand, seems to have been downright nativist in his choice of pupils, as Philostratus testifies; from the same source we also have the characterisation of Polemo as an irredeemably arrogant character.<sup>94</sup>

The ecumenical language of the Roman elite during the first two centuries of the empire was perpetually concerned with the themes of difference and hierarchy, as Myles Lavan has recently argued.<sup>95</sup> Through Polemo’s hierarchic variety of insufficiency, the Hellenic-male-leonine physiognomy reaffirmed itself as the ideal centre, with its roots firmly in the Aristotelian analytics and even animal fables.<sup>96</sup> Animal-interpretations, in turn, are one of the elements which are both found in divination and physiognomy,<sup>97</sup> and which formed part and parcel of the ethnographic register. The perfection is unitary, but the multitude of ways in which an individual can fall short of it is where the true epistemic ordering of the physiognomising gaze resides. The sage-like physiognomist cajoled his audiences to ‘enjoy vicariously the power of being a secret voyeur’ to the weaknesses of individuals and groups alike.<sup>98</sup> The Polemonian physiognomist also kept his options open:

The material evil is multiform, so that even if it is not more widespread, it is constituted in many varieties. Accordingly stories too, which invent and establish hydras and chimaeras and giants from various bodies, intend evil to be understood as multiform. But if anyone looks back to the definition of the signs, he will perceive that the signs of evil are many, but that the things which are gathered and understood from these signs are not so many; for wildness and savageness are

<sup>92</sup> On attitudes facing provincial sophists: Isaac 2011. Travelling for *paideia*: Nasrallah 2005, 289–314; Pretzler 2007. Cf. also Allen 2016 on Memnon, Herodes Atticus’ ‘Aethiopian’ pupil.

<sup>93</sup> Gal. *Quod an. mor. corp. temper. sequantur* 7 (Kühn 797–798).

<sup>94</sup> Phil. VS 531 (42.32), 535 (45.30–46.1); cf. Swain 2007, 157, 160. For portraits of *pepaideumenoí*, which likewise were shoehorned into a relatively narrow mold, Borg 2004.

<sup>95</sup> Lavan 2016, 154–163; cf. for a later context Weisweiler 2016.

<sup>96</sup> Ar. *An. pr.* 70b. Popović 2007, 98 claims Polemo never explicitly describes this ideal, but the ‘Leiden Polemo’ (B32, Hoyland 2007b, 427), the translation of which was not yet available for him, shows otherwise.

<sup>97</sup> Pack 1941, 330.

<sup>98</sup> Barton 1994, 101; Swain 2007, 197f. On the regulating aspects of such essentialising rhetoric of recognition, cf. Moatti 2007, esp. 29f.

reckoned by many and various signs, and by different signs inhumanity, weakness and avarice. And so it is not evil so much as the signs of evil that are many and diverse.<sup>99</sup>

The peoples of the empire (or the world) were various and different, and in a wide range of registers or genres their collective evidential value for an argument depended exactly upon this.<sup>100</sup> The unavoidable heterogeneity of the empire was not a hindrance or a deficiency, but could be turned into a source of triumphalism and glory by way of describing the variety of populations under Roman power, or even just by referring to the possibility of ekphrastically describing it.<sup>101</sup> And while the Greek elites of the east had an ambiguous attitude towards discussing the Roman world empire – many texts of the second century go to great lengths to avoid mentioning Rome at all – physical monuments such as the Aphrodisias Sebasteion show that local Greek elites could benefit from couching their local discourse in monumentalisation of Roman power.<sup>102</sup> Besides this, the register of ethnographicising writing already possessed its own prestige and epistemic appeal, which now could be applied and adapted in the context of a new world empire framing the Greek world, much like the Achaemenids and Alexander’s realm had done.<sup>103</sup>

As one could expect from its double ancestry in both medical writing and rhetoric – two fields thriving in hierarchies and classifications – physiognomical argumentation derived part of its authority from its claim of being able to diagnose imbalances and deviations from either a normative centre or a notional ideal.<sup>104</sup> What did this mean in cases where it was deployed in ethnicised arguments? Crucially, Graeco-Roman thinking on ethnic differences – while not exactly ‘racist’ or perhaps even ‘proto-racist’ in its nature – was undergirded by a set of consistent and

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**99** Anon. Lat. *De phys.* 44: *Nam malitiae res multiformis est, ut, etiam si non latius tendatur, constat tamen per multas diversitates. Denique et fabulae quae hydras et chimaeras et gigantes ex variis corporibus fingunt atque constituunt malitiam multiformem intelligi volunt. At si quis ad diffinitionem signorum respiciat, signa quidem malitiae, quae tamen ex signis his colliguntur atque intelliguntur, non adeo multa esse percipiet. Nam et multis et variis signis feritas et immanitas, diversis inhumanitas, imbecillitas et avaritia deputantur. Igitur non tam malitiae indicia multa atque diversa sunt.* (Translation I. Repath).

**100** For instance in Plin. *HN* 7.6; Max. Tyr. 2.4, 2.8; Artem. *Oneir.* 1.8; Sext. Emp. *PH* 1.148–153; Numen. *ap. Eus. PE* 9.7.1 (Des Places) F 1a; Celsus *ap. Orig. CCels.* 1.14. On moralising animal *ekphraseis*, Webb 2009, 42.

**101** Triumphalism e.g. in Verg. *Aen.* 8.722f. Reference to a multitude of peoples without actually needing to describe them: Plin. *HN* 5.29, 97. Several epigraphic articulations of the same are examined in Lavan 2016, 163–167.

**102** On Greek avoidance of mentioning Rome: Trapp 1997, xxxvii; Swain 2007, 197; cf. Whitmarsh 2010, 5f. on how Greek versions of Augustus’ *Res gestae* avoid mentions of world conquest. Also see Ando 2010 *passim* and Woolf 2010, esp. 200. On the Sebasteion of Aphrodisias, see Smith 2013, for instance characterising the reliefs of the North Building ‘an extraordinary visual inventory of world empire’ (*ibid.* 311); cf. this with the nation reliefs of Hadrianeum: Hughes 2009.

**103** On ‘prestige of formal elements’, see von den Hoff 2004, 121.

**104** Humoral basis for the physiognomical correspondence between the soul and the body: Ps.-Ar. *Physiogn.* 807a–b, 809a. Ar. *Gen. an.* 782b applies this to peoples, with Scythians, Thracians and Ethiopians as examples.



theoretically formulated ideological explanations for the essential characteristics of the peoples of the world.<sup>105</sup> A passage from the anonymous Latin *Physiognomy* discusses hair as an ethnicised sign:

Curly hair shows a man who is excessively deceitful, timid, greedy and desirous of money. And such men are referred to the race of the Egyptians, who are timid, and to that of the Syrians, who are greedy. Thick hair overhanging the brow reveals an excessively wild mind, because it is referred to the type of appearance in a bear. [...] Blond and thick and rather white hair testifies to characters which are difficult to teach and tame. It is referred to the race of the Germans.<sup>106</sup>

In this reading, the verbs *ostendunt*, *declarant*, and *testantur* all participate in physiognomy's posture as 'inference from signs'. Among the 'technical' types of knowledge-creation about human groups, physiognomy no doubt had the best applicability within the register of ethnographicising writing; it certainly had a stronger epistemic-intuitive legitimation for this than, say, oracular pronouncements.<sup>107</sup> The physiognomist, while able to construct an authoritative position similar to that of oracular interpreters, was well able to gesture towards a largely uncontroversial and widely shared theory reifying the perceived differences between human populations. Ekphrasis, with its declared ideal of 'making visible' not only the outward appearance of the subject, but also its natural essence, was an obvious tool for physiognomical arguments about ethnically defined groups – so obvious, indeed, that its use would have been almost reflexive for the ancient rhetoricians.

## Physiognomising the provinces

Lucian refers to individuals' physiognomies in several of his literary pieces.<sup>108</sup> He was also well-versed in ethnic stereotypes current in his own milieu.<sup>109</sup> In a prefatory

**105** On the 'racism' and 'proto-racism' in antiquity, Isaac 2004; despite antiquity's vastly different matrix of scientificity, McCoskey 2012 has usefully applied 'race' as a category in ancient context. On physiognomical arguments Isaac 2004, 149–162 examines physiognomical arguments; but see the warning in Rohrbacher 2010, 94 about Isaac's overly stark conclusions drawn from his material.

**106** Anon. Lat. *De phys.* 14: *capilli crispini nimum subdolum, avarum, timidum, luci cupidum hominem ostendunt. referuntur autem tales ad gentem Aegyptiorum, qui sunt timidi, et ad Syrorum, qui sunt avari. capilli densi imminentes fronti nimum ferum animum declarant, quia referuntur ad speciem ursi. [...] capilli flavi et crassi et albidiores indociles et indomitos mores testantur; referuntur autem ad gentem Germanorum.* (Transl. I. Repath).

**107** On the legitimating power of knowledge systems: Barton 1994, 31.

**108** Lucian *De par.* 41 (with skin colour codifying gendered attributes); *Fug.* 4; *Reviv.* 34 uses animal analogies (cf. Anon. Lat. *De phys.* 8, 9, 118–132).

**109** For instance, about Syrians: *Bis Acc.* 27; *Scyth.* 9; others *Alex.* 9, 27. Lucian's 'mapping' of cities and ethnicities: Nasrallah 2005, 295f.

warm-up piece called *Heracles* a remarkable ekphrastic description of a provincial work of art is offered as an elaborate basis for justifying Lucian’s continued sophistic performances in his old age; the set-piece collapses the distinction between an ekphrasis of a work-of-art and a physiognomical ekphrasis of a person.<sup>110</sup> Jaś Elsner has compared Lucian’s description of the sun-burnt and wizened features of Ogmios to chapters 41 and 36 in the *Leiden Polemo*, though he admits that these are hard to relate to the image in *Hercules*, which Lucian turns into a defence of seasoned orators’ eloquence and a sort of self-portrait.<sup>111</sup> As he remarks, possible irony in the use of physiognomic aspects should not be discounted. It is also worth remembering that the value of the ‘ethniced’ evidence within the piece may be subtly elsewhere:

The Celts call Heracles Ogmios in their native tongue, and they portray the god in a very peculiar way. To their notion, he is extremely old, bald-headed, except for a few lingering hairs which are quite grey, his skin is wrinkled, and he is burned as black as can be, like an old sea-dog. You would think him a Charon or a sub-Tartarean Iapetus – anything but Heracles! Yet, in spite of his looks, he has the equipment of Heracles: he is dressed in the lion’s skin, has the club in his right hand, carries the quiver at his side, displays the bent bow in his left, and is Heracles from head to heel as far as that goes. I thought, therefore, that the Celts had committed this offence against the good-looks of Heracles to spite the Greek gods, and that they were punishing him by means of the picture for having once visited their country on a cattle-lifting foray, at the time when he raided most of the western nations in his quest of the herds of Geryon.<sup>112</sup>

It is an impressive ekphrasis, with mythology, ethnographicising gestures, geography and physiognomy all incorporated. Elaborating from a remark made by Brent Shaw about how provincial identity seems to be highlighted when the gaze is directed at a province or its inhabitants from a spatial remove,<sup>113</sup> it might be said that the depth of the perspective will in such a case set the group in question into its place among the peoples of the empire in a fashion that almost resembles a map.<sup>114</sup> This is also when a writer will

<sup>110</sup> Ekphraseis of works of art were not rigidly distinguished into a category of their own: Elsner 2002, 1.

<sup>111</sup> Elsner 2007, 205. He also cautions against assuming that Lucian is describing an actual image (204), something which scholars especially within Celtic Studies have done almost by default.

<sup>112</sup> Lucian. *Heracl.* 1–2: Τὸν Ἡρακλέα οἱ Κελτοὶ Ὀγμιον ὀνομάζουσι φωνῇ τῇ ἐπιχωρίῳ, τὸ δὲ εἶδος τοῦ θεοῦ πάνυ ἀλλόκοτον γράφουσι. γέρων ἐστὶν αὐτοῖς ἐς τὸ ἔσχατον, ἀναφαλαντίας, πολὺς ἀκριβῶς ὅσαι λοιπαὶ τῶν τριχῶν, ῥυσὸς τὸ δέρμα καὶ διακεκαυμένος ἐς τὸ μελάντατον οἰοί εἰσιν οἱ θαλαττουργοὶ γέροντες· μᾶλλον δὲ Χάρωνα ἢ Ἰαπετόν τινα τῶν ὑποταρταρίων καὶ πάντα μᾶλλον ἢ Ἡρακλέα εἶναι ἂν εἰκάσειας. ἀλλὰ καὶ τοιοῦτος ὢν ἔχει ὅμως τὴν σκευὴν τὴν Ἡρακλέους· καὶ γὰρ τὴν διφθέραν ἐνήπτει τὴν τοῦ λέοντος καὶ τὸ ῥόπαλον ἔχει ἐν τῇ δεξιᾷ καὶ τὸν γωρυτὸν παρήρηται, καὶ τὸ τόξον ἐντεταμένον ἢ ἀριστερὰ προδείκνυσιν, καὶ ὅλος Ἡρακλῆς ἐστὶ ταῦτά γε. ὥμην οὖν ἐφ’ ὕβρει τῶν Ἑλληνίων θεῶν τοιαῦτα παρανομεῖν τοὺς Κελτοὺς ἐς τὴν μορφήν τὴν Ἡρακλέους ἀμνομένους αὐτὸν τῇ γραφῇ, ὅτι τὴν χώραν ποτὲ αὐτῶν ἐπήλθεν λείαν ἐλαύνων, ὅποτε τὰς Γηρυσόου ἀγέλας ζητῶν κατέδραμε τὰ πολλὰ τῶν ἐσπερίων γενῶν. (Transl. A. M. Harmon).

<sup>113</sup> Shaw (2014, 530) is thinking in particular about the cases of Tertullian and Firmilian of Caesarea: Tert. *Ad Nat.* 2.8; *Scorp.* 6.2, 76; Firm. *ap. Cypr. Ep.* 74.19.3.

<sup>114</sup> On ekphrasis, textuality, and geographical mapping, see Eide 2016, 311–318.

be most likely to use a provincial ethnonym, and often in an apparently neutral fashion. Yet the gaze itself is hardly neutral. Whether it is an individual provincial or a vaguely ‘ethnic’ provincial artwork that is being scrutinised, the Imperial-era fascination with the extraordinary and the striking is clearly in evidence.<sup>115</sup> Ekphrastically presented ‘Celtic’ evidence of the barbarian way of imagining Hercules (as well as their curiously long and atavistic cultural grudge) is in more ways than one an invitation to have a good old stare – even while Lucian, the canny enabler, outsources the ‘true’ explanation to a similarly ‘ethnic’ informant, thus softening the stance of the sophist as the interpreter of outlandish physiognomies for the benefit of his audience.<sup>116</sup>

The progymnastic recommendations of how to construct an ekphrasis of an artwork also mention the addition of reasons (λογισμοί) for the artist’s way of depicting a thing in a given way.<sup>117</sup> In *Heracles* Lucian does this in a way that collapses historical perspectives into one timeless horizon.<sup>118</sup> Moreover, as noted in the second of the treatises handed down under the name of Menander Rhetor, the ‘talk’ (*lalía*) form of speech – Lucian’s short piece is called *prolalía* – benefits from the ‘sweetness and delicacy’ obtained by narratives, examples making the speaker’s intentions clear, and stories that are new for the audience and thus interesting to learn about.<sup>119</sup> This kind of ‘sweetness’ has a clearly imaginative dimension – firing up urban audiences to imagine the local antiquities, curious conversations, and weird sights of the empire’s far-flung corners.<sup>120</sup>

The pleasantly striking and extraordinary details of many a group within the empire were likely to stem from their pre-Roman past, or at least been liable to be projected into that horizon. So if there is a certain static and antiquarian quality in the way provinces were characterised during the Second Sophistic, this can also be approached from the point of view that the most interesting – because most distinctive, most alien – ekphraseis of any society within the Empire would have had the effect of keeping the group in question locked into an essentialisingly cast ‘ethnically’ vignette. The ἔθνη themselves were far more efficient if they could be retained as distinctive both in their

**115** In particular, see Gleason 1995, 39 making clear the connections and tensions between the physiognomist’s typological endeavour and the collecting of *mirabilia*.

**116** The ‘learned Gaul’ has been suggested to represent Favorinus himself (see Amato 2004; Hofeneder 2006). “Interestingly, the wiry, bald, sun-burnt Gallic Heracles of Lucian is almost the very opposite, physiognomically, to Polemo’s flabby and pale Celt with his luxuriant locks. Can we detect Lucian commenting here on the dispute between Polemo and Favorinus?”

**117** Nicol. Myr. *Progymn.* 69.

**118** Precisely as Polemo is noted to be doing in his ethnographicised exemplaries: Gleason 1995, 41. Swetnam-Burland 2015, 161 notes how past/present and landscape/people are juxtaposed in depictions and ekphraseis of Egypt.

**119** Menand. Rhet. 2.4.389: χαίρει γὰρ τὸ τῆς λαλιᾶς εἶδος τῆ γλυκύτητι καὶ τῆ τῶν διηγημάτων ἀβρότῃτι. παραγένοιτο δ’ ἂν ἡ γλυκύτες τῷ λόγῳ, εἰ παραδείγματα λέγομεν δι’ ὧν ἐμφανιούμεν ὁ προαρούμεθα, ἱστορίας ἡδίστας τοῖς ἀκροαταῖς μαθεῖν ἐκλεγόμενοι. For ekphrasis and *diegema*, see Webb 2009, 75ff.

**120** The interest-piquing exoticism of the Ogmios ekphrasis: Nesselrath 1990, 135.

cultural and physical characteristics, ready to be decoded via ekphrasis in order to pursue whatever argument was at stake. From the viewpoint of the rostra and the imperial palace alike, an empire containing a maximum range of human physiognomies and cultures would, in fact, have been the best-adorned – indeed the healthiest – empire imaginable. Such an empire would also have offered the greatest wealth of ekphrasis for its urban audiences to enjoy. Valorization of multiplicity and cruel ethnic mockery living side by side are both reinforced by the same ideological assumptions about individual regions giving rise to a predictable, essentially unchanging type of people, who will in one way or another act out their origins. As Parshia Lee-Stecum has pointed out:

the ethnic affiliations of the Roman elite never represented an authentic or accurate ethnographic map of empire, but bolstered a model of elite strength constituted from a diverse range of communities, regions, and ethnicities. This accorded well with the wider ideology of Roman strength modelled in the myth of Romulus' asylum.<sup>121</sup>

Other recent contributions have highlighted the way in which the cultural integration of local elites, especially in the Roman East, had not yet by the second century led to the emergence of a unified elite identity.<sup>122</sup> Greek identities, in particular, were buoyed by the self-consciously classicising identity politics of the Second Sophistic, which the preoccupations apparent in rhetorical training readily emphasised.<sup>123</sup> Yet it is useful to keep in mind, as Simon Swain has noted, that Imperial Greek classicism was not backward-looking, but 'served to validate present-day political formations'; indeed, it was the Greek elite's way of arranging themselves in a harmonious continuum with their earlier history and myths, while maintaining the absolute connection between the past Hellenic identity and their current identities.<sup>124</sup>

Aelius Aristides, the hypochondriac sophist who had studied under Polemo, spoke in Pergamon in 167 about the harmony between the three Asian cities of Ephesus, Smyrna, and Pergamon. All three are together superior within their province, which in turn is superior among the regions of the whole continent.<sup>125</sup>

First let us consider the whole political structure, of which we are all here constituents, both the larger and the smaller. By how much is it believed to exceed all others, in the judgement of both our rulers and nearly all other men? None of them has so many cities as all these, nor so many large ones. [...] It has come to such a height of excellence that although all the land bounded by the Phasis and the Nile right up to this spot was from earliest days called 'Asia' by the Greeks, this portion by the sea has taken the name of the continent for itself and made it its own. Thus it has been victorious over the rest.<sup>126</sup>

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**121** Lee-Stecum 2014, 466.

**122** See Woolf 2010; Lavan 2016; Weisweiler 2016.

**123** Cf. Schmitz 1997, 178f.; Bowie 2004, 70f.; Jones 2010, 23; Kemezis 2014.

**124** Swain 2007, 130f.

**125** Cf. Jones 2004, 14–15.

**126** Ael. Ar. Or. 42 (Jebb) 518–19: Πρῶτον μὲν τοῖνυν περὶ τῆς ὅλης συστάσεως ἐνθυμηθῶμεν, εἰς

Sophists praising the cultural centres of Asia Minor in the second century were tapping into a rich interest about the cities' origins, prestige, and identity, as well as the literary use of listing 'ethnic' customs. 'Being themselves' and exhibiting vivid and demonstrable links to the remotest past could be directly converted to a heightened standing – and fiscal privileges – under the Roman administration. Moreover, Aristides' passage matches well Ruth Webb's observation about city ekphraseis being frequently organised through the metaphor of *periegesis*; by the time of Aelius Aristides the periegetic form would have strong literary associations with the kinds of geographic descriptions that had formed an ordering principle from Herodotus onwards, and already earlier.<sup>127</sup> These, in turn, would have incorporated both 'ethnified' material and geographical descriptions – the two aspects were not distinct in ancient literature, and both could work as complements to historical as well as other narratives.<sup>128</sup>

Asia Minor offered the optimal conditions for 'ethnified physiognomy' to take root in rhetorical and other Imperial-era discourses with the broad appeal that it seems to have wielded. Proud cities, eager to showcase their distinctness and old pedigree, were filled with people of distinct phenotypes from all over the empire engaging each other in trade, competition, and litigation; at the same time, they were overlooked by some of the most imposing monumental architecture in the entire empire featuring barbarian physiognomies (such as the Attalid monuments of Pergamum, the Sebasteion of Aphrodisias, and Antoninus Pius' Parthian monument in Ephesus).<sup>129</sup> Medical writers of the time, strongly present in the centres of learning in Asia, were very interested in psychosomatic disorders and explanations of human phenotypic differences – while also partaking in processes of organising and ordering the knowledge regime of the time in ways that both in terms of influence and of

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ἦν ἅπαντες οἱ ταύτη συντελοῦμεν ὁμοίως μείζους καὶ ἐλάττους, ὅποσῳ τινὶ τῶν ἄλλων προέχειν πεπίστευται καὶ παρὰ τοῖς ἄρχουσι κριταῖς καὶ παρὰ τοῖς ἄλλοις σχεδὸν ὡς εἰπεῖν ἅπασιν. οὔτε γὰρ πόλεις τοσαύτας τὰς πάσας οὐδεμία ἄλλη τῶν πασῶν παρέχεται οὔτε δὴ τὰς γε μεγίστας τοιαύτας. [...] εἰς τοῦτο δὲ ἀνήκει τῆς ἀξίας ὥστε τοσαύτης οὔσης τῆς ἀπάσης χώρας, ἦν ὁ τε Φᾶσις καὶ ὁ Νεῖλος διειλήφασιν πρὸς τὸν ἄνω τόπον, καὶ ταύτης συλλήβδην κληθείσης Ἀσίας ὑφ' Ἑλλήνων ἐξ ἀρχῆς, ἡ περὶ θάλατταν αὐτῆ νυνὶ μοῖρα ἀφελομένη τὴν ἠπειρον τοῦνομα ἐαυτῆς ἴδιον πεποιῆται, οὔτως ἀντὶ πάσης τῆς ἄλλης νενίκηκεν εἶναι. (Transl. C. P. Jones).

**127** Webb 2009, 55; on the periegetic register, see Romm 1992, *passim*; cf. Nasrallah 2005. As Eide 2016, 307 observes, ordering (either establishing order or following one) is crucial to ekphrastic techniques (cf. 311).

**128** Cf. Clarke 1999; Nasrallah 2005, 285f.; Webb 2009, 67 on ekphraseis often blurring the boundaries between description and narration.

**129** On Attalid monuments featuring Galatians and Persians, Ferris 2000, 8–15; Stewart 2004, 206–232; on the Sebasteion of Aphrodisias, Yildirim 2004; Smith 2013; on the Ephesian monument featuring Parthians, Chausson 2006; Landskron 2006. Regarding Greek emphasis on local pasts in the Imperial context: Jones 2010; Woolf 2010.

actual teacher-pupil relationships crossed the permeable borders of literary genres.<sup>130</sup> It is easy to see how Polemo’s rhetoric and the epistemic appeal of the various ways of explaining the mental capabilities and states of outgroups, or even inhabitants of other provinces,<sup>131</sup> would have found immediate epistemic purchase.

## Echoes in the Later Roman Empire

Turning next to examine a small selection of ethnicised physiognomies from the Later Roman Empire – primarily from Ammianus Marcellinus – it is worth bearing in mind it was during this period that the Alexandrian ‘iatrosophist’ Adamantius produced his paraphrase of Polemo’s *Physiognomonía*: there clearly was enough interest for such an undertaking to be worthwhile.<sup>132</sup> The same impression of quite frequent references to physiognomical arguments is reinforced by Late Imperial historiography and biography: in the notoriously gossipy *Historia Augusta*, at least Zenobia and Maximinus Thrax are described through full-fledged physiognomical ekphrasis that incorporate clear ethnicising elements.<sup>133</sup> It can also be surmised that enough Late Antique copies of Polemo survived to guarantee a translation into Arabic in the Middle Ages.<sup>134</sup>

Ammianus, a close contemporary to Adamantius, is notable for some of his descriptions of individual or ethnic physiognomies in his *Res gestae*.<sup>135</sup> The emperors are given their set-piece diagnostics as part of their obituaries or *aestimationes*, a tendency that seems to have been fairly widespread in Late Imperial biographical writing but that had deep roots in Graeco-Roman tradition of historiography and biography.<sup>136</sup> On a more heuristic level, many characters in Ammianus’ historiographical conception seem adept at reading signs evident in a person’s bearing, even when they

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**130** Rufus of Ephesus, Aretaeus of Cappadocia, Galen himself, and others: Swain 2007, 11; Boys-Stones 2007, 94–124.

**131** Provinces standing in metonymy for their inhabitants: Lavan 2016, 159.

**132** Cf. Evans 1969, 74–83. Adamantius, a Jew who later converted into Christianity, seems to have wanted to cast the *tekhne* as compatible with the new religion by calling it ‘God-given’: Popović 2007, 91. On ‘Christian physiognomy’, see Berzon 2016, 83.

**133** SHA *Tyr. trig.* 30.15f. on Zenobia; *Max. duo* 1.5–2.2, 3.6, 6.8f. and 9.2f. on Maximinus Thrax’s barbarian physique and the *Leitmotiv* of his cyclopean size.

**134** On the reception and manuscript tradition of Polemo, see Swain 2007, 176f., Hoyland 2007a, 235ff., 309–325. Also note Barton’s observation (1994, 122) that the ethnonyms, in particular, have been liable to dropping out in the course of epitomisation.

**135** Famously, he mentions the ‘old books’ of physiognomy in 15.8.16 – a possible nod towards his use of such manuals.

**136** Evans 1969, 46–58; Rohrbacher 2010, 94–112; on Ammianus in particular 103–109, reinforcing Guy Sabbah’s conclusion (Sabbah 1978, 422–427) that Ammianus’ physiognomical descriptions match the manuals or handbooks much more than those, say, of Suetonius.

are not rhetoricians nor implied to be formally trained in the skill. In the case of imperial persons – whether Julian’s great promise which was read from his physiognomy by the Roman army, or the ‘barbarian’ personality and looks of the cruel and irascible Valentinian – the audience is invited to physiognomise a target.<sup>137</sup>

As an example of an individual person’s ekphrasis we may take the famous case of Peter Valvomeris, a leading figure in the urban unrest in Rome under the prefecture of Leontius. He is characterised physiognomically but also with clearly ethnicising overtones in Ammianus’ impressive and vivid description of the stand-off between the rioters and the prefect.

Then, seated in his carriage, with every appearance of confidence [Leontius] scanned with sharp eyes the faces of the crowd’s ranks, raging on all sides of him like serpents, and allowed many insults to be hurled at him; but recognising one fellow conspicuous in his huge stature and red head among all the rest, asked him if he was not Peter, surnamed Valvomeris, as he had heard. And when the man had replied in insolent tones that he was none other, the governor, who had known him of old as the ringleader of the malcontents, in spite of the outcries of many, gave orders to bind his hands behind him and hang him up. On seeing him aloft begging in vain for the aid of his companions, the whole mob, until then crowded together, scattered through the various arteries of the city and vanished so completely that this most fierce promoter of riots had his sides well flogged, as if in an isolation cell, and was banished to Picenum.<sup>138</sup>

Erich Auerbach’s well-known chapter on the episode, while occupied with the ‘representation of reality’ in it, in fact ends up echoing some of the ways of seeing that Ammianus has built into his text.<sup>139</sup> Auerbach wrote about Ammianus’ fascination with the ‘grotesque, and, with them, the rhetorically horripilating’ (54) but maintained that the break with ‘classical antiquity’ in his style was complete. He correctly identified Ammianus’ desire for ‘sensory vividness’ (58) but did not connect this with the basic advice for ekphrastic techniques that the rhetorical learning of the Later Imperial era, in particular, would have kept alive.<sup>140</sup> Physiognomical elements go largely unmentioned. The crowd, likened in an animal analogy to so many serpents and described only *en masse*, as a many-bodied but collective threat, melts away

<sup>137</sup> Both cases have been studied in Rorhbacher 2010: for Valentinian, see pp. 107f.

<sup>138</sup> Amm. 15.74–5: *Insidens itaque vehiculo cum speciosa fiducia contuebatur acribus oculis tumultuantium undique cuneorum veluti serpentium vultus perpessusque multa dici probrosa agnitum quendam inter alios eminentem vasti corporis rutilique capilli, interrogavit, an ipse esset Petrus Valvomeris, ut audierat, cognomento: eumque cum esse sonu respondisset obiurgatorio, ut seditiosorum antesignanum olim sibi conpertum, reclamantibus multis post terga manibus vinctis suspendi praecepit. Quo viso sublimi tribuliumque adiumentum nequicquam implorante vulgus omne paulo ante confertum per varia urbis membra diffusum ita evanuit ut turbarum acerrimus concitor tamquam in iudiciali secreto exaratis lateribus ad Picenum eiceretur.* (Transl. J. C. Rolfe, with alterations).

<sup>139</sup> Auerbach 1953.

<sup>140</sup> Even as he notes the numerous animal comparisons: Auerbach 1953, 58.

and gets reabsorbed into the body of the city itself in the face of Leontius’ decisive action. Leontius himself, his name bringing to mind the leonine ideal of a Hellenic/Roman male – stern and keen in his looks – surveys the seething mass from on high and proves his reputation for justice that borders on severity. It seems that as far as metaphors go, Ammianus has given expression in the scene to his unease about the baser elements of the Romans and their possible collusion with the barbarians inside the empire; the answer to this, in turn, lies in the old-fashioned *Romanitas* of Leontius.<sup>141</sup> Valvomeres, whose name in turn would be recognised by Ammianus’ audience as barbarian,<sup>142</sup> towers over the rest of the multitude: a northerner in his stature, name, and hair.<sup>143</sup> His insolent behaviour is thus fully expected on the basis of his looks. Valvomeres will hang as the tormented Marsyas did: muscular yet helpless and pathetic.

In terms of entire population groups Ammianus showcases on many occasions his belief in historiography that includes traditionally framed geographical and ethnographical digressions; the subjects of these mostly constitute outgroups, although the Roman elite and plebs are given their own satirical-ethnographic ekphraseis, too.<sup>144</sup> The groups chosen for ekphraseis are tellingly traditional, as well: Egyptians, Thracians, Gauls, Persians, and – substituting for Scythians – the steppe groups of Huns and Alans are all furnished with prolonged, very literary and consciously erudite descriptions. Regarding Egyptians, Ammianus’ view is mostly respectful, but also clearly comparable to the ideas current in his contemporary society.

Moreover, most Egyptians are quite swarthy and dark-complexioned, with somewhat gloomy looks, slender and shrivelled, easily fired up in disturbances, quarrelsome, and very sharp petitioners. Among them, a man would blush were he not able to show many whip-marks in his body, gained through the refusal of tribute. And it has not so far been possible to come up with a torture cruel enough to compel a hardened robber of that land against his will to reveal his own name.<sup>145</sup>

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**141** Of particular note in connection with the Valvomeres episode is Ammianus’ excoriation of the base pleasures of the Roman *plebs*: 14.6.25f., 28.4.28–34; the Roman elite is implied to be badly prepared to keep these in check.

**142** On the Germanic name, see Widdowson 2008, 612f.

**143** The *rutilae comae* are a marker of not only northerners (Tac. *Germ.* 4, 31; *Pan. Lat.* 8(5).16.4; *Amm.* 15.12.1) but from the physiognomic viewpoint of people with similarly impulsive and aggressive nature (Anon. *Lat. Physiogn.* 79).

**144** Roman excursuses in whole: 14.6; 28.4.6–35. For Ammianus’ satirical register, Ross 2015.

**145** *Amm.* 22.16.23: *homines autem Aegyptii plerique subfusculi sunt et atrati magis quam maesti oris, gracilenti et aridi, ad singulos motus excandescentes, controversi et reposcenes acerrimi. erubescit apud eos siqui non infitiando tributa plurimas in corpore vibices ostendat. et nulla tormentorum vis inveniri adhuc potuit, quae obdurato illius tractus latroni invito elicere potuit, ut nomen proprium dicat.* (Transl. J. C. Rolfe, with alterations).



This can be compared with a range of second-to-fourth century descriptions of Egyptians. By juxtaposing it with Ptolemy's representation of the inhabitants of southern parallels, we see that Ammianus uses his ekphrasis of Egypt to bring in 'exotic' physiognomies which in another authorial context were relegated to even more southerly peoples – namely, the Aethiopians. Ptolemy wrote of the southerners, his generic 'Aethiopians':

The people who live under the more southern parallels, that is, those from the equator to the summer tropic, since they have the sun over their heads and are burned by it, have black skins and thick, woolly hair, are contracted in form and shrunken in stature, are sanguine of nature, and in habits are for the most part savage because their homes are continually oppressed by the heat.<sup>146</sup>

Then, zooming closer to Lower Egypt – his own area of origin, which Ptolemy consequently does not classify as being influenced by the southern climes, but instead as the southernmost region of the balanced and most civilized middle clime and under astrological forces acting in the central areas of his four quarters of the sky – he notes that its inhabitants were well suited for mathematical arts, clever, and eminent worshippers of gods:

Of these peoples the inhabitants of Cyrenaica and Marmarica, and particularly of Lower Egypt, are more closely familiar to Gemini and Mercury; on this account they are thoughtful and intelligent and facile in all things, especially in the search for wisdom and religion; they are magicians and performers of secret mysteries and in general skilled in mathematics.<sup>147</sup>

Ptolemy shows how the astro-climatological template was well able to accommodate manipulation based on the area of origin of a given writer, while still maintaining in place most or all of the received elements: the knack was in foregrounding elements which helped an author to construct their authorial identity within a given text or argument. In Adamantius' physiognomical handbook, the phenotypic and cultural

<sup>146</sup> Ptol. *Tetr.* 2.2.8: οἱ μὲν ὑπὸ τοὺς νοτιωτέρους παραλλήλους, λέγω δὲ τοὺς ἀπὸ τοῦ ἰσημερινοῦ μέχρι τοῦ θερινοῦ τροπικοῦ, κατὰ κορυφὴν λαμβάνοντες τὸν ἥλιον καὶ διακαιόμενοι μέλανές τε τὰ σώματα καὶ τὰς τρίχας οὖλοί τε καὶ δασεῖς καὶ τὰς μορφὰς συνεσπασμένοι καὶ τὰ μεγέθη συντετηγμένοι καὶ φύσεις θερμοὶ καὶ τοῖς ἤθεσιν ὡς ἐπίπαν ἄγριοι τυγχάνουσι διὰ τὴν ὑπὸ τοῦ καύματος συνέχειαν τῶν οἰκίσεων. (Transl. F. E. Robbins.).

<sup>147</sup> Ptol. *Tetr.* 2.3.49: καὶ τούτων δὲ οἱ μὲν περὶ τὴν Κυρηναϊκὴν καὶ Μαρμαρικὴν καὶ μάλιστα οἱ περὶ τὴν κάτω χώραν τῆς Αἰγύπτου μᾶλλον συνοικεῖονται τοῖς τε Ἰχθύσι καὶ τῷ τοῦ Ἑρμοῦ, διόπερ οὗτοι διανοητικοὶ τε καὶ συνετοὶ καὶ εὐεπίβολοι τυγχάνουσι περὶ πάντα καὶ μάλιστα περὶ τὴν τῶν σοφῶν καὶ θείων εὐρεσιν μαγευτικοὶ τε καὶ κρυφίων μυστηρίων ἐπιτελεστικοὶ καὶ ὅλως ἱκανοὶ περὶ τὰ μαθήματα. (Transl. F. E. Robbins.). Cf. with this Ptol. *Tetr.* 2.2.9: "The southernmost of them are in general more shrewd and inventive, and better versed in the knowledge of things divine because their zenith is close to the zodiac and to the planets revolving about it. Through this affinity the men themselves are characterized by an activity of the soul which is sagacious, investigative, and fitted for pursuing the sciences specifically called mathematical." On Ptolemy's different treatment of Egypt *vis-à-vis* the other writers of his age, see Isaac 2011, 497.

characteristics of generalised ‘Southerners’ are again present in closer connection. For him, there was no need to distinguish between geographical regions in a similar level of detail as Ptolemy did, but as Max Goldman has recently pointed out, Adamantius does ground his physiognomical stereotyping on climatological template much more consistently than previous physiognomists.<sup>148</sup>

[...] whereas those in the south have black, curly hair, black eyes, thin legs, are good at learning, very sagacious, light-minded, liars, wily, and have thievish thoughts.<sup>149</sup>

Physiognomically and perhaps also otherwise, this assemblage comes closer to what Ammianus wrote, considering that further into his excursus he does praise the learning of the Egyptians, and especially that of Alexandria.<sup>150</sup> Ptolemy, Ammianus and Adamantius can moreover be compared with a text from the Eastern Mediterranean that is broadly coeval with the latter two: a popular (perhaps ‘mercantile’) geography translated into Latin in two versions known respectively as the *Descriptio* and *Expositio totius mundi et gentium*.<sup>151</sup> It does not include many descriptions of provincial groups’ physiques, but in the case of Egypt it clearly participates in a shared – and to all appearances relatively demotic – iconosphere of Egypt’s essential and indelible characteristics. Particular emphasis, as in Ammianus, seems to be on the religious worship, wisdom traditions, priestly and philosophical knowledge, and the peerless excellence of Alexandria-based doctors.<sup>152</sup>

Ammianus’ famous excursus on Gaul portrays the inhabitants of the area in a largely positive but noticeably conventional way. This is the result of both the emphasis on the immutability of population groups that the ensemble of climate-based theories perpetrated, and Ammianus’ apparent choice of using Timagenes of Alexandria, an Augustan writer, as his primary source on Gauls.<sup>153</sup> The bodily *ekphrasis* shares many elements with that of Diodorus Siculus, another Late-Republican author.<sup>154</sup> The vivid description of a fiery Gallic wife entering a melee has often been read as a

**148** Goldman 2016, 69f.

**149** Adamant. *Phys.* B31: οἱ δὲ ὑπὸ τῆ μεσημβρία μελανότριχες, οὐλότριχες, μελανόφθαλμοι, λεπτοσκελεῖς, εὐμαθεῖς, πολυγνώμονες, κουφόνοοι, ψεῦσται, κερδαλέοι, ἐπικλοπα νοήματα ἔχοντες. (Transl. I. Repath) Cf. Anon. Lat. *De phys.* 14; Pol. Leid. B31: “[...] the inhabitants of the southern parts are black, curly-haired, with thin heels, dusky eyes, black hair, and little flesh. They are tolerant in their actions and have cleverness, memory, lightness, opulence, much thought, lying, desire, and stealing” (Hoyland 2007b, 425; transl. R. Hoyland).

**150** Amm. 22.16.15–22.

**151** Ed. J. Rougé 1966. See Grill 2014 for a summary of the possible origins of the *Expositio/Descriptio*.

**152** *Exp. tot. mundi et gent.* 34–37.

**153** On the epistemic stability underpinning Ammianus’ ethnography: Woolf 2011, 32, 105–111; Weisweiler 2016, 202.

**154** Diod. Sic. 5.28.1–3.

vivid eye-witness account from Ammianus himself, and while this point cannot be either proven or disproven, it is embedded in an ekphrasis of the Gauls' physique and bearing that only contains traditional elements:

Almost all the Gauls are of tall stature, fair and ruddy, terrible for the fierceness of their eyes, fond of quarrelling, and of overbearing insolence. In fact, a whole band of foreigners will be unable to cope with one of them in a fight, if he calls in his wife, stronger than he by far and with flashing eyes; least of all when she swells her neck and gnashes her teeth, and poisoning her huge white arms, proceeds to rain punches mingled with kicks, like shots discharged by the twisted cords of a catapult. The voices of most of them are formidable and threatening, alike when they are good-natured or angry. But all of them with equal care keep clean and neat [...] <sup>155</sup>

Many of the details are already met in the Late Republican discourse – such as Diodorus Siculus or Cicero's *Pro Fonteio*, glimpsed above – where they had become established while the 'Celts' or Gauls were still a group largely external to the Empire. Independent and tall Gallic women had likewise made appearances in ethnographic passages.<sup>156</sup> So although Ammianus clearly indicates admiration for Gallic provincials and implies that they – with the implicit 'sturdy stock' that both Gallic sexes encapsulate<sup>157</sup> – might possess the key to the Roman empire's survival against the Goths,<sup>158</sup> his Gauls are suspended both in their culture and physiognomy in a timeless condition, largely informed by the imagery about their pre-Roman society. As the 'eternal allies' (*societati nostrae foederibus iunxit aeternis*) of the Romans, the muscular, brave and neat Gauls are most useful if they will remain their primordial selves, at least in Ammianus' optimistic and physiognomically underpinned view. The characteristics which in many earlier physiognomies of the northerners were considered signs of negative qualities, are inferred by Ammianus to signify a productive and essentially 'Gallic' boon for the empire. The topos of their warlikeness has been reconciled at last, late in the tradition, to emerge as a benefit to the empire. But in this, the Gauls will need to remain Gauls.

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**155** Amm. 15.12.1–2: *Celsioris staturae et candidi paene Galli sunt omnes et rutili luminumque torvitate terribiles, avidi iurgiorum et sublatius insolentes. Nec enim eorum quemquam adhibita uxore rixantem, multo fortiore et glauca, peregrinorum ferre poterit globus, tum maxime cum illa inflata cervice suffrendens ponderansque niveas ulnas et vastas admixtis calcibus emittere coeperit pugnos ut catapultas tortilibus nervis excussas. Metuendae voces conplurium et minaces placatorum iuxta et irascentium, tersi tamen pari diligentia cuncti et mundi [...]* (Transl. J. C. Rolfe).

**156** Powerful, tall or spirited Gallic women: Diod. 5.24.2f., 5.32.2; *Tract. de mul. claris in bello* p. 10 (Gera 1997); Plut. *De mul. virt.* 20, 22; Dio 76.16.5 *ap. Xiph.* 324–325. Ammianus may also have added the siege machine metaphor as an internal allusion to his own digression on siege engines in 23.4, just before Julian's Persian expedition.

**157** The fecundity of Gallic women: Str. 4.1.2, 4.4.3.

**158** Ammianus' appreciation of Gallic military prowess: 15.12.3, 19.6.4–7, 25.6.12–15; cf. with his explicit recommendation of what to do to Gothic contingents in the Roman army: 31.16.8.

Some of the groups outside the empire whose physiognomy Ammianus describes in a clearly evaluative way include Persians, Huns, and Alans. These ethnographical *ekphraseis* can be considered physiognomical in the sense that the physical and mental or cultural characteristics are presented in close connection – though seldom with explicit indications of inference – while the general correspondences between the qualities themselves and their physical signifiers broadly match the common associations met elsewhere. Persians combine in a unique way negative and positive signs, just as their society is in some parts described with great approval by Ammianus, yet also includes indications of the Easterners’ stereotypical cruelty and tyranny.<sup>159</sup> They have beautiful eyebrows and ‘not uncomely beards’, yet they also are slight (*graciles paene sunt omnes*) and have ‘goat-like’ grim eyes (*caprinis oculis torvi*).<sup>160</sup> In the case of the Huns, inhumane habits are reflected in their looks, which Ammianus crafts into a tour-de-force *ekphrasis* of ‘hard primitivistic’ physiognomy:

The people of the Huns, little mentioned in ancient records, dwelling beyond the Maeotic Sea near the ice-bound ocean, exceed every degree of savagery. There, the cheeks of the children are deeply furrowed with steel from their very birth, in order that the growth of hair, when it appears at the proper time, may be checked by the wrinkled scars, they grow old without beards and without any beauty, like eunuchs. They all have compact, strong limbs and thick necks, and are so monstrously ugly and misshapen, that one might take them for two-legged beasts or for the stumps, rough-hewn into images, that are used in putting sides to bridges. But although they have the form of men, however ugly, they are so hardy in their mode of life that they have no need of fire nor of savoury food, but eat the roots of wild plants and the half-raw flesh of any kind of animal whatever, which they put between their thighs and the backs of their horses, and thus warm it a little.<sup>161</sup>

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<sup>159</sup> On Ammianus’ Persian excursus, see Teitler 1999.

<sup>160</sup> Amm. 23.6.75: *sed ut generaliter corpora describamus et mores graciles paene sunt omnes, subnigri vel livido colore pallentes, caprinis oculis torvi et superciliis in semiorbium speciem curvatis iunctisque, non indecoribus barbibus capillisque promissis hirsuti, omnes tamen promiscue vel inter epulas festosque dies gladiis cincti cernuntur*. Both here and in the Hunnic *ekphrasis* that follows, Ammianus seems to emphasise the role of a beard (at least as a source of beauty), which stands in contrast to beards’ lack of importance in Polemo: cf. Elsner 2007, 207, 218. Julian, famously, cultivated a beard which became an object of derision among those putting forth negative readings of his physiognomy (Rohrbacher 2010, 105) and among other things led the emperor to pen his *Misopogon*, ‘Beard-Hater’; Ammianus may be responding to this tendency by emphasising the *varietas* of ‘ethnic beards’ in his ethnographicising physiognomies.

<sup>161</sup> Amm. 30.2.1–3: *Hunorum gens monumentis veteribus leviter nota ultra paludes Maeoticas glaciale oceanum accolens, omnem modum feritatis excedit. Ubi quoniam ab ipsis nascendi primitiis infantum ferro sulcantur altius genae, ut pilorum vigor tempestivus emergens conrugatis cicatricibus hebetetur, senescunt imberbes absque ulla venustate, spadonibus similes, compactis omnes firmisque membris et opimis cervicibus, prodigiosae formae et pavendi, ut bipedes existimes bestias vel quales in conmarginandis pontibus effigiati stipites dolantur incompte. In hominum autem figura licet insuavi ita visi sunt asperi, ut neque igni neque saporatis indigeant cibis sed radicibus herbarum agrestium et semicruda cuiusvis pecoris carne vescantur, quam inter femora sua equorumque terga subsertam fotu calefaciunt brevi*. (Transl. J. C. Rolfe, with alterations).

The description is certainly very impressive, emotive, and vivid; it is also very much in the tradition of the ‘Scythian ethnographies’, coloured with the accrued pool of Imperial-era ethnographies of the north, and intensified by the emotive salience of the epistemic shock at the seeming barbarian threat.<sup>162</sup> Ammianus brings in a gender-ambiguous note – an element long belonging to northern ethnography – by introducing the eunuch simile, though this impression is detailed to result from the Hunnic way of manipulating their own looks. A cross-over with the ekphrasis of physical objects is also hinted at by likening the Hunnic looks to barely anthropomorphic bridge herms or other crudely hewn decorations. Here, Ammianus may well have been thinking about Lucan’s *Bellum Civile*, where the idols of Gallic gods in a gruesome grove – a passionately described *locus horridus* – are told to entice terror through their rotting, half-human shapes.<sup>163</sup> Yet, Ammianus continues, the broadly human outward shape of the Huns pales in comparison with their beastly behaviour: an animal analogy is all that is left when a people lets go of such human basics as fire and cooking. The argument finds a rhetorically impressive path to the old trope of a Scythian assimilation between the man and his steed.<sup>164</sup>

Alans, described next in Ammianus’ ‘Scythian excursus’, are on the whole much closer to normative humans, and while the Huns are expressly noted to be a *gens monumentis veteribus leviter nota*, Alans are glossed as the Massagetae of old, tying them immediately to the Herodotean tradition and within much more established literary conventions.<sup>165</sup>

Moreover, almost all the Alani are tall and handsome, their hair inclines to blond, they are fearsome due to the fierceness of their gaze, subdued though it is. They are light and active in the use of arms. In all respects they are somewhat like the Huns, but in their manner of life and their habits they are less savage.<sup>166</sup>

In their physique the Alans appear as rather generic Northerners, with tall and well-built bodies, blondish hair, and upsetting eyes – all these being traits that could have been affixed to almost any northern population group.<sup>167</sup> The Herodotean pastiche is made even more recognisable by the explicit borrowing of such cultural practices

<sup>162</sup> For Ammianus’ Hunnic-Alanic excursus, see Burgersdijk 2016.

<sup>163</sup> Luc. *Bell. Civ.* 3.394–452.

<sup>164</sup> Taken much further in 30.2.6.

<sup>165</sup> Amm. 30.2.12. For the Herodotean elements in this excursus, see Wiedemann 1986, 194, Barnes 1990, 71.

<sup>166</sup> Amm. 30.2.21: *Proceri autem Halani paene sunt omnes et pulchri, crinibus mediocriter flavis, oculorum temperata torvitate terribiles et armorum levitate veloces, Hunisque per omnia suppare verum victu mitiores et cultu [...]* (Transl. J. C. Rolfe, with alterations).

<sup>167</sup> Although Ammianus seems to have paid particular attention to barbarians’ eyes; this heightens the sense of physiognomical principles influencing his ethnographicising register.

as the Scythian religion: the Alans, just like Herodotus’ Scythians, worship a sword stuck into the ground as a god of war.<sup>168</sup>

It is perhaps pertinent to take a final glimpse into the rhetorical underpinnings of essentialising *ekphraseis*, especially the assimilation between reading the land and its people. Ammianus’ contemporary, the Antiochene sophist and rhetorician Libanius, gives in his speech *Antiochicus* several useful indications about how the speakers of his generation (as well as those of the preceding centuries) would have approached the task of praising a city through the essentialising power of its environs and inhabitants. In this, Libanius proceeds very much in accordance to how Menander Rhetor’s treatise would recommend: he needs to demonstrate the excellence of the original settlers of the city, with the understanding that any praise targeted at their *genos* will also apply to the settlers of the city being praised.<sup>169</sup> Libanius says:

It is necessary, however, for me to do honour to the memory of those ancient times, and then to speak of them in such a fashion that there will be shown to be harmony between the present circumstances of the city and those of former times, and so that it will appear that its present circumstances are owed to the same factors through which in antiquity it was preeminent, and that its brilliance today does not depend upon less important clauses.<sup>170</sup>

The circumstances are the signs from which inferences can be drawn about the essential quality of the city’s character. This is about as close to a physiognomical reading of a city as can be conducted. Slightly later in the same speech Libanius pursues the theme of essential characteristics further:

Before, however, I set forth who were the people who first occupied this land, I must speak of the nature of the land and what manner of breezes it possesses, how it is situated with respect to the sea, what it possesses in the way of water, what sort of land it is for the raising of crops, and in general concerning the advantages which exist here. For since the land is in fact older than its inhabitants, it is fitting for the praise of the land to come before that which will be given to the race. Indeed the first and greatest praise of a city is the excellence of its land, just as is the case, I believe, with a ship when the keel is strong to which all the other members are fastened. This subject, then, must be tested before the others.<sup>171</sup>

<sup>168</sup> Amm. 30.2.23; cf. Hdt. 4.62.

<sup>169</sup> Menand. Rhet. 1.2.353–354: καὶ οὕτως μὲν τὰ γένη τῶν ἐνοικούντων διαγνωσόμεθα, καὶ τοὺς ἐπαίνους, οὓς ἂν περὶ τῶν γενῶν εἴπωμεν, νομιούμεν προσήκειν τοῖς οἰκήσασιν.

<sup>170</sup> Liban. Or. 11.11: δεῖ δὲ με ἐκεῖνα πρότερον ἀξιώσαντα μνήμης ἔπειτα οὕτως ὑπὲρ τῶνδε λέγειν, ὥστε φανῆναι συμφωνίαν τῶν ὄντων πρὸς τὰ πάλαι καθεστῶτα καὶ ὅτι οἷς γε ἐκεῖνα προϋπήρξε, καὶ ταῦτα ὀφείλεται, ἢ δὲ νῦν λαμπρότης οὐκ ἀπὸ χειρόνων ἦρτηται. (Transl. G. Downey).

<sup>171</sup> Liban. Or. 11.12–13: Πρὶν δέ, οἳ τινες πρῶτοι κατέσχον τὴν χώραν, διδάξαι, περὶ φύσεώς τε τῆς χώρας καὶ ὅπως μὲν ἀέρων εἴληγεν, ὅπως δὲ ἔχει πρὸς θάλατταν, ὅπως δὲ ὑδάτων μετείληφεν, ἥ τις δὲ αὐτῆ καρποῦς ἐκτρέφειν, καὶ ὄλως περὶ τῆς ἐνταῦθα πλεονεξίας διαλεκτέον. ὥσπερ γὰρ ἡ χώρα πρεσβύτερόν τι τῶν ἐνοικούντων, οὕτω καί τῃν ὑπὲρ ταύτης εὐφημίαν προτέραν εἶναι δεῖ τῆς εἰς τὸ γένος ἐσομένης. Καὶ ἅμα πρῶτον καὶ μέγιστον [τῆς] πόλεως ἐγκώμιον γῆς ἀρετῆ, καθάπερ, οἶμαι, νεώς, ὅταν ἐπ’ ἰσχυρὰν τὴν τρόπιν τὰ ἄλλα ἢ συμπεπηγότα. τοῦτο δὲ πρὸ τῶν ἄλλων ἐξεταστέον. (Transl. G. Downey).

It is an almost climatological beginning for a praise of a city, harking back to the Hippocratic tradition but also to the debates which were prevalent from the second century onwards, particularly in the Greek-speaking eastern half of the empire. Libanius argues explicitly that an appropriate praise of a city should take stock of both its past and its location, since the current excellence of the inhabitants can be inferred from these. This represents well the way in which the Late Imperial tradition put ekphrasis increasingly to encomiastic and other epideictic use.<sup>172</sup> In ekphrastic rhetoric on cities and peoples, the horizons of time and place converged.

## Physiognomising the empire?

Ekphrastic techniques were embedded in the ways in which the Greek and Roman elites communicated about their world. From their early schooling onwards, they were trained in the verbal representation of objects and agents, with plausibility – however commonplace – and vividness as the declared aims. These stylistic aims, in their turn, served often to buttress the ultimate rhetorical aim of persuasion.<sup>173</sup> Ethnicised exemplars were a valuable tool for all genres of rhetoric, but formed such a broad pool of resources that orators and writers could frequently tweak the material to their liking, depending on the desired degree of classicising style, currently salient population groups, and the projected or performed identities of the speaker, their adversaries, and their audience. Additions, as long as they did not markedly challenge the already-established mental map of the empire, a province, or an *ἔθνος*, were subsumed into the pre-existing pool of common knowledge.<sup>174</sup> The epistemic support for such ethnicised arguments, especially when ‘ethnic’ customs or characteristics were posited, came from a range of theories, as we have seen above.

We have seen how for Polemo, the ‘ethnic’ analogies of physiognomical inference appeared as the earliest type for constructing a physiognomising argument. Was he also implying that this earliest type was most firmly grounded in observable reality, or that the essential characteristics of population groups made these analogies the most ‘natural’? The essentialising way in which many second-century passages engaging with the ethnogeographical tradition frame their arguments makes this implication seem likely. The essential qualities – physical, mental, and cultural – of the various peoples of the world were attributed to climatic and other influences upon their homelands. While change in culture was often understood to be possible in Imperial-era literature, the physical qualities of peoples were for the most part imagined as

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172 See Webb 2009, 78f.

173 Webb 2009, 75, 88–97.

174 Cf. Eide 2016, 314 in the context of geographical thinking.

unchanging. In certain registers, such as the ancient novel, self-consciously contrived and marvellous episodes could subvert and play with the value of physically ‘ethnic’ evidence of *ekphraseis*. An example of this can be cited from Heliodorus’ *Aethiopica*, where Charicleia is born white due to her mother having gazed at an image of Andromeda when Charicleia was being conceived.<sup>175</sup> Broadly speaking, however, in the context of the Imperial Rome, physiognomical *ekphraseis* would have contained within them a series of signs not only about where a person was from, but also how this ‘ethnicised’ origin influenced his character.

For *ekphrasis* in general, vividness (ἐνάργεια) and clarity (σαφήνεια) were crucial qualities.<sup>176</sup> In *ekphrastically* circumscribing the imperial order of knowledge through ethnicised details, vividness and clarity could best be obtained by keeping the ethnically conceived units distinct and separate, without much consideration for the identities held by the groups in question. Through the readily available display of the variety of the empire’s constituent peoples, a diagnostic eye could also be cast onto the empire itself. It might even not be too far-fetched to point out that through the ethnographical register, *ekphraseis* of a physiognomical nature were metonymically widened to serve as a diagnostic gaze directed at the whole of the Roman Empire. To borrow Tim Whitmarsh’s useful analytical concept of ‘*ekphrastic contagion*’, we might here see *ekphrastic* concerns seeping far into other genres of writing – just as in his original coinage *ekphrasis* can begin to colour individual texts in a multitude of ways.<sup>177</sup> Manifesting in technical writing, rhetoric and historiography alike, the High and Late Empire produced a highly intergeneric regime of ethnographicised physiognomical discourse. The distinct ἔθνη portrayed as inhabiting the Empire could – in a timeless, essentialist way – be seen as analogous to the different parts of a single corporeal entity, with each fulfilling their functions to which they were best suited according to the ancient matrix of ‘scientific’ anthropology. But for the balance to be maintained, the different limbs and organs of the empire – its constituent ἔθνη – had to know their place and remain their essentialistically conceived selves.

The normative or ‘tautological’<sup>178</sup> aspect of physiognomical analogies is clear: a feature (mental or physical) is thought to fit a stereotype of a behaviour, *ethnos*, or gender because the case is ‘commonly known to be true’. This brings us back to the most basic rhetorical techniques, and their (ab)use when a speaker takes up an outgroup that he knows is salient in the minds of their audience. In this sense, the

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**175** Hel. *Aeth.* 4.8, 10.14. See Whitmarsh 2002, 111 calling Charicleia a ‘walking *ekphrasis*’ – but she is also a counter-normative confirmation to the ‘as is commonly known’-type ethnicised cliché ‘all Ethiopians are black’.

**176** Cf. Elsner 2002, 3.

**177** Whitmarsh 2002, 111.

**178** The term is that of Sassi 2001, 53–55.



dependence of ‘ethnised physiognomy’ on the normative ‘ethopoeic’ iconospheres shared by its audiences is clear. The empirical claims of ancient physiognomical rhetoric, combined with the anecdotal and wholly stereotypical *exempla* used therein, produced jointly a heady, essentialising discourse on the ethnic subjects of the empire. If we search for an explanation for the curious durability and long life of many of the ethnic stereotypes within the Graeco-Roman literature, the combined demands of ekphrastic techniques and the exemplary value given to the classical literary models come a long way towards accounting for the ‘unchanging barbarian’.<sup>179</sup> Neither the ascribed identities nor the essentialisingly imagined natures of subaltern groups – whether outside or inside the empire – were amenable to change when the rhetorical basis of representing them remained characterised by an enduring set of techniques. Physiognomical ekphraseis are relatively understudied yet efficient markers of this epistemic changelessness even in Late Antiquity.

The literary continuation of imagery had a real influence upon the way the subjects of the empire were described, and perhaps nowhere more so than in ekphraseis – physiognomical or other – of population groups. On the one hand, the distinct provinces were amenable to being portrayed in an embodied way as constituent parts of an organic ecumenical empire, each with their separate specialisms dependent upon the inherited assumptions of what given *ἔθνη* were like. On the other hand, however, the physiognomical gaze was directed to the level of individual provinces. In such a corporeal metaphor, the prominent cities of a province – and perhaps its *metropolis* in particular – obtained something of the physiognomical signification value of the face, or more narrowly the eyes, the ‘sum of all physiognomy’.<sup>180</sup> A city metonymically provided the most secure and eloquent proof of the qualities of the whole it represented. This, in turn, was influenced by the cities’ position – especially in Asia Minor – as the hubs for rhetorical constructions of Hellenic and local identities and pasts; the fierce competition between the most important cities for imperial favour and benefits ensured that the demand for rhetorical justifications for special merit remained constant. And since a physiognomically trained rhetorician was able to infer the unique deservedness of the city from the lay of the land and its inhabitants’ pedigree – two aspects which were thought to be elementally connected to a people’s character – it does not seem exaggerated to speak about rhetoric practices ‘physiognomising the empire’.

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<sup>179</sup> A phenomenon commented upon by e.g. Wolfram 1997, 37, calling it the ‘impossibility of new barbarians’. Also cf. Schmidt 2002.

<sup>180</sup> Anon. Lat. *Phys.* 20: *nunc de oculis disputandum est, ubi summa omnis physiognomoniae constituta est*. Galen cites Polemo for having called Rome the ‘epitome of the world’: Galen *Hippoc. de art. lib. et Gal. in eum comm.* 22.

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Maria Gerolemou

# 11 Representing the insane

## Introduction

Studying facial expressions, that is to say, treating the face as a device that includes classifiable information on the way in which the person behaves, helps us to understand how this information is encoded and to develop a database of visual signs that could function as a guide to various behavioral practices.<sup>1</sup> The effectiveness of this taxonomy, which constitutes the main principle of the art of physiognomy, presupposes that characterological traits are or become in a way innate, i.e. natural, and, as such, that they have a sympathetic relationship with the body.<sup>2</sup>

Bodily signs could be also examined as stereotyped modes of representing various types of insanity. Particular emphasis is given to the external traits of mental disorder, both in medical contexts and in physiognomic texts, i.e. to the peculiarity of facial expressions, eyes, and gestures, as these enable experts and laymen to distinguish between different types of mental disorders, and, generally, they signal imminent madness.

Within this framework, this paper will explore further how literary depictions of paintings and statues exploit physiognomic traits of madness to their advantage, i.e. to enroll *enargeia*, vividness for the described subject, trigger the viewer's *phantasia* and promote the artist's skills in presenting the aesthetic 'other'.<sup>3</sup> Special attention will be given to the work of Callistratus, an orator of the fourth or fifth century CE,<sup>4</sup> who often depicted heroes suffering from what is commonly described as mental disorder, including drunkenness and lovesickness.

## The physiognomic traits of insanity

Physiognomic typology, as noted above, presupposes a natural interaction between body and soul and empirical observations for accessing mental dispositions. In the proemium of Ps. Arist. *Physiognomonica* it is stated: "that minds follow their bodies

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<sup>1</sup> On ancient physiognomy, see Evans 1941; Megow 1963; Klibansky, Panofsky and Saxl 1979, 55–66; Swain 2007; see further Métraux 1995, ch. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Boys-Stones 2007, 19. See e.g. *De alim.* 23.1 on *sympatheia* in Hippocratic writings and Holmes 2014.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. e.g. Quintilian, *Inst.* 6.2.29; Ps. Longinus 15.1. On *phantasia* and *enargeia*, see, among others, Zanker 2004, esp. ch. 3; Webb 2009, 93–96, 107–130; Platt 2011, 230–4; Vogt-Spira 2011; Roby 2016, 91; Gross 1992, 167–170.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Nesselrath and Bäbler 2006, 4.

and are not isolated and unaffected by the changes of the body is something that becomes very clear in cases of drunkenness and illness: for states of mind appear to change a great deal through the affections of the body. And correlatively, the body is clearly affected along with the affections of the soul in cases of love and fear and grief and pleasure”<sup>5</sup> (cf. Arist. *Prior Analytics* 70b7–9); however, a non-innate, acquired affection or disease could be useful to physiognomists only in case it shows a very intense presence and thus manages to modify external bodily signs (see Ps. Arist. *Phys.* 806a7–12).

Mental disorders, such as cases of *mania* and of melancholy, are treated by physicians both as a permanent and non-permanent situation, a transient behavioral disorder and, at the same time, an enduring pathological condition.<sup>6</sup> The Ps.-Aristotelian *Problemata* 955a39f. distinguishes between *melacholia dia physin*, a natural melancholy, and a non-temporary situation of melancholy which is the outcome of sickness (*dia noson*). When the black bile emerges from conditions outside the body (like diet) and is not part of the physique, then, it is merely a transient sickness and does not influence comportment and psychology, otherwise, the author of the treatise refers to a number of different types of melancholy, depending on the temperature and quantity of the black bile (953a29–32, 953b7–11, 954a22– 955a40; cf. further 953a15 on epilepsy). Galen in *On the Temperaments* 1, 643 also notes that some people are melancholic by nature. *Mania* in Ps. Arist. *Physiognomonica*, on the other hand, is not considered to be a chronic condition; nevertheless, it forces the body to adapt to it accordingly (808b23–28).<sup>7</sup> However, in the Aristotelian *Categories*, *manikē ekstasis* is an inborn and permanent character trait (9b35–37).<sup>8</sup> Caelius Aurelianus refers too to acute and chronic madness; for instance, mania is considered to be a chronic disease (*Chron.* 1.5), while *phrenitis* (*Ac.* 1.5, 1.21) and melancholy (*Ac.* 1.42) are described as acute diseases.<sup>9</sup>

Klibansky, Panofsky and Saxl argue that, despite the innate versus non-innate character of madness, a development of ‘catalogues’ with physiognomic symptoms of madness is observed in medical writings (cf. e.g. Hipp. *Epidemics* 2.5, 2.6); these do function as a heuristic tool for detecting and demonstrating madness.<sup>10</sup> The somatic features of madmen, according e.g. to Rufus of Ephesos, include rigid eyes which can

<sup>5</sup> Tr. by Swain 2007.

<sup>6</sup> See, for example, Galen, *De locis affectis* 8 p. 156, 200, Oribasius, *Collectiones medicae* 45.30, 42, 45, 50, Ps. Galen, *Definitiones medicae*, 19.416.σμοσ, σμζ;

<sup>7</sup> Iamblichus in *De mysteriis* 3, 25 argues that non-divine madness (the outcome of black bile, drunkenness, rage) is contrary to nature (*para physin*), while divine madness is greater than nature (*hyper physin*). See, generally, Galen’s *De sanitate tuenda libri* 6.3 on the διαφθοραὶ τοῦ σώματος; they are divided into ἀναγκαῖα and εὐμφορτοί.

<sup>8</sup> Ahonen 2014, 92.

<sup>9</sup> See Brown 1993, 439f.; Van der Eijk 2013; cf. Boys-Stones 2007, 110; Gourevitch 2017.

<sup>10</sup> However, see Boys-Stones 2007, 110.

only blink, rough lips, brown skin color,<sup>11</sup> little hairiness of the body, a delicate voice, rapid movement of the tongue when speaking, a large chest, but a narrow abdomen, gaunt limbs, fast and vigorous movements (see as in Aetius 9.56–151).<sup>12</sup> Moreover, in the Hippocratic corpus, those with a melancholic type of madness stutter (Hipp. *Epid.* 2.5.1) or are affected by aphasia (*Aph.* 8.40, *Morb. Sacr.* 7.7–8; cf. ps. Arist. *Probl.* 953b13–16).<sup>13</sup>

Physiognomic texts use similar stereotypical features which signify the presence of insanity although in another context: open mouth, raised eyebrows, staring eyes, trembling eyes (Adam. A7),<sup>14</sup> quivering eyes (Adam. A14), sparkling eyes (Adam. A16), dry eyes (Adam. A18), upturned neck (Adam. B21), spasms of the face and cheeks (Adam. B28), rough forehead (Adam. B21), deep voice which ends in a high pitched tone (Adam. B 42), flaming skin (Ps. Arist. *Physiogn.* 812a23–25),<sup>15</sup> or a sullen look (Adam. B28), lean and wrinkled brows and drooping eyes (*Phys.* 808a7–12).

The most prominent, among the physiognomic traits of madness, that externalizes mental disorder into a shocking spectacle, is the extreme and convulsive mobility; in contrast, absence of movement defines cases of melancholy. The former feature enjoys a long tradition in Greek literature, best attested in the books of Mattes (1970), who calls it the syndrome of poriomania, and of Padel (1992), where she specifically argues, “inside is sane. Being ‘out’ of home and all it stands for – mind, right place – is mad. Mad is outside, other, foreign” (1995, p. 15).<sup>16</sup> Many mad characters in Greek tragedy, for instance, are engaged in the habit of making several different movements in quick sequence to, eventually, end in immobility and silence.<sup>17</sup> Orestes’ madness, as described by Euripides, provokes rapid movement (*E. Or.* 44f.; cf. 277f.); after madness is over, Orestes is merely a breathing image (155), a living corpse (385f.), with weak dis-jointed limbs, *anarthros* (228), in need of his sister’s help in order to walk (218f., 231–234;

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**11** Finally, the association of dark skin with madness, as well as with *phobos* and depression (*dysthymia*), is common (cf. Aretaeus’ *On the causes and signs of chronic diseases* 1.5.7), and this likely results from the role of black bile in the generation of madness. On that see, Gilman 1982, 2–3.

**12** See also Rufus, *On Melancholy* preserved by Rhazes, as cited by Klubansky, Panofsky and Saxl 1979, 49 n. 128.

**13** Flashar 1966, 47, n. 59–60 for further examples. See also: Orestes (*Eur. Or.*) is both speechless and motionless without it (227–22, ὅταν ἀνήϊ νόσος/μανιάς, ἄναρθρός εἰμι κάσθενῶ μέλη).

**14** For the purposes of this article I follow Repath’s 2007 line of thought regarding the text of Adamantius.

**15** Particularly, the Leiden Polemon in B51, on the signs of a depressed and sad man, reports: “His sign is that you see he has a peeling face, bringing together what is between the eyes, with a huge forehead, eyebrows locked together, a furtive gaze, eyelids joined together, and frightened by fear”; tr. by Hoyland 2007.

**16** On madness as it is associated with wandering, see Mattes 1970, 63–64.; Padel 1981, 112 and 1995, 99–100, 107–108; Montiglio 2005, 27–28; Becker 1937, 156–157 (esp. for Aeschylus).

**17** See further characters affected by physical illness; they can be distinguished by slow motion or non-motion at all (cf. the ill body of Philoctetes in Sophocles’ *Phil.* 207).



cf. S. *Phil.* 879–881).<sup>18</sup> The frenetic movement and the shaking of the head and hands that mad persons exhibit, stand in opposition to gestures that are codified, dignified, slow and calm, movements that, for example, the Athenian aristocrats of the classical period had to adopt in order to bolster their status (cf. S. *Thyestes* fr. 257,<sup>19</sup> although cf. Phrynichus fr. 10 K.-A.).<sup>20</sup>

Madness, mainly its manic type, is expressed through disorderly movements and disconnected gestures, both in medical and physiognomic texts too. In the *On the sacred disease* 15, the author, describes two types of insanity, the phlegmatic (due to an excess on *phlegma*) and the choleric (due to an excess of *cholē*): the phlegmatic type is quiet and does not warp, while the choleric type cries, is aggressive and restless, and is always doing something inappropriate.<sup>21</sup> At 1.90–3, the patient, during a mad crisis, is reported to be jumping from his bed and rushing out of doors (cf. 7.14–32).<sup>22</sup> Moreover, the text of the *Physiognomonica* warns that, to reach a diagnosis, one should take into consideration not only facial traits but also the kind of movements which take place and the signs of the body postures (806a28, ἔκ τε γὰρ τῶν κινήσεων φυσιογνωμονοῦσι).<sup>23</sup> In the Leiden Polemon, motion is prominent among physiognomic signs of madness (B39). Particularly, in B58, it is argued that other signs of an evil and stupid madman are, along with weakness of knees, an excessive preoccupation with looking at himself and the limbs of his body, a reedy, sharp, long voice, and excessive movement of his head. Attention to movement also embraces the minutiae of leg behavior. More precisely, in B7, the author argues that those with thick ankles, thick heels, fleshy feet, stubby toes, and thick calves are, for the most part, either stupid or mad.

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**18** See further Euripides' Heracles: Madness causes his muscles to contract violently (953); according to Lyssa he is tossing his head, rolling his eyes and cannot control his breath (990). In v. 931, it is stated that "he wasn't himself anymore" (ὁ δ' οὐκέθ' αὐτὸς ἦν). After his crisis of madness is over he stands in silence, ἔστη σιωπῆ (867–71), as if someone has unplugged him (929f.).

**19** As cited at Bremmer 1991, 19.

**20** See Bremmer 1991, 18–18.

**21** See Flashar 1966, 29–30.

**22** Cf. the idea that the womb moved freely within a woman's body, causing madness, is attested in the classical period in Plato's *Timaeus* 91b–e and in the early Hippocratic text *Diseases of Women* 2.201. See further, Aretaeus of Cappadocia, *On the Causes and Symptoms of Acute Diseases* 2.11.1, *Therapeutics of Acute Diseases* 2.11; Soranus, *Gynecology* 3.29, Galen, *On the Affected Parts* 6.5, *On the Anatomy of the Womb* 4. See, on the wandering uterus, among others, Dean-Jones 1994, ch. 1; King 1993 and 1998, ch.11.

**23** Cf. also 806b25, αἱ δὲ κινήσεις αἱ μὲν νωθραὶ μαλακῆν διάνοιαν, αἱ δὲ ὀξεῖαι ἔνθερμον; 806b36–39, 807b28–29, 35–36, 808a11–12

## Portrayals of insanity

The orator's representation of mental disorders in an ekphrasis corresponds to culturally acquired knowledge, already residing in his audience's memory.<sup>24</sup> That is to say, it could also rely on established formulas, standardized visual symbols and external attributes of madness represented both in medical and physiognomic context. Taking advantage of the facial typology of various types of emotional characters as a visual resource that, consequently, would have a communicative effect on its audience,<sup>25</sup> writers of ekphrastic depictions convey a sense of lived experience to their audience. Moreover, while the depiction of physiognomic traits of madness and descriptions of the painted or sculpted body of the madman provide a representation of mental disorder and advance a guide to illness. In contrast to medical and physiognomic texts, the physiognomic characteristics of mad bodies in *ekphrasis* mark madness as a positive aesthetic and ontological value and, ultimately, invite the audience to develop a sympathetic relationship with the aesthetic 'other'.<sup>26</sup> Representing emotional excess, the mad body is depicted in ekphraseis neither as contemptible nor as alien; on the contrary, it becomes a source of knowledge concerning the darker sides of human existence, probably also under the influence of famous literary scenes of madness in Greek epic or tragedy (cf. Ps.-Arist. *Probl.* 953a10–26).<sup>27</sup>

Portraying mental illness gives the artist the opportunity not only to imitate nature, but to imitate it in a non-typical state. The madman's soul is overloaded with emotions, and his facial and bodily expressions are quite demanding. He experiences extreme sensations and, due to this, various constantly-changing emotions are imprinted on his face which is depicted as deformed. Depictions of madmen offer, then, a bodily reality that is changed, sometimes corrected or supplemented, and, as such, produces additional vividness according to the unexpectedness that the viewer experiences. For instance, in description 2, where Callistratus describes the manic Bacchante, her femininity is described as a corrected one (*diorthoumenē*), as the traditionally feminine passivity is replaced with speediness and strength generated by the *mania* given to her by Dionysus.

At the same time, the representation of madness in the verbal descriptions of art gives the impression that it challenges the limits of naturalism. The portrayal of mania functions as a case study for this particular issue, namely of the artistic tendency to externalize the natural case, here of insanity, without abandoning the capacity of art to expand perception. This is probably supported by the character

<sup>24</sup> See Bartsch and Elsner 2007; Webb 2009, 109–110.

<sup>25</sup> See Webb 2009, ch. 5.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Elsner 2007a, 204.

<sup>27</sup> See Padel 1995.

of mania itself which is described by Philostratus the Elder as a deceptive mechanism that is prone to draw someone away from things that exist to things that don't exist (2.23.1, ἀπατηλὸν γάρ τι ἡ μανία καὶ δεινὸν ἐκ τῶν παρόντων ἀγαγεῖν εἰς τὰ μὴ παρόντα, 2.23.3).<sup>28</sup> There is a long history of the association of madness with illusion and against realism. For example, in the play of Euripides' *Orestes*, the protagonist in his mad moments vividly describes the hunt of the Erinyes<sup>29</sup> (he constantly changes from ἔμφρων to ἄφρων, cf. *Or.* 43–45, 253–254, 297<sup>30</sup>), creating an additional, alternative stage where he supposedly fights with the monsters (268–272, see also *IT.* 281–300 and Aesch. *Cho.* 1051–1054). Therefore, σαφήνεια, clear knowledge, does not prevail on this stage, as his sister Electra says (*Or.* 258–259, μέν', ᾧ ταλαίπωρ', ἀτρέμα σοῖς ἐν δεμνίοις· ὄραξ γὰρ οὐδὲν ᾧν δοκεῖς σάφ' εἰδέναί, cf. 976–981).<sup>31</sup>

Ruth Webb, in her book *Ekphrasis, Imagination and Persuasion in Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Practice*, refers to the work of an anonymous writer, entitled *Periton tessarōn merōn tou teleiou logou*, where the text describes the difference between simple and elaborate narrative by drawing on the episode of Ajax's madness (Walz, *Rhetores Graeci*, vol. 3, pp. 576–578), which is contracted to simple narrative, since, the elaborated narrative reveals the hero's signs of madness: "He indicated (*menuei*) his inner feelings by his wild appearance, by the ruthless and hot-blooded look in his eyes as well as by his fast and deep breathing [...]. He moved at one moment with stealthy control and at the next he moved quickly in his rage – long was the stride of the gigantic hero – but Athena diverted both his mind and his eyes, darkness fell on his inner and his outer vision".<sup>32</sup>

Hence, madness gives the opportunity to both the artist and the orator to expose their technical and artistic virtuosity by proving that it is possible to transform the invisible into words and images by mimicking nature in order to reach not only anatomical realism, but, more importantly, emotional realism.<sup>33</sup> In the main, the representation of the unseen, as in the *technē* of physiognomy where the visible signs of the body stand for the invisible character traits, or in the art of medicine where the

<sup>28</sup> The action of viewing and being deceived is a central figure of several other pictures in the *Imagines* (cf. 1.23, on Narcissus); see Elsner 2007, 325. On aesthetic deception see, among others, Halliwell 2002, 1–33, Wessels 2014, Woodruff 2015.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. also *Cho.* 1061, Orestes is the only one who experiences a true vision of Erinyes, whom he is able to describe vividly (1048–1050, 1057–1058).

<sup>30</sup> Cf. μεταθήσεις φρένων in Eur. *Ba.* 944, 1269–1270.; also see Orestes in A. *Cho.* 1014, νῦν αὐτὸν αἰνῶ, νῦν ἀπομῶζω παρών, and Ajax in Soph. *Aj.* 303–310, from γέλων to ἔμφρων and θύωξεν.

<sup>31</sup> Gerolemou 2011, 7.

<sup>32</sup> Webb 2009, 209–210.

<sup>33</sup> On anatomical realism in art, see Métraux 1995, 13–14. For the emotional realism of Hellenistic art, see, among others, Pollitt 1986, 141–147; Neer 2010, ch. 4.

interior space of the body is revealed through symptoms,<sup>34</sup> becomes a matter of urgent concern for art as well, especially from the Hellenistic period and onwards. This kind of representation valorizes art's ability to exercise mastery over physical forces and passions. In the *Memorabilia*, Socrates supports the concern of the figurative arts to convey all kinds of emotions and emotional conflicts (*Mem.* 3.10; Pliny *NH* 35.98). Similarly, the younger Philostratus argues that the accomplished painter must be able to discern ἠθῶν σύμβολα, the signs of men's character and portray his human subjects as insane or angry, thoughtful, happy, or in love (*Imagines* 1, *Proem.* 3).<sup>35</sup> Callistratus argues too that art has the tendency to express or represent the unseen passions and character (cf. *Descr.* 10.2).<sup>36</sup> For example, depiction 4 presents the statue of a drunken Indian who exhibits signs of mania because of excessive drinking. According to Ps.-Arist. *Probl.* 953a34–953b9 the amount of wine that one drinks could turn someone into a manic or demented (*moros*) person, epileptic, or someone suffering from melancholy. More precisely, the text claims that mania and drunkenness are both accompanied by excessive bodily heat, so that the man, whether drunk or mad, is unable to think or to have appropriate sense perceptions (957a3).<sup>37</sup> However, the sculptor, according to Callistratus, fails to portray drunkenness and mania and thus make the cheeks of the Indian flesh-red to signal that he is overwhelmed by his drunkenness; his condition is rather portrayed through the Indian's trembling posture. At the same time, however, literary portraits of insanity underline the fact that the reading of facial expressions and, generally, of bodily behavior depends not merely on what the expressing subject feels, but on what the audience feels when it reads/sees it; thus, in this context, the line of demarcation between sanity and insanity depends upon the audience's interpretation as well; I will touch this point further at the end of chapter.

In Callistratus' depictions of sculpted and painted heroes in frenzy, medical and physiognomical signs of madness are mingled with literary portraits of madmen. For instance, Praxiteles' statue of Dionysus is influenced, according to Callistratus' text, by the image of the youthful Dionysus-Stranger of Euripides' play *Bacchae*, where the god is pictured as a young man, full of daintiness and desire (*Dep.* 8.3) and with gleaming eyes, exhibiting in this way the Bacchic mania (8.5). Similarly, in *Depiction* 2, Callistratus, although he does not describe the actual signs of madness which are imprinted on the face of a Bacchante and does not refer to any literary ancestors, reports:

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<sup>34</sup> See Holmes 2010.

<sup>35</sup> Lysippus, according to Plutarch, was chosen by Alexander as the only one who could depict his character (*Plut. Alex.* 4.1–2).

<sup>36</sup> See, for further discussion, Lada-Richards 2003, 15–16.

<sup>37</sup> On drunkenness as a type of madness, see Caelius Aurelianus (*Chron.* 1.5.146) and Areateus, *On the causes and signs of chronic diseases* 1.6. For drunkenness as a “minor case of madness”, see Chrysippus in Stobaeus 3, 18, 24. See also Seneca, *Epistle* 83, 18 who describes drunkenness as “voluntary madness” (*voluntaria insania*).

When we saw the face we stood speechless; so manifest upon it was the evidence of sense perception, though perception was not present; so clear an intimation was given of a Bacchante's divine possession aroused it; and so strikingly there shone from it, fashioned by art in a manner not to be described, all the signs (*tekmeria*) of passion which a soul goaded by madness displays (2.3).<sup>38</sup>

Callistratus' reaction to the sight of madness is a narrative device for ensuring sympathy with the mad Bacchante by placing the audience in the artist's and narrator's position.<sup>39</sup> Particularly, the hands of the Bacchante are pictured in action (*energous epedeiknuto*) while she is shaking their Bacchic thyrsus and carrying her victim (2.4). The Bacchante is noisy and restless, disturbing everyone around her (cf. *Morb. sacr.* 15. 3–5). Furthermore, the detailed description of her wavy loose hair (2.3), reminiscent of the manic Euripidean Phaedra in *Hippolytus* (201–201), denotes mania too. Finally, the decline of the mental faculties is further illustrated with the dullness of her eyes. Philostratus the Elder also provides a picture of the Bacchantes (1.18) during their violent act of murder, rending in pieces Pentheus and tearing off his arms, while Agaue is dragging her son by the hair. Pentheus is begging them not to kill him, but they only hear a lion's roaring. In Cithaeron, they rush headlong, setting in motion echoes from the mountain side.

The statue of Medea constitutes an exegesis of her drama as told by Euripides (*Dep.* 13). Deserted by her spouse, Medea goes into a state of delirium suddenly and exhibits a profound alteration of facial expression: The statue expresses emotions and actions that are first rational and then passionate, and generally negates, as in Euripides' drama, Medea's motherly nature (13.3 τῆ φύσει πρὸς τὰ ἔκγονα τῆς φιλογονίας ὄρους ἐκβάλλουσα). The text overemphasizes the capacity of the *eikōn* to imitate Medea's emotions, which rapidly change from reasoning (*logismos*) to passion (*thymos*) and eventually grief (*lupē*)<sup>40</sup> which, in Callistratus' text, is reproduced through constant mood swings. Rushed motion is exemplified by Seneca, in his Medea play, as the most important sign of the protagonist's madness (382–386), which, in Callistratus' text, is reproduced through constant mood swings. Ultimately, her changing feelings lead to her act of murder. Her grief, at the place of her *thymos*, depicts her solely in terms of her motherly instincts, which, because they are weak (*arrōstos*), cannot prevent her from murdering her children. However, both her animal-like passion and tenderness are described as products of the complicated female nature. After her *cholos* becomes *thymos*, anger, she returns, naturally, to pity (*oiktos*).

In her despondency, her face is flushed, she is induced to silence, she loses her appetite, and she lies unmoving. In particular, she is pale, depressed and not

<sup>38</sup> All translations of Callistratus are from Fairbanks 1931 (Loeb).

<sup>39</sup> On sympathy as a working tool of *ekphrasis*, see Webb 2009, e.g. p. 149.

<sup>40</sup> Likewise, in Seneca's drama, madness, among other passions, is imprinted on her face (*Medea* 380–396, *omnis specimen affectus capit*; cf. Callistratus *Dep.* 13.2, αὐτα μετὰ τοῦ σώματος τὰ πάθη ἢ εἰκῶν ἐμμεῖτο).

concerned with cleanliness or decency. Her depressive variety, *δυσθυμία* of lovesickness, violence or anger, and reasoning is further impressed in her mourning pose, as pictured first in her hands, holding the murder weapon (a sword) ready to serve her mad passion, then, in her dark-cloak, and generally in her careless appearance, unkempt hair and dirty clothes (cf. Hipp. *Aph.* 6.23 and Galen on Medea in *On the Doctrines of Hippocrates and Plato*, e.g. 3.4.23). Her actions are vague and uncertain, performed without energy or volition. More importantly, her eyes, in some instances, exhibit her passion, in others her morose disposition (*skythrōpon*), which then transforms into sadness (*stygnotês*). This twofold situation is also found in the epigrammatist Antiphilus of Byzantium (*AP* 16.136), who describes Timomachus' painting of Medea in her two dispositions, angered and in a state of pity. The bloodshot eyes, which flash murderous fire, are recruited to indicate madness (*AP* 16.135–43) along with Medea's murderous hands (*AP* 16.128).<sup>41</sup> Medea's eyes, as a sign of her homicidal madness, were previously described by Euripides, in his *Medea*, when she looks at the servants with a savage glance (92–93, ὄμμα νιν ταυρουμένην).<sup>42</sup> Philostratus the Younger delivers a similar description of a painting of Medea. According to him, there is a grim frown around her eyes, and her brow is charged with deep thought. Her hair is bound in a hieratic way while her eyes are shining, either with love or inspiration, divine mania (7.1). Describing mad Heracles, Philostratus the Elder uses analogous stereotypical features: the hero in madness smiles “a grim and alien smile” (2.23.3),<sup>43</sup> his eyes are fixed, and he has no consciousness; external impressions make very little impression upon his mind; consequently, the power of volition is diminished.

Callistratus finds the painting of Athamas (*Dep.* 14), a favorite tragic character, on the shores of the Scythian land after the murder of his son Learchus. The mad Athamas, king of Orchomenos, is captured naked, with blood in his hair. His hair, like the hair of the Bacchante, is flying in the wind, a sign of furious movement, while his eyes are distressed (*paraphoros*) and filled with anxiety (*ekplêxis*). He is armed, but only with madness (*mania*), for his raged deed and soul-destroying fear (*thymophoron deima*) sent by the furies. Additionally, like Medea, he holds a sword ready to rush out (*probeblêto ektheonti*) and, although he is not moving (*akinêtos*), a sense of movement is conveyed which sparks bewilderment, displacing in this way those who experience it (*tous theatas existê*). In this painting, Ino is depicted as terrified, trembling from fear, and pale as if she is dead. According to the Physiognomists, pale eyes are also perceived as a sign of madness (*Anonymi Medici*, 3.5, ὀφθαλμοὶ

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Timomachus for illustrating Medea in a moment of visual calmness before violent action and Gutzwiller. Philostratus (*V.A.* 2.22) tells us that Timomachus' Ajax was shown, after the attack on the flocks, sitting in dejection and planning his suicide.

<sup>42</sup> Similarly, Clytemnestra in *Depiction* 10 of Philostratus (Book 2) appears equally mad: her eyes are crazed, her hair are flying, her savage arm with the axe is turning against Cassandra. On the eyes as bearer of emotions in Greek culture, see Cairns 2005.

<sup>43</sup> Tr. by Fairbanks 1931 (Loeb).

ὑπόκριτοι, <εἶ> μὴ ὑπὸ νόσου, μανίαν δηλοῦσιν, see also Adam. A9). Next to Athamas and Ino, the picture is supplemented with Amphitrite and the Nereids. The eyes of the former, as they glance, are savage and fearsome, conjuring her with madness, while the latter are full of *himeros*, desire, amazing in this way the spectator.

The perceivers of a madman's story visualize various settings which rapidly change as the story develops. That is to say, they are forced to adjust to the real and emotional movement of the mad character under description. Euripides, by underlining motion as a feature that signifies madness, describes Heracles' madness in this way: Heracles thinks that he undertakes a journey to Megara (954–955) where he joins a banqueting hall (955–957), then approaches the Isthmos (958) and ends his travels in Mycenae and in Eurystheus' palace (943, πρὸς τὰς Μυκίνας εἶμι).<sup>44</sup> The servants staring at the spectacle are confused and thus ask: 'Does our lord play a game with us or is he insane?' (952). The motion produced by Heracles' madness is employed to add dynamism to the scene by stimulating an illusion of wider space. More madness, more space! Moreover, the fact that madness usually creates upheaval in the scene by attracting spectators gives the impression that the artwork is alive and keeps the audience's eyes engaged. For instance, the mad Athamas and Heracles, examined above (see also Philostratus the Elder 2.23), are surrounded by observers of the manifestations of their insanity (who also try to help them fight their madness), the servants in Heracles' case, Ino, Amphitrite and the Nereids in Athamas' case. Consequently, such an elaborated description emphasizes, as I argued briefly above, not only the emotions felt by the characters in insanity, but moreover those aroused sympathetically in both the intra- and extranarrative audience.

## Conclusion

Descriptions of madness in medical and physiognomic contexts rely on typified bodily and behavioral signifiers, especially motion, for achieving a precise diagnosis and understanding of the signaling of insanity. Writers of *ekphrasis* too, particularly Callistratus, depict the insane mind and body by using physiognomic traits. Notably, this not only serves the purpose of advancing artistic naturalism; the depiction of madness both as visceral and as artistic excessiveness works sympathetically towards the audience. In other words, portrayals like this elicit the audience's sympathy for the 'oddity' of both mad mind and body and, ultimately, urge the acceptance of it as an aesthetic alternative.

<sup>44</sup> See also in *HF* 1197, his travel, insane, across the river Acheron into Hades. Cf. further on Heracles' travelling Kraus 1998, 152.

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## Part III: **Semitic traditions**



Cory Crawford

## 12 The question of ekphrasis in ancient Levantine narrative

### Introduction

As a subtype of the broader question of what we might term artistic synaesthesia – in which the consonance and dissonance of verbal, visual, aural, haptic, and even olfactory modes of expression are constantly explored and challenged in their boundaries – ekphrasis and physiognomy provide occasion to think specifically about speech (or script) and sight in ancient practices of (re)presentation. Well known as it is in the study of classical and postclassical literature and its relation to the visual arts, modern discourse about ekphrasis makes its way into the study of the ancient Near East rarely, even less in the study of Northwest Semitic traditions. As we shall see, however, this is not because of the lack of relevant phenomena, but perhaps rather because of the lack of explicit theoretical discourse in the sources themselves. This should not preclude the investigation of ekphrasis or ekphrastic practices any more than the relatively late articulation of ekphrasis as a rhetorical strategy in the *Progymnasmata* should prevent the admission of Homeric evidence for such practices. Rather, the emergence of ekphrasis in the Second Sophistic and its many subsequent iterations have galvanized modern discourse on the verbal and visual arts in a way that heuristically provides a vocabulary for exploring and attending to the ways ancient authors and artists navigated the constraints of their art. Similarly, these questions are worth our attention even for earlier times and different places because of their potential for elucidating different configurations of the relation between the two. Indeed, this volume has provided the means for thinking about the transformation and sublimation of the visual in the literal in ancient Mesopotamia, and I wish here to extend the discussion to consider some ways in which the Northwest Semitic world demonstrates that, even without an explicit technical vocabulary or discourse, Levantine authors and artists were impelled “to breach the supposed boundaries between temporal and spatial arts.”<sup>1</sup>

If we define ekphrasis with most modern scholarship primarily (and roughly) as words about art objects (real or otherwise), Northwest Semitic examples of the Bronze and Iron Ages are easy to produce.<sup>2</sup> What we do not find is any kind of explicit

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1 Mitchell 1986: 98. By ‘temporal’ and ‘spatial’ he means verbal (esp. poetry) and visual arts, a dichotomy explored by Lessing 1879.

2 Outside of narrative frameworks, ancient Near Eastern writing is replete with genres defined by concern for objects: inventories, receipts, offering lists, epigrams, lexical texts, chronicles, not to mention the theories that writing originated as a mimetic means of record keeping that evolved from depiction.

technical vocabulary, definition, or theoretical reflection on the nature, problems, or potential of the distinction between speech and sight. I argue in this paper, however, that although explicit analytical engagement is not visible in propositional form, ancient Levantine authors and artists confronted the problem directly in both verbal and visual media. Many Mesopotamian examples of art objects and their relationship to texts have been marshaled by art historians to explore ancient attitudes toward the object and visual perception, and not without due caution against privileging texts as the sole carriers of and windows onto meaning.<sup>3</sup> Such studies have been crucial in developing theories about ancient reception of and engagement with these objects and in illuminating the use of objects in social and political relationships.<sup>4</sup>

Fewer studies consciously take up the question of the role of the words about the objects within their textual settings, fewer still for Northwest Semitic contexts. It is partly for this reason that in this study I take my cues from the definition of ekphrasis in the rhetorical handbooks of the Second Sophistic, that is, “a speech that brings the subject matter vividly before the eyes,” more than from that of contemporary literary criticism: “words about [visual] artworks.”<sup>5</sup> The classical definitions drew on much earlier texts, such as the Iliad, in their formulation of the rhetorical objective, and were so successful that some seem to take it for granted that Homer was among the first to deploy ekphrastic strategies in his narration of the shield of Achilles. Thus not only is there ancient precedent for reading ekphrasis anachronistically, as I will here, but the rhetors of the first century described the problem as one of medium, a challenge to transcend and even push the bounds of the verbal as far as they could into visual territory.<sup>6</sup> Thus virtually anything perceptible to the eyes, or even to the imagination, could fall within the bounds of ekphrastic rhetoric. I appeal to this feature not to broaden the scope so as to claim a Levantine seat at the rhetorical table, but rather to borrow its framing as a problem of word and image. Thus I take their formulation as an invitation to investigate the problem of vision in text generally, and to narrow the scope I will select as evidence texts mainly from the eastern Mediterranean, more specifically from the Semitic texts of this region.<sup>7</sup> Most texts I investigate below describe objects that would gain admission to the study of ekphrasis via the modern “words about art” definition by virtue of the artifice indicated therein, but that is

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<sup>3</sup> See, for example, Winter 2007; Bahrani 2003; Feldman 2006.

<sup>4</sup> E.g., Feldman 2006; 2014.

<sup>5</sup> On this distinction much has been written, see Webb 2009, especially pp. 1–12 for the clearest delineation of the distinctions. Most treatments, even of classical material, veer toward the modern definition while still aware that it is both an extension and narrowing of the ancient rhetorical tradition. See, e.g., essays in Goldhill and Osborne 1994.

<sup>6</sup> I use the spatial metaphor, deliberately evoking Lessing’s seminal framing: *Laocoon, oder über die grenzen der malerei und poesie*.

<sup>7</sup> The question of ekphrasis in Mesopotamian art was taken up, if somewhat indirectly, by Irene Winter (2000).

of secondary concern to me here. I target specifically those narratives that implicitly or explicitly manifest “the tendency of artists to breach the supposed boundaries between temporal and spatial arts [which] is not a marginal or exceptional practice, but a fundamental impulse in both the theory and practice of the arts, one which is not confined to any particular genre or period.”<sup>8</sup> We shall find this to be the case with regard at least to the texts and images discussed here.

My focus will be thus on those texts that explicitly signal the desire to make their audience *see*. Further, I understand the basic goal of classical ekphrasis defined in the rhetorical manuals to be one of affect, and I therefore attend especially to those texts that draw a connection between word, image, and the affected audience. These case studies show that although the ancient Near East probably lacked an explicit theoretical vocabulary for investigating and producing ekphraseis, the influential texts and genres not only exhibit what would later be more concretely defined as ekphrastic rhetoric, they serve as important points of reflection on the nature of description and depiction in the ancient Near East. This investigation will allow also further reflection on the conceptual intersection of ekphrasis with physiognomy, which are mutually informative, even though they are brought together only rarely. If we take as a starting point the purpose of ekphrasis from the ancient rhetorical handbooks, it becomes apparent that physiognomy works in the opposite direction, to translate what is before the eyes into a statement about the nature of the thing observed.<sup>9</sup> As Frahm puts it, physiognomy is “the intellectual discipline that explains how to infer the qualities and future prospects of human beings from physical features of their body, especially the face.”<sup>10</sup> Although the ancient Near East lacks the explicit theoretical and reflective tradition for either of these phenomena, we clearly see these implicitly through their operation in a variety of learned contexts. Physiognomic inquiry and data exist as a subset of divinatory practices, whereby the observation of organic variation (e.g., in flight patterns of birds, in exposed entrails of sacrificial animals, or in human physical features) is assumed to encode information about invisible realities, present or future.<sup>11</sup> Physiognomy reads (in some cases literally, in the sense of seeing letters) from visible to invisible, whereas ekphrasis tries to make the invisible visible. This difference is inscribed at the level of production (of oracular pronouncements, of ekphrastic texts), at least fictively: the diviner starts with observation of the thing

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**8** Mitchell 1986: 98. Mitchell argues here also that there is no objective, “semantic” difference between images and texts, as scholarly discourse about “the” visual and “the” verbal as if they were self-evident categories would suppose. I nevertheless persist in using such language mostly because it describes how the ancient authors and artists approached their craft.

**9** See discussion in Elsner 2002; Webb 2009.

**10** Frahm 2010: 114.

**11** See the variety of treatments on divination, including reflections on underlying theory and epistemology, in Annus 2010.

(person) present and creates the unseen narrative, the ekphrastic author narrates affectively in order to make the unseen visible.

I begin by grounding the investigation into northwest Semitic contexts with a discussion of an East Semitic text known also in the west, namely two illustrative episodes in the *Epic of Gilgamesh*: the prologue and the so-called hymn of praise in the opening lines of tablet I, and Uta-Napishti's description of his flood vessel in tablet XI as he recounts to Gilgamesh how he gained immortality.<sup>12</sup> From there I move westward to the Levant, looking at two pericopes from Ugarit – Kirta's vision of Hurriya and Baal's temple building – before moving to the Hebrew Bible to treat both its long descriptions of sacred space and the “symbolic vision” of prophetic narratives as examples that attempt to mediate sight for the audience. Given the broad swaths of territory covered, full exposition of any one will not be possible. Rather, my concern is to gain a sense of the range of possible ekphrastic expression or, more specifically, the extent to which we see ancient Levantine artists and authors challenging and, in some cases, reifying the apparent boundaries between verbal and visual expression.

## Seeing wisdom in *Gilgamesh*

I begin with a Babylonian text, the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, because it displays a range of ekphrastic strategies and also exhibits direct influence on some of the texts we will discuss below. It is also worth noting its attestation, albeit fragmentary, in the Levant and Anatolia (at Hattusa, Ugarit, and Megiddo).<sup>13</sup> We will discuss the prologue to the Standard Babylonian version, as well as the Flood narrative (tablet XI) probably composed in their classical form in the second half of the second millennium.<sup>14</sup> From the very first line the prologue establishes the primacy of looking as the vehicle to knowledge, and Gilgamesh as one whose unsurpassed looking had granted him unsurpassed knowledge: “He who saw the Deep, the foundation of the country, / who knew ... , was wise in everything! / ... / He learnt the totality of wisdom about everything. / He saw the secret and uncovered the hidden / he brought back a message from the antediluvian age.”<sup>15</sup> George notes the semantic fusion of ‘Deep’ (*naqbu*) as the cosmographic location of Ea, the god of wisdom, with ‘totality’, which are joined by the notion, present in current English idiom, that to ‘get to the bottom’

<sup>12</sup> Although *Gilgamesh* is obviously Mesopotamian in origin, I include it as both counterpoint and precursor to Levantine traditions which has had demonstrable influence on them; see below.

<sup>13</sup> See George 2003 for full discussion.

<sup>14</sup> The earlier Old Babylonian version began with the “hymn of praise” to Gilgamesh, after the invitation to the audience to see in Uruk the evidence of Gilgamesh's presence and accomplishments.

<sup>15</sup> I.1–2, 6–8. This and all translations from George 2003.

or to ‘plumb the depths’ of something is to comprehend it in its totality. In the scope of the story about to unfold, this is more than metaphorical, since Gilgamesh “had a brief experience of Ea’s domain in retrieving the magic plant of rejuvenation.”<sup>16</sup> The résumé continues, noting that at the end of his tiresome journey he wrote all his deeds on a stele and then “built the wall of Uruk-the-sheepfold, / of holy Eanna, the pure storehouse” (I.11–12). At precisely this point the narrator connects the audience to the city built by Gilgamesh and the narrative left by him, enjoining them to enter the story in their own act of viewing the city and its foundation tablets, an act that concludes the prologue:

See its wall which is like a strand of wool, / view its parapet which nobody can replicate! / Take the stairway that has been there since ancient times, / and draw near to Eanna, the seat of Ištar, / that no later king can replicate, nor any man. / Go up on the wall of Uruk and walk around, / survey the foundation platform, inspect the brickwork! / (See) if its brickwork is not kiln-fired brick, / and if the Seven Sages did not lay its foundations! / [One šar is] city, [one šar] date-grove, one šar is clay-pit, half a šar the temple of Ištar: / [three šar] and a half (is) Uruk, (its) measurement. / [Find] the tablet-box of cedar, / [release] its clasps of bronze! / [Open] the lid of its secret, / [lift] up the tablet of lapis lazuli and read out / all the misfortunes, all that Gilgamesh went through! (I.13–28)

The invitation to travel with the narrator to Uruk is not extended simply for the purpose of marveling at the beauty of the city walls; the very form of the city creates an epistemological confirmation of the narrative about to unfold, one which itself involves various journeys to view unsurpassed works and deeds in the quest for wisdom and knowledge.<sup>17</sup> It will also mirror the injunction to Ur-shanabi the boatman at the end of the visit to Uta-Napishti’s abode, upon their return to Uruk (XI.322–28). The audience in the prologue opens the box with the narrator in what might be described in context as a speech act and draws out the precious lapis lazuli tablets containing the tale the audience is about to hear. The verbally narrated act of seeing brings the audience into the story even as the literary form substitutes for visual perception.

At this point the older (Old Babylonian) story begins by extolling the superior stature of the hero. The verbs of seeing thus draw the audience into a chain of imaginative visual experience initiated by Gilgamesh and continued by the hearers. We might think of this as an expression, with W.J.T. Mitchell, of the range of responses to ekphrasis: ekphrastic hope, which desires to overcome the gap between seeing and hearing (in this case the distance between Uruk and the audience), ekphrastic fear, the implicit anxiety that the gap might collapse, in this case that the audience be

<sup>16</sup> George 2003: 444.

<sup>17</sup> On the walls of Uruk as metaphor for the everlasting quality of the *Epic of Gilgamesh* itself, see Zgoll 2010.



able to examine the tablets themselves and usurp the power of the learned narrator, and ekphrastic indifference, in which it is realized that neither the hope nor the fear will be achieved.<sup>18</sup> These relations animate the encounter between subject, narrator, and audience in what Mitchell calls a social practice,<sup>19</sup> whose relation to ideology is never far removed. The ekphrasis in the prologue of Gilgamesh is involved in the production of social relations, with the narrator-scribe standing between his<sup>20</sup> audience and, quite literally in the frame of the narrative, knowledge of all things, including the secrets of human (im)mortality.

The narrative next moves in l. 29 to the “hymn of praise” of Gilgamesh that opened earlier recensions of the tale and provides occasion for considering the nexus of ekphrasis and physiognomy. Here the semi-divine status of Gilgamesh is coterminous with his physical stature: “Surpassing all (other) kings, hero endowed with a superb physique, / brave native of Uruk, butting wild bull!” (I.29–30). It goes on to call him a bulwark for his troops, a flood-wave, perfect in strength, and “so tall, perfect and terrible.” (I.37). This stature was divine in origin: “Bēlet-ili drew the shape of his body, / Nudimmud brought his form to perfection” (I.49–50). The following lines are difficult to make out, but go on to praise his shape, which continues in ll. 56–62: “A triple cubit was his foot, half a rod his leg. / Six cubits was [his] stride, / [x] cubits the ... of his [...] / His cheeks were bearded like those of [...], / the locks of his hair growing [thickly as Nissaba’s.] / [As] he grew up he was perfect in [his] beauty, / by human standards [he was] very handsome.” This description is in line with classical definitions of ekphrasis as it is a descriptive meditation on the hero that indicates his exalted person. Irene Winter has called attention to this feature as a literary encoding of a visual aesthetics that could be applied to divine, semi-divine, and royal bodies.<sup>21</sup> We can also observe this as a kind of physiognomy in reverse, in which the description of the body encodes and conveys the protagonist’s traits otherwise invisible to the audience. Physiognomic practices start with the observation and decode the meaning, ekphraseis of bodies in narratives encode meaning through description of physical features. These two aspects of the prologue, namely the twin injunctions to gain knowledge by seeing the city and seeing the person of the one who saw the deep display an aesthetics of looking that attempts to transcend verbal media, and thereby to activate ocular modes of knowledge, that is best described by ekphrasis.

One further point to be made about the Gilgamesh epic, especially in light of what will follow below, concerns the impossible journey of Gilgamesh in Tablet XI

<sup>18</sup> Mitchell 1994: 152–156.

<sup>19</sup> Mitchell 1994: 164–165.

<sup>20</sup> The voice of Sin-leqi-uninni, widely thought to be the arranger of the Standard Babylonian epic. Earlier hands may indeed be female, given the stronger presence and perhaps even domination of women in the scribal arts (see Meier 1991). If this be the case (and even if not), gender must be admitted as another social relation realized in the act of narration.

<sup>21</sup> Winter 2000; see also Winter 1989; 1996.

to the distant abode of Uta-Napishti,<sup>22</sup> the only human to have transcended death when the first iteration of humanity was eradicated in a flood.<sup>23</sup> As Gilgamesh interrogates the flood hero to determine whether he, Gilgamesh, might also escape death, a story-within-a-story unfolds as Uta-Napishti recounts for the protagonist the details of his divine rescue. As is well known, Ea, the god of wisdom and craftsmanship, tipped off Uta-Napishti to the gods' plan to bring the flood and substituted his own, to rescue Uta-Napishti and his family by means of a vessel provisioned with all flora, fauna, craftsmen, and precious materials of the natural world. In a chain of revelation, the narrator relates the form of the vessel to the audience by means both of Ea's description to a reed wall, who relays it to Uta-Napishti, who recounts it to Gilgamesh; this is followed by Uta-Napishti's recollection to Gilgamesh of his building process, which are not identical with the divine message. Ea, under oath not to disclose to any human the divine plan to eradicate humanity, had said to a wall "Demolish the house, build a boat! / Abandon riches and seek survival! / Spurn property and save life! / Put on board the seed of all living creatures! / The boat that you are going to build, / her dimensions should all correspond: her breadth and length should be the same, / cover her with a roof like the Apsu." Uta-Napishti's concern is for what witnesses to this act might ask him, presumably upon seeing that he has demolished his house and is building an unusual structure. Ea responds that he should tell them he is going down "to the Apsu, to live with Ea, my master." Then Uta-Napishti elaborates to Gilgamesh his construction process, from the arrival of the workmen with their tools to their final celebration "as on the feast-days of the New Year itself" several days later. This description includes Uta-Napishti's brief elaboration of the structure, narrated as construction in progress:

On the fifth day I set in place her (outer) surface: / one "acre" was her area, ten rods each her sides stood high, / ten rods each, the edges of her top were equal. / I set in place her body, I drew up her design: / I gave her six decks, / I divided her into seven parts. / I divided her interior into nine, / I struck the water pegs into her belly. / I found a punting-pole and put the tackle in place.

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<sup>22</sup> Whose name that translates the name of the Sumerian flood hero Ziusudra in tablet XI (Uta-Napishti-ruqi, 'life of distant days') encapsulates both his immortality and his impossibly distant dwelling place. These are two of the essential characteristics of divine beings, fitting of course since he (and, presumably, his wife) was the only human to have transcended death. The Akkadian Uta-Napishti was probably understood to mean "I found (my) life"; see George 2003 1:152–153.

<sup>23</sup> One might be able also to discuss here the description of the Gilgamesh's journey to, arrival in, and wonder at the otherworldly garden in tablet IX, were it not so badly damaged. One notes, however, that it hints at a kind of narrative mimesis and at a rich dwelling on visual affect resonant with similar episodes in Greek and Arabic literature, which also pick up other tropes from the Babylonian epic.

The purpose of the description within the story is to indicate the divine blueprint of the unique structure, which is like no boat known from the time.<sup>24</sup> Rather, it has been shown that the description of this vessel as a seven-tiered structure whose base length and width are equal, as is the overall height, evokes the blueprint of a ziqqurat.<sup>25</sup> When the form is not recognized by scholars as a ziqqurat it is subject to utilitarian criticisms: for Patai it is less “shipshape” than Noah’s ark, and according to Finkel, “processes of textual accretion ‘developed’ [a seaworthy model] into a tall, multi-floored tower of a cruise ship that was apparently endorsed by Gilgamesh himself (utterly unusable).”<sup>26</sup> Holloway ascribed the affinity inhering in the forms of the ark of Uta-Napishti and the Mesopotamian ziqqurat to a shared “temple ideology”, pointing out that the biblical flood account in Genesis 6–9 shared a similar “ideology.”<sup>27</sup> I argued, similarly, that this affinity was integrated into the narrative, since the architectural form is likely what provided cover when his neighbors inquired about his massive structure.<sup>28</sup> Other hints include the comparison of the construction celebration to the New Years’ day festival, and the coming to rest on the mountain, and the offering of incense on the “ziqqurat” of the mountain, which is indistinguishable from the flood vessel.<sup>29</sup> It is also hinted at by virtue of its containing a world-in-miniature and by the fact that it was the place of the flood hero’s apotheosis.<sup>30</sup> The form, as well, has been noted to evoke structures of ziqqurat architecture, such as that of Marduk at Babylon.<sup>31</sup>

Although our focus here is on description and not on the adumbrations of sacred architecture, the connection may have implications for locating chronologically the beginning of narrative building description in ancient Near Eastern literature, including Northwest Semitic.<sup>32</sup> Even more germane, it has implications for how we

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**24** See now the earlier description of a flood vessel as, apparently, a coracle in Finkel 2014.

**25** Finkel’s unproveniented tablet describes the reed construction of a vessel “like a circle”, for which he makes the compelling case that a coracle was intended. One notes, however, that early Mesopotamian temple forms included rounded (oval) temples, such as the famous Temple Oval at Khafaje. Note too Finkel’s claim (2014: 137) that Khafaje produces the earliest visual depiction of a coracle in cross-section, although it seems rather uncertain that it is not the more regular divine barque with pointed prow and stern.

**26** Patai 1998: 4–5; Finkel 2014: 143.

**27** Holloway 1991.

**28** Crawford 2013b.

**29** XI.158; George translates *ziq-qur-rat* as “peak”.

**30** XI. 200–204: “Enlil came up into the boat, / he took hold of my hands and brought me out. / He brought out my woman, he made her kneel at my side, / he touched our foreheads, standing between us to bless us: / “In the past Uta-napišti was (one of) mankind, / but now Uta-napišti and his woman shall be like us gods!”

**31** See references and discussion in Crawford 2013b.

**32** As we will discuss below, Hurowitz (1992) proposes that the baroque building description of the temple of Solomon was an Israelite innovation that drew on ancient Near Eastern traditions. The Gilgamesh evidence, however, suggests that the tradition may have been established much earlier.

understand the ekphrasis relative to its multiple audiences: to Gilgamesh as Uta-Napishtim's interlocutor, but also to the audience within and without the story. The dressing of the flood boat in temple forms lets the audience – who at one point were dwelling in the shadow of at least one Babylonian ziqqurrat – in on another secret and enhances their sense of the plot, the ruse, and the significance of the story. So here the ekphrasis is doing more than simply bringing the flood vessel before the eyes – it simultaneously reveals a significance that is concealed in the basic details of the description.

These two examples from Gilgamesh provide a backdrop for considering ekphrasis in narratives produced in West Semitic languages, serving to draw out similarities and differences in the way description is utilized and framed in literature from Ugarit and from the Hebrew Bible.

## Seeing and Hearing in Ugaritic epic poetry

The corpus of alphabetic Northwest Semitic literature discovered at Ugarit in the early twentieth century revolutionized research into Canaanite religion and its relationship to biblical texts, genres, language, and poetics and, in the absence of other such texts from the Bronze Age, it has come to represent the Canaanite mythic tradition. Some of these texts skirt the line that we from our modern vantage might identify as ekphrastic sensibilities although, as we shall see, these are greatly muted in what has survived. Although these texts certainly exhibit in several places an aesthetics of affective gazing, such as in the type-scene of the sight of the approaching god, the scenes, for the most part, do not necessarily exhibit a direct or conscious attempt to play with the different modes of representation.

The gaze is a dimension of experience rendered occasionally in Ugaritic literature, perhaps most explicitly in the Kirta epic. Childless king Kirta is told by El in a dream explicitly what he is to say to acquire Hurriya, daughter of King Pabil of Udm, for his wife<sup>33</sup>:

Give me Lady Hurriya,  
 the loveliest of your [Pabil's] firstborn offspring:  
 her loveliness (*n'm*) is like Anat's,  
 her beauty (*tsmh*) is like the beauty of Astarte,  
 her pupils (*'qh*) are pure lapis lazuli (*'ib*<sup>34</sup> *iqni*),

<sup>33</sup> Trans. of Kirta epic follows generally Coogan and Smith 2012, except where noted.

<sup>34</sup> Or “gems of lapis lazuli”. See DULAT s.v. “*ib*”.

the whites of her eyes (*p'ph*<sup>35</sup>) are gleaming alabaster (*sp / trml*<sup>36</sup>).  
 they are surrounded (*thgrn*) by eye-shadow (*[s]dm*)<sup>37</sup>  
 I will rest in the gaze of her eyes (*ašlw bšp 'nh*)!  
 This in my dream El granted,  
 in my vision the Father of Humanity,  
 to bear offspring for Kirta,  
 a boy for El's servant.' ”  
 Kirta awoke – it was a dream,  
 El's servant had had a vision (*hprt*).<sup>38</sup>

Although the bare description of Hurriya is fairly light on detail, a case might be made for its ekphrastic quality given its literary setting and the implications of its narrative focus. To begin with, the passage moves from generic aesthetic praise (loveliness, beauty like that of goddesses) to dwell on her eyes, comparing her pupils and whites to precious stones used in statuary.<sup>39</sup> The practice of emphasizing the eyes in art and text is ubiquitous in the ancient Near East; it served to indicate animation and a visual relationship of worship. That relationship is textually constructed in the final line of the description, which itself concludes the vision: “I will rest in the gaze of her eyes!” As Irene Winter has shown, the relationship mediated by sight between worshipper and object of worship is bidirectional in a way that is apparent from the fact that both object and supplicant are endowed with sight.<sup>40</sup> In the case of Hurriya and Kirta, the expression ‘to rest in the gaze of her eyes’ evokes the concept of worship, but is also fraught with an ambiguity and even

<sup>35</sup> See discussion in Wyatt 2002: 196–97.

<sup>36</sup> Wyatt 2002 reads “bowls of alabaster”.

<sup>37</sup> This reading is tentative. Wyatt understands it as the last strophe of a tricolon describing the eyes (2002); Parker reads rather “Who'll transfix (?) me [...]” (1997: 17). I am inclined toward his translation, or something like it (perhaps “who surround me”) because it avoids the irregular tricolon followed by a single colon and because it preserves the spatial flavor of the following strophe, of resting “in the gaze of her eyes”. Coogan and Smith 2012 do not translate.

<sup>38</sup> On the vocabulary of dream and vision here see Greenfield 1994.

<sup>39</sup> See discussion in Wyatt 2002, esp. 196ff. On the eyes as emphasized in Mesopotamian art and text, see Winter 2000a; 2000b. The narrative move from general to a single specific feature also resonates with the building of the temple of Baal and the installation of a window; see below. Eyes are the primary bodily vehicle of worship in the ancient Near East, as reflect in countless archaeological discoveries. Perhaps most indicative are the so-called “eye-idols” of Tel Brak (Mallowan 1947; 1969) and eye inlays have been recovered at numerous ancient Near Eastern sites. The famous Tell Asmar hoard of twelve votive statues recovered in the Abu Temple of the early third millennium bore enlarged eyes made from shell (whites) and black limestone (pupils); see Frankfort 1935 figs 64, 65. Note also that Babylonian “Eye Stones” sometimes bore royal inscriptions (Müller-Klieser 2016; da Riva 2008: 40, cf also pp. 33, 123). In a specifically Northwest Semitic context, see Harrison and Osborne 2012: 130 (Tayinat building XVI).

<sup>40</sup> See Winter 2000a; 2000b.

irony colored by a “feminist bias” that may be a fundamental characteristic of the epic, as Margalit has argued.<sup>41</sup> It is uncertain whether Hurriya described in terms of statuary inhabits the role of the worshipper or of the goddess, or it is perhaps doubly inscribed as both. Both deities and devotees are materially represented as objects, and a case could be made that Kirta’s rest in the gaze makes him potentially both object and subject. On the one hand, the phrase evokes the relationship between viewing observer and viewed deity, and on the other it portrays an active, seeing subject (Hurriya) and passive object (Kirta). Described this way, this scene and its ultimate exclamation in particular may adumbrate, as ekphrasis often does, the future agency of the women in the story.<sup>42</sup>

This passage is part of the instructions given by El in the dream-vision in response to Kirta’s complaint of childlessness: Kirta is to make offerings to Baal, muster a massive army to march to Udm and besiege it. When King Pabil comes out to offer terms, with peace offerings of gold, silver, land, slaves, chariots, and a slave-woman’s sons, Kirta is to refuse and instead ask only for Hurriya. Presuming Kirta had never before seen Hurriya, the language El gives Kirta is more than a verbal message, it also presents her visually to Kirta; it is simultaneously a sighting and a citing.<sup>43</sup> More than extolling the beauty of Hurriya, it also implies the instantiation of desire in Kirta for Hurriya as he is given the script by El. The literary context is bewilderingly complex when one considers the speakers involved: El speaks to Kirta, already in an altered state, about how Kirta should respond to the future offering mediated by the messengers of Pabil, by means of a description of the fair lady that they in turn are to deliver to Pabil. The repetition of this message is more than indicated, it is performed at least once as the dream unfolds in reality: Kirta delivers the message to the messengers, who then repeat it to King Pabil.<sup>44</sup> This tangle of reception, involving first the author and his audience and then El, Kirta, Pabil’s messengers and King Pabil, highlights the problem of audience in descriptive narrative raised by Fowler. Treating ekphrasis as the literary description of a work of visual art, he concludes that “of any element in a description we can ask whether the focalization is that of the artist who made the original work of art, or his audience, or the observer, or his audience, or the author, or his audience: and we have still not brought in the observer’s brother-in-law whom chapter four will reveal to be the hero of the novel.”<sup>45</sup> Curiously, Kirta’s

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<sup>41</sup> Margalit 1999. He concludes that “it is typical of Ugaritic epic literature to portray women as superior in intellect and/or courage to men” (228; see also 228 n.30).

<sup>42</sup> For example: the broken hint of Hurriya’s action toward the people of Udm and her meat slaughter and summons to the banquet in tablet 2, and their daughter Thitmanit’s mourning response and Ša-tiqatu’s healing victory over Mot (Death) in tablet 3.

<sup>43</sup> To borrow Mitchell’s pun (1994:152n.4).

<sup>44</sup> Wyatt (2002: 204–205 and n.130) restores it in the broken section at the end of KTU 1.14 VI 40ff, as the messengers repeat Kirta’s message to Pabil.

<sup>45</sup> Fowler 1991: 31.

“rest in the gaze” is the only line not repeated verbatim in the foretold encounter with Pabil’s messengers (1.16 VI 30–31) and may depend on the different audience within the frame of the story.<sup>46</sup>

Whether this encounter should be counted as evidence of an Ugaritic ekphrastic tradition is a matter, of course, of definition. Although the text reports a vision that reveals the existence of the beautiful Hurriya to Kirta, it arguably stops short of bringing her person “vividly before [his] eyes,” although the short focalization on her eyes and their affective properties, drawing on visual traditions of physical production of statuary in the Near East, seems a good candidate for the application of the term ekphrasis, as it involves both description and the plastic arts. It also mediates the gaze in interesting ways, as it is his word that makes her into an active but mute seer while he would be the passive recipient of her gaze, whereas on the other hand he is a speaking presence involved in a conversation as to how to constrain her father into giving her over to his possession.

## Ekphrasis in the temple of Baal?

Ugaritic texts also demonstrate the affective properties, mediated by sight, of skillfully wrought objects. This is apparent in the Baal cycle, 1.4.I, where Baal sends the messengers Gapn and Ugar to the craftsman god Kothar with requests for him to make a gift for Athirat (“Please, see to a gift for Lady Athirat of the Sea, / A present for the Creatress of the Gods”) so that he might ultimately be granted a temple (‘For Baal has no house like the gods, / No court like Athirat’s children’s’).<sup>47</sup> Kothar’s response contains no speech, only a report of his work, which comes arguably closest to ekphrastic description in the Ugaritic texts:

23–24	The Skilled One ascended to the bellows, Tongs in the hands of Hasis	<i>hyn. 'ly. lmpḥm/ bd. ḥss. mšbṭm</i>
25–28	He cast silver, he poured gold, He cast silver by the thousands, Gold he cast by the myriads.	<i>yšq. ksp. yšl/h. ḥrṣ. yšq. ksp/l' alp̄m. ḥrṣ. yšq/m. lrbbt</i>
29	He cast a canopied resting-place:	<i>yšq. ḥym. wtbṭḥ/</i>

<sup>46</sup> Wyatt (2002: 204–205 and n. 130) thinks it is simply a scribal error and suggests it should be re-stored. He also suggests it would have been in the missing verses in 1.14 VI 40ff.

<sup>47</sup> Ll. 9–11: [wn. 'in. bt. lb'l/km. 'ilm. wḥzr/kbn. 'at]r[t]; ll. 20–22: šsknm'/mgn. rbt. 'atrt ym/mgṣ. qnyt. 'ilm. Transliteration and translation of all Baal cycle texts follow Smith and Pitard 2009, here pp. 396–398.

30–32	A grand dais of two myriads(-weight), A grand dais coated in silver, Covered in liquid gold.	<i>kt. 'il. dt. rbtm/ kt. 'il. nbt. bksp/ šmrḥt. bdm. ḥrṣ/</i>
33–35	A grand throne, a chair of gold, A grand footstool overlaid in electrum.	<i>kḥt 'il. nḥt/bzr. hdm. 'il(?) / dprš'a. bbr/</i>
36–37	A grand couch of great appeal (?), Upon whose handles was gold.	<i>n'l. 'il. d. qblbl/ 'ln. yblhm. ḥrṣ</i>
38–40	A grand table filled with creatures, Animals of the earth's foundations.	<i>tlḥn. 'il. dml'a/mnm. dbbm. d/msdt. 'arṣ</i>
41–43	A grand bowl (pounded) thin like those of Amurru, Crafted like those of the country of Yaman, On which were water buffalo by the myriads. <sup>48</sup>	<i>ṣ'. 'il. dqt. k'amr/ sknt. kḥwt. ym'an/ dbh. r'umm. lrbbt</i>

Although this fits a basic, mainly modern sense that ekphrasis is the description in narrative of art objects, there is no explicit indication in the textual framework that the author intended thereby to make the audience “see” these objects. It is rather a list of items made by Kothar with minimal description, emphasizing the quality of the production over their form (though not exclusively) such that it seems no hearer would be able to imagine the objects with any precision. It emphasizes the materials (silver, gold, electrum) and the process of manufacture (melting, casting, repoussé) more than it does style or shape. A hint at decoration comes at the end, with “creatures, animals of the earth’s foundations” as well as “water buffalo by the myriads”. This description fits what is known of ancient divine and royal furniture as well as seems very close to objects recovered archaeologically.<sup>49</sup>

After this description ca. 16 lines are missing, which likely relate the delivery of the objects to Baal and Anat, who take them to Athirat. When the text becomes legible again we find Athirat performing duties of unknown significance, at which point she sees Baal and Anat coming and is severely shaken by the sight (CAT 1.4 II 12–26). The act of seeing is unusually emphasized in this case compared with other similar scenes.<sup>50</sup> “When she lifted her eyes (*bnš'i 'nh*), she looked (*wtpḥn*), /

<sup>48</sup> The precise meanings of many of these terms are highly uncertain but sufficient to give the impression necessary to my argument. On the translation of the terms for these objects, see discussion and bibliography in Smith and Pitard 2009: 409–26.

<sup>49</sup> See Smith and Pitard 2009: 421–426; see also Heyer 1978.

<sup>50</sup> The trope of the approaching god in Ugaritic epic is a clear literary attempt to inscribe visual affect. I do not delve into it here because the evidence that the author attempts to provoke the same affect in the audience is circumstantial. In any case, with the scene in question, Smith and Pitard note (2009: 48–49) that in 1.3 III 32a, which uses very similar terminology, a single colon describes Anat seeing the arrival of Baal’s messengers, while the description here is emphatic, taking two bicola.



Athirat indeed saw (*kt'n*) Baal's advance, / The advance of Adolescent Anat, / the approach of the In-law of the peoples." As in many such scenes of arrival, she is deathly afraid, but here she is appeased by another act of looking, this time at the objects made by Kothar that Baal and Anat were conveying: "The gleam of silver Athirat eyed, / Gleam of silver, glint (?) of gold. / Lady Athirat of the Sea rejoiced (*šmh*), / Aloud to her attendant she declared: / 'See the skilled work of the source of the Deeps (!)'"<sup>51</sup> Unfortunately the state of the text prevents a clear rendering of the following sixteen lines, but what is clear is that the sight of the materials and the production quality made a positive impression. This term of affect, from the root \**šmh*, is elsewhere in the Baal cycle used of visual encounters: While Anat was slaughtering her captives, "Hard she fought and looked about (*t'n*), / Anat battled, and she surveyed (*tḥdy*). / Her innards swelled with laughter (*bšḥq*), / Her heart filled with joy (*bšmḥt*)." (1.3 II 25–27). Anat tells El: "In the construction of your house do not rejoice ('*al. tšmh*) / Do not rejoice ('*al. tšmh*) in the height of your palace" (1.3 V 19–21).<sup>52</sup> But this term is also used more generally of course, including to indicate aural response: " Mightiest Baal rejoiced (*šmh*)" at the news delivered by Anat that he would build his temple (1.4 V 25–35), although this is probably in anticipation of the same phrase describing Baal's response to the completion of his temple (1.4 VI 35–36).

Returning to Athirat's response to Baal's offerings made by Kothar, a certain affinity obtains between what the audience sees in the manufacture and what Athirat sees in the delivery – gold and silver and the skilled work being the primary elements. Of course this may be less ekphrastic than it is important to plot progression, since these items appease Athirat and ultimately pave the way for the construction of the temple of Baal. But the explicit indication of affect, the congruence of the affect with the emphasis of the description, and the fact that these lines constitute the most detailed description preserved in the Baal cycle, if not in Ugaritic poetry, suggest the author possibly intended to make a verbal impression through the description.

Compared with the offerings to Athirat, the building of Baal's temple – the climax of this part of (if not the entire) cycle – seems minimalist from a descriptive point of view.<sup>53</sup> Upon receiving clearance to proceed, he gathers abundant quantities of gold and silver and summons Kothar, commanding him twice in

51 CAT 1.4 II 28–31.

52 On loftiness leading to visual response, compare the "historical-literary" account of Nebuchadnezzar I (RIMB 2.4.8–9) describing the return of Marduk, whose lofty appearance (*lānšū elā*) prompts a joyful response from the people of the land as well as from the gods of heaven and earth.

53 One notes, however, that while the physical description of the palace is almost entirely absent and the story moves from commission to enthronement fairly quickly, the pace simultaneously becomes more deliberate here, repeating the following steps verbatim: Kothar's request, Baal's refusal, procuring cedars, and then four tricola about the fire in the house.

repeated cola to build the house quickly (1.4 V 51–54). After interjecting (twice) that he should provide Baal with a window, and twice rejected, Kothar procures Lebanese cedars and kindles a fire in the house. The fire burns until the seventh day, at which point Baal “rejoiced”: “My house I have built of silver, / My palace of gold” (1.4 VI 36–38). Thus the desired speed of construction is mirrored in the brevity of description: The only ingredients for the temple are ore, cedar fuel for a supernatural fire, and seven days. The whole process takes just over twenty lines, matched or outdone in length not only by the offerings to Athiratu, but also by the feasting leading up to his installation and the creation of a window in the temple immediately after he takes the throne. Indeed, the window is the only architectural feature singled out, and this because it is coterminous with a break in the clouds, which coincides with Baal’s identity as the storm god. Keeping with what I see as the logocentric orientation of the narrative, this window is apparently not for sight, but for sound: “An aperture was opened in the house, / A window inside the palac[e]. / Baal opened a break in the clouds, / Baa[l] gave forth his holy voice. / Baal repeated the is[sue of (?)] his [li(?)]ps, / His ho[ly (?)] voice covered (?) the earth, / [At his] voice . . . the mountains trembled. / The ancient [mountains?] leapt [up?], / The high places of the ear[th] tottered” (1.4 VII 25–35).<sup>54</sup> The emphasis in the building of the temple in the Baal cycle, arguably from the outset of the narrative, seems more verbal than visual even though the author employs subtle mimetic techniques outlined here. In light of all this, I do not see overwhelming evidence in the extant Ugaritic texts of a developing Bronze-Age Canaanite tradition of robust ekphrasis in narrative contexts, either in the sense of narrative descriptions of works of art (though in light of the Ba’al texts above this may be a question of degree) or in the explicit efforts of authors to “bring vividly ... before the eyes”.

These indications of vision in Ugaritic narrative notwithstanding, a holistic reading of the epics manifests a greater concern for spoken messages rendered verbatim between parties in the stories, often through messengers.<sup>55</sup> Famous in this

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<sup>54</sup> It is possible that there is a visual implication as well in the broken lines following Baal’s second refusal of Kothar (1.4 VI 10ff.), in which he gives reasons for not making a window in the house. Unfortunately these are too fragmentary to make sense of. Some have hypothesized that it is the very window that enables the temporary victory of Mot later in the cycle.

<sup>55</sup> If we admit uncritically for a moment the more modern equation of ekphrasis with description and narrative apostrophe, we might consider the unique verse structure of Northwest Semitic poetry as inscribing an aesthetic of description. The usual bi- or tristrophic arrangement presents a single theme or thematic cluster twice in variant and/or paired terms, thus slowing the narrative speed by half. Watson divided the types of parallelism into three: delayed identification, parallelism of greater precision, and dramatic delay (Watson 1988). This resonates with what Fowler (1991) called the figure of the difference between description and narration, although it fails in the essential need to show implicitly or explicitly a concern for visualization. I am not persuaded that there is an essential

regard are Baal's lines, delivered to his messengers and then repeated by them to Anat, that seem to hint in the direction of the audience, cueing through the ears rather than the eyes: "For a message I have, and I will tell you, / a word, and I will recount to you, / Word of tree and whisper of stone, / Converse of Heaven with Earth, / Of Deeps with stars. / I understand the lightning which the Heavens do not know, / The word people do not know, / and Earth's masses do not understand. / Come and I will reveal it / In the midst of my mountain, Divine Sapan, / On the holy mount of my heritage, / On the beautiful hill of my might" (1.3 III 20–31).<sup>56</sup> Variants of this speech are common enough in these texts that one might consider it expressive of a key theme in narratives about the gods at Ugarit, one that probably indicates and justifies mantic practices.<sup>57</sup> Likely the legacy of oral storytelling, this repetition of verbal messages delivered between protagonists usually by means of envoys, for knowledge of the world mediated by words, resonates with the exaltation of the god experienced primarily through sound.<sup>58</sup> Thus although they sometimes include the contents of dreams and visions, and attend to visual response, these visions penetrate ears more than eyes, at least in their narrated framework. This is certainly not due to an attenuated artistic tradition, as these texts hint at and archaeological finds demonstrate, but it seems not to bleed into the Ugaritic narratives. These narratives do stand in marked literary contrast to the roughly contemporaneous Gilgamesh prologue and flood tablet and to the later biblical narratives, to which we now turn.<sup>59</sup>

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difference between description and narrative, *pace* Fowler 1991; Bal 2009. See discussion in Mitchell 1989.

**56** Repeated with slight variation in 1.3 IV 13–18; it also is partly found in 1.1 II 19–23, 1.1 III 10–16. Strophes here reflect poetic divisions, not manuscript lines. Trans. Smith and Pitard 2009. On the importance of these lines for Ugaritic myth and ritual, see Wyatt 2007.

**57** See discussion of the import of the secret word in the Baal cycle in Smith and Pitard 2009: 225–238; Wyatt 2007.

**58** Although the stories are sometimes framed around the contents of dreams and visions (e.g., Kirta), these visions penetrate ears more than eyes, at least in their narrated framework. On visions see Greenfield 1994, and on oracles see Wyatt 2007.

**59** The sparing details resonate with Mesopotamian chronicles that report kings' building projects with few details. See references in Hurowitz 1992: 68–90. One must remember, however, that considerations of genre must be accounted for: we have been examining Ugaritic poetry, which may present a different aesthetic than would a prose narrative, and therefore change the potential for deployment of ekphrastic strategies. On archaeological finds, it has been noted that the items created for Athirtu's appeasement are similar to luxury goods such as the gold repoussé bowl, bedecked with charging bulls among other things, and the ivory bed panels from room 44 of the royal palace (Smith and Pitard 2009). Even though the text does not refer directly to these items, the myth informs our ability to tease out some of the personal relations engendered by these items and to hypothesize by analogy their properties as agents acting within that matrix.

## Seeing buildings in the Hebrew Bible

### The *Tempelbaubericht* and dedication in 1 Kgs 6–8

The Hebrew Bible is peppered with narratives that concern visual artifice, the brightest examples of which are also the most vehement and opposed to it, especially the Golden Calf episode (Exod 32) and the “icon parodies” of Second Isaiah (40–48) and Jeremiah (10). It would not be out of place to expect that in a corpus possessed of such strong iconoclastic strains authors were uninterested in or even fundamentally opposed to turning texts into vision.<sup>60</sup> But some texts reveal precisely the opposite, the literary encounter with a vibrant tradition of skilled manufacture that endowed the product with the kind of power denounced by figures like Moses and the later prophets. More than that, we find in the very texts concerned with these prophetic figures a particular way of seeing that echoes what we have encountered already in *Gilgamesh*. We will begin with building narratives and move from there to traditions of symbolic vision in the writing prophets.

The first building report one encounters in the canonical narrative sequence of the Hebrew Bible is Noah’s building of the flood boat in Genesis 6–9.<sup>61</sup> The similarities between this narrative and that of tablet XI of *Gilgamesh* was one of the most sensational discoveries of the nascent discipline of Assyriology, although for the ark-building narrative the parallels are subtle. Like *Gilgamesh*, the Priestly version of the biblical flood narrative includes detailed divine instruction about how Noah was to build the boat (Heb. *tēbâ*), including structures (door, window, roof, three stories) and materials (gopher wood, bitumen). Although the described form differs, the two accounts present vessels more architectural than seaworthy, and likely both drew on forms of sacred architecture.<sup>62</sup> The priestly author reports the fulfillment succinctly, with no extended discussion of the building process, as in *Gilgamesh*. Also like the Babylonian account, the audience is left to draw meaning from the described form; architectural connections are inferred by the audience and not explicitly made by the author. Vision is not an overt literary concern here, although if scholars are correct in seeing temple forms in these texts, it is the reader’s mental imagination of the vessel that draws the connection and enhances the meaning of the story, and may constitute one of the

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**60** Although one could, especially on the example of Islamic calligraphy and aniconism, expect precisely the opposite, namely, that texts were the only means left of “sight”. For a comprehensive overview and discussion of divine vision in the Hebrew Bible see Chavel 2012; on “icon parodies” see Levtoŵ 2008.

**61** With the likely exception of the creation of the world in Gen 1, which, as many modern commentators have noted, is infused with the terminology of construction and craftsmanship that also characterizes the more obvious building narratives described below. See discussions and references in Hurowitz 1992; Smith 2009; Walton 2011.

**62** On this see Holloway 1990; Crawford 2013b.

purposes of the explicit description. The other building narratives, to which we now turn, have more explicit visual motives discernible in their more elaborate narratives.

## Solomon's temple building (1 Kgs 6–7)

Among the most detailed descriptions of the Hebrew Bible, if not of ancient literature, are those that concern the dwelling of Yahweh: the temple of Jerusalem, narrated in 1 Kings 6–7, the wilderness tabernacle of Exodus 25–31, 35–40, and the (“future”) temple of Jerusalem narrated in a vision of Ezekiel (40–48).<sup>63</sup> These texts are all embedded in narratives that exhibit multiple layers of editorial activity and complex relationships between them. My interest here is not so much to interrogate the particulars of the descriptions and their relationships to each other as it is to examine the narrative framework they are set in, looking for clues as to the purposes of their elaboration.

The first and most likely earliest text is the report of Solomon's building activity found in the narrative that runs from Joshua's entrance to the promised land until the exile of Judeans to Babylonia in 586 BCE, the Deuteronomistic History. So called because of its distinct editorial bent informed by theological idiosyncracies found in Deuteronomy, it is a tapestry woven from a variety of textual traditions and genres threaded with Deuteronomic ideals and adjudications. The temple construction report details the building, decoration, and furnishing of a rectangular, “*langraum*” temple with a three-storied structure surrounding the central building on three sides. Interspersed with the temple construction is the description of Solomon's less ornate palace (at least textually), including chambers, a lion-adorned staircase and throne, and a “house of the forest of Lebanon” pillared with timbers from the famed cedar stand.

The intense debate surrounding the origins of the temple building report highlights issues relevant to the question of ekphrasis, because at issue in the debate is the purpose for which the description was composed. Models of composition range from the integration of architectural blueprints used by builders to temple archival material to the Deuteronomistic Historian's exilic memory of the temple, to a fictive “verbal icon” created to erect the virtual building in response to the political disasters of the sixth century BCE.<sup>64</sup> Challenges to the idea of a post-destruction composition have been advanced on the basis of the difficulty of a straightforward reading, of literary seams that indicate textual growth, and of the fact that the Deuteronomistic History encodes at various points a material development (including renovations)

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<sup>63</sup> I list them in this order because this is my view of the general order of their composition and the order in which I will discuss them.

<sup>64</sup> See discussion in Sweeney 2007, as well as the brief summary of these positions in Dubovsky 2015: 6–8.

of the temple that presuppose the form generally described in the text as such.<sup>65</sup> Also troubling for an original Deuteronomistic composition is the unapologetic and unexplained tension of the temple description with the Deuteronomic aversion to figural depiction.<sup>66</sup> With these debates in mind, then, it makes most sense to me that the building and furnishings description derives from the Deuteronomistic assembly of pre-exilic archival material of different types. Extant exemplars of these texts were produced for different purposes, few of which we would consider ekphrastic. Monumental inscriptions could be produced for gods as much as for the populace, inventories for internal administrative purposes, letters for political persuasion, and architectural plans for construction managers. Some of these might veer toward ekphrastic intent, especially the latter. Often the impetus for the production of such texts is the commemoration of a change in status: renovation, addition, new standards of measure, and, of course, destruction. Specific changes pointed to and proposed as compositional occasions include the building of the temple by Solomon, the division of Israel and Judah into separate polities, the renovations by Jehoash, Ahaz, Hezekiah, and Josiah, and of course the destruction of the temple in 586.

Assuming this kind of generic bricolage, it would be instructive to excavate these genres (monumental inscriptions, scribal exercises, visual architectural plans, priestly inventories) for their potential espousal of ekphrastic objectives.<sup>67</sup> As Hurowitz has shown in great detail, we have examples of a variety of genres of texts resembling different portions of the broader temple building narrative, and it seems most reasonable that Dtr stitched these together in its construction of a sweeping narrative from Joshua through 2 Kings.<sup>68</sup> Thus by all accounts, clarity on the origins

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**65** On the textual evidence for the physical development and modification of the temple, see Dubovsky 2015.

**66** Na'aman's conclusion that the narrative of 1 Kgs 6–7 represents the temple as it appeared in the time of the Josianic Deuteronomist neglects to account for the development narrated at important points in the history: Ahaz's stripping of the laver stands and bovine under the sea, and Hezekiah's stripping of the doors and removal of Nehushtan. As I have noted elsewhere (Crawford 2011), these acts effectively removed the figural imagery from the courtyard and may have signaled a growing prohibition of such imagery, normatively expressed in the Deuteronomic formulation in exile. Nor does it seem that Dtr needed to give a deeper history to the temple appearance in order to highlight these potentially iconoclastic acts for its reforming heroes, among which Ahaz is not one. See Dubovsky 2015 and especially Blum 2012.

**67** On the existence of these types of texts, see George (1995: 173), who discusses precisely the types of texts we are talking about: "metrological texts which give measurements of temples," and "'topographical' and other texts which list the ceremonial names of shrines, gates, throne-daises and other cultic fixtures and fittings".

**68** Hurowitz 1992. He takes issue with the frequent application of the term 'archival' in that it is too vague, that the term says nothing about the genre of the putative source text(s); I use it here deliberately, precisely because I understand it to have been comprised of different texts, such as inventories (especially in the furnishing descriptions), monumental inscriptions, letters, and scribal exercises. For treatments of the date and origins of the Solomonic material in the context of Dtr, see discussion and references in Halpern, Lemaire, and Adams 2010.

of the description of the temple and its appurtenances is difficult to achieve. Were it the case that the origins of the sources were clearer, one might be able to discern ekphrastic motives behind them with finer resolution, since such texts arguably served as deictic media, pointing either to features of the buildings visible to the reader or otherwise conjuring the building or its grandeur.<sup>69</sup> One recalls, furthermore, that by all indications entry into the main hall – let alone the innermost sanctuary – was forbidden to all but a small subset of priests, and therefore that the building narrative allows conceptual entry for whoever was permitted access to the text. The description itself may indeed point toward its desire to allow insight into features that would be invisible even to the most elite priests: in 1 Kgs 6:30 the floor of the main hall is said to have been overlaid with “gold, both inside and out” (*w't qrq' hbyt sph zhb lpnymh wlhyswn*). This verse is most often taken, not without difficulty, to mean “inner and outer areas” of the floor of the main hall, perhaps indicating the floor of the shrine and of the rest of the hall. This, however, is not specified, and may rather mean that the flooring was gilded on its upper and lower (i.e. visible and invisible) surfaces. As Sweeney puts it, “overlying both the inside and outside suggests that the undersides of the planks would include gold not visible to the onlooker, again indicating the importance of this sacred area that is visible to divine eyes as well as human.”<sup>70</sup> On the other hand, the description of the temple inscribes the view not of the cross-sections and invisible structures, of the building as its skeleton was being fleshed out, but it presents rather the general view of the interior dimensions as they would have been generally experienced were the audience given a tour of the building. This is most apparent in the widths given of the three-storied structure surrounding the building, which are given as 5, 6, and 7 cubits for the lower, middle, and upper floors respectively (1 Kgs 6:5–10). The structure widens toward the top because the walls are thickest at the bottom, but the widths given are those as they would have been experienced by a viewer standing on the inside of the structure.

In the end, for our purposes here, the temple description must be taken as a whole, as a prominent part of the Deuteronomistic history’s narrative about the most active builder in ancient Israel. When so considered, the temple building report takes on a different quality from whatever its fragmentary original components might have been. One already sees in the opposition of temple and palace that pride of place is given to the former: the narrative gives the time to completion of the palace complex

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<sup>69</sup> See, for example, the description of Marduk’s ziqqurrat in the Esagil tablet (George 1992: 109–117); cf. also the later Yehawmilk inscription (*KAI 10; COS 2.32*), which reports the king’s commissioning of several distinctive features of a shrine to the goddess, using deictic terms that were likely intended to point to features visible to the viewer of the stele.

<sup>70</sup> 2007: 115.

as thirteen years, compared to the temple's seven,<sup>71</sup> but reverses the (dis)proportions in the relative lengths of the description; the palace structure and throne are described in a scant fifteen verses.<sup>72</sup> Seen in this light, one finds the hint already of the temple's prominence in the Deuteronomistic history. As Marvin Sweeney characterizes it, the temple building report "is written to impress the reader with the glory of the Solomonic temple and the care taken during construction to ensure its sacred character."<sup>73</sup> This is because the temple is among the most prominent characters of the Deuteronomistic history: it is the final resting place of the ark, the destination indicated already in Deuteronomy and leading up to 1 Kgs 8 as the "place at which YHWH [would] choose to place his name."<sup>74</sup> The temple is the crucial factor in the Deuteronomistic evaluation of all of the kings of Judah, based on whether they ensured its centrality or permitted the worship of YHWH at places other than the temple of Jerusalem built by Solomon. It was during the renovation of the temple in the reign of Josiah, the DH tells us, that the "book of the torah" – recognized by virtually all scholars to be the core of Deuteronomy, which was probably authored not long before – was discovered. It was at the temple, standing on its portico, that Josiah "read in their hearing all the words of the book of the covenant that had been found in the house of the Lord" (2 Kgs 23:2b). And it was the temple, of course, whose dismantling was charted by the Deuteronomistic Historian in the final chapter (2 Kgs 25). The temple is the lynchpin of the Deuteronomistic History and its ideology and theology, and given this it is unsurprising to find the composer applying extraordinary energy to its description.

Yet the temple's central role as protagonist in the sweeping Deuteronomistic History is not the only indication of the purposes of its extensive description. We have already begun to discuss above the notion that the description gives access – potentially intended to be a kind of visual access – to an audience primarily excluded from it, and likely even attends to features invisible to those who were permitted. The description in 1 Kgs 6–7 is framed by the Deuteronomistic temple dedication prayer offered by Solomon in 1 Kgs 8, in which vision is explicitly and repeatedly fronted. In the first case, the narrator indicates that the ark, which had been in other places in the DH coterminous with the presence of YHWH, is placed in the interior shrine under the wings of the cherubim, which covered it entirely (1 Kgs 8:4–7).<sup>75</sup> The text clarifies for the reader that the only indication that a viewer inside the house would have of the ark's resting place were its carrying poles, which were so long that "the

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71 These are most likely symbolic numbers, and possibly motivated by scribal efforts to foreshadow Solomon's problematic attention to things other than the worship of YHWH.

72 1 Kgs 7:1–12; 10:18–20.

73 Sweeney 2007: 109.

74 Cf. Deut 12:5, 11, 21; 1 Kgs 8:20, 21, 29. On the so-called "name theology" see Richter 2002.

75 Verse 7b reads: *wyskw hkrbym 'l h'rw'n w'l bdyw mlm'lh*.



ends of the poles were seen from the holy place in front of the inner sanctuary; but they could not be seen from outside; they are there to this day.” Thus the description is oriented toward an audience that is not permitted visual access, therefore their visual confirmation is attempted in the verbal note that even in the later time of the audience the priest permitted entry into the main hall of the sanctuary could attest to the presence of the ark in the innermost shrine.

Viewing the temple is also – and perhaps most important – the explicit prerogative of YHWH. Solomon importunes the deity at the beginning and end of the lengthy prayer to “face<sup>76</sup> (*w-pnyt*) your servant’s prayer and his plea, hearing the cry and the prayer that your servant prays before you today, *for your eyes to be open night and day toward this house, (lhywt ‘ynk pthwt ’l hbyt hzh lyh wywm)* the place of which you said, ‘My name shall be there’” (1 Kgs 8:28b–29). The prayer’s closing blends even more explicitly sight and sound: “that your eyes be open to the plea of your servant, and to the plea of your people Israel, listening to them whenever they call to you” (8:52). Solomon’s plea inscribes the visual relationship similar to that narrated between Kirta and Hurriya, and one that also subtly upends other hierarchies of vision, in which the votive worshippers (i.e., at Tell Asmar) keep their eyes ever opened toward the deity. These acts of facing and watching the temple is what enables the deity, then, to hear the prayer of worshippers directed literally toward the place. And the description of the temple accomplished in the immediately preceding chapters allows the audience also to see what YHWH sees. Solomon’s prayer was successful, as YHWH granted in similar language the request of the king when he appeared (*w-yr’*; 9:2) to Solomon: “I have consecrated this house that you have built, and put my name there forever; my eyes and my heart will be there for all time” (9:3b).<sup>77</sup>

The tradition of wonder and admiration as culturally expected responses to entering or viewing a temple is well known in the ancient Near East and is indicated at several points in the Hebrew Bible.<sup>78</sup> Psalm 48 equates looking on Jerusalem with seeing god, and describes the wonder and fear experienced by kings as they view the city and temple: “His holy mountain, beautiful in elevation (*yph nwp mšwš kl h’rš*) is the joy of all the earth, / Mount Zion, the heights of Zaphon, / city of the great king. / By its citadels God is known as a fortress” (48:2b–4 [ET 1b–3]). The next verses show the terrifying impression the sight makes, even on kings who had determined to battle against it. They see and are astounded; in terms reminiscent of the Ugaritic scenes of divine approach, these kings are in panic, they are terrified, they tremble and flee (vv. 5–8 [ET 4–7]). Verse 10 sets the worshippers in YHWH’s temple (*hyklk*), considering his loyalty. The psalm then concludes by enjoining the reader – in language echoing

<sup>76</sup> I translate the imperative *w-pnyth* “face” instead of ‘regard’ in order more fully to capture the visual sense of the term and the blend of visual and verbal, ‘to turn toward’ the plea.

<sup>77</sup> *hqdšty ’t hbyt hzh ’šr bnth lšwm šmy šm ’d ’wlm whyw ’yny wlyb šm kl hymym.*

<sup>78</sup> On viewing in the Hebrew Bible see the detailed study of Chavel 2012.

the *Gilgamesh* prologue discussed above – to take in the view of Jerusalem and to translate it into words: “Walk about Zion, go all around it, count its towers, / consider well its ramparts; / go through its citadels, / so that you may tell the next generation / that this is God, / our God forever and ever.” (48:13–15 [ET 12–14]). Psalm 27:4 exemplifies the sight of the temple even more closely in a plea that the speaker be able “to dwell in the house of Yahweh all the days of my life, to gaze on the pleasant place (*lhzwṭ bnʿm*) of YHWH and to make inquiry in his temple.”<sup>79</sup> Likely a common ancient Near Eastern trope of extolling cities and buildings, these verses disclose a tradition of viewing as an act of worship. Solomon’s Deuteronomistic dedication extends this to YHWH’s viewing, and together they make the temple the ocular and verbal focus of Israelite worship. The worshipper gazes and inquires, while YHWH looks and hears.

The act of YHWH’s looking at his house likely originates from the peculiar theology of the Deuteronomist, which does not allow for the personal presence of the deity in the temple, creating the unique affinity between a god and a worshipper who both look on the house.<sup>80</sup> It makes the sight of *the temple*, and not of the deity, the most basic medium of communication between deity and worshipper, who both look toward it in a unique parallel act. The description thereof as arguably the narrative climax of the Deuteronomistic history facilitates for the audience this act of looking. This act of looking becomes even more explicit when we turn to the narrative of the revelation and building of the wilderness tabernacle and Ezekiel’s future temple.

## Seeing the wilderness tabernacle (Exod 25–31; 35–40)

The conjunction of viewing and description is even more explicit in the other two major building descriptions in the Hebrew Bible, namely, the wilderness tabernacle in Exodus and Ezekiel’s temple vision. First we will investigate the tabernacle building pericope in Exod 25–31, 35–40, before turning to Ezekiel’s vision (Ezek 40–48). Both of these constitute extraordinarily detailed descriptions that ostensibly slow the plot but structure the works in which they are embedded, and more important, exhibit more explicit interest in visual representation than the temple building description discussed above.

As with the Deuteronomistic temple, the wilderness tabernacle represents something of a climax of the Priestly source (P) of the Pentateuch. Not only does it and the

<sup>79</sup> Compare also Jonah 2:5 (2:4ET): “I am banished from your sight, yet I would look again on your holy temple (*ngršty mngd ʿnyk ʿk ʿwsyp lhbyt ʿl hykl qdšk*).” On these verses and their associated conceptions see Holtz 2011.

<sup>80</sup> Cf. the prophetic tradition of seeing (in) the temple, below.

consecration of the priests and inauguration of its service take up more textual space than any other episode, it is also entwined with other crucial accounts in P, most important among them Creation, which several scholars have argued is structured according to temple building narratives.<sup>81</sup> Further, it seems that the tabernacle texts are an outgrowth of the temple building narratives and are likely an attempt to bring the tent-sanctuary traditions in line with the fixed Jerusalem temple and its competing priesthods.<sup>82</sup> These developments and links are important for understanding the theological and traditional history of Israelite conceptions of sacred space but cannot detain us here except to note the hint that the visualization of the tabernacle cannot be far removed from deeper literary and political motives.

Important for our purposes is that the tabernacle description is narrated not once but twice – the plan and its execution – in a way that echoes the tradition seen in Ugaritic narrative of instruction-fulfillment such as that in Kirta’s dream, as well as the command-fulfillment trope in (especially the Priestly texts of) the Pentateuch.<sup>83</sup> Like the Ugaritic narratives, too, the tabernacle fulfillment is not always a verbatim replication of the command, with indications that it provided room for textual expansion.<sup>84</sup> More explicitly than in the temple description, the tabernacle construction narrative frames the text in visual terms: In Exod 25 YHWH tells Moses, at Sinai, to command the Israelites to bring gifts so that they will “make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them” (25:8). This sanctuary must be made, however, “according to the model (*tbnyt*)<sup>85</sup> that I am showing you (singular) (*kl šr ’ny mr’h*)” (25:9). The hiphil participial form of *r’h*, literally to ‘make see,’ indicates that what (verbally) follows is the blueprint “shown” to Moses according to which the Israelites are to make the sanctuary, and therefore the audience sees what Moses sees. The next several chapters constitute the model, beginning with the ark of the covenant, the furnishings, and the tent and courtyard structure with its embroidered fabrics and gilded woods.

This sight-framing also concludes the narrative, wherein after the “fulfillment” verses, when the craftsmen had finished building (so narrated in chs. 35–39), Moses looked over the work, again using *r’h*: “Moses inspected (*wyr*) all the work: they had done as YHWH had commanded. So Moses blessed them” (Exod 39:43). At this point the supernatural cloud appeared to direct the Israelites on their journey after Sinai: “For the cloud of the LORD was on the tabernacle by day, and fire was in the cloud by night, *before the eyes of all the house of Israel* (*l’yny kl byt yšr’l*) at each stage of

<sup>81</sup> Levenson 1988; Walton 2011; Smith 2009; Hurowitz 1992.

<sup>82</sup> On this connection, see discussion and references in Crawford 2011.

<sup>83</sup> On the command-fulfillment trope in the Pentateuch, see Baden 2008.

<sup>84</sup> For a helpful overview of these texts and the debates over the textual development, see Boorer 2016.

<sup>85</sup> I translate ‘model’ rather than ‘pattern’ to capture the semantic relation with building. ‘Blueprint’ would also work.

their journey” (40:38). This final verse of the tabernacle construction narrative, and of Exodus, discloses that a primary purpose of the tabernacle was to create a visual focal point, which is later reinforced by the arrangement of the community of Israelites “by their ancestral houses, ... facing (*mngd*) the tent of meeting on every side” (Num 2:2). Thus the tabernacle narrative is “sighted” in YHWH’s visual disclosure of its plan, in Moses’ inspection on the completion of the work, and in the community’s constant placement of the tent “before their eyes.”

The majority of modern commentators on the tabernacle texts have puzzled over its formalism and repetition, and most in the last few decades have noted the pejorative evaluations of previous generations. A few recent treatments attempt to make sense of the repetition in a substantive way, among which is the dissertation of A. Cooper Robertson, who attended specifically to the question of ekphrasis in her argument that the texts effect a kind of mimetic ritual process on the reader.<sup>86</sup> Robertson argues that the variegated repetition has the effect of directing the attention of the reader’s eye to those things repeated, while those things that are glossed over more quickly are equivalent to a scopic blur, or quick visual pass. Further, the repetition exists in a kind of mimetic relationship with the things multiplied. She notes that “while the order in which details are revealed makes good sense in terms of visual perception, it makes little sense in terms of the process of construction.”<sup>87</sup> The text presents first “the things that would be most easily visible from a distance”, whereas if it were a true construction narrative the order would often be the reverse.<sup>88</sup> Thus the description (and fulfillment) is geared toward sight particularly for the benefit of the audience rather than for the characters in the story. The tabernacle text’s objective is therefore to make Moses, and by default the reader, *see* the model. In this, form and meaning are closely aligned – the detail and ornateness of the building is paralleled carefully in the description.<sup>89</sup>

Inscribed in the reception of the tabernacle texts are many of the main dichotomies, ideologies, and anxieties that literary critics have long described, at least since Lessing’s *Laocoön*. Not only is the basic distinction between plot and description apparently manifest, but such valorizations as Judaism vs. Christianity, Catholicism vs. Protestantism, Idol vs. Logos are mapped onto these texts as much as description vs. narration. When Wellhausen, whose disdain for the Priestly texts is well known, remarked that Exod 35–39 “is utterly meaningless in terms of content...[it] would not be missed, if it were absent,” his ostensible championing of plot over description

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<sup>86</sup> Robertson 2010.

<sup>87</sup> Robertson 2010: 172.

<sup>88</sup> Robertson 2010: 172. For example: “One would need to know upfront that the cherubim are to be hammered out of the same piece of metal as the cover, for example, before one could embark on the project.”

<sup>89</sup> Cf Propp 2006: 366: “there is a fondness for redundancy [in P], particularly the ‘short-circuit inclusio,’ e.g., ‘and you shall plate it pure gold, from inside and from outside you shall plate it’ (Exod 25:11)”. On the relation of inclusio to temple building accounts, see Hurowitz 1992: 65–67.

barely masks his ideology.<sup>90</sup> Propp calls out the apparently widely held assumption (seeming to speak by default to Protestant sensibilities): “To say the least, the Tabernacle pericope challenges our notions of literature. Why is it so boring?” He then brings the conversation around to the question, rightly in my opinion, to affect: “The real reason the Tabernacle chapters bore most of us is that most of us don’t care about the Tabernacle. If we did, we would revel in the use of texture, color, scent and sound to make the Tabernacle seem real.”<sup>91</sup> The key to understanding this particular building narrative in its context is, in final analysis, explicit in the framework of the text: it is to make the audience, both Moses and the reader, “see” the place that would house the divine presence and from which instruction would flow.

## Ezekiel’s temple vision and prophetic seeing

The temple description in Ezekiel’s vision (Ezek 40–48) exhibits a strategy different from both 1 Kgs 6–8 and from the tabernacle narratives of Exodus, although it is clearly related to both and it is framed around explicit sight language. In Ezekiel the text derives in part from the tradition of prophetic vision as well as from the tradition of building narratives. As with the other narratives, I am interested in the way it is situated in its narrative setting and do not delve into the history of the compilation or composition of the text.

The oracles of Ezekiel are set in the context of the Babylonian exile, the prophet having been a priest in Jerusalem and experienced a prophetic “call” in Babylonia. Ezekiel takes a generally negative view of the ability of the Israelites to remain faithful to YHWH, but repeatedly states that because of YHWH’s loyalty the fortunes of Israel would be reversed and they would return to the land.<sup>92</sup> This is the situation at the end of ch. 39, where YHWH reports that through them his holiness would be displayed in the eyes of the nations, marked by the return of the Israelites to their land: “I will never again hide my face from them” (39:29). It is at this point that that return is reenacted for the prophet as he is taken by the hand of YHWH in “visions of God (*bmr’wt ’lthym*)” to Jerusalem. Waiting for him there is a man of brilliant appearance, holding a measuring reed and linen cord, who frames the vision in terms of affect: “Mortal, *see with your eyes (r’h b’yntyk)* and hear with your ears (*wb’zntyk sm’*) and set in your heart (*wšym lbk*) *everything I am going to show you (kl ’sr ’ny mr’h ’wtk)*, for you were brought here *in order that I might show it to you (lm’n hr’wtkh)*; *declare all that you are seeing (hgd ’t kl ’sr ’th r’h)* to the house of Israel.” The multiplication of the verbs of

<sup>90</sup> Wellhausen 1899: 142.

<sup>91</sup> Propp 2006: 710.

<sup>92</sup> On Israel’s future in Ezekiel, see Schwartz 2000, Schwartz 2008.

seeing emphasize that his act of recording what follows for his audience constitutes the discharge of this duty – his verbal reporting of the vision he sees and hears.

What unfolds is the elaborate measurement of a building and its courtyard walls and gates and the description of its furnishings and decorations (chs. 40–43), at which point the glory of YHWH returns to Jerusalem, whence it had departed earlier (in chs. 8–11). This is followed by regulations about its service and about the arrangement of people in and around its spaces. Unlike both the 1 Kings 6–7 narrative, whose conceit is the elaboration of the construction process, and the tabernacle plan-and-construction texts, which were structured around command-fulfillment narratives, Ezekiel’s narrative is located within the tradition of prophetic vision accounts that nevertheless make use of both the temple and tabernacle building reports, in that he describes a Jerusalem temple clad in the imagery and utopian ideals of the tabernacle, most visible in the arrangement of all tribes and peoples around the temple. Ezekiel is here cast as a new Moses, placed on a high mountain upon which descends the glory of God to deliver torah and organize the community poised to re-enter the promised land. The perfect worship, whose regulations are delivered by Ezekiel, will enable the land to be perfected, with the space of the divine abode marking ground zero, around which all the lands are ordered.

For our purposes, the framing of the text as the report of a vision – a report enjoined by the figure within the vision – is a clear attempt to make the audience see what the prophet saw, at the same time its inherent *invisibility* distinguishes the holy authority of the prophet from the profanity of the audience. This is also in play in two other (earlier) visions of the book of Ezekiel, visions also of elaborate detail related to the Jerusalem temple. Ezekiel 1–3 reports a vision from exile of the appearance – in florid but confounding detail – of many-faced creatures, bronze in appearance, attached to wheels – with embedded eyes – that constrained their motion, with a dome-shaped object above their heads. The description of these creatures undoubtedly draws its form from the wheeled stands of the Jerusalem temple (which according to 1 Kings 7 carried imagery of lions, bulls, and cherubim in the spaces of their frames).<sup>93</sup> These types of stands are well known in the Iron Age eastern Mediterranean. These visionary creatures are the vanguard of the deity, who approaches and is also subjected to a description by the prophet that, unlike the creatures, is encased in layers of comparative circumlocution. To take one example: “Upward from what appeared like the loins I saw something like gleaming amber, something that looked like fire enclosed all around; and downward from what looked like the

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<sup>93</sup> A claim made, among others, by King and Stager 2001: 343. Owing probably to the fact that this text was foundational for the development of Jewish mysticism and was labeled with the term “merkavah” – chariot – these are frequently called chariots in secondary literature, though they are never so called in the text of Ezekiel (see Greenberg 1983: 165). They are functionally more like the divine attendants of Psalm 18, on which YHWH rode from his temple in his rescue of the psalmist. Greenberg mentions the lavers as having wheels but does not see them inspiring the text, as I do.

loins I saw something that looked like fire, and there was a splendor all around. Like the bow in a cloud on a rainy day, such was the appearance of the splendor all around. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD” (1:26–28). Instead of a simple report that YHWH’s physical form was hidden from his view, Ezekiel translates the visual occlusion into verbal obscurity: “the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD” tells the reader not to try even to imagine the person of God. As Sasson eloquently puts it, “We all know what it cost Ezekiel when in his early chapters he tried to avoid anthropomorphisms while speaking about God: he fractured grammar, blurred gender, ignored number, and played havoc with syntax; in short, he gave us bizarre, realistically impossible, visions.”<sup>94</sup> Here it seems beyond question that we have an attempt to push the boundaries of the verbal-visual divide. The “prophetic call narrative” vision concludes, after all, with the presentation of a scroll to the prophet, which he eats in preparation of his delivery of the word of YHWH – which presumably included the very report of the event in a kind of *mise en abyme* such as we saw in the opening of *Gilgamesh* – to Israel.

## Prophetic vision and ekphrasis

Ezekiel’s call narrative is an exemplar of a genre rooted in vision. The prophetic careers of Isaiah and Jeremiah also begin with visions, both also connected to the temple. Isaiah 6 reports a vision of Yahweh leading to a verbal commission more straightforward than Ezekiel’s, although not totally devoid of visual ambiguity. “I saw YHWH sitting on a throne, high and lofty,” he reports with no evasion, but then follows on with descriptions that avoid the divine body: “the hem of his robe filled the temple” (6:1). The six-winged seraphs appear, covering their genitals and their eyes with them, repeating “Holy!” Smoke fills the temple as it shakes at their thundrous voices, at which point the prophet disclaims the disjuncture between his eyes and his mouth: “Woe is me! I am doomed, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell among a people of unclean lips, yet my eyes have seen the King, YHWH Sebaot!” (6:4–5). A seraph resolves the tension by purifying Isaiah’s lips with an ember from the incense altar, at which point the prophet hears the proceedings of the divine council as YHWH requests a messenger. Isaiah volunteers, and the message is that ocular and aural perception will not lead to insight: “Keep listening but do not comprehend, / keep looking but do not understand. / Make the mind of this people dull, / and stop their ears, / and shut their eyes, / so that they may not look with their eyes, / and listen with their ears, / and comprehend with their minds, / and turn and be healed” (6:9–10). Isaiah’s seeing and hearing here contrasts with that of his audience, a point to which we will return below.

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<sup>94</sup> Sasson 2002: 65.

Jeremiah's call narrative (Jer 1) is different from the other two in that it is marked by the arrival of the word (*dbr*) of Yhwh to the ears of the prophet. Vision is here only implicit, hinted at in the "hand of YHWH" touching Jeremiah's mouth, marked only afterward by verbs of seeing: "YHWH put out his hand and touched my mouth; and YHWH said to me: 'Now I have put my words in your mouth. See (*r'h*), today I appoint you over nations and over kingdoms'" (Jer 1:9–10).<sup>95</sup> It may be that this is part of a tradition that downplays vision as the primary mode of revelation (cf. 1 Kgs 19; Amos 3), but what follows the "call" proper (beginning in v. 11) is in fact classic example of the "prophetic symbolic vision" trope. In its narrowest form the symbolic vision presents an ekphrastic dialogue between God and prophet, in which the deity reveals (or otherwise indicates) an object, often mundane, and asks the prophet what he sees, and then spells out a symbolic meaning of the sight based on some essential quality of the thing seen, be it name or form.<sup>96</sup> Thus:

The word of YHWH came to me, saying, "Jeremiah, what do you see?" And I said, "I see a branch of an almond tree (*shaged*)." Then YHWH said to me, "You have seen well, for I am watching over (*shoqed*) my word to perform it." The word of the LORD came to me a second time, saying, "What do you see?" And I said, "I see a boiling pot, tilted away from the north." Then the LORD said to me: "Out of the north disaster shall break out on all the inhabitants of the land." (Jer 1:11–14).

Crucial to audience understanding is the dialogic nature of the vision. This is most obvious in the verbal pun created not mainly by the sight of the almond branch, but by its naming, which is elicited through dialogic means in order to make the verbal pun between *shaged* and *shoqed*.<sup>97</sup> Other symbolic visions of this type include Amos 7:1–9; 8:1–3; Jer 1:11–14; 24:1–10; Zechariah 1–6.

Thus vision and vision-reports are at home in prophetic initiation and activity. The reason for the proliferation of vision-texts in prophetic circles can only be guessed at, but Chavel has pointed toward two texts that may help to explain this.<sup>98</sup> First, in a text that evokes the themes and language of Isaiah's call, the story of the prophet Micaiah ben Imla in 1 Kings 22 differentiates Micaiah from other, false prophets on the basis of vision. The allied kings of Israel and Judah, suspicious of the univocality of some 400 prophets who foretold success, seek the advice of Micaiah, who initially deceives them before unravelling the prior prophetic oracles through a vision report. "I saw (*r'yty*) all Israel scattered on the mountain, like sheep that have no shepherd" (22:17). He then drives the point home, blurring the line again between verbal and visual index: "Hear (*shm'*) the word of YHWH! I saw (*r'yty*) YHWH sitting on his throne, with

<sup>95</sup> "See" may well be metaphoric here, of course, or even ironic.

<sup>96</sup> See the seminal study of Niditch 1980.

<sup>97</sup> Van der Toorn (1989) argues that the imagery of the budding almond branch discloses a temple setting; Chavel, however, argues the imagery is chiefly mental (2012: 33n.105).

<sup>98</sup> Chavel 2012, esp. 35–37.



all the host of heaven to the right and to the left of him. YHWH said, ‘Who will entice Ahab, so that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead?’ Then one said one thing, and another said another, until a spirit came forward and stood before YHWH, saying, ‘I will entice him.’ ‘How?’ YHWH asked him. He replied, ‘I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.’ Then YHWH said, ‘You are to entice him, and you shall succeed; go out and do it’” (1 Kgs 22:19–22). Micaiah prefaces his delivery of the word with a visual transcription of the heavenly deliberations to which he was an eyewitness. As Chavel notes, the vision is what lets Micaiah – and subsequently his royal interlocutors – in on the divine secret. The other prophets by implication had only heard the voice, namely, that of the lying spirit. This secret, visual knowledge of the divine council would provide the seed for the development of apocalyptic literature.<sup>99</sup>

The second text cited by Chavel, Daniel 10:1–8, seizes on this distinction in a text that borrows from Ezekiel. Daniel, standing by the Tigris river, looks up and sees “a man clothed in linen, with a belt of gold from Uphaz around his waist. His body was like beryl, his face like lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and the sound of his words like the roar of a multitude” (10:5–6). Daniel had been with others, who were overcome with power but did not see the vision: “I, Daniel, alone saw the vision; the people who were with me did not see the vision, though a great trembling fell upon them, and they fled and hid themselves. So I was left alone to see this great vision” (10:7–8). The framing of the vision is telling, in that it validates the message based on sight: “In the third year of King Cyrus of Persia a word was revealed to Daniel. ... The word was true, and it concerned a great conflict. He understood the word, having received understanding in the vision (*bmr’h*).” Thus sight (especially the sight of God) in these texts establishes the authority of the visionary as opposed to everyone not privy to the vision.

Here Chavel’s observation has important implications for explaining the centrality of vision in prophetic texts and even more for thinking about the verbal dimension of the visual report against the backdrop of ekphrasis. If it is true that one of the primary motivations of vision is the creation of social difference, the ekphrastic strategy becomes clearer. The report of the vision must do two fundamental things: it must convey enough about the vision to affect the hearer in such a way as to evoke a visual experience and at the same time it must prevent the viewer from actually seeing the vision and thus collapsing the difference between prophet and audience. In these two motivations we can see in operation what Mitchell defined as *ekphrastic hope* and *ekphrastic fear*, respectively. Ekphrastic hope is generated in the audience straining to see through speech, and it is coupled with the ekphrastic fear that the

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<sup>99</sup> On the role of prophetic vision in the origin and development of apocalyptic literature, see references in Chavel 2012: 35, n.108.

distance will collapse and everyone will see and thereby undercut the differentiated power of the prophets. Perhaps this is what accounts for the efflorescence of sight-language in prophetic texts. Ekphrastic hope is encoded in the ways the vision reports frame and mimic visual experience, such as in Ezekiel's verbal ambiguity in the visual description of YHWH, and in the implicit argument that a vision of YHWH conveys greater authority than purely aural delivery. Ekphrastic fear is felt in the very choice of verbal delivery because its deliverer knows it will ultimately fail to re-present the scene and therefore creates an insuperable boundary between seer and hearer. Ekphrasis as a strategy defines proximity and distance so as to favor the seer and define him in relation to the hearer. As Elsner puts it, "the very thematics of presence and absence – a poem's distantiation from its object of description and the description's ability to bring that object back to the mind's eye through *enargeia* – was central to the aesthetic of the genre."<sup>100</sup> And Mitchell, further, noted that the "figurative requirement" of ekphrastic rhetoric "puts a special sort of pressure on the genre of ekphrasis, for it means that the textual other must remain completely alien; it can never be present, but must be conjured up as a potent absence or a fictive, figural present."<sup>101</sup> It is the prophetic tradition of seeing indicated by the texts discussed here that would provide the foundation for biblical and nonbiblical apocalyptic traditions, for which vision reporting is a preferred mechanism for both revealing and concealing. Seeing in these prophetic texts at one stroke renders the prophet sighted and the audience blind.

This last point brings together the discussion of the biblical material and helps to explain the niche these ekphrastic episodes occupy in the biblical anthology. It is no accident that one of the first instances of ekphrasis in the Hebrew Bible centered on the dwelling of YHWH, because who controls access – even verbally – to the divine wields the religio-social power that flows from it. The social dimensions of Israelite architecture are beginning to be the subject of greater analysis as their role in articulating hierarchies comes in to greater focus.<sup>102</sup> The Deuteronomistic Historian centered his agenda of reform on a text "discovered" in the temple, a text that in turn centered religious power in the Jerusalem temple, and, assuming access was widely restricted, the dissemination of the "image" of the temple in text also at some level realized the temple for a broader audience. Similarly, the Priestly texts describing the tabernacle may have had as one of their agendas the appropriation of earlier cult systems and authority by establishing a visual congruity between the tent of wilderness and the Jerusalem temple.<sup>103</sup> This Priestly document took on

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<sup>100</sup> Elsner 2002: 13. Webb 2009 understands *enargeia* as vividness.

<sup>101</sup> Mitchell 1994: 63.

<sup>102</sup> See, for example, George 2009.

<sup>103</sup> On arguments for this appropriation, see Crawford 2011. I see the Priestly document of the Pentateuch as having its primary formation in the Pre-Exilic period

new life after the exile as it apparently became the basis for social restructuring.<sup>104</sup> The temple and tabernacle fed into the way Ezekiel made sense of the destruction of Jerusalem and his relation to it as well as of the future of Israel. The growth of apocalyptic literature was inextricably bound with the shifting political fortunes of Judah that redistributed power in Judah through particular priesthoods and gave new meaning to older, especially Priestly texts. Ekphrastic strategies were deployed within this context at least partly as a means to political ends and flourished in the particular configuration of power in Judean society.<sup>105</sup> It is no accident that the acts of seeing and describing the temple are at the heart of biblical traditions of vision. In-group social boundaries and power dynamics were determined, maintained, and eventually challenged by controlling access to the presence, literally, the ‘face’ of God. The prophetic visions began as a disclosure of special knowledge obtained by seeing and translated that into a medium in which seeing was both central and impossible – namely, into text. The alternation of centrality and impossibility drove a machine that replicated the tension in myriad ways, eventually as an in-group response to their own expulsion from the sight of god. In this, apocalyptic literature never strayed very far from the building whose presence and absence saw the genre’s first adumbrations – nor from the verbal translation of the experience of seeing within it.

## Conclusion

The purpose of this paper has been to ask whether ancient Levantine authors were concerned with transcending the boundaries of the senses, specifically speech and sight, through their compositions. In order to do so it was necessary to survey those instances in which the desire to make the audience see was more or less explicit in the work itself. The deeper question of nonexplicit sight through speech and what ancient rhetoricians called *enargeia*, “vividness,” are left to further study. Why should one be concerned with ekphrasis in the ancient Levant, if it was not an explicitly defined literary genre? Mostly because it provides a heuristic model for organizing affective

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**104** Cf. Ezra 10; Haran 1981.

**105** Mitchell (1986: 103–07) makes a similar point about Lessing mapping visual and verbal rhetorical practices onto European struggles (Britain vs. Continent; Protestant vs. Catholic) of the 18th century: “Where these principles [of spatiality separated from temporality] do affect practice is in the formation of value judgments, canons of acceptable works, and formulations of the ideological significance of styles, movements, and genres. Since these regulative principles generally advertise themselves as nothing more than natural, necessary, or literal ways of talking about the arts, the disclosure of their figurative basis may help us to reconstruct what Fredric Jameson would call the ‘political unconscious’ that sets them in motion and determines their form” (103). See also Mitchell 1994: 151–181.

and potentially synaesthetic texts and, more important, for thinking about the implications of the deployment of synaesthetic strategies. I have argued that although the concept was probably never theorized, we might, as did the authors of the *Progymnasmata*, and literary and art historians since at least the eighteenth century, collect and organize ancient examples and discern their operations and motivations in surviving Levantine corpora.

From the examples discussed we find in West Semitic contexts explicit attempts to overcome the word-image divide in the Levantine texts we examined: *Gilgamesh*, *Kirta*, *Baal*, biblical building narratives and prophetic visions, all of which attempted with various rhetorical strategies to make their audience (both within the text and without) see, at the same time deriving power from the audience's blindness. These examples are sufficient to rough out the contours of ekphrastic strategies in Northwest Semitic literature. The Canaanite tradition (to the extent represented by Ugaritic epic texts) seemed less interested in making the audience see than making them hear, with the caveats that this may be an accident of discovery, and that more subtle arguments for vision in Canaanite texts might be fruitfully explored in the future. The biblical narratives explored, by contrast, exhibit strong ekphrastic tendencies, concentrated especially around the building narratives of Noah's ark, Solomon's temple, Moses' tabernacle, and Ezekiel's temple, as well as around the tradition of prophetic vision reports. These contours also allowed us to point toward some of the power dynamics inhering in the simultaneous revelation and occlusion that attend attempts to overcome the divide between word and image.

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Regula Forster

## 13 Physiognomy as a secret for the king. The chapter on physiognomy in the pseudo-Aristotelian “Secret of Secrets”

The pseudo-Aristotelian “Secret of Secrets” (Arabic *Sirr al-asrār*, Latin *Secretum secretorum*) is an Arabic compilation dating probably from the late 10th century CE.<sup>1</sup> It is one of the most influential works of the Middle Ages, both in its original Arabic version as well as in its many translations and adaptations. In the main preface, the work is presented as an epistle by Aristotle to Alexander the Great: Aristotle is said to have written the epistle when he had become too old to accompany his pupil on his military expeditions. The text replaces him as Alexander’s teacher and gives Alexander all the knowledge he needs to rule successfully. The treatise therefore can be read as a mirror for princes, though it also has a decidedly encyclopaedic character.<sup>2</sup>

The Arabic *Sirr al-asrār* circulates in two different versions – a long and a short form<sup>3</sup> – and contains a chapter on physiognomy inserted at different places in these versions. Furthermore, the chapter is not always of the same length. However, it obviously forms an essential part of the text, as we do not know an Arabic version of the *Sirr al-asrār* that excludes it completely.<sup>4</sup> Besides, the chapter on physiognomy was quite successful on its own, as there are manuscripts that contain only this section.<sup>5</sup> This success is striking insofar as the chapter is competing with another pseudo-Aristotelian text, the *Physiognomy* translated into Arabic by Ḥunayn b. Ishāq.<sup>6</sup> We can therefore conclude that the *Sirr al-asrār*’s way of presenting physiognomy was quite appealing to potential readers, beyond the simple fact that the chapter was attributed to Aristotle.

In the long form of the *Sirr al-asrār*, the chapter on physiognomy is included in the second section of the text. This is the section on the behaviour of the king, which is by far the longest section of the work. It starts with the behaviour of the king proper, such as how he should speak and dress. Then, two subsections follow, one on astrology and a very long one about medicine. The physiognomy, then, is the last subsection.

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1 For this dating, see Forster 2006, 11–19. Even if we assume that the *Rasāʾil Ikhwān al-ṣafāʾ* should be seen as an early 10th century compilation (see de Callataÿ 2014, 262), this dating of the *Sirr al-asrār* remains valid.

2 See Forster 2006, 108–111.

3 Which one is older, whether one of them developed out of the other or whether they both stem from a common archetype, remains an open question at the moment, see Forster 2006, 20–30.

4 Forster 2006, 91.

5 Forster 2006, 14 and 91.

6 Ghersetti 1999, ix–xi.

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**Notes:** This article is based largely on my doctoral dissertation (Forster 2006).



Physiognomy here is presented as a science important for the correct behaviour of the king, but also as having close relations to medicine.<sup>7</sup>

The chapter on physiognomy itself consists of three parts: (1) a theoretical introduction, (2) the famous story about Hippocrates and Polemon, and (3) a detailed description of bodily parts and their meaning for determining the character of the person in question. While this is the normal form and position of the chapter on physiognomy in the long form of the *Sirr al-asrār*, there is at least one manuscript<sup>8</sup> that drops both the introduction and the story about Polemon and Hippocrates, and places the remaining part at the end of the *Sirr al-asrār*'s section about justice (see table below). Through this relocation, physiognomy becomes an instrument to

Section	Long Form (in 10 sections)	Long Form (Riyadh MS)	Short Form (in 8 sections)	Short Form (in 7 sections)
1	Types of kings	Types of kings	Types of kings	Types of kings
2	1) Behaviour 2) Astrology 3) Medicine 4) Physiognomy (Introduction, Polemon and Hippocrates, Details)	1) Behaviour 2) Medicine	1) Behaviour 2) Astrology	1) Behaviour 2) Astrology
3	Justice	1) Justice 2) Physiognomy (Details)	Justice	Justice
4	Ministers	Ministers	1) Ministers 2) Scribes 3) Tax clerks	1) Ministers 2) Scribes 3) Tax clerks
5	Scribes	Scribes	Ambassadors	Ambassadors
6	Ambassadors	Ambassadors	Army	1) Army 2) Warfare 3) Physiognomy (Introduction, Details)
7	Tax clerks	Tax clerks	1) Warfare 2) Physiognomy ((Introduction), Details) 3) Medicine	Medicine Occult sciences
8	Army	Army	Occult sciences	
9	Warfare	Warfare		
10	Occult sciences	Occult sciences		

<sup>7</sup> For the close relationship of physiognomy and medicine see Gherseti 2001; Gherseti 2007; Hoyland 2007, 241.

<sup>8</sup> Riyadh, King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies, 2815.

guarantee the justice of the king: to know about physiognomy is no longer a question of good behaviour, but a question of justice, which is the basis of a prospering state.

The short form of the *Sirr al-asrār* shows a structure that is similar to the manuscript just mentioned: most manuscripts of the short form leave out the story about Polemon and Hippocrates.<sup>9</sup> Some manuscripts have an even shorter chapter, leaving out the introduction as well.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, the chapter is located at a point that is much later in the text. It usually comes after the sections on the army and on warfare, and before the subsection on medicine and the occult sciences.<sup>11</sup> In this way, physiognomy maintains its close connection with medicine, but is shifted from being a science important for the king's behaviour to being one of the many sciences included in the work. The *Sirr al-asrār* becomes, thereby, less of a mirror for princes and more of an encyclopaedia.

## The introduction

In the introduction of the chapter, Aristotle explains that physiognomy is a knowledge that Alexander cannot live without.<sup>12</sup> But most of all, it is a true science,<sup>13</sup> and the section ends with a declaration that the author could give a clear proof of its truth, but that this would take too long. Its importance can also be shown by the fact that already “the ancients” (*al-awā'il*)<sup>14</sup> have practised it: Here, the compiler of the *Sirr al-asrār* obviously has not been very careful: the “ancients” are – in medieval Arabic literature – usually the Greeks, but the alleged author Aristotle himself is Greek and would not talk like that about the “ancients”.

The section on the bodily details starts with yet another introduction, which again emphasises the importance of physiognomy, but also explains its theoretical foundation. The uterus is compared with a pot: the embryo gets cooked, and in this process acquires certain properties. If it is cooked too little, the person will be blond and blue-eyed, signs which are, therefore, indications of a defective character.<sup>15</sup> This comparison invokes not only a medical discourse, but also an alchemical one, where the lesser metals are said to have been “ripened” for too short a time.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Forster 2006, 91.

<sup>10</sup> Forster 2006, 91.

<sup>11</sup> See Forster 2006, 24–25, 91; a different analysis of the text's structure is offered by Manzalaoui 1974, 166–170.

<sup>12</sup> Ed. Badawī 1954, 116.

<sup>13</sup> See also Ghersetti 2007, 281–282 and Hoyland 2007, 238–239.

<sup>14</sup> See Ghersetti 2007, 282.

<sup>15</sup> Ed. Badawī 1954, 118.

<sup>16</sup> See Ullmann 1972, 257. That the metals are the children of the earth and that the vile metals should return to the ‘womb’ to ripen are the central motives of the *Risālat al-Tāj* (“The epistle of the Crown”),

## The story of Polemon

One more argument for the truth of physiognomy follows in the second subsection: the story about Hippocrates and Polemon. In antique sources, the same story is told about Socrates and Zopyrus.<sup>17</sup> By introducing Polemon, the *Sirr al-asrār* takes the most prominent physiognomist of all times<sup>18</sup> as its protagonist; by replacing Socrates by Hippocrates, it emphasises the link between physiognomy and medicine.<sup>19</sup> In the story, the pupils (*talāmidha*) of Hippocrates draw his picture and bring it to Polemon asking him to give his opinion. He considers it and says: “This is a cheat, a godless man, who loves fornication.”<sup>20</sup> The pupils become so angry that they want to kill him, explaining that this is indeed a picture of the learned Hippocrates. Polemon insists on simply having given his judgement according to his art. They then go back to Hippocrates and report what happened. Hippocrates reacts as follows:

Hippocrates said to them: “Polemon said the truth! By God, he was not wrong by a single letter in what he has explained. This is my property and my characteristic. But after I had realised that these things are ugly, I restrained myself (*nafsi*) from them and my intellect conquered my passions.”

This adds to the excellence of Hippocrates, because philosophy is but the control of the passions.<sup>21</sup>

The story, which is meant to be told in praise of physiognomy, actually ends up praising philosophy:<sup>22</sup> physiognomy can describe someone’s disposition, but how he or she will develop, is impossible to say. The importance of physiognomy as a science for the ruler is, therefore, limited.

## The detailed rules

The physiognomic rules are presented in a list, ordered more or less from head to heel (*a capite ad calcem*). This means that the model followed is not physiognomic such as that of the Pseudo-Aristotelian *Physiognomy* or of Polemon’s *Physiognomy* (where the order followed is from the feet upwards), but rather a medical one, where the

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attributed to Mary the Copt (see MS Cairo, Dār al-kutub, Kīmiyā’ majmū’a 23, fols. 39r–40v).

<sup>17</sup> Whether the *Sirr al-asrār* is the oldest text replacing Socrates and Zopyrus by Hippocrates and Polemon, is a problem not yet solved. See Swain 2007, 6; Hoyland 2007, 237; Ghersetti 2007, 283.

<sup>18</sup> See Hoyland 2007, 235–236 and also Ghersetti 1999, ix.

<sup>19</sup> See Swain 2007, 7.

<sup>20</sup> Ed. Badawī 1954, 117.

<sup>21</sup> Ed. Badawī 1954, 117.

<sup>22</sup> See Ghersetti 2007, 283.

head-to-foot-structure is the standard.<sup>23</sup> In addition, the introduction of this section<sup>24</sup> talks about the way someone might look at Alexander. Instead of a constant trait, it is a kind of behaviour that here becomes the object of physiognomy – something that is found already in the work of Polemon.<sup>25</sup>

At both the beginning and the end of this subsection, we find a description of the most excellent person.<sup>26</sup> These two descriptions are, generally speaking, very similar, though the second one is much longer. They are based on the Aristotelian idea of the middle way, also prominent in medical writings. Only in one respect do they diverge substantially: While the first one recommends a man with black hair,<sup>27</sup> as does the section on hair, the second description of the perfect man describes a man with reddish hair (*aṣhab*).<sup>28</sup> Both descriptions end on a similar note: as can be expected in a mirror for princes, they tell Alexander that he should choose such a person as his companion. At the beginning we read:

This is the most balanced natural disposition; be satisfied with it for yourself and for your companions.<sup>29</sup>

This sounds very much like a medical discourse on balance, but it is relocated in the context of a mirror for princes. The end of the second description reads quite similarly:

Alexander, if you find someone of this characteristic, chose him for yourself and give him power over the affairs of your flock and over your concerns. Alexander, you must not hurry in your judgement based on one sign only. But collect all your evidence. And if you have opposing evidence, go for the stronger and more convincing, and you then will attain your goals and be successful with the help and generosity of God, the Sublime. God is the one who grants success.<sup>30</sup>

Here, the political dimension becomes clearer, as the person will also be responsible for Alexander's subjects. Furthermore, a *caveat* is added: as shown in the story about Hippocrates and Polemon, judging a man's character by physiognomy is not an easy thing to do. Whether Alexander will be able to know what exactly "stronger and more convincing" signs are remains an open question.

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<sup>23</sup> See Ghersetti and Swain 2007, 319.

<sup>24</sup> Ed. Badawī 1954, 117–118.

<sup>25</sup> See Hoyland 2007, 247.

<sup>26</sup> Ed. Badawī 1954, 118 and 123–124. For similar descriptions and their principles, see Ghersetti 1996, esp. 123–125.

<sup>27</sup> Ed. Badawī 1954, 118.

<sup>28</sup> Ed. Badawī 1954, 123.

<sup>29</sup> Ed. Badawī 1954, 118.

<sup>30</sup> Ed. Badawī 1954, 124.

In its enumeration of bodily parts and their meanings, the *Sirr al-asrār* makes clear that the beautiful body is a sign of a beautiful soul; the imperfect, handicapped body, on the other hand, is the sign of a corrupted soul. Furthermore, it should be noted that three elements quite common in physiognomic writings are missing from the *Sirr al-asrār*: it does not use comparisons with animals, it does not discuss different ethnic groups, and it does not discuss any specifics of gender.<sup>31</sup>

## Sources

In general, it is difficult to prove dependencies between physiognomic texts. As noted by Hoyland, the *Sirr al-asrār*'s "categories, style, and vocabulary [...] owe much to Polemon".<sup>32</sup> However, Polemon was not the main source of the compiler of the *Sirr al-asrār*. For his detailed list of physical signs and their meaning, he seems to have used Abū Bakr al-Rāzī's (d. 313/925 or 323/935) *al-Manṣūrī fī l-ṭibb*,<sup>33</sup> a medical work that contains a section on physiognomy, structured like the section of the *Sirr al-asrār* in a top-down order.<sup>34</sup>

Though these two sections could also go back to a shared source, they are so close, even in their very phrasing, that it seems probable that the compiler of the *Sirr al-asrār* used al-Rāzī's text as his main source, though probably a version to some extent different from the modern edition. In addition, he might have made use of other physiognomic texts not yet identified.

When comparing al-Rāzī's list with the one from the *Sirr al-asrār* (see Appendix), it is striking that they present the same body parts in the same order: hair, eye and eyebrow, nose, forehead, mouth, face, ear, voice and speech, neck, belly, back and shoulders, arms, palm, feet, legs, hamstrings, step and, finally, the most excellent person of all.<sup>35</sup> In the details, however, the two texts show substantial differences. Usually, the *Sirr al-asrār* has a shorter text. For example, its section on the colour of the hair is much shorter than al-Rāzī's, and the section on the eye is hardly recognisable. However, at some points, the *Sirr al-asrār* has longer explications than al-Rāzī, for example about the nose, speech and the movements of the body. For the time being, it is impossible to tell whether these elements were taken from a text of al-Rāzī's different from the one edited or whether the compiler of the *Sirr al-asrār* used more than one source for this section – or even added elements of his own invention. However,

<sup>31</sup> Swain 2007, 13.

<sup>32</sup> Hoyland 2007, 244.

<sup>33</sup> Thomann 1997, 6–7.

<sup>34</sup> Al-Rāzī 1408/1987, 99–105.

<sup>35</sup> In contrast, the London MS discussed in section 5 which seems to represent an early version of the chapter on physiognomy, has a few inversions compared with the *Sirr al-asrār* (see below).

the most striking element of the *Sirr al-asrār*'s detailed list remains its focus on the usefulness of physiognomic considerations for Alexander as a ruler.<sup>36</sup> The medical source has clearly been put to use as an example of the mirror for princes genre.

## Outlook: Latin and German physiognomies

From Arabic, the *Sirr al-asrār* was translated into Persian and Turkish, but also into Castilian, Hebrew and Latin. From Latin, it made its way into most European vernaculars.<sup>37</sup>

Of the two Latin translations, only the later one contains the chapter on physiognomy. This is one of the few examples of a translation from Arabic into Latin stemming from the Holy Land. It was executed by a certain Philip of Tripoli around 1232,<sup>38</sup> and nowadays, exists in at least 350 manuscripts<sup>39</sup> and several early prints. The chapter on physiognomy is – just as in some of the Arabic versions – not a part of the section on the behaviour of the king. Rather, in the most common configuration of Philip's text, it forms the very last chapter of the work. In this way, it is far removed from both medicine and the occult sciences, but also from the behaviour of kings and from the chapters on the appointment of staff. As the very last piece of advice for Alexander, physiognomy might here be seen as the culmination of Aristotle's knowledge.

There are, however, other versions of Philip's Latin text available, the most prominent of these being the adaption by Roger Bacon.<sup>40</sup> Here, physiognomy is still positioned at the very end of the text, but Bacon has also kept some other subsections on the occult sciences, which are otherwise missing from the Latin. This structure presents physiognomy as only one among many occult sciences, and perhaps as less of a culmination than in the standard Latin text.

The chapter on physiognomy seems to have been considered an important part of the text in the Latin transmission, as it is – contrary to other chapters – not usually left out. However, its form was not seen as canonical. This can be seen, if we look at a specific German translation from the Latin: This translation, the *Zimmernsches Secretum secretorum*, was executed by an anonymous Cistercian nun from the convent of Zimmern in Swabia, in the year 1282, only fifty years after the translation from Arabic into Latin.<sup>41</sup> All versions of the *Zimmernsches Secretum* show a very interesting form of the chapter on physiognomy: instead of the details as found in the

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<sup>36</sup> See above section 3.

<sup>37</sup> See for example Williams 2003a; Williams 2003b; Forster 2006, 43–48, 113–240.

<sup>38</sup> Williams 2003a, 109.

<sup>39</sup> Forster 2006, 120.

<sup>40</sup> Ed. Steele 1920.

<sup>41</sup> Forster 2006, esp. 167.

Arabic and in Philip's Latin translation, the details are taken – in one version almost completely, in another at least to a large extent – from Hugo Ripelin's *Compendium theologiae veritatis*.<sup>42</sup> Ripelin, who died in 1268, was a Dominican from Strasbourg, and his *Compendium* was one of the most influential books of the time. As for the physiognomy of the *Zimmersches Secretum*, we can assume that the translator was working from a Latin manuscript that had part of Ripelin's text as marginalia – the German-speaking nun, however, by fusing both physiognomies, created a new physiognomy of her own.

The *Sirr al-asrār*'s chapter on physiognomy draws on both clearly physiognomic sources, but also on medical sources. Located at different positions within the text, the *Sirr al-asrār* sometimes stresses physiognomy's importance for the ruler, but at other times its connection with the occult sciences. The sense of it as a science important for the king gets lost sometime in its long history of reception. When an anonymous Swabian nun incorporates extracts from a theological encyclopaedia into her own physiognomy, we have left behind the mirror for princes genre completely.

## Appendix

### The physiognomic details in Abū Bakr al-Rāzī's *al-Manṣūrī fī l-ṭibb* compared with the corresponding section of the pseudo-Aristotelian *Sirr al-asrār*

Elements that seem to be new to the *Sirr al-asrār* in comparison with the edited text of al-Rāzī are underlined.<sup>43</sup>

al-Rāzī, <i>al-Manṣūrī fī l-ṭibb</i> , translation	al-Rāzī, <i>al-Manṣūrī fī l-ṭibb</i> , ed. al-Ṣiddīqī 1408/1987, 97–107	<i>Sirr al-asrār</i> , ed. Badawī 1954, 119–124	<i>Sirr al-asrār</i> , translation
<b>On the signs of the hair</b>	<b>[97] في دلائل الشعر:</b>		
Soft hair is a sign of cowardice	الشعر اللين يدل على الجبن	فالشعر اللين يدل على الجبن وبرد الدماغ وقلة الفطنة.	Soft hair is a sign of cowardice, of a cold brain and of a lack of intelligence.
and coarse of courage.	والخشن على الشجاعة.	والشعر الخشن دليل الشجاعة وصحة الدماغ.	Coarse hair is a sign of courage and of a sound brain.

<sup>42</sup> Forster 2006, esp. 173 and 176–177.

<sup>43</sup> I should like to thank Emily Cottrell for double-checking the Arabic texts and correcting my translations.

Much hair on the belly is a sign of the lecherous and much hair on the backbone is a sign of courage.	وكثرة الشعر على البطن يدل على الشبق وكثرة الشعر على الصلب يدل على الشجاعة.		
Much hair on the shoulders and the neck is a sign of stupidity and boldness.	وكثرة الشعر على الكتفين والعنق دليل على الحمق والجرأة.	وكثرة الشعر على الكتفين والعنق يدل على حماقة والجرأة.	Much hair on the shoulders and the neck is a sign of stupidity and boldness.
Much hair on the breast and the belly is a sign of a lack of intelligence.	وكثرة الشعر على الصدر والبطن دليل على قلة الفطنة.	وكثرة الشعر على الصدر والبطن يدل على الوحشة في الطبع وقلة الفهم وحب الجور.	Much hair on the breast and the belly is a sign of a cheerless nature, a lack of <u>understanding</u> and love of <u>tyranny</u> .
Hair that stands on the head and on the whole body is a sign of cowardice.	والشعر القائم على الرأس وعلى جميع البدن دليل على الجبن.		
<b>On the signs of the colour</b>	<b>في دلائل اللون:</b>		
The red-blond colour is a sign of much blood and heat.	اللون الأشقر الأحمر يدل على كثرة الدم والحرارة.	والشقرة دليل الحمق وكثرة الغضب والتسلط.	Blond is a sign of stupidity, much anger and dominion.
The colour that is between white and red is a sign of a balanced disposition, if the skin is at the same time thin-haired.	واللون الذي بين الأبيض والأحمر يدل على اعتدال المزاج، وإذا كان الجلد معه أزرع.		
One whose colour is like a flame of fire, is rash and mad. One whose colour is gently red is ashamed.	ومن كان لونه مثل لهيب النار فهو عجول مجنون. ومن كان لونه أحمر رقيقاً فهو مستح.		
One whose colour is green-black is ill-natured.	ومن كان لونه أخضر أسود فهو سيئ الخلق.	والأسود يدل على الأناة وحب العدل – والتوسط بين هذين.	Black is a sign of balance and love of justice. The intermediate is between these two.
<b>On the signs of the eye</b>	<b>[98] في دلائل العين:</b>		
One whose eyes are large is lazy. One whose eyes are hollow is a smart fellow and wicked. One whose eyes are protruding is impudent, enervated and extremely ignorant.	من عظمت عيناه فهو كسلان. ومن كانت عيناه غائرتين فهو داهية خبيث. ومن كانت عيناه جاحظتين فهو وقح مهزال جاهل على الأكثر.	من عظمت عيناه وجحظتاً فهو، حسودٌ وقح كسلان غير مأمون ولا سيما إذا كانت زرقاء.	One whose eyes are large and protruding is envious, impudent, lazy and not to be trusted, especially if they are blue.



	ومن كانت عيناه متوسطتين مانلتين إلى الغور والكحلة والسواد فهو يقظان فهيم.	One whose eyes are intermediate, tending to be deep, dark and black, is alert and understanding.
If the eye is set in the length of the body, the person is cunning and wicked.	وإذا كانت العين ذاهية في طول البدن فصاحبها مكار خبيث.	وإن كانتا ذاهيتين في طول البدن فصاحبهما خبيث.
One whose pupil is of extreme blackness is a coward.	ومن كانت حدقته شديدة السواد فهو جبان.	
One whose eye resembles the eyes of goats in its colour is ignorant.	ومن كانت عينه تشبه أعين الأعز في لونها فهو جاهل.	ومن كانت عيناه يشبهان عيون البهائم في الجمود وبعد الملاحظة فهو جاهل غليظ الطبع.
One whose eyes move fast and sharply and is of a piercing look is cunning, artful and a thief.	ومن كانت عيناه تتحركان بسرعة وجدة وكان حاد النظر فهو مكار محتال لص.	ومن تحركت عيناه بسرعة وجدة نظر فهو محتال لص متربص.
One whose eyes move slowly as if they were rigid is someone of thought and cunning.	ومن كانت حركة عينيه بطيئة كأنها جامدة فهو صاحب فكر ومكر.	
One whose look is similar to the look of women without being effeminate is lecherous and vainglorious.	ومن كان في نظره مشابهة لنظر النساء من غير تخنيث فهو شبق صلف.	
If the gaze of a man is like that of young men, and if in his eyes and in the whole face is laughter and happiness, he will live long.	وإذا كان في نظر الرجل مشابهة من نظر الصبيان وكان فيها وفي جملة الوجه ضحك وفرح فإنه طويل العمر.	
If the eye is big and trembling, the person is lazy, inactive and loves women.	وإذا كانت العين عظيمة مرتعدة فصاحبها كسلان بطال محب للنساء.	
If the eye is small, blue and trembling, the person is of very little modesty, artful and loves women.	وإذا كانت العين صغيرة زرقاء مرتعدة فصاحبها قليل الحياء جدا محتال محب للنساء.	

And if the eye is red like live coal, the person is evil and bold.	وإذا كانت العين حمراء مثل الجمر فصاحبها شرير مقدم.	وإن كانت العين حمراء فصاحبها شجاع مقدم.	And if the eye is red, the person is <u>courageous</u> and bold.
The black pupil is a sign of laziness and silliness.	والحدقة والسوداء دليل على كسل وبلاهة.		
And a blue eye in which's blue is yellow as if it had been dyed with saffron is a sign of a very bad nature.	والعين الزرقاء التي في زرقتها صفرة كأنما قد صبغت بالزعفران تدل على رداءة الأخلاق جدًا.		
One whose pupils tend towards whiteness due to the strength of their blueness is a coward. One whose eyes are yellow is a coward. A lot of spots in the eye around the pupil are a sign that the person is evil.	ومن كانت حدقتاه مائلتان إلى البياض لشدة زرقتهما فهو جبان. ومن كانت عيناه صفراوين فهو جبان. والنقط الكثيرة في العين حوالي الحدقة تدل على أن صاحبها شرير.		
And if [they] are in a blue eye, it is worse.	وإن كانت في عين زرقاء كانت أشر.		
The eye that has something like a collar around it is a sign that the person is envious, malicious, enervated, a coward and evil.	والعين التي حولها مثل الطوق تدل على أن صاحبها حسود حقود ومهزال وجبان شرير.		
The eye that is similar to the eye of the cow is a sign of stupidity.	والعين الشبيهة بأعين البقر تدل على الحمق.		
If the pupil is black with yellow in it as if it were gilded, the person is murderous and blood-shedding.	وإذا كانت الحدقة سوداء فيها صفرة كأنها مذهبة فصاحبها قتال سفاك للدماء.		
As for the eye that is facing upwards and is similar to that of cows, if it is at the same time red and big, the person is ignorant, a fornicator and a heavy drinker.	والعين المنقلبة الى فوق شبه أعين البقر إذا كانت مع ذلك حمراء عظيمة كان صاحبها جاهلاً زانياً سكيراً.		

The most laudable eye is the bluish-black. And if the blue-ness is not very shiny and there is no yellow or red in it, this is a sign of a good nature.	وأحمد العيون هي الشهل. وإذا لم تكن الشهلة شديدة النريق ولا يظهر عليها صفرة ولا حمرة فإنها تدل على طبع جيد.		
[As for] the blue eye that shines with yellow and green like the turquoise, the persons are wicked.	والعين الزرقاء التي تبرق بصفرة [99] والخضراء كالفيروزج أصحابها أردباء.	وأردأ العيون الزرق الفيروزجية؛	The worst eyes are the blue, turquoise-coloured;
And if they have in them at the same time red spots like blood or white ones, the person is the worst and most wicked of men.	فإن كان فيها مع ذلك نقط حمر مثل الدم أو بيض، فإن صاحبها شر الناس وأدهام.	فإن كان حولها نُقْط بيض أو سود أو أحمر، فإن صاحبها شر الناس وأردأهم.	and if there are white, black or red spots around them, the person is the worst and most wicked of people.
If the pupil is as if it were bulging and if the rest of the eye is stiff, the person is stupid.	وإذا كانت الحدقة كأنها ناتئة وسائر العين لاطى فصاحبها أحمق.		
If the eye is small and hollow, the person is cunning, envious and wicked.	وإذا كانت العين صغيرة غائرة فصاحبها مكار حسود خبيث.		
If the eye is bulging and small like the eye of the crab, it is a sign of stupidity and an inclination to lust.	وإذا كانت العين ناتئة صغيرة بمنزلة عين السرطان دل على الجهل والميل إلى الشهوات.		
If the eye is small and of agile movement and blinks much, the person is bad and treacherous. If the eyelid is broken or twisted without reason, the person is a liar, cunning and stupid.	وإذا كانت العين صغيرة خفيفة الحركة كثيرة الطرف فصاحبها رديء خداع وإذا كان الجفن من العين منكسرًا أو ملتويًا من غير علة فصاحبها كذاب مكار أحمق.		
The person with an eye that shivers a lot is evil if the eye is small. If it is big, he is less bad but more stupid.	وصاحب العين الكثيرة الرعدة شرير إن كانت عينة صغيرة. وإن كانت عظيمة، نقص من الشرر وزاد في الحمق.		
The person with very blue eyes is evil and a traitor.	وصاحب العين الزرقاء الشديدة الزرقة شرير خائن.		

The eye that is always blinking is a sign of cowardice and madness.	العين الدائمة الطرف تدل على الجبن والجنون.		
One whose pupils are tending to be white because of their extreme blueness is a coward.	ومن كانت حدقتاه مائلتان إلى البياض لشدة الزرقة فهو جبان.		
<b>On the signs of the eyebrow</b>	<b>في دلائل الحاجب:</b>		
[As for] the very hairy eyebrow, the person is anxious, full of sorrow and of weak speech.	الحاجب الكثير الشعر، صاحبه كثير الهم والحزن، غث الكلام.	[120] والحاجب الكثير الشعر يدل على العيِّ و غث الكلام.	The very hairy eyebrow is a sign of a stammer and of weak speech.
If the eyebrow is long and stretches until the temple, the person is haughty, proud and vainglorious.	وإذا كان الحاجب طويلًا ممتدًا إلى الصدغ فصاحبه تباها متكبر صلف.	فإن كان الحاجب ممتدًا إلى الصدغ فصاحبه تباها صلف.	If the eyebrow stretches until the temple, the person is haughty and vainglorious.
And likewise, one whose eyebrows tend to run at the side of the nose downwards and at the side of the temple upwards is vainglorious and dull-witted.	وكذلك من كان حاجبه يميل من ناحية الأنف إلى أسفل ومن ناحية الصدغ إلى فوق فإنه صلف أبله.		
		ومن رقَّ حاجبه واعتدل في الطول والقصر وكان أسود فهو يقظان فهم.	One whose eyebrow is thin, of medium length and black, is alert and understanding.
<b>On the signs of the nose</b>	<b>في دلائل الأنف:</b>	<b>الأنف:</b>	<b>The nose:</b>
One whose tip of the nose is thin loves quarrels.	من كان طرف الأنف منه دقيقًا فهو محب للخصومة.		
One whose nose is thick and filled, he lacks understanding.	ومن كان أنفه غليظًا ممتلئًا فهو قليل الفهم.		
		إذا كان الأنف رقيقًا فصاحبه نزق.	If the nose is thin, the person is impetuous.
One whose tip of the nose is thin and long is inconstant and irresolute.	ومن كان طرف أنفه دقيقًا طويلًا فهو طيَّاش [100] خفيف.	ومن كان أنفه طويلًا يكان يدخل في فمه فهو شجاع.	One whose nose is long and nearly enters his mouth, is courageous.
One who is flat-nosed is lecherous.	ومن كان أفطس فهو شبق.	ومن كان أفطس فهو شبق.	One who is flat-nosed is lecherous.

One whose nose-holes are very wide open is irascible.	ومن كان ثقباً أنفه شديدي الانتفاخ فهو غضوب.	ومن كان أنفه شديد الانفتاح فهو غضوب.	One whose nose is very wide open is irascible.
		وإن كان الأنف غليظ الوسط مائلاً إلى الفطس فهو مهذار كذوب.	If the nose is thick in the middle and tends to be flat, he is babbling and lying.
		وأعدل الأنوف ما كان غير طويل فاحش، وكان غلظه متوسطاً إلى الطرف، حسناً غير فاحش.	The most regular nose is the one that is neither long nor immoderate, and if its thickness is intermediate to a beautiful extent, not immoderate.
<b>On the signs of the forehead</b>	<b>في دلالات الجبهة:</b>	<b>الجبهة:</b>	<b>The forehead:</b>
One whose forehead is flat and has no wrinkles in it is quarrelsome and stirs mischief.	من كانت جبهته منبسطة لا غضون فيها فهو مخاصم شغب.	الجبهة المنبسطة التي لا غضون فيها دليل على المخاصمة والشغب والرقاعة والصلف.	A flat forehead without wrinkles is a sign of quarrel, mischief, foolishness and vainglory.
One who has a frowning forehead tending to the middle, is irascible.	ومن كان مقطب الجبهة مائلاً إلى الوسط فهو غضوب.		
One whose forehead is big is lazy.	ومن كانت جبهته عظيمة فهو كسلان.		
One whose forehead is small is ignorant.	ومن كانت جبهته صغيرة فهو جاهل.		
One whose forehead is very wrinkled is vainglorious.	فريشاك متعجب تنالك نمو فلص ورف نوض غلأ.		
		ومن كان جبهته متوسطة في السعة والتنوء وكان فيها غضون فهو صدوقٌ فهو يقظان حاذق.	One whose forehead is of intermediate width and protuberance and has some wrinkles, he is trust worthy, understanding, alert and skilful.
		ومن كانت جبهته ظاهرة التنوء فهو سبكت متوقف في الأمور حازم.	One whose forehead is visibly protuberant is taciturn, hesitant in [his] affairs and prudent.

<b>On the signs of the mouth, the lip and the teeth</b>	<b>في دلائل الفم والشفة والأسنان:</b>	<b>الفم:</b>	<b>The mouth:</b>
One whose mouth is wide is understanding and courageous.	من كان واسع الفم فهو فهيم شجاع.	من كان واسع الفم فهو شجاع.	One whose mouth is wide is courageous.
One who has thick lips is stupid and of coarse nature.	ومن كان غليظ الشفة فهو أحمق غليظ الطبع.	ومن كان غليظ الشفتين <u>عريض</u> الأسنان فهو أحمق.	One who has thick lips and broad teeth, is stupid.
One whose lip is lightly pigmented is of poor health.	ومن كان قليل صبغ الشفة فهو ممرض.		
One who has weak, thin and scattered teeth is of a weak constitution.	ومن كان ضعيف الأسنان رقيقها متفرقها فهو ضعيف البنية.		
One who has long and strong canine teeth is insatiable and evil.	ومن كان طويل الأنياب قويها فهو نهم شرير.		
<b>On the signs of the face and the figure</b>	<b>في دلائل الوجه والصورة:</b>		
If a man has the figure of a drunk, he is a heavy drinker.	إذا كانت صورة الإنسان بالحالة التي تكون عليها صورة السكران فهو سكير.		
If it is that of the enraged, he is irascible.	وإذا كانت بالحالة الغضبان فهو غضوب.		
If it is that of shyness, he is a shy being.	وإذا كانت بالحالة الخجل فهو حبي خجل.		
One who has a fleshy face is lazy and ignorant.	ومن كان لحيم الوجه فهو كسلان جاهل.	ومن كان لحيم الوجه فهو جاهل كذاب.	One who has a fleshy face is ignorant and a liar.
One who has fleshy cheeks is clumsy.	ومن كان كثير لحم الخدين فهو غليظ الطبع.		
One who has a thin face is understanding and mindful of [his] affairs.	ومن كان نحيف الوجه فهو فهيم مهتم بالأمور.	ومن كان نحيف الوجه فهو مهتم بالأمور فهم.	One who has a thin face is mindful of [his] affairs and understanding.
One who has a small face is despicable, irresolute, a flatterer and wicked,	ومن صغر وجهه فهو دنيء خفيف ملقٌ خبيث.	ومن صغر وجهه وكان مائلاً إلى الصفرة فهو رديء خبيث خداع [121] شكس.	One who has a small face that tends to yellowness is evil, wicked, a cheat and quarrelsome.
One who has a very round face is ignorant.	ومن كان شديد استدارة الوجه فهو جاهل.		
One who has too big of a face is lazy.	ومن أفرط عظم وجهه فهو كسلان.		

One who has a long face is impudent.	ومن كان طويل الوجه فهو وقح.	ومن طال وجهه فهو وقح.	One who has a long face is impudent.
One who has an ugly face is only rarely of good character.	ومن كان سمح الوجه لا يكون حسن الخلق إلا في [101] الندرة.	وأجود الوجوه ما كان حسن السعة بآدى الحياء غير متسع جدًا ولا صغير جدًا، سهل الخدين، رقيق الشفتين، منتظم الأسنان، غير كثير شعر اللحية والحاجبين.	The best face is one with a beautiful width, of evident modesty, neither very wide nor very small, with easy cheeks, thin lips, with even teeth, without too much hair in beard and eyebrows.
One whose temples are swollen and whose jugular veins are full is irascible.	ومن كانت أصداعه منتفخة وأوداجه ممتلئة فهو غضوب.	الصدغان: ومن كانت أصداعه منتفخة وأوداجه ممتلئة فهو غضوب.	The temples: one whose temples are swollen and whose jugular veins are full is irascible.
<b>On the signs of the ear</b> في دلائل الأذن:			
One who has big ears is ignorant and will live long.	من عظمت أذنه فهو جاهل طويل العمر.	ومن كان عظيم الأذن جدًا فهو جاهل، إلا أن يكون حافظًا.	One who has very big ears is ignorant, though of good memory.
A small ear is a sign of wickedness and [the person] will be short-lived.	وصغر الأذن يدل على خبث وقصر عمر.	ومن كان صغير الأذنين جدًا فهو أحمق سارق زان جبان،	One who has very small ears is stupid, a thief, an adulterer and a coward.
One who has flabby ears is short-lived.	ومن كان أعضف الأذن فهو قصير العمر.	وخيرهما ما كان متوسطًا غير كثير الشعر فيهما.	and the best of the two is if they are intermediate, without much hair in them.
<b>On the signs of the voice, the speech and the breath</b> في دلائل الصوت والكلام والنفس:			
One who has a rough and loud voice is courageous.	من كان صوته غليظًا جهورًا فهو شجاع.	من كان جهير الصوت فهو شجاع جسور مقدم.	One who has a loud voice is courageous, daring and bold.

	ومن كان خشن الصوت مانلا إلى الحدة فهو جاهل فُدْم صبور على الجفاء والتعب، ومن رق صوته إلى الغاية فهو نَزْرَق سيء الخلق. وخيرهما المعتدل المائل إلى النُّعْة والليونة.	One who has a raucous voice with a tendency to sharpness is ignorant, dull, patient in harshness and difficulty. And one who has an extremely thin voice is hasty and of bad character. And the best of the two is the intermediate that tends to nasalisation and softness.
	الكلام: من كان كلامه معتدلا بَيْنَ العُلْطَة والرقة واللكنة والتأني فهو عاقل مدبر صدوق طيب الأخلاق حسن المرافقة.	The speech: one whose speech is moderate, between roughness, delicacy, stammering and slowness, is prudent, a leader, trustworthy, good-natured and a good companion.
One who speaks fast is rash and of little understanding.	ومن كان كلامه سريعاً فهو عجول قليل الفهم.	ومن كان كلامه سريعاً، لا سيما إن كان صوته رقيقاً، فهو وقح جاهل كذوب.
One whose speech is loud and fast is rash, ill-natured and irascible.	ومن كان كلامه عالياً سريعاً فهو عجول سيء الخلق غضوب.	ومن كان كلامه غليظاً فهو غضوب سيء الخلق.
One who has a deep breath is of evil intention. One who has a deep voice has a greedy belly.	ومن كان نفسه طويلاً فهو رديء الهمة. ومن كان صوته ثقيلاً فهو رغيب البطن.	
One whose voice is nasal is envious and harbours ill will against people.	ومن كان أغن الصوت فهو حسود مضممر الشر للناس.	ومن كان كلامه أغنٌ صبراً فهو حسود متحيل.
A coarse voice is a sign of stupidity and a lack of intelligence.	وخشن الصوت دليل على الحمق وقلة الفطنة.	ومن كان حسن الصوت فهو دليل على الحمق وقلة الفطنة وكبر النفس.
		One who has a beautiful voice, this is a sign of stupidity, a lack of intelligence and pride.



ومن يحرك جسده كثيراً من الرجال ويلعب بيديه فهو خفيف سخيف صلف خداع مهذار.	A man who moves his body much and plays with his hands is irresolute, simple-minded, vainglorious, treacherous and babbling.
ومن كان وقوراً سكيناً فهو تام الخلق مدبر صحيح العقل. ومن كان ألكن أو ناقص الكلام فهو ناقص العقل.	And one who is grave and taciturn is of a perfect nature, a leader of sound reason. One who stammers or has an imperfect way of speaking is also of imperfect reason.

#### On the signs of the flesh

#### في دلائل اللحم:

Much rough and hard flesh is a sign of slowness of understanding and feeling.

اللحم الكثير الغليظ الصلب يدل على غلظ الفهم والحس. واللحم اللين يدل على جودة الفهم والطبع.

Soft flesh is a sign of a good understanding and good nature.

#### On the signs of laughter

#### في دلائل الضحك:

One who laughs much is gentle, helpful and does not mind or care much about [his] affairs.

من كان كثير الضحك فهو دمث. يساعد قليل العناية والاهتمام [102] بالأمور.

One who laughs little is antagonistic, quarrelsome and never satisfied with what people do.

ومن كان قليل الضحك فهو مضاد مخالف لا يرضى بما يعمل الناس.

One who has loud laughter is impudent.

ومن كان عالي الضحك فهو وقح.

One who starts coughing while laughing or becomes asthmatic, is impudent and boisterous.

ومن كان يقع عليه سعال عند الضحك أو ربو فإنه سليط صخاب.

On the signs of movements	في دلائل الحركات:	
Slow movements are a sign of silliness. And fast ones are a sign of inconstancy.	الحركات البطيئة تدل على البلاة. والسريعة تدل على الطيش.	
On the signs of the neck	في دلائل العنق:	
One whose neck is very short is cunning and wicked.	من كان عنقه قصيرًا جدًا فهو مكار خبيث.	ومن كان عنقه طويلًا رقيقًا فهو صياح أحرق جبان.
One whose neck is long and thin is noisy, stupid, ill-natured and a coward.	ومن كان عنقه طويلًا دقيقًا فهو صياح أحرق سييء الخلق جبان.	ومن كان عنقه قصيرًا جدًا فهو مكار خبيث.
One whose neck is thick and strong and powerful is strong, irascible and a violent attacker.	ومن كان عنقه غليظًا قويًا شديدًا فهو قوي غضوب بطاش.	ومن كان عنقه غليظًا فهو جاهل أكرول.
		وخيرها المتوسط الظاهر العروق القليل لحم القمحدوة.
		The best of them is the intermediate one whose veins are visible and with little flesh on the back part of the head.
On the signs of the belly	في دلائل البطن:	
Strong ribs and much flesh on them are a sign of ignorance, and a soft belly is a sign of a good intellect.	شدة الأضلاع وكثرة لحمها يدلان على الجهل، ولطافة البطن تدل على جودة العقل.	
A big belly is a sign of much sex.	وعظم البطن يدل على كثرة النكاح.	[122] ومن كان كبير البطن فهو أحرق جاهل معجب بنفسه يحب النكاح. —
Thin and delicate ribs are a sign of a weak heart.	ودقة الأضلاع ورقتها تدل على ضعف القلب.	
		ولطافة البطن وقلة سعة الصدر يدلان على جودة العقل وحسن الرأي.
		A delicate belly and a breast that is not too wide are signs of a good intellect and sound reason.

<b>On the signs of the back</b>	<b>في دلائل الظهر:</b>	
A large back is a sign of strength, eminence and heavy anger.	عرض الظهر يدل على الشدة والكبر وشدة الغضب.	وعرض الكتفين والظهر يدلان على الشجاعة مع خفة العقل.
A bent back is a sign of a bad character.	وانحناء الظهر يدل على رداءة الخلق.	وانحناء الظهر من غير كبير يدل على <u>شكاسة الخلق</u> .
A straight back is a favourable mark.	واستواء الظهر علامة محمودة.	وترافاة الصدر واستواء الظهر علامة محمودة.
<b>On the signs of the shoulders</b>	<b>في دلائل الكتفين:</b>	
Thin shoulders are a sign of a lack of intelligence. Wide shoulders are a sign of a good intellect. A very towering tip of the shoulder is a sign of stupidity.	الكتف الدقيق يدل على قلة العقل. والكتف العريض يدل على جودة العقل. وشخص رأس الكتف جدًا يدل على الحمق.	
		وإذا برزت الكتفتان فانهما يدلان على سوء النية وقبح المذهب.
<b>On the signs of the arms</b>	<b>[103] في دلائل الذراع:</b>	
When the arms are so long that the palm reaches the knee, it is a sign of a noble soul, eminence and love for the people.	إذا كان الذراعان طويلين حتى يبلغ الكف الركبة دل على نبل النفس والكبر وحب الناس.	إذا طالت الذراعان حتى يبلغ الكف الركبة دل على الشجاعة والكرم.
When the arms are very short, the person loves evil and is a coward at the same time.	وإذا قصر الذراعان جدًا فصاحبهما محب للشر جبان مع ذلك.	وإذا قصرتا، أي الذراعان فصاحبهما محب للشر جبان.
<b>On the signs of the palm</b>	<b>في دلائل الكف:</b>	
The soft and delicate palm is a sign of fast learning and understanding.	الكف اللينة اللطيفة تدل على سرعة العلم والفهم.	

The ugly and short palm is a sign of stupidity.	والكف الفاحشة القصر تدل على الحمق.		
The very thin and long palm is a sign of impudence and frivolity.	والكف الدقيقة الطويلة جدًا تدل على السلاطة والرعونة.	والكف الطويلة مع الأصابع الطوال تدل على النفوذ في الصناعات وإحكام الأعمال وتدل على الرئاسة. وغلظ الأصابع وقصرها يدل على الجهل والحمق وقصر الهمة.	A long palm with long fingers is a sign of penetration in the crafts and mastering the tasks and a sign of leadership. Thick and short fingers are a sign of ignorance, stupidity and a lack of ambition.
<b>On the signs of the loin, the hip and the leg</b>	<b>في دلائل الحَقْوِ والورك والساق والقدم:</b>		
Fleshy and hard feet are a sign of bad understanding.	القدم اللحيم الصلب يدل على سوء الفهم.	وكذلك القدم الغليظة اللحيمة العريضة تدل على الجهل وحب الجور.	Similarly, thick, fleshy and broad feet are a sign of ignorance and love of tyranny.
Small and little feet are a sign of an immoral person and a buffoon.	والقدم الصغير الحقيق يدل على أن صاحبه صاحب فجور ومزاح.	والقدم الصغيرة اللينة تدل على الفجور.	Small, soft feet are a sign of immorality.
Thin heels are a sign of cowardice. Coarse and strong ones are a sign of strength.	ودقة العقب تدل على الجبن، وغلظه وقوته يدلان على الشدَّة،		
		وخبرها ما كان بين ذلك حسن الاستواء والجودة وخفة اللحم وسلامة الأظفار وانتظام الأصابع. ورقة العقب دليل على الجبن، وغلظهما دليل الشجاعة.	The best of them is between that of good straightness and quality, of weak flesh, with sound nails and even toes. Thin ankles are a sign of cowardice, and thick ones are a sign of courage.
Thick legs and hamstrings are a sign of foolishness and conceit.	وغلظ الساقين والعرقوبين دليل على البله والنفخة.	[123] وغلظ الساقين والعرقوبين يدل على البهَّة والقحة وقوة الجسم.	Thick legs and hamstrings are a sign of foolishness, impudence and a strong body.
Much flesh on the hip is a sign of weakness and laxity.	وكثرة لحم الورك يدل على ضعف القوة والاسترخاء.	وكذلك كثرة اللحم في الورك يدل على ضعف القوة والاسترخاء.	Likewise, much flesh on the hip is a sign of weakness and looseness.

Protruding hip bones are a sign of courage. If the bones of the loins are protuberant, this is a sign of strength and might. Thin loins are a sign of love of women, a weak body and cowardice.	وشخص عظم الوركين يدل على الشجاعة. وإذا كان الحَقْوَانُ شأخصي العظام فتلك علامة الشدة والجبروت. ودقة الحَقْوُ تدل على حب النساء وضعف البدن والجبن.	
<b>On the signs of the steps</b>	<b>[104] في دلالات الخطى:</b>	
One whose steps are wide and slow is deliberate and successful.	من كانت خطاه واسعة بطيئة فهو متأنٍ منجح.	ومن كانت خطاه واسعة بطيئة فهو مُنَجِّحٌ في جميع أموره وأعماله مفكر في عواقبه.
One whose steps are short and fast is rash, does mind [his] affairs and does not judge them well. [...] <sup>44</sup>	ومن كانت خطاه قصيرة سريعة فهو عجول ذو عناية بالأمور غير محكم لها. [...]	ومن كانت خطاه قصيرة سريعة فهو عجولٌ شَكِسٌ غير محكم للأمور سيء النية فيها.
[...] Among the signs of a balanced man of good understanding and nature are that he should be neither tall nor short, neither slender nor fleshy,	[105] [...] ومن علامات الرَجُلِ المعتدل الجيد الفهم والطبع أيضاً، أن يكون بين الطويل والقصير، والقضيف واللحيم،	وخير الرجال الرجل المعتدل، الفهم، الجيد الطبع؛ يكون لحمه ليناً رطباً متوسطاً بين الرقة والغلظ، وبين الطويل والقصير،
white permeated with red, with palms and feet of medium size and medium fleshiness, and of a medium-sized head, with a slightly broad neck,	أبيض مشرب حمرة، معتدل الكف والرجل في الصغر والكبر وقلة اللحم وكثرتة، معتدل الرأس في العظم، في رقيقته غلظ قليل،	أبيض مائل إلى الحمرة والسمره صافى السمره، أسيل الخدين، سهل الوجه، أزج الحاجبين،

<sup>44</sup> In al-Rāzi's text, three sections ("On the signs of courage", "On the signs of cowardice", "On the signs of a man of good understanding and nature") follow here. While the first two have no equivalent in the *Sirr al-asrār*, there is a parallel to the second part of the third, which I therefore adduce again.

<sup>45</sup> I have left out seven sections of al-Rāzi's text ("On the signs of the philosopher", "On the signs of a man of coarse nature", "On the signs of an impudent man", "On the signs of a man of a loathing mind", "On the signs of the lecherous", "On the signs of the natures of the female", "On the signs of the eunuch") that have no equivalent in the *Sirr al-asrār*.

his hair tending a bit to be red, neither lank nor curly, his face round, his nose straight and very beautiful, of medium-size, his eye bluish-black, with moistness and purity [...].<sup>45</sup>

وشعره يميل إلى الحمرة قليلاً بين السبط والجعودة، ووجهه مستدير، وأنفه مستوٍ حسن جداً معتدل في العظم، وعينه شهلاء فيها رطوبة وصفاء. [...]

حسن الشعر، بين السبط والسهولة والجعودة، أصهب الشعر، متوسط العينين مائلتين إلى الغور، معتدل الرأس، في رقبته استواء،

with beautiful hair, neither lank nor smooth nor curly, of reddish hair, of medium-sized eyes, tending to be deep, of a medium head, of a straight neck,

مائل الأكتاف مجتمعهما، عديم اللحم في الصلب والأوراك، في صوته اعتدال بين الغلظ والرقفة، سبط الكف، طويل الأصابع مائلة إلى الرقة قليل الضحك والمزاح والمرء، كأنما يخالط نظره سروره أو فرح؛ إذا مشى يطيل الالتفات، قليل الكلام فيما لايعنيه، تارك للهلح، غير متعرض للطمع.

his shoulders tending to meet each other, without flesh in the backbone and on the hips, with a balanced voice, neither thin nor coarse, of open hand, with long fingers tending to be thin, laughing, joking and disputing little, so that rather his look is merging with his joy and happiness, when he walks he lengthens the attentions (?), speaking little what he does not mean, without impatience, and not greedy.

[124] فإذا ظفرت يا اسكندر، بمن هذه صفته فاستخلصه لنفسك وولّه أمور رعيتك وحوادثك.

Alexander, if you find someone of this characteristic, choose him for yourself and give him power over the affairs of your flock and over your concerns.

[107] [...]

**All one needs for physiognomic judgements and examinations**

جملة يحتاج إليها في أحكام أمر الفراسة واستقصائها

One should not make haste in judging by only one sign. But one should collect all one can. Then judge accordingly.

ينبغي أن لا يسرع الحكم بدليل واحد، ولكن يجمع منها ما أمكن. ثم تكون قضيتك في الحكم عليه بحسب ذلك.

ويلزمك، يا اسكندر، أن لا تسرع في الحكم بدليل واحد ولكن اجمع شواهدك كلها.

Alexander, you must not hurry in your judgment based on one sign only. But collect all your evidence.

<p>And if you have contradictory signs, weigh their strengths and indications and go for the more probable. And know that the signs of the face and the eye especially are the strongest and soundest signs.</p>	<p>ومتى جاءتك دلالات متضادة وزنت قواها وشهاداتها ثم ملت إلى الأرجح. واعلم أن دلالات الوجه والعين خاصة أقوى الدلائل وأصحبها.</p>	<p>ومتى جاءتك شواهد متضادة، فإل إلى الأقوى والأرجح تُصيَّبُ وتُنَجِّحُ أمورُك بعون الله تعالى بعون الله تعالى وكرمه. والله الموفق. والله الموفق.</p>	<p>And if you have opposing evidence, go for the stronger and more convincing and you will attain your goals and be successful with the help and generosity of God, the Sublime. God is the one who grants success.</p>
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Emily Cottrell

## 14 Ekphrasis of a manuscript (MS London, British Library, Or. 12070). Is the “London Physiognomy” a fake or a “semi-fake,” and is it a witness to the *Secret of Secrets* (*Sirr al-Asrār*) or to one of its sources?

The London Physiognomy, purportedly the oldest written witness of the Physiognomy chapter of the *Sirr al-Asrār*, entered the collections of the British Museum in 1954.<sup>1</sup> Lacking any explicit reference to a wider text bearing the title *Sirr al-Asrār*, it was nevertheless later regarded by Manzalaoui as a witness of a ‘mixed recension’ of the *Sirr al-Asrār*, showing features of both the two main recensions preserved today.<sup>2</sup> Grignaschi on his side regarded the London manuscript as a valuable witness, placing it higher in his own reconstruction of the transmission than Manzalaoui.<sup>3</sup> The colophon which concludes that text indicates that the copy was made during the first half of the tenth-century, implying that the London Physiognomy may be the oldest preserved witness of a chapter of the *Sirr al-Asrār*.

To this day, the London manuscript has never been described in any of the British Library catalogues (the British Library is where the collections of the British Museum were relocated in 1982), and the so-called recent acquisitions are merely listed in a register available to the public in the Oriental Manuscripts reading room. After Meredith-Owens’s initial enthusiasm regarding the acquisition of what would have been one of the oldest Arabic manuscripts on paper in the United Kingdom, specialists started to raise suspicion as to the actual date of the manuscript.<sup>4</sup> Curators at the British Library now consider the manuscript to be a “fake, stemming from a famous forgers’ atelier active in Tehran in the 1940s,” according

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1 Meredith-Owens 1955–1956, 33–34. Foster 2006, 14–16.

2 Manzalaoui 1974, 147–257; on the London Physiognomy, see esp. 155, 187 and 233–234. Manzalaoui distinguishes a Short Form (SF) in seven or eight books (SF7 and SF8) and a Long Form (LF) in ten books where Steele had used the designation of ‘Western version’ for SF and ‘Eastern version’ for LF (Steele, *Secretum Secretorum*, p. xiv, explaining that he did not believe in a Western origin for the composition of the text but wanted to underline the fact that the version was available in the West, as witnessed by the excerpts translated into Latin by John of Sevilla as well as by the Hebrew and Spanish translations).

3 Grignaschi 1976, 14.

4 Walzer 1985, 26, expressed the strongest judgement of the London manuscript, which he considered a forgery, in a very brief remark. However, the articles of Stern which Walzer quotes to support his assertion (*loc. cit.*, 25, n.50) are wrongly designated (read Stern [9] and [10] instead of [8] and [9]) and nowhere do we find in them Stern expressing the positions ascribed to him by Walzer.

to the hand-written note on the list of acquisitions found in the margin of the entry “Or. 12070.”<sup>5</sup> This unsupported remark is based on the assumption that the paper is younger than the purported date of the copy. Nonetheless, as the detailed investigation in this essay will seek to establish, a number of details seem to point to the manuscript as a ‘semi-fake’ rather than a ‘fake’.<sup>6</sup>

## Codicology to the rescue of text-analysis?

The manuscript and its contents were briefly described by Manzalaoui in his 1974 study of the manuscripts and sources of the *Sirr al-asrār* as follows:

Angular naskhī, extremely reminiscent of Kufic, with idiosyncratic forms to certain letters. Dated, in the scribe’s own hand, 330 A.H., i.e. 941 A.D. Thick pinkish paper. A 43 fol. octavo-sized manuscript. Our text is the last of six short tracts; fols. 39v–43; 18 ll. [...] Other contents: (1) Epistle of Fārābī in comment upon epistle of Zeno (this manuscript antedates Fārābī’s death by nine years). (2) Miscellaneous extracts from the pseudo-Aristotelian *Problemata*. (3) Treatise by the grammarian al-Kisā’ī on common blunders in speaking Arabic. (4) Epitome of Plato’s *De legibus*, made by Ḥunayn ibn Ishāq. (5) Minor items from the Hippocratic collection, including the letter of Artaxerxes to Hippocrates.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Grignaschi’s correspondent at the British Museum, whom he quotes as “E. Anderson” expressed his doubts on the paper and the writing already in 1976 (see Grignaschi 1976, 14). The register’s note was communicated to me by the curator of Arabic manuscripts at the British Library, Colin Baker, when I started working on the manuscript in 2009 and whom I thank here wholeheartedly. Further details were added in an e-mail (dated November, 23rd, 2009) by David Jacobs, an expert on Arabic papers at the British Library, who stated that the Or. 12070 is written on “an Indian dyed paper, common in the 19th and 20th c.”; Savage-Smith 2003, introd. xli–xlii, n. 123, refers to the origins of the London manuscript as a fake produced in Tehran in the 1940s, without explicit reference to the register.

<sup>6</sup> This notion is developed, in relation to Arabic and Persian manuscripts, in Soudavar 1999, 255–273.

<sup>7</sup> Manzalaoui 1974, 155–156, to which should be added the following: modern binding added at the British Museum, traces of restauration; size 27, 5 by 18 cm; writing surface 23 by 14 cm; 18 lines per page. Manzalaoui was almost correct in his description, but for the qualification of ‘minor’ item he gave to the *Pseudo-Hippocratic Letters*, here extant in a unique complete Arabic translation and followed by two Hippocratic short pieces known to have been translated by Ḥunayn b. Ishāq (see E. Cottrell, “An Arabic Manuscript of the Pseudo-Hippocratic Letters,” forthcoming in the proceedings of the XXIXth International Conference on the History of Arabic Sciences [University of Aleppo, 3<sup>rd</sup>–5th Nov. 2009], in press and available on <http://fu-berlin.academia.edu/EmilyCottrell>). As to the Platonic “*Laws*” which are here stated to be given according to a translation by Ḥunayn ibn Ishāq, they should rather be called pseudo-Platonic, see Gutas 2012, 852–853 and the edition of the text by G. Tamer (see *infra* fn. 22).

According to a brief remark by Manzalaoui, the seller was a man named “P. Khonsavi”.<sup>8</sup> This scholar is likely to be the same person who sold a copy of the Druze epistles to the Bodleian library in 1956 (Oxford, Bodleian, MS Arab. e. 213), the writing of which closely resembles the London manuscript as was remarked by Alfred Felix Landon Beeston, then curator of Arabic manuscripts at the Bodleian.<sup>9</sup> The London and Oxford manuscripts show a number of common features, not limited to their script. They both betray the use of Eastern Kufic headings and the claim that they were copied during the lifetime of the main author – Fārābī in the case of London manuscript and Ḥamza b. ‘Alī, the supposed founder of the Druze religion, in the case of the Oxford codex, which purports to be an autograph.<sup>10</sup> Claims like this would have enhanced the price of the manuscripts and they may raise suspicions.

More problematic is the time span between the dates of the two manuscripts as given in their colophons: 330 AH/941–942 CE for the London specimen; 408 AH/1017–18 CE for the Oxford one, making the possibility of an autograph, or that of a single copyist for both manuscripts, very unlikely.<sup>11</sup> Be that as it may, Beeston seemed convinced of the authenticity of the Druze manuscript after he compared the supposed signature, on the top of the first folio, allegedly that of the famous Abbasid vizier, Muḥammad Ibn al-‘Alqāmī (d. 656 AH/1258 CE), with the identical mark preserved on an Istanbul manuscript of Marzūbānī’s *Kitāb al-Muwashsha*.<sup>12</sup> The vizier

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**8** Manzalaoui 1974, 155. The spelling ‘Khonsavi’ should certainly be corrected into Khonsari.

**9** Beeston 1954–1956, 285–290, see 287. I am extremely grateful to the authorities of the Bodleian Library in Oxford for providing researchers the precise conditions of acquisitions of the manuscripts in their possession and in particular to Alasdair Watson (Bodleian Library) for having checked the acquisitions register. The sale was concluded by “S. Khonsari, from Dublin, on the 13th of February, 1956.”

**10** The Oxford copy was used by De Smet for his critical edition of the Druze epistles (De Smet 2012). On the complex issue of the beginnings of the Druze religion, see De Smet 2012, 19–30. A number of the folios carrying the Eastern Kufic headings at the beginning of treatises in the Oxford manuscript have disappeared and were probably sold independently.

**11** For the little we know about him, Ḥamza ibn ‘Alī was not yet born in 330/941–2. De Smet makes the following remarks about the Oxford manuscript: (1) the date appears in a note by a later hand, (2) the text is generally faulty, (3) many folios are missing and (4) that the existing folios have been bound with some disorder (cf. De Smet, *loc. cit.*, pp. 115–116 and p. 550, n. 37). He adds that the Oxford manuscript shares some of its readings with a manuscript of the Druze epistles now preserved in Saint-Petersburg (a facsimile edition of which was produced by Rodionov 1995) which is believed to be from the 16th century. This latter manuscript was offered by the French physician Clot Bey to the tsar Nicolas I in 1839 (De Smet 2012, 115). Clot Bey was attached to the khedive Muḥammad ‘Alī and he had come into possession of dozens of Druze manuscripts after the Druze revolt of 1838 was put to an end by the Egyptian army (De Smet 2012, 12, 107–109).

**12** Some folios of the Istanbul manuscript (MS Suleymaniyye, Cami 1012) were made available on a private website (of which screenshots can be sent on request to the author of this paper). The supposed signature of Muḥammad ibn al-‘Alqāmī seems at first sight close enough to the one appearing on the Oxford manuscript, but we may wonder why a vizier would not rather have a seal or a more calligraphic ex-libris, and why the honorific name (*laqab*) bestowed on him by the caliph, namely

al-'Alqāmī (or Ibn al-'Alqāmī, but the first form is the one used by his contemporary and colleague Naṣīr al-Dīn Tūsī) survived the death of the last Abbasid caliph and entered the service of the Mongols. The existence of his books in a Turkish library would imply that an Ottoman librarian knew the provenance of the book (possibly as part of a group of books), or that we are dealing with a facsimile of a work once possessed by al-'Alqāmī. Needless to say, the possibility that the signature of the famous vizier was added by a clever book-seller at any stage of the history of the manuscript should also be taken into consideration. All things considered, too little is known of the Istanbul manuscript to take it as evidence for the date of the Oxford manuscript.

Returning to the London manuscript, the semi-Kufic script and Eastern Kufic headings may agree with a reference to Mashhad on the end fly-leaf of the original binding (now fol. 43r), pointing to a provenance from the Eastern part of the Abbasid empire, as will be discussed more extensively in the next section. This was indeed the period during which semi-Kufic evolved towards a formalized form of Naskh script, the characteristics of which were codified by Ibn Muqla (d. 940 CE).<sup>13</sup> But as already emphasized above, the script of the London and Oxford manuscripts being so peculiar and apparently related, it seems unlikely that one text could have been copied in Mashhad or elsewhere in Iran by Muḥammad ibn 'Alī ibn Durustawayh al-Isbāhānī (“of Isfahan”) while the other could be the work of the sketchy figure of Ḥamza ibn 'Alī b. Aḥmad al-Zawzānī at the Fatimid court in Cairo some seventy years later.<sup>14</sup> Interestingly, the London manuscript collection bears the title *Epistles of the Sages (Rasā'il al-ḥukamā')*, using the title of the Pseudo-Hippocratic Letters as a generic title for the whole volume.<sup>15</sup> This title is reminiscent of the way the Druze epistles are usually designated, as *Epistles of Wisdom (Rasā'il al-ḥikma)*, although the Oxford manuscript lacks the title, which De Smet believes was only later attached to the Druze epistles.

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“Mu'ayyid al-Dīn,” i.e. ‘Supporter of Religion,’ was not used. According to De Smet (2012, 116, n. 501), the Istanbul manuscript was copied in 637/1239 for the vizier’s library (as stated on the title page). De Smet seems to be willing to give some credit to the signature of al-'Alqāmī, making the Oxford copy the oldest known manuscript of the Druze epistles. However, the late hand who added on the first folio the mention that the copy was “made” for the vizier’s library must be mistaken: al-'Alqāmī’s was named vizier in 639/1242, three years after after the purported copy of the Istanbul manuscript. For a full discussion of the relevant sources, cf. Jorati 2014 and Wickens 1962, 23–35. On a closer examination, the hand which wrote “Muḥammad ibn al-'Alqāmī” on two folios of the Druze manuscript (at the beginning of two epistles, on fol. 1r and 44r) seems to differ slightly from the one responsible for the signature on the front page of the Istanbul manuscript, but this point should be ascertained by an expert in paleography.

<sup>13</sup> Tabbāa 1991, 119–148. The Niffarī Eastern Kufic manuscript dated 344/955–6, in Arberry 1953, 29–42, is also discussed by George 2010, 126.

<sup>14</sup> Hamza b. 'Alī purportedly wrote his treatises and letters at the Fatimid court in Cairo, although he supposedly stemmed from far-away Sijistān (modern Baluchestan).

<sup>15</sup> I am currently working at an edition and translation of this important text with the collaboration of Prof. Sayyed Gad (Tanta University).

In regard to the reference to the city of Mashhad in Khorasan (here given its honorific name Mashhad al-Riḍā from its association with the Twelver Shiite imam al-Riḍā),<sup>16</sup> the London manuscript seems to present two stages of completion. In one colophon, corresponding to the treatises copied in the angular Naskh script inspired from semi-Kufic and coming at the end of the Physiognomy (the last in the collection of treatises in the manuscript), we read: “Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī ibn Durustawayh of Isfahan has achieved this copy in 330 [AH. i.e. 941–942 CE], praise be to God for his blessings and the prayer on [the prophet] Muḥammad and his pure family (*farigha min ta’līqihī Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī ibn Durustawayh al-Iṣbāhānī sanat thalathīn wa thalathimī’a, wa-l-ḥamdu li-Llāhī ‘alā ni’amihi wa-l- ṣalūt*<sup>17</sup> ‘alā Muḥammad wa-ālihi al-ṭāhirīn)” (Or. 12070, fol. 43r). But on the verso of the same folio, we find in what seems to be a different and later hand using the Muḥaqqāq script an indication as to the location of the copy of a poem<sup>18</sup> written on what was probably the cover of the quire or booklet before it was rebound in London: “It was written as a memory for the owner of the book, Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm the Persian, in [the city] of Mashhad al-Riḍā (*katabahu tadhkiratan li-ṣāhib al-kitāb Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Fārisī fī Mashhad al-Riḍā*)” (Or. 12070, fol. 43v).<sup>19</sup> The script of the poem, like that of the table of contents (in Persian) on fol. 1r, by an even later hand, does not seem to claim any old age, two points which tend to oppose the idea of a forgery. The copyist of the poem points to the otherwise unknown Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Fārisī as the owner, possibly the commissioner of the book.

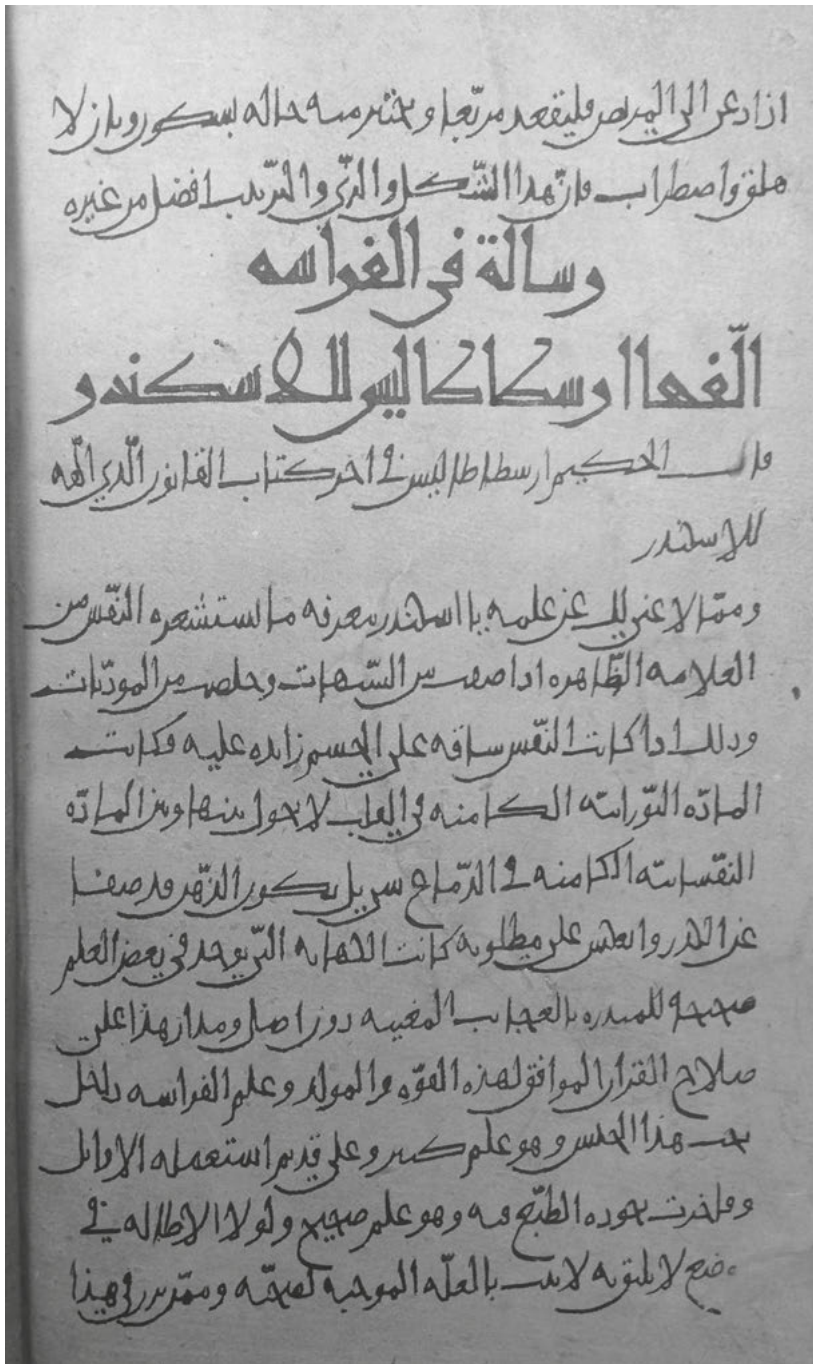
More intriguing though are the reader marks left by an owner of the London manuscript on fol. 2r and 16r. The man, whose name could be read Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Muḥammad al-Farā’inī/al-Qarā’inī/al-Qarānsī/al-Qurāshī, gives the date of 650 (AH, equivalent to 1252–53 CE) in the top left corner of fol. 2r. This would contradict the informed view of Dr David Jacobs (British Library) who estimated that the “Indian dyed” paper on which the London Physiognomy is copied belongs to the common

<sup>16</sup> Al-Riḍā died in Mashhad in 808. It is unclear to me when exactly the Shiite imam’s name came to be attached to the city.

<sup>17</sup> The use of the old orthography for *ṣalāt* is common in religious formulas, including in later or modern manuscripts. But the London manuscript displays the use of old orthography in several places throughout its texts and not solely in religious formulas (cf. *infra* Table 1, especially fn. 2). This feature adds some credit to the age of the texts copied in the London collection.

<sup>18</sup> The verses belong to a poem composed while in prison by ‘Alī ibn Jahm (whose name is given on the top of the page) in honour of the caliph al-Mutawakkil (r. 847–861). It appears in the collection of his poems as edited by Mardam Bak, *Dīwān ‘Alī ibn al-Jahm*, 43–45.

<sup>19</sup> Pointing to the possibility that the London manuscript is a recent copy of an older artefact, the ink of fol. 43r (and 42r) has transperced through fol. 43 and left a reddish trace of the text on the modern binding folio 44r, otherwise left blank. The (metallic?) ink of the poem on fol. 43v seems to have hindered the chemical reaction: the text of 43v appears as a shadow within the reddish trace of 42r and 43r on 44r. Dating the ink used for the manuscript would certainly help piercing the mysteries of the London manuscript.



First page of the Treatise on Physiognomy (London, BL, Or. 12070, fol. 39b). Courtesy of the British Library.

type of these papers known for the 19th and 20th c. dyed papers.<sup>20</sup> The (purported) thirteenth-century reader's mark, as well as others readers' marks in the manuscript, seem influenced by the Nasta'liq type of script, which did not develop until the 13th–14th century.<sup>21</sup> The great diversity of scripts displayed in the London manuscript is among the reasons why it can be suspected of being a forgery.

Inconclusive as the evidence is, the above description offers a number of hints which specialists will have to examine in order to establish a history of the London manuscript (and possibly that of the Oxford Druze epistles). The question of the authenticity of the London manuscript can be reduced to three alternatives:

- 1) The London manuscript was copied by the same hand as the Oxford manuscript, and the papers and inks should be analyzed with radiocarbon dating and multispectral imaging in order to determine their age more precisely. It should nevertheless be remarked that in the case of a forgery, both manuscripts could well have been copied on sheets of paper of a respectable age to enhance the value of the manuscript.
- 2) The London manuscript was copied by someone who made use of the Oxford manuscript, with the intention of imitating the hand.
- 3) The London manuscript is a facsimile of an original copied by the same hand as the Oxford manuscript.

Whichever of these three hypotheses is the correct answer, it seems clear that the London and the Oxford manuscripts were once part of a unique collection, remembering that they were obtained from a unique seller. The presence of a Druze manuscript in this collection is a significant hint that a Druze or someone interested in Druze writings has shown interest in the texts assembled in the London manuscript. A cursory presentation of the contents of the manuscript will confirm that the pieces in the manuscript were in all probability not assembled randomly.

## An overview of the contents of the London manuscript

The epistles included in the London manuscript are all known, though only partially in a number of cases, from other manuscripts. They can generally be said to offer a fairly correct text, albeit often an abbreviated or fragmentary one.<sup>22</sup> The main title given to the

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<sup>20</sup> As was kindly pointed out to me by Dr Jacobs (cf. *supra* fn. 5), Indian papers go back to earlier times, with the earliest known dated specimen fabricated in Nepal in 1105 CE.

<sup>21</sup> See the reproduction in Beeston, (*supra* fn. 9), plate XVII.

<sup>22</sup> Apart from Manzalaoui's description quoted above, the London manuscript was described with more detailed identifications by Daiber (2009, 163–165). The Fārābī treatise was first edited in Hyderabad



booklet, appearing on folio 2r, refers to two distinct items: “Epistle of the shaykh, the ascetic, Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn Ṭarkhān al-Fārābī may God prolong his life and Epistles of the Sages (*Risālat al-shaykh al-zāhid Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn Ṭarkhān al-Fārābī aṭāla Llāhu baqā’ahu wa-Rasā’il al-ḥukamā’*)”. The Farabian epistle (dealing with the definition of the “Necessary Being”) is clearly seen as the most valuable piece in the collection, and the claim that the text was copied during the author’s life-time gives an added value to the text. The absence of a more elaborate title might be explained by the fact that the Fārābī’s treatise opening the collection on the next folio starts abruptly, in a manner not uncommon in the Middle Ages where books’ titles were often deduced from the first lines of the text. The minor treatises are not mentioned on the title page, but strangely enough the little-known work here designated as *Epistles of the Sages* (i.e. the title given here to the *Pseudo-Hippocratic Letters*) is mentioned, following the form we find at the beginning of the text on fol. 33r. This, as was suggested earlier, might be related with the buyer or commissioner’s interest for some epistles on “wisdom (*ḥikma*).”

Because of the parallels which have been noticed between Fārābī’s works and the *Sirr al-Asrār*, we should probably give a short overview of the Farabian material in the London manuscript.<sup>23</sup> As was mentioned above, the formula attached to Fārābī’s name implies that the copyist knew he was alive at the time he completed his work (some eight years before Fārābī’s supposed death in Syria in 339 AH/950 CE). Even if such a note could also have been added to enhance the price of a manuscript, the existence of al-Fārābī’s *Commentary on Zeno’s Epistle* happens to be attested in twelfth-century Khorasan by the second-generation Avicennian philosopher Ḥāshim al-Dīn al-Bayhaqī (d. 1165 CE), the author of one of the earliest biographies of al-Fārābī that includes a bibliography.<sup>24</sup> This might in turn point to the text as having been written by Fārābī

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(1349/1930) and reprinted several times, including Sezgin 1999, 225–234. The lexicographical treatise of al-Kisā’ī (d. 189/805) was published by Brockelmann 1898, 29–46. For the partly pseudepigraphous Aristotelian questions and answers on the model “Why is it that? (*li-mā ṣāra*)” see Filius 1999, esp. xliii–xliv where the author gives a number of parallels from Abū Bakr al-Rāzī’s *Kitāb al-Ḥāwī* (whose influence on the *Sirr al-Asrār*’s Physiognomy chapter is addressed in R. Forster’s paper in this volume). For more *Problemata* including literal parallels to the London manuscript, in a version ascribed to Rāzī under the title “Medical questions (*masā’il ṭibbiyya*)” see the MS Leiden, Or. 958, foll. 39r–45v, where the set of questions follows directly a chapter on onomancy known from the *Sirr al-Asrār* (see infra part II.3). For the Pseudo-Platonic *Laws*, cf. Tamer 2001, 68, n. 27 and 290; 2004, 303–335 (using the London Manuscript).

**23** These parallels remain one of the most difficult issues in addressing the *Sirr*. The date of the *Sirr* is usually established on the basis of the parallels with the Brethren of Purity, but the date of their *Epistles* is still debated, and so is the nature of their relation to both Fārābī’s writings and to the *Sirr al-Asrār*. See Forster 2006, 18, and 22; Manzalaoui 1974, 175–184; Grignaschi 1976, 15–23; Walzer 1985, 11–12; . The treatise, which starts on fol. 3r with a repetition of the name of al-Fārābī adds one name – attested elsewhere in his biographies – to his genealogy (...*ibn Ṭarkhān ibn Awzalagh*...).

**24** Bayhaqī’s *Tatimmat Ṣiwān al-ḥikma* was edited by Shafī’ 1935, by Kurd ‘Alī 1946 and by R. ‘Ajam 1994; partial transl. by Meyerhof 1948, 122–217. The Fārābī entry is number 17 in Bayhaqī’s collection of biographies. Kurd ‘Alī’s edition, based on a different manuscript than ‘Ajam, is lacking the reference to the “commentary on Zeno and on the Greek Sage” (41 ‘Ajam). ‘Ajam’s text (which reflects the

before his departure to Egypt and Syria, since Bayhaqī states that not all of his works were available in Khorasan. In the introductory lines of the Epistle, Fārābī states that he decided to comment on the epistles of “Zeno the Ancient” or “the Great Zeno” (two valid translations for *Zaynūn al-kabīr*), a disciple of “Aristotle the Greek Sage (*al-Shaykh al-Yūnānī*),” epistles that were in circulation among the Christians.<sup>25</sup> That Fārābī studied with some important transmitters of the Syriac Aristotelian tradition in Baghdad is a well-established fact and this reference to his Christian contemporaries should be accepted as a token of authenticity. However, Aristotle wrote refutations of Zeno’s paradoxes and the chronological inversion between the two is almost certainly the result of the former’s prestige in ninth-century Baghdad.

In comparison to the text edited in Hyderabad, the London text seems to be abbreviated. The Zeno commentary makes use of philosophical terminology, in particular of the concept of the Necessary Being (*al-wājib al-wujūd*). It lays out the emanation of the ten spheres and the degrees of reality, including the intelligibles and the sublunar world, in a way which lines up with Fārābī’s presentation in the *Political Regime* (*al-Siyāsa al-madaniyya*) but differs slightly from the one laid out in his most famous work, *The Opinions of the People of the Virtuous City* (*Mabādi’ āra’ ahl al-madīna al-fāḍilā*), to the effect that the Originator remains “beyond being” in a more radical way. The *Virtuous City* is considered to be of a later date.<sup>26</sup> The tonality of the *Commentary on Zeno’s Epistle*, its vocabulary and themes (God’s existence, its unicity, its attributes, the emanation of the intellects and that of the sublunar world, prophecy and the religious law...) echoes both the Pseudo-Aristotelian *Theology* and Pseudo-Ammonius’ *Opinions of the Philosophers*, two works widely quoted by the early Ismaili missionaries at a time when Fārābī was still residing in the eastern Abbasid empire. This type of literature, where a monotheist and creationist inflexion was given to the ideas of

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13th-century rendering of the Tatimmat by the anonymous author of the Muntakhab Siwan al-hikma) agrees with the reading of the Hyderabad edition (with additional “and”). Hans Daiber has discovered a number of new manuscripts of Fārābī’s *Commentary on Zeno’s Epistle*, the study of which will help decide for the better reading, see Daiber 2009), nn° 597; 617; 647; 897.

**25** The “Greek Sage” usually refers to Plotinus, whose *Enneads* are often quoted in Arabic under the authority of a “Greek Sage (*al-shaykh al-yūnānī*)”, although Porphyry, his disciple and the ultimate editor of the Plotinian writings, is known to have been nicknamed “the old man of Tyre” by Themistius, see Rosenthal 1974, 437–46; Aouad 1989; Zimmermann 1986, 110–240. The formulation of the London manuscript differs from the one we read in the Hyderabad edition (see supra fn. 22) of Fārābī’s *Commentary on Zeno’s Epistle*, p. 3 (“to comment on the epistles of Zeno the Ancient/the Great Zeno and on those of the Greek Sage...”).

**26** A summary of the *Opinions of the Inhabitants of the Virtuous City* was edited by Walzer in his introduction to his edition and translation of the *Virtuous City* (Walzer 1985, 20–21, 38–49. Summaries like this allowed booksellers and scholars to offer items they had in stock for copy to distant customers or colleagues. According to Grignaschi 1976, 64, Fārābī completed chapter 28 of his *Virtuous City* in 331/942–943 – that is to say within a year after the completion of the model from which the London manuscript was copied, considering that the quality of the paper is a strong indication that the manuscript we possess today is a copy of an older original.

ancient Greek philosophers, seems to have played a certain role in the diffusion of Islam in regions that were not yet entirely Islamized.<sup>27</sup>

If the attribution of the commentary to Zeno's epistle to al-Fārābī remains to be demonstrated, his influence on the Fatimid Ismaili theologians and their Druze rivals needs to be further investigated. The Druze epistles are believed to have been written during the Fatimid caliphate in Egypt and Syria, two regions in which al-Fārābī had stayed during the last years of his life, more than seventy years before the supposed date of their composition. Al-Fārābī might, in turn, have been influenced during his youth in Khorasan by the intellectual activity of the Ismaili propagandists, as has been suggested by Hans Daiber.<sup>28</sup> The *Sirr al-Asrār* itself could well have been in circulation among the Shiite Zaydites and their Ismaili rivals in northern Khorasan and Tabaristan.<sup>29</sup> Concurrently, or shortly after the Druze epistles started to be put in circulation, the Ismaili theologian Ḥamid al-Dīn al-Kirmānī was adapting Fārābī's theory of the ten intellects (which appears in a summarized way in the *Comm. in Zeno*) into the Ismaili doctrine.<sup>30</sup> The Brethren of Purity, whose relation with the *Sirr al-Asrār* and with Fārābī has long been noticed but remains to be studied, were among the Ismaili predecessors of Kirmānī who perused al-Fārābī's writings.<sup>31</sup> Parallels between the portrait of the ideal vizier according to Book IV of the *Sirr al-Asrār* (in both the Short and the Long Forms) and the portrait of the "imam-philosopher" in Fārābī, which in turn closely resembles the one we find in the epistle of the Brethren of Purity, has puzzled researchers since the very beginning of the *Sirr al-Asrār* studies.<sup>32</sup>

If the London manuscript or its archetype was once in the collection of Druze scholars, the subjects dealt with in its different epistles would have been familiar topics. The themes represented in the London manuscript would have been of interest

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**27** This was certainly the case of most regions administered by the Samanids, Ziyarids, Buyids, and Saffarids at the time al-Fārābī was alive.

**28** Daiber 1991, 143–150; on a similar line but adding the Brethren to the picture and pointing to Fārābī as possibly more than just influenced by Ismailism, Steigerwald 1999, 455–476.

**29** Manzalaoui 1974, 152–153, nn°25–26, points at two manuscripts (= Badawī's edition ۛ and ۛ) as possibly being dedicated to a Zaydi imam of Yemen. Several manuscripts (both Short and Long Form) stem from Yemen (see Manzalaoui, nn° 5, 25, 26), however, the prince mentioned in the dedication of n°25 is not a "Zaydi imam" but the son of a famous 16th c. Yemeni Tahirid vizier of the king 'Āmir 'Abd al-Wahhāb [r. 1489–1517], whose court was based in Ibb. In the Sprenger manuscript preserved in Berlin (Sprenger 943, 16th c., on which see *infra* part IV.3), the copyist gives his name as Ibrāhīm b. Yaḥyā b. Qāsīm b. Aḥmad b. al-Mahdī b. Yaḥyā b. Maṣṣūr b. Yaḥyā b. Maṣṣūr b. al-Mufaḍḍal al-Hādī, which seems likely to be a Yemenite Zaydite name.

**30** De Smet 1995, 272–284.

**31** Aḥmad Triki (al-Turayki), author of a thesis on the Brethren of Purity, produced an edition of the *Sirr al-asrār*, in which he claimed that the Epistles of the Brethren and the *Sirr* share a single author. Cf. Turayki 1983 (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.).

**32** These parallels were first listed by Verdenius 1917, 28–39, using Dieterici's partial translation of the Brethren of Purity. See further Manzalaoui 1974, 175–184 and 196–198 adding further parallels with al-Fārābī and the text and translation in Walzer 1985, 230–241, 246–249.

to any philosophically inclined mind in the tenth-century, and the insertion of al-Kisā'ī's lexicographical treatise on common mistakes further places the collection within a milieu of Arabized Persians. This would apply to Samanid Mashhad, as much as to the intellectual circles in which al-Fārābī evolved and to the use by the copyist “Muḥammad ibn 'Alī ibn Durustawayh al-Isbāhānī” of the Arabic pronunciation of Isfahan's name rather than the Persian one (“al-Isfāhānī”). As to the yet unpublished Arabic translation of the *Pseudo-Hippocratic Letters* preserved in the London manuscript, it transmits the Stoic vision of the philosopher as best ruler and should therefore be compared with Fārābī's conceptions of the philosopher-king, alongside the Platonic and (Pseudo-)Aristotelian political treatises available to him.<sup>33</sup> Finally, most of the treatises preserved in the London manuscript, for which a date or an author is known, were extant before the supposed date of the copy (330/941–2). These elements form a strong indication that the texts preserved, if not the actual artefact we possess, should be considered as ‘genuine,’ i.e. are the witnesses of a classical transmission.<sup>34</sup> Further analysis of the *Physiognomy* text (in the second part of this paper), as preserved in the London manuscript, will help us establish this point.

## The title of the *Physiognomy* chapter in the London manuscript

As was already noted by Manzalaoui, the London *Physiognomy* provides in its first section (see *infra*, Table 1, for the text and translation of the full chapter) the title of a book from which it would constitute an excerpt. Furthermore, the introductory lines of the London text allude to the position of the *Physiognomy* chapter within a wider “Aristotelian” treatise.<sup>35</sup>

*Epistle on Physiognomy* composed by Aristotle for Alexander. Aristotle the philosopher said at the end of his *Book of Rules* [lit. *Book of the Law*], which he composed for Alexander... (*Risāla fī l-firāsa allafahā Aristāṭālīs li-l-Iskandar. Qāla al-ḥakīm Aristāṭālīs fī ākhir Kitāb al-Qānūn al-ladhī allafahu li-l-Iskandar...*). [MS London, Or. 12070, fol. 39v]

This title points to the treatise as having been extracted from a larger collection circulating under the title *Kitāb al-Qānūn*. Trying to make sense of this title, with no

<sup>33</sup> Cottrell 2016, 136, n. 22 and the edition of the text in Cottrell, *The Pseudo-Hippocratic Letters in Arabic*, forthcoming.

<sup>34</sup> Grignaschi, who had been informed by a British Museum curator that the London manuscript was raising suspicions, thought that the texts preserved therein were too rare to accept the idea of a simple forgery, cf. Grignaschi 1976, 14.

<sup>35</sup> Manzalaoui 1974, 156. Cf. Grignaschi 1976, 14; Forster 2006, 15.

additional information on a context or other contents, is no easy task. Moreover, *qānūn* is a loanword in Arabic, and it inherited the polysemy it had in Greek. Arabic *qānūn* is derived from Greek κανών, where the meaning evolved from “stick, rod, ruler,” to that of “list, table, chart,” and consequently “rule, law.” It is unclear whether it entered Arabic directly from Greek or via Syriac, where the Greek loanword is used for both grammar and ecclesiastical “rules” and “precepts,” but also for “lists” or “tables,” as in Greek. Further meanings derived from the preceding ones are attested in Syriac, such as “hymns” and “penalties.”<sup>36</sup> The polysemy of *qānūn* makes it impossible to give an exact translation, even more so when the reference is made to a supposedly lost book. The comparison of the Physiognomy chapter of the London manuscript with the versions we have in the Short and the Long Forms of the *Sirr al-Asrār* led Grignaschi to consider the *Qānūn* as an ancestor of the versions we possess today.<sup>37</sup> Anticipating the argumentation which will follow here and in the rest of this paper, we will assume that the London Physiognomy was once part of a text identical or partly similar to the *Sirr*, and we suggest rendering the title *Kitāb al-Qānūn* as “The Book of Rules.” This translation highlights the role of “rules” or “principles” (of organization of the government and the army, of astrology, physiognomy, hygiene, diets, remedies, magical calculations or the use of talismans...) in the *Sirr al-Asrār*.

The possibility that the *Sirr al-Asrār* or parts of it was known as the *Qānūn* (at least by the copyist of the London manuscript) is made evident by a reference to a *qānūn* in the introduction of the *Sirr*, where “Aristotle” states:

“I wished to make for you [a set of] rules (*qānūn*) that you will use to ponder all your requirements, in replacement of me and as a substitute advising you in the totality of your affairs (*raghibtu an aj’ala laka qānūnan taj’aluhu li-jamī’ ma’āribika mizānan tuqimuhu maqāmi fa-yanūbu fī jamī’ umūrika manābi*).”<sup>38</sup>

Deducing the title from the first lines of the text would again support the supposed date of the original from which the London manuscript was copied. But it also seems

<sup>36</sup> Liddell and Scott’s *Greek-English Lexicon*, Oxford 1940, s.v. κανών; Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, Oxford 1969, s.v. κανών; Payne-Smith, *Thesaurus Syriacus*, Oxford 1879, vol. 2, col. 3660–3661. The early history of the word is summarized by Gorak 1991, 9–31.

<sup>37</sup> Grignaschi 1976, 35, 39–47.

<sup>38</sup> Pseudo-Aristotle, *Sirr al-Asrār*, 70 (ed. Badawī), already noted by Manzalaoui 1974, 158. The text of the Short Form, as in MS Leiden, Or. 749, fol. 78r, differs slightly but already has the reference to the *qānūn*: “...to set for you [a set of] rules you can use for all your decisions... (*fī an uqīma laka qānūnan taj’aluhu li-jamī’ tadābirika*).” As a rule, the Leiden Short Form reflects a poorer command of written Arabic than the Long Form versions. This is certainly one of the reasons why the text underwent several revisions. The use of *qānūn* here, with Aristotle telling Alexander that he composed the *qānūn* for him so that he can carry it in place of his aging master could be a pun, playing on a double-entendre of Greek κανών. The author of these lines may have had in mind Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics* (III.iv.5), where we find that “the good man ... is the standard and measure (*kanōn kai metron*) of the noble and pleasant” (transl. Rackham in the Loeb collection, 142 (Gr.)/143 (tr.), quoted by Gorak 1991, 17–18).

possible to say that the semantic value given to the word *qānūn* corresponds with a date towards the early ninth-century. The Greek loanword seems to have been used with the same sense it carries in Avicenna's *Canon of Medicine* (*al-Qānūn fī al-ṭibb*), written less than a century after the purported date of the London manuscript and where the title is defined in the first lines of the medical encyclopedia as “the exposition of the general and particular principles [using the plural *qawānīn*] of medicine.”<sup>39</sup> Before Avicenna's *Canon of Medicine*, *qānūn* appears mainly in Arabic titles referring to astronomical tables. The most famous of these tables were Ptolemy's *Handy-Tables*, which circulated in Arabic under different titles but were commonly referred to as Ptolemy's *Qānūn*, i.e. his astronomical tables. The success of Avicenna's *Canon* led to the gradual abandonment of this early use of the term.<sup>40</sup>

Considering the full contents of the *Sirr al-Asrār*, it would be tempting to see in the indication given by the London manuscript a trace of the existence of a corpus of Pseudo-Aristotelian treatises once gathered as his “Canon.” After all, a Physiognomy ascribed to Aristotle was translated into Arabic.<sup>41</sup> But in order to verify this hypothesis, other attestations of the *Sirr* under alternative titles would have to be identified, which the current state of research in the field of Arabic manuscripts and the very low number of scientifically published material does not allow. Looking for other titles under which the *Sirr al-Asrār* has been in circulation, we find in the Chester Beatty manuscript (Arabic 4183), copied in 829/1425–6 and studied by Gätje and Daiber, the title *Pieces of Advice for Alexander* (*Naṣā'ih Iskandar*). However, we would expect to find *Naṣā'ih al-Iskandar* in proper Arabic so that the title of the Dublin manuscript should be considered as somehow Persianized, and although the title is reminiscent of Aristotle's lost *Pieces of Advice* (Ἐπιθήκη) to Alexander in eight books, no conclusion can be reached.<sup>42</sup> Additionally, we should mention a note by the

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**39** We have verified the Leiden manuscript (MS Leiden, Or. 63, 13th c.) of Book I of the *Qanūn* as well as the English translation published in India, Al-Shaikh al-Ra'is Abu Ali Al-Husain Bin 'Abdullah Bin Sina [i.e. Avicenna] 1982, 31.

**40** The polysemy of *qānūn* seems to have led it to be superseded by *zij*, a word of Indian origin, commonly used in both Arabic and Persian. Al-Bīrūnī's astronomical tables for Mas'ūd of Ghazna, the *Qānūn al-Mas'ūdī*, figures as an exception. Ibn al-Nadīm, a Baghdadian bookseller who wrote a catalogue of all the books known to him by the end of the tenth century, mentions only one book under the title of *Qānūn*, namely a treatise on harmonics ascribed to Euclides. Cf. Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, 206 (ed. A.F. Sayyid)/326 (ed. Tajaddod) and *GAS* V, 120; 400 (Euclides) and VI, p. 102 (Ptolemy).

**41** Edition and Italian translation of the Arabic text by Ghersetti 1999. Edition of the Greek text and English translation by Swain in Swain 2007, 637–661.

**42** Gätje and Daiber 1965, 71–78. The Dublin Chester Beatty manuscript is a representative of the Short Form of the *Sirr* (in eight books), which Manzalaoui considers older than the Long Form and to which we will turn in the next section. Needless to say, such a title might have been on the mind of the forger of a Pseudo-Aristotelian collection (if such a collection indeed existed prior to the compilation of the *Sirr al-Asrār*). The *Pieces of Advice* are mentioned in the anonymous catalogue of Aristotle's works (*Anonymus Menagii*) but Moraux sees it as apocryphal, cf. Moraux 1951, 258–259. The Chester Beatty is listed and briefly described by Manzalaoui 1974, 150; for a wider presentation, see the tables of contents in Forster 2006, 24–29.

thirteenth-century philosopher Shams al-Dīn al-Shahrazūrī (d. after 1304) where we read that Ibn al-Bīṭrīq had translated Aristotle's *Book of the Politics of the Kings* (*Kitāb Siyāsāt al-Mulūk*) for al-Ma'mūn.<sup>43</sup> More obscure still is the reference by Manzalaoui to the title *Book of the Crown* (*Kitāb al-Iklīl*) under which Hajji Khalifa seems to refer to the *Sirr al-Asrār*. The title appears in the list of Abū Bakr al-Rāzī's work by al-Bīrūnī, in the section on medical books, as "ascribed to Rāzī," but unfortunately we do not know anything about its contents.

Another title was noticed by Steele in the parallel excerpt he discovered in the universal history of the Christian Egyptian historian Ibn al-'Amīd al-Makīn (1205–1273). Al-Makīn's work is only partially edited but a number of manuscripts of its (original) Arabic version (extant in two recensions) have been known for centuries. Unfortunately, Steele and Manzalaoui relied on Wallis Budge's English translation of an Ethiopic translation of the Arabic, so that the precise wording of the title in Arabic remained unknown to them and to their readers. What they read in Budge's translation gave them the impression that the title under which al-Makīn was providing a short description of the contents of the *Sirr* could initially be seen as somehow close to a *Book of Law/Rules/Principles* (i.e. "qānūn") as found in the London manuscript:

"Now there are some who say that Aristotle the sage, the teacher of Alexander, taught the ten sciences of the earth [i.e. universal sciences] and established them, and that he composed many treatises on the healing of the body besides other well-known books. And he compiled for Alexander a work, which we have mentioned in a previous place, and entitled it 'The Book of the Knowledge of the Laws of Destiny,' and in it the science of talismans and the art of astrology, and he drew therein magical figures which were to be used for frightening and terrifying men and he further gave instructions..."<sup>44</sup>

After verifying the Arabic text of al-Makīn, we can ascertain that the Ethiopic rendering of the title was misleading, and that the Egyptian historian certainly knew the *Sirr al-Asrār*, which is referred to as "Book of Politics in the Organisation of the Government (*Kitāb al-Siyāsa fī tadbīr al-riyāsa*)," a title which appears at the beginning of the *Sirr* (and is repeated at the end of the book in a slightly different form).<sup>45</sup> This

<sup>43</sup> al-Shahrazūrī 1976, 197, ll. 1–6 (this gloss appears solely in the Short Recension of the *Nuzhat*). If the lost archetype of the *Sirr al-Asrār* (as presupposed by Grignaschi and Manzalaoui) could be identified with this work, Grignaschi's hypothesis of the existence of a lost *Kitāb al-Siyāsa* among the ancestors of the *Sirr* would find an unexpected confirmation. The paragraph quoted makes a number of references to the *Sirr al-Asrār*'s contents and could confirm Ibn al-Bīṭrīq's authority on the *Ur-Sirr*.

<sup>44</sup> Steele, *loc. cit.*, xxiii, quoting Wallis Budge 1896, II, 382. Cf. Manzalaoui 1974, 244. Al-Makīn further summarizes the "Circle" or "Octagon" of Justice (cf. Steele 1920, lii–liii) although he could have read it in a number of authors such as Ibn Juljul, al-Mubashshir ibn Fātik, Ibn Abī Uṣaybi'a, etc. Steele's reference to the Octagon as part of Ḥunayn's *Aphorisms of philosophers and physicians* (*loc. cit.*, lii) is erroneous. It corresponds in Ibn Abī Uṣaybi'a's text to a quotation of Ibn Fātik, following an excerpt from Ḥunayn (cf. vol. I, 66–67 of the Müller edition).

<sup>45</sup> Al-Makīn, *al-Majmū' al-Mubarak*, MS Paris, BNF, Ar. 294, fol. 129v. The title and a shorter description of the contents are repeated on fol. 136r before a summary of the Octagon of Justice (fol. 136v), to

title was also known to Ibn Juljul (944–994), an Andalusian court physician in whose *History of Physicians* (composed in 975)<sup>46</sup> we find the first reference to the title *Sirr al-Asrār* known to us, in addition to a number of quotations said to be copied from “the *Kitāb al-Siyāsa fī tadbīr al-riyāsa* known as the *Sirr al-Asrār*.”<sup>47</sup>

Commenting on the citation of al-Makīn, Steele remarked that Roger Bacon used the title “Book of the Ten Sciences (*Liber Decem Scienciarum*)” and believed Bacon might have been under the influence of the ten-book version of the *Sirr al-Asrār* (i.e. Steele’s “Eastern Version” and Manzalaoui’s “Long Form”).<sup>48</sup> But the ten chapters of the Long Form do not show any attempt to present a division of the text in ten sciences or thematics.<sup>49</sup> Beyond that, the reference comes somewhat earlier than the description of the *Sirr*’s contents. If the *Sirr al-Asrār* does have a reference to the quadrivium (p. 116 Badawī, where we read that “music is one of the four sciences which are the pillars of the world”) shortly before the chapter on physiognomy in Badawī’s edition, no reference to a curriculum of ten sciences can be found in the book. However, such a reference appears in the widely read *Aphorisms of the Philosophers (Ādāb al-falāsifa)* by Ḥunayn ibn Ishāq, where a curriculum of ten sciences is ascribed to Aristotle. Hugo Bizzari discovered that some of the versions available in medieval al-Andalus had Ḥunayn’s work together with the *Sirr al-Asrār*, possibly because of some parallels in the Alexander material.<sup>50</sup> Be that as it may, the ten sciences of the curriculum have little to do with the structure of the ten-book version of the *Sirr* and Steele’s hypothesis can be safely abandoned.

Turning finally to the purported author of this *Qānūn*, and looking at the Greek bibliographies of Aristotle, no title including the word *κἀνὼν* seems to exist. The

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which we will return at the end of this paper. For the titles, different at the beginning and the end of the text, see Pseudo-Aristotle, *Sirr al-Asrār*, 67 Badawī: *Kitāb al-Siyāsa fī tadbīr al-riyāsa al ma-‘rūf bi-Sirr al-Asrār*, and *loc. cit.* 171: *Kitāb Sirr al-Asrār li-ta’sīs al-siyāsa wa tartīb al-riyāsa* which translates as *Book of the ‘Highest Secret’ [or ‘Secret of Secrets’] for the Establishment of Politics and the System of Government*.

**46** Grignaschi (1976, 12) mentions the date after Ibn al-‘Abbār (d. 1260).

**47** Ibn Juljul, *Ṭabaqāt al-aṭibbā’ wa-l-ḥukamā’*, ed. Sayyid 1955, 26. The *Kitāb al-Siyāsa fī tadbīr al-riyāsa* (i.e. the *Sirr al-Asrār*) should not be confused with the related treatise titled *Kitāb al-Siyāsa al-‘Ammiyya*, which constitutes “Letter VIII” of the Pseudo-Aristotelian *Epistolary Novel*, a purported correspondence between Aristotle, Philip of Macedonia and Alexander the Great culminating in a famous Aristotelian apocryph, the *De Mundo*. Grignaschi suggested that the *Sirr al-Asrār* was an 11th-c. rearrangement of the *Siyasa al-‘Ammiyya* ultimately based on a lost *Book of Politics (Kitāb al-Siyāsa)* (Grignaschi 1967, 212).

**48** Steele 1920, xxiii, referring to his edition of Roger Bacon’s commentary to the *Sirr* (*loc. cit.*, 25, 172). Manzalaoui 1974, 244, on al-Makīn’s references to the *Sirr*.

**49** For a short description of the ten books see Anawati 1955, 60–70 (often based on Steele 1920, xxxvii–lxiii).

**50** Ḥunayn ibn Ishāq, *Ādāb al-falāsifa*, 55 (ed. Badawī); Ḥunayn ibn Ishāq, *Libro de los Buenos Proverbios*, 62 (ed. Sturm 1970). For versions where the *Ādāb al-falāsifa* and the *Sirr* are found attached, see Bizzarri 2010, 36–54; cf. Salvador Martínez 2010, 69.



closest in meaning would be the lost Aristotle's *Laws* (Νόμων) in four books (Diogenes Laertius, *Lives and Opinions of the Philosophers*, 5.26.29) but little can be said of this lost work.<sup>51</sup> Nor do we find in the Arabic bibliographies of Aristotle any item under this title apart from al-Fārābī's description of each one of the eight books of Aristotle's *Organon* as a set of 'rules' or 'principles' (*qawānīn...*).<sup>52</sup> As to the expression 'Aristotelian canon,' which naturally comes to mind when inquiring into the existence of a Pseudo-Aristotelian *qānūn*, it seems to appear at a rather late date, under the influence of Christian scholasticism. In Christian writings and mainly after Eusebius (d. 339), Greek κανών came to designate a 'canonical' set of texts and this meaning has remained prevalent in Latin and in the languages derived from it.<sup>53</sup> However, if Ibn al-Bīṭrīq (fl. first half of the ninth-century)<sup>54</sup> is indeed the actual author of some of the translated material compiled in the *Sirr*, as will be suggested in the conclusion of this paper, and if indeed he was the one to designate the collection as a *qānūn* – something impossible to prove unless new manuscripts are discovered – he might have used the word with its late and largely Christian semantic value of "authoritative collection of texts." Such a title would certainly fit into the compendial character of the scientific and pseudo-scientific tractates aggregated in those parts of the *Sirr* that do not deal with politics.<sup>55</sup>

## The position of the Physiognomy in the different versions of the *Sirr al-Asrār*

According to the few lines introducing the Physiognomy in the London manuscript (Table 1, section [A.] *infra*), the chapter was located somewhere near the end of the *Qānūn*.<sup>56</sup> This corresponds to the position of the Physiognomy chapter in the Short Form (= SF) of the *Sirr al-Asrār* rather than to its position in the Long Form (= LF).<sup>57</sup>

51 Moraux 1951, 130–131, esp. 130, n. 44, suggests correcting the reading of the title in Diogenes Laertius with the help of the anonymous catalogue of Aristotle's works (*Anonymus Menagii*) and identifying the *Laws* with a treatise on Greek and Barbarian 'Customs (Νόμμοι)', known from a number of quotations.

52 The Fārābī excerpt appears in Ibn Abi Uṣaybi'a's bibliography of Aristotle (*ʿUyūn al-anbā fī ṭab-aqāt al-aṭibbā*, vol. I, 58–59, ed. Müller).

53 Ulrich 2002, 22–28.

54 On him, see Forster 2006, 52–54.

55 According to Ibn Abi Uṣaybi'a (*ʿUyūn al-anbā*, I, 205 Müller), Ibn al-Bīṭrīq was a weak translator because of his western background (*lāṭīnī*).

56 Grignaschi, "Les Métamorphoses," 44–46, developed a number of hypotheses about the relation of the *Qānūn* and the two versions of the *Sirr* we possess today, but as will be developed in this section and in the third part of this paper, the evidence given by Grignaschi appears to be weak in a number of cases.

57 In the following footnotes we will often use Manzalaoui reference system: SF for Short Form, SF7 for the seven-book form, SF8 for the eight-book form, LF for Long Form (usually in ten books).

In the Berlin Sprenger manuscript (an SF7), the table of contents describes the last chapter of the book on the “occult sciences (*‘ulūm khaṣṣiyya*)” as including the secrets of talismans (*ṭilsamāt*), theurgy (*istimālat al-nufūs*), the properties of stones, plants and animals, “and [some] wonderous issues among the secrets of medicine (*wa-nukat gharība min asrār al-ṭibb*)” seemingly leaving aside onomancy and physiognomy, unless the former was considered to be part of theurgy and the latter part of the secrets of medicine. The same reference to the “wonderous issues among the secrets of medicine” is repeated in the first lines of the section on Hygiene in the Paris SF8 (Paris, BNF 2421) that is to say after the Onomancy and Physiognomy, which precede in this witness the section on Hygiene, the Lapidary and the section on Talismans. The Leiden manuscript (an SF8), usually considered to be one of the best preserved representatives of the Short Form,<sup>58</sup> displays the Physiognomy in its eighth and last book.<sup>59</sup> The floating position of the Physiognomy, from one manuscript to the other, points to the section as having been added at some point in the transmission, but its inclusion in all the SF7 and SF8 witnesses – as well as in the Long Form – implies that the insertion happened at an early stage. Yet another indication that a position near the end of the text rather than at the end of Book II (as in the Long Form) must have been the original position is the place occupied by the Physiognomy chapter in the undated, but medieval, Hebrew and Spanish versions, as well as in Roger Bacon’s commentary.<sup>60</sup> In contrast, the position of the Physiognomy at the end of Book II in most of the Long Form manuscripts that are available to us gives the impression of an interruption in the themes of Books II and III.<sup>61</sup>

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Manzalaoui, “The Pseudo-Aristotelian,” 229, suspected Badawī’s edition – in the absence of any clear indication by Badawī – to be based on the Long Form manuscript MS Cambridge Arabic 899 as a primary witness; see *Sirr-Badawī*, introd. 42 for its date and the anteriority of the Berlin 5604 among the manuscripts he used. The English translation realised for Steele by Ali and Fulton is based on a LF Gotha manuscript (with variants from other SF and LF manuscripts given in the notes), in Steele, *Secretum Secretorum*, 176–266.

**58** On the superiority of the Leiden manuscript among the SF8 versions, cf. Grignaschi 1982, 7. The order of the books in the Short Form would also be closer to the one it had in the lost archetype of SF and LF (*loc. cit.*, 6). Grignaschi 1976, 65) is erroneous in believing the Leiden manuscript can be dated of the 15th century. It belongs rather to the 17th century and was probably copied at the request of Levinus Warner (1616–1665), judging from the paper and its watermarks. For the position of the section in the different witnesses of the Short Form, see the comparison of the manuscripts in Forster 2006, 25. A description of the table of contents in a sample of Short Form manuscripts is given by Grignaschi 1976, 97–101.

**59** The Leiden manuscript has a binding mistake which resulted in part of the Physiognomy section appearing in Book IV (cf. Forster 2006, 25, n. 111). A better understanding of the stemma would help us to know if this error was caused by the model used by the Leiden manuscript’s scribe and/or if it resulted in the displacement of the chapter in later copies.

**60** Forster 2006, 25. Cf. Gaster 1908, 111–162, where the Physiognomy appears at 148–152. On the Hebrew version(s), see the important remarks of Spitzer 1982, 34–54 esp. 37–45 and Grignaschi 1982, 20. For the medieval Spanish version, see the edition by Kasten 1957, 62–66.

**61** The thematic continuity between Book II and Book III is interrupted by a series of unrelated medical and pseudo-scientific sections, as pointed out already by Steele 1920, xiv. Once the unrelated

The inclusion of the Physiognomy section at the end of Book II gives it, nevertheless, a more prominent place than the one it received in the Short Form. Possibly, the person who added to Book II a number of tracts missing in the Short Form used the opportunity made available by his new edition to give physiognomy – a “science” supposedly praised in a saying of the prophet Muhammad<sup>62</sup> – a more prominent place, removing it simultaneously from the chapter on occult sciences.<sup>63</sup> The insertion of the teachings on physiognomy at the end of Book II also moves the reference to this pseudo-science closer to both the portrait of the ideal sovereign (in Book II, 77–78 *Sirr-Badawī*) and to that of the ideal vizier (in Book IV, 138–139 *Sirr-Badawī*). These portraits, without focusing on the bodily characteristics, make reference to some of the features that will be found in the Physiognomy, as will be shown in the third part of this paper. Finally, a last possible indication that the Long Form rearranged earlier materials is found in the table of contents in the introduction of the text, where the topics of Book II are described as the etiquette of the sovereign, his behaviour and his habits.<sup>64</sup> The theme of the habits which the king should observe may have attracted the long medical developments resulting in the insertion of medical sections (diet, remedies, sleep, cupping and bidding, bath, etc.).

## The Onomancy chapter and its relation to the Physiognomy

In most of the Short Form manuscripts, the Physiognomy usually comes directly before or after the Onomancy (or onomatomancy). Onomancy is a magical method based on numerical computations using the values given to letters. In Greek, Hebrew and Arabic (among others languages), numbers were written at some stage using

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material is removed, Manzalaoui finds Platonic overtones in Book II and III, cf. Manzalaoui 1974, 208–209. The importance given to justice in the *Sirr al-Asrār*, more specifically in Book III, echoes Plato’s *Republic*, Book IV, 444c–444e where the analogy is made between justice, health and virtue.

<sup>62</sup> The wording of this saying, preserved in Bukharī’s collection of prophetic sayings (*ḥadīth-s*) remains extremely obscure, see Ghaly 2009, 164–165; Fahd 1966, 379; De Smet 2012, 324–325 noticed the Druze interest for the pseudo-science.

<sup>63</sup> On the composition of Book II, cf. Steele 1920, xiv. Grignaschi 1976, 51, admits that the original place of the Physiognomy in the (lost) archetype of SF and LF must have been somewhere at the end of the book. A reference to the “priests” (*kahana*) who practiced the art in the introductory paragraphs (cf. Table 1, section [B.2.]) would legitimate the insertion of the Physiognomy among the occult sciences.

<sup>64</sup> As expressed in the title “On the behaviour of the king and his appearance and how he should control his person privately (*fī ḥal al-malik wa-hay’atihi wa-kayfa yajibū an yakūna ma’khadhuhu fī khaṣṣati nafsihi*)” (*Sirr*, 77 *Badawī*). Manzalaoui gives numerous examples in which the Long Form seems based on the Short Form rather than the opposite (Manzalaoui 1974, 224–227; 229–232. Steele 1920, xiii, considered SF as the oldest version. Grignaschi 1976, 34, noticed that the Physiognomy, as part of medicine, is announced in the table of contents of the Short Form versions but is missing from the table of contents of the Long Form.

the letters of the alphabet, so that each letter had a numerical value. The method explained by Aristotle to Alexander, based on what would today be called modular arithmetic, is said to help determine the name of the victor between two commanders. In the Short Form versions, Onomancy and Physiognomy usually appear in the last chapter or in the one before the last. In the seven-book version (SF7), the last chapter is most often titled “On medicine” while in the eight-book version (SF8), the last chapter is designated as addressing “occult sciences.” In the case of the Berlin Sprenger manuscript, which according to Grignaschi preserves the fullest SF7 version and the most ancient readings,<sup>65</sup> the contents announced for the seventh and last book are spread before and after the title, reduced to “Book VII, on medicine”.<sup>66</sup> These elements could confirm the possibility of an interpolation. In the Long Form, the Onomancy appears separately in the chapter on wars and soldiers, which corresponds to the theme of the treatise better than an insertion in the chapter on medicine. Nevertheless, the close relation of what might otherwise seem like two independent leaflets is betrayed by the common rhetorical admonition introducing both texts: “And as to what you really ought to know, O Alexander...”. But the comparison with the Short Form reveals that this is the result of a stylistic harmonization produced by one of the *Sirr* revisers.<sup>67</sup>

As was noted long ago, the Onomancy chapter appears to have circulated independently, in both Arabic and Syriac.<sup>68</sup> Its first attestation in Arabic comes in an astrological treatise ascribed to Abū Maʿshar (ca. 787–886) which incidentally claims Greek influences, the *Kitāb al-Muḥaqqiq al-Mudaqqiq al-Yūnānī* (lit. “The Greek Meticulous Investigator”).<sup>69</sup> Abū Maʿshar’s treatise remains unstudied until this day so

<sup>65</sup> Grignaschi 1976, 83 (on the Sprenger Short Form); pp. 99–101 (on the table of contents of some representatives of the Short Form).

<sup>66</sup> For the Onomancy and the Physiognomy attached to each other in the witnesses of the Short Form, cf. Forster 2006, 25 and 29. In Badawī’s edition of the Long Form, the Physiognomy appears at 116–124, closing Chapter II, while the Onomancy appears at 152–155, closing Chapter IX (on wars and related techniques).

<sup>67</sup> Physiognomy: *wa-min jumla mā lā ghinā’ bika ‘an ‘ilmihī yā Iskandar...* (*Sirr*-Badawī, 116). Cf. Onomancy: *wa-mimmā lā ghinā’ bika ‘anhu yā Iskandar...* (*Sirr*-Badawī, 152). The introductory lines of both tractates differ in the Short Form. In the onomancy, Aristotle squarely claims divine revelation for his learning of the method: “...and it is among the divine secrets which God entrusted me with... (*wa-huwa min al-asrār al-ilāhiyya al-lati awda’anī Allāh iyyahā...*)” (MS Berlin, Sprenger 943, 14v). As to Alexander’s use of physiognomy, instead of the exhortation found in the Long Form (*Sirr*-Badawī, 116), Aristotle tells his pupil about the need for the sovereign to evaluate the trustworthiness of people (MS Berlin, Sprenger 943, 16r/MS Dublin, Chester Beatty Ar. 4183, 28r/MS Leiden, Or. 749, 106v). I am extremely grateful to Regula Forster for sharing with me some of her material relevant to the study of the Short Form.

<sup>68</sup> Steele 1920, lix–lx; cf. Plessner 1925, col. 917.

<sup>69</sup> Abū Maʿshar, ca. 1920?. Pingree 1970, vol. I, 36–37, suggested identifying the *Muḥaqqiq* with Abū Maʿshar’s *Kitāb al-Mawālid al-Saghir* and states that the tract on onomancy is commonly ascribed to Pythagoras and to Petosiris in classical works.

that the attribution is hard to confirm, but nothing really seems to prevent it. Dunlop pointed out the discovery by Paul Tannery of a number of Greek parallels to the tract, one of them explaining the very method which we find exposed systematically in Abū Maʿshar's chapter and in the *Sirr*'s section, while the other versions give a direct application of the method in the form of tables of equivalences between letters and numbers so as to determine more quickly the "value" of a name and its strength against the adversary's name.<sup>70</sup> Tannery further discovered that a systematic explanation of the method had been described in Hippolytus' *Refutation of All Heresies*, an early Christian haeresiological compendium in which Greek philosophers were blamed for their supposed dualism or magical beliefs. Tannery's findings proved the antiquity of the material that Hippolytus relied on and helped determine the dates of tracts which circulated among Roman astrologers such as the *Letter of Pythagoras to Telauges* or an epistle by the magician Petosiris, where similar methods as those used in the *Sirr*'s Onomancy can be found.<sup>71</sup> Neither the Pseudo-Hippolytus nor Abū Maʿshar ascribes the method to Aristotle, a characteristic which may indicate its early date in contrast to the *Sirr* and its tendency to ascribe to Aristotle all sorts of scientific tracts.<sup>72</sup>

A later piece of evidence for the circulation of the Onomancy as an independent tract lies in the testimony of Ibn Abī Uṣaybi'a, a thirteenth-century physician who had privileged access to some of the main libraries of his time. His mention of a *Kitāb al-Ghālib wa-al-maghlūb* ("The Victor and the Vanquished") in his bibliography of Aristotle is parallel to the title found in both Abū Maʿshar and the *Sirr* at the beginning of the treatise. The addition by Ibn Abī Uṣaybi'a of an alternative title (*Kitāb al-Yatīm*, i.e. "The Book of the Orphan"), unknown in the *Sirr* tradition, seems to be a definitive proof of an independent diffusion.<sup>73</sup> Grignaschi – who elsewhere proved he was an outstanding philologist – oddly never identified this *Kitāb al-Yatīm* with the mean-

<sup>70</sup> Dunlop 1959, 148 referring to Tannery 1844, 231–260.

<sup>71</sup> Tannery 1844, 234 and 249, explains the various purposes of the Greek tracts as determining the victor in a trial, a fight, a competition, or a concourse. He notes a parallel in the Pseudo-Hippolytus' *Philosophumena*, where interestingly for future studies of the *Sirr al-Asrār* and its sources, the onomancy is followed by a section on astrological physiognomy derived from Ptolemy's *Tetrabiblos*, Book III. See the translation of Legge 1921, 83–87 and 87–92. Ibn al-Bīṭrīq's father seems to have played a part in the translation of the *Tetrabiblos*, according to Ibn al-Nadīm. Dunlop was not aware that a number of excerpts of the Pseudo-Hippolytus' *Refutation* found their way into the Arabic *Opinions of the Philosophers*, ascribed to a certain Ammonius, as was discovered by Rudolph 1989, 23–25.

<sup>72</sup> In addition to the witnesses listed by Forster 2006, 13–14, the chapter on onomancy is ascribed to Aristotle in the Syriac *Book of Medicine*, translated by Wallis Budge 1913, a late compilation of earlier tractates of Syriac and Arabic origin. A chapter titled *Ḥisāb al-ghālib wa al-maghlūb* appears in a miscellaneous collection preserved in Leiden (MS Or. 958, fol. 45v–46r, copied in the 16th c. and mainly preserving Iranian authors) where it figures directly after a series of *Medical questions* (*As'ila min al-ṭibb*) taken from an unknown work by Abū Bakr al-Rāzī using the *Problemata* form, with questions starting with the formula "Why is it that (*li-ma šāra*)?" (*loc. cit.*, 39r–45v).

<sup>73</sup> The onomancy is mentioned by Ibn Abī Uṣaybi'a, 'Uyūn al-anbā' fī Ṭabaqāt al-aṭibbā', vol. I, 69 Müller.

ingless “*Kitāb al-Nīm*” (*Book of Nīm* ?) he had discovered in an Istanbul manuscript (MS Aya Sofia 2843) of the *Sirr* and in an Ottoman treatise on politics, where he had found excerpts of a *Kitāb al-Siyāsa* (i.e. “Book of Politics”) which he believed derived from an ancestor of the *Sirr al-Asrār*.<sup>74</sup> Another piece of evidence that Grignaschi did not address is the fact that the beginning of the Onomancy in the Istanbul manuscript (MS Aya Sofya 2843), which he reproduces (and translates correctly) in his “Appendice III,” states that the “*Kitāb al-Siyāsa fī Tadbīr al-Riyāsa* is completed” implying that what follows (the Onomancy) was considered to be independent material.<sup>75</sup>

Strikingly, both Aristotle and the magician Apollonius of Tyana (known in Arabic as “Balinas”) are said in some of their Arabic biographies, or in their own purported works in Arabic, to have been orphans. In a spurious biography known to Ḥunayn ibn Ishāq sometime around the beginning or the middle of the ninth century, Aristotle was said to have met Plato while the latter was tutoring the son of a Greek king who showed no capacity whatsoever for learning. Aristotle, then a lad at the court and the companion of the king’s son, secretly took this opportunity to learn and was finally given the occasion to demonstrate his intelligence, to the point that he became Plato’s best student and successor.<sup>76</sup> As for Balinas, whose largest work in Arabic is the *Book of the Secret of Creation (Kitāb Sirr al-Khalīqa)*, which makes use of a variety of Late Antique Greek and Christian sources, he claims to have been an orphan (*yatīm*) in the first lines of the book.<sup>77</sup> The *Sirr al-Khalīqa* was composed during the reign of al-Ma’mūn (r. 813–833), in whose chancellery Ibn al-Bīṭrīq, the purported translator of the *Sirr al-Asrār*, was practicing his activity.<sup>78</sup> The *Sirr al-Khalīqa* was shown to borrow

74 Grignaschi 1976, 28–29. In Arabic, *اليتيم* (*al-yatīm*) and *النيم* (*al-nīm*) are easily confused in a hasty scribal hand (as was already noted by Dunlop 150, n.1 and after him by Peeters 1968, 71). On the *Kitāb al-Siyāsa* and its relation to the *Sirr al-Asrār* and to the *Kitāb al-Siyāsa al-‘Ammiyya*, see Grignaschi 1976, 9–12.

75 Grignaschi 1976, 93–95. In the Istanbul Aya Sofia 2843 version (a Long Form) the Onomancy follows a tract on botany. Example (c) in Grignaschi’s comparison of three onomancy chapters (*loc. cit.*, 93 and 96–97) is misleading: the Oxford manuscript (an SF7) has no reference to a *Book or Calculation of the Nīm*. It is designated there as “The section on the number deduced (i.e. the denominator) for the victor and the vanquished (*al-qawl fī al-‘adad al-kharj li-l-ghālib wa-l-maghlūb*),” which Grignaschi translates rather vaguely as “Le Discours sur le Calcul. Les deux tableaux (lit. sacoches) du Victorieux et du Vaincu” (*loc. cit.*, 96). His reading should be corrected with the identical title preserved in the Berlin Sprenger manuscript (Berlin, Sprenger 943, fol. 14v): *al-qawl fī al-‘adad al-makhrāj li-l-ghālib wa-l-maghlūb*.

76 Ḥunayn ibn Ishāq, *Adāb al-falāsifa*, 51 Badawī. On the possible Alexandrian origins of the story, see Gutas 1986, 30–31.

77 Balinas al-Ḥakīm 1979, 5. Weisser 1980, 24.

78 Forster 2006, 50–53 and 12, n. 10 pointing to Badawī and Van Ess as accepting Ibn al-Bīṭrīq’s attribution. Plessner also admits Ibn al-Bīṭrīq’s role (Plessner 1925, coll. 912–920). Badawī, *al-Uṣūl al-Yūnāniyya* 33–35, provides details on the identification of the caliph to whom the work was dedicated, namely al-Ma’mūn [r. 813–833]. Al-Ma’mūn’s interest in a Persian text known as the *Testament of Ardashir*, and his own background, (his mother was of Persian extraction), in addition to his long stay in Merv during the years preceding his accession to the caliphate, agree particularly well with the contents of the *Sirr al-Asrār*.

large extracts from the *Problemata* tradition in a similar way as Job of Edessa (d. ca 835) in his *Book of Treasures* (composed 817), where a number of parallels to the *Sirr al-Khaliqa* can be found.<sup>79</sup> The fact that Job of Edessa and Ibn al-Biṭrīq were close colleagues at the Abbasid court under al-Ma'mūn points to the fact they almost certainly knew the onomancy of the *Sirr* or *Kitāb al-Yatīm*, as did their colleague Abū Ma'shar, but we cannot know for sure if they knew it under the title *Book of the Orphan*.

With this fragmentary view of a complex textual tradition in mind, we can now turn to the comparison of the text proper. This will help us determine the quality of the text preserved in the London manuscript.

## Table 1: Comparison of the London Physiognomy and the Long Form version of the *Sirr al-Asrar*

For the comparison of the London Physiognomy with the Physiognomy chapter preserved in the *Sirr al-asrār* as edited by Badawī in Table 1 the following codification was used: (1) *Italic* for minor differences that can be explained by common scribal mistakes and rewriting (including paleographic confusion; use of a synonym; modernisation of the vocabulary and minor changes in grammar or syntax).<sup>80</sup> (2) **Bold** for differences in the order of the elements (more significant than simple inversions) within a section. (3) Underlined for original elements in one version or the other. Some original elements might be italic and underlined where synonymy or paleographic proximity might have been involved. For the religious formulas, differences have been highlighted as underlined, although they depend very much of the tastes of copyists and might as well have been rendered with italics. A hash mark (#) is used to indicate a different order for a whole section. A number of rather small additions in the Long Form, in comparison to the London text, have not been reproduced due to the lack of parallel between the two texts and they are represented in our table with parentheses and ellipsis. The full text of LF can nevertheless be found in the table of comparison for LF and Abū Bakr al-Rāzī's *Ṭibb al-Manṣūrī* in Regula Forster's paper in this volume.

Commenting on Table 1 is not an easy task: Badawī's edition should be considered as yet another "mixed version" of the text, since the late Egyptian scholar used manuscripts of the three main versions of the text (SF7, SF8 and LF) without choosing one as a base text. Nor did he provide a full apparatus indicating the variants, omissions,

<sup>79</sup> Montgomery 2013, 307. Weisser 55–68. Moreover, the alchemical *Tabula Smaragdina* appears in both the *Sirr al-Asrār* and in the *Sirr al-Khaliqa*, see Forster 2006, 104.

<sup>80</sup> Minor semantic and syntactic changes are part of scribal work. These are most often based on local tastes or on the linguistic skills of a patron.

additions and displacing of the elements. The remarks made from the comparison of the London text and the Badawī edition should be verified on the manuscripts supposedly used by Badawī before any conclusions can be drawn. They should be considered as possible leads more than definitive statements. The comparison tends to confirm Manzalaoui's hypothesis that the London Physiognomy is a "mixed version" including elements from both the Short and the Long Forms.<sup>81</sup>

## General organisation of the sections

The London text can be divided into three main parts, leaving aside section [A.]. Which consists of the title and a short description of the source and has been addressed supra in the section "The Title of the Physiognomy chapter" (p. 366). We find after these introductory lines:

- (1) an introduction (sections [B.] to [G.]);
- (2) the ideal portrait of who Alexander should take as a friend (sections [H.] and [I.]);
- (3) the description of the best physical characteristic for each bodily part (sections [J.] to [L.]).

The comparison of Badawī-*Sirr* and the London text seems to confirm that the Long Form of the *Sirr* was revised and edited but that the models from which both texts are derived were extremely close,<sup>82</sup> although a long interpolation (the anecdote about the meeting of Polemon and Hippocrates) and a different organisation of the sections is also attested. Looking specifically to the introduction, sections [B.] to [G.] in the London text are almost identical to the parallel sections found in Badawī-*Sirr*, although one can detect in the omissions and additions the work of a reviser. This introduction bears the influence of Adamantius' epitome of Polemon in the reference it makes to the role of "divine men" in the discovery of physiognomy, which is said to be close to an "unerring art of prophecy."<sup>83</sup>

The role of a reviser in the conception of the Long Form as compared to the Short Form was already assumed by Manzalaoui, who believed that the Short Form chronologically preceded the Long Form, although both would derive from a common, lost original.<sup>84</sup> Grignaschi's position differed in that he thought that the Short Form was

<sup>81</sup> Manzalaoui 1974, 233.

<sup>82</sup> To give but a couple of examples of paleographic accidents that demonstrate the reliability of the London text: in [B.1] المؤذيات versus المرذيات; شاقفة versus شاقفة; in [K.6] أصغر versus صغر. The London text can be used to correct Badawī's edition in a number of instances, such as section [F.] where we find خافياً ("in secret") in the London manuscript while we read خائف ("frightfully") in *Sirr*-Badawī. Suggestions of emendations are mentioned in the footnotes to the texts in Table 1.

<sup>83</sup> Cf. Repath 2007, 495–496 (A2). On the absence of a prologue in the Leiden Polemon, see Repath 2007, 488. The *Sirr* witnesses seem to retain here elements that might have been expurgated in the process of transmission.

<sup>84</sup> Manzalaoui 1974, 172–175, 179, 183.



Table 1: Comparison of the London Physiognomy and the Long Form version of the *Sirr al-Asrar*.

Translation of BL Or. 12070, 39v-43r	BL Or. 12070, Risāla fī al-firāsa, fol. 39v-43r	Sirr al-asrār, 116.10–124.4 Badawi
<p>[A.] Epistle on Physiognomy composed by Aristotle for Alexander. Aristotle the philosopher said at the end of his <i>Book of the Rules</i>, which he composed for Alexander:</p>	<p>رسالة في الفراسة ألّفها أرسطاطاليس لالاسكندر. قال الحكيم أرسطاطاليس في آخر كتاب القانون الذي ألّفه لالاسكندر:</p>	<p>Sirr al-asrār, 116.10–124.4 Badawi</p>
<p>[B.1.] And among the things you really should know, O Alexander, is the knowledge of what the soul can deduce from the external features when it has been purified of desires and freed from evils. And this happens when the soul is firm<sup>i</sup> on the body and superior to it, and that nothing interferes between the luminous substance concealed in the heart and the psychic substance concealed in the brain, and that the mind has been purified of opaqueness and is reflecting [faithfully] what it seeks.<sup>ii</sup></p>	<p>ومما لا غنى لك علمه يا اسكندر، معرفة ما تستشعره النفس من العلامة الظاهرة إذا صفت<sup>2</sup> من الشهوات وتخلصت<sup>3</sup> من ذلك إذا كانت النفس مهيأة على الجسم زائدة عليه، فكانت المادة/الفرسية الكاملة في القلب لا يحول بينها وبين المادة النفسانية الكاملة في الدماغ شيء، بل يكون الذهن قد صفى<sup>4</sup> عن الكدر وانعكس على مطلوبه.</p>	<p>[116.10–18] ومن جملة ما لا غناء بك عن علمه يا اسكندر، معرفة ما تستشعر النفس بالعلامة الظاهرة إذا صفت من الشهوات وتخلصت من الغريزيات. وهذا القسم يعرف بالظن. فإذا كانت النفس مهيأة على الجسم زائدة عليه، وكانت المادة الفرسية الكاملة في القلب لا تحول بينها وبين المادة النفسانية الكاملة في الدماغ وصفاء الذهن عن الكدر وانعكس على مطلوبه.</p>
<p>[B.2.] The priests who existed in some parts of the world were truthful in their predictions of invisible phenomena of unknown origin. And the basis for this is in the correct association [of the signs] according to this capacity [i.e. the knowledge of physiognomy] and of the nativity; and the science of physiognomy enters under this kind [of arts, i.e. divination].<sup>iii</sup> It is a great science, which the Ancients used in the past and about which they boasted of their natural disposition for it. It is a true science, and if not [for fear] of prolixity in a place where it does not pertain, I would have proven you its veridicity with all requisite proof.</p>	<p>كانت الكهانة التي توجد في بعض العالم<sup>5</sup> صحيحة/المتنبذة<sup>6</sup> وبالجملة المعنوية، والمولد، و علم الفراسة داخل تحت هذا الجنس. وهو علم كبير، وعلى قديم استعماله الأرائل، و فاختارت<sup>7</sup> الطبع فيه وهو علم صحيح ولو لا الإطالة في وضعه لا يثبت به لا يثبت<sup>7</sup> بالعلمة الموجبة لصحته.</p>	<p>كانت الكهانة التي توجد في بعض العالم صحيحة/مقدرة بالجملة المعنوية دون أصل. ومدارها أيضاً على طالع القرآن الواقع بهذه القوة المولدة، كما أنه يترك أن تستشعر بالدلائل مع حسن الطبع علم الفراسة فهو علم كبير، وفي قديم الأئمة استعماله الأرائل و فاختارت<sup>7</sup> الطبع فيه، وهو علم صحيح، ولو لا الإطالة لا يثبت بالعلمة الموجبة في صحته.</p>

- [C.] Polemon was among the ancient people who were prominent in this science and whose name became attached to its validity. He could determine from the composition of a man his character.
- [D.] I have established here [for you], O Alexander, some summarized prescriptions in the science of physiognomy to exempt you of too much of the same – because of your excellent disposition and your noble nature. And this is where it starts, with God's grace and his generous help.
- [E.] Therefore I say, that just as the womb is to the foetus what a pot is to food, whiteness with blue and blond<sup>8</sup> are two [I]<sup>9</sup> signs of immaturity. And if a disability is added to these, the whole nature is defective. Be aware of any blue-eyed blond<sup>10</sup> born disabled, as this is an immoral, treacherous and vicious nature.
- [F.] O Alexander! If you see someone who looks at you with insistence and who blushes, looks ashamed, and has an involuntary smile or tearing eyes when you look at him, [it is a sign that] he likes you in secrecy. And if it is the opposite, he is envious of you and trying to conceal it.
- [117.1-2] وممن برز فيهم ونسب إلى صحتهم من الأوائل صاحب الفراسة أفليمون، وكان يستدل بتكوين الإنسان على أخلاق نفسه (...).<sup>١٧</sup>
- [117.13-14] وما اسكنك! أنا أثبت لك من علم الفراسة رسوماً مختصرة وعقداً كافية تعنيك – بحسن طبيعتك وكرم جهرتك – عن كثير من علم الفراسة إن شاء الله.
- وقد أثبت هنا، يا اسكنك من علم الفراسة مختصراً تعنيك – بحسن طبيعتك وكرم جهرتك – عن كثير من ذلك. وهما هنا مبتدأ ذلك على بركة الله وحسن عونه.
- فأقول إنه كما كانت الرحم الجنين بمنزلة القدر للطبخ كان البيض مع الزرقه والشقره دليلاً على قلّة النضج. فإن انضف إلى ذلك نقص من الخلق فقد نقص الطبع. فتحفظ من كل أزرق أشقر أو جري الخلة فهي خلة الفجرة والخيانة والفسق.
- [118.1-4] قد علمت أن الرحم للجنين بمنزلة القدر للطبخ فالبيض الساطع مع الزرقه والشقره الكثير تثدل على قلّة النضج. فإن انضف إلى ذلك نقص في الخلق، فقد نقص الطبع. فتحفظ من كل أزرق أشقر أو جري أزرع، فهي خلة الفجرة والخيانة والفسق.
- [118.5-7] يا اسكنك! إذا رأيت رجلاً يكثر النظر إليك ونظرت إليه فاحمرّ وجهه وظهر منه تبسم لا يريد به ممتع عيناه فهو محبّ إليك. وإذا كان بخلاف ذلك فهو حامد لك، مستخفّ بك.
- يا اسكنك! إذا رأيت إنساناً كثير النظر إليك فإذا نظرت إليه أحمرّ وجهه وظهر منه تبسم لا يريد به ممتع عيناه فهو محبّ إليك خائياً لك. وإذا كان بخلاف ذلك فهو حامد لك مستخفّ بك.

(Continued)

Table 1 (Continued)

Translation of BL Or. 12070, 39v-43r	BL Or. 12070, Risāla fir al-firāsa, fol. 39v-43r	Sirr al-asrār, 116.10–124.4 Badawī
[G.] O Alexander! Be aware of anyone disabled or, handicapped from birth, you should protect yourself from an enemy.	يا اسكندر! تحفظ من كل ناقص الخفة وصاحب عاهة من أصل الخفة تحفظ من عدوك.	[118.8] وتحفظ من كل ناقص الخفة أو صاحب عاهة تحفظ من عدوك (...)
[H.1.] O Alexander! Know that the best and most appropriate person I wish you as a friend is a man of middle-stature, neither tall nor short, with a medium waist, neither too thick nor too slender, who has a middle-sized head, neither small or big, showing a good countenance and a beautiful appearance and face, meaning that [his face] should be between round and fleshy, pale but permeated with light red or brown. [H.2.] [And he must have] reasonably long hair, neither too flat or too curly, neither too thick or fine, between black and blond [or 'chestnut'], that is, red-brown. And he must have big eyes, tending slightly to hollowness, between black and blue, that is deep-blue. [His] neck should be neither [too] long or [too] short, and neither fat nor slender, but regular. And with this, he should have bending shoulders and his loins and hips should not be too fleshy. His voice should be clear, balanced between being pleasant and soft. In addition to this, he should not speak much, except when it is needed.	يا اسكندر! علم أن أعنان الشخصوس الموافقة التي أرضاها بصحاك، هو الرجل المتوسط القامة فيما بين الطول والقصر، المتوسط الرقبة فيما بين العظ والنعافة، المتوسط الرأس فيما بين الصغر والكبر مع تمام الخفة وحسن الشكل فيه وفي الوجه، و [40v] ذلك ان يكون متوسطاً فيما بين التدوير <sup>11</sup> ، و التمتع أبيضاً مشرباً بحمرة أو سمره معتدلة.	[118.11–15] وأعنان الخفة الموافقة توسط القامة وسواد الشعر، والعينين وغورهما وتدوير الوجه،
	ويكون طويل الشعر متوسطاً فيما بين البسطة والجمودة وفيما بين العظ والرقة وفيما بين السواد والصفرة <sup>12</sup> ، وذلك هو الأصهب.	والبياض والمشرب بحمرة أو السمرة المعتدلة مع تمام الخفة واعتدال القامة، وتوسط الرأس في الصغر والكبر، وقلة الكلام إلا عند الحاجة إلى ذلك، والتوسط في جبهة الصوت، ورقته وميله إلى النخافة من غير إفراط وميل طباعه إلى السواد والصفراء <sup>13</sup> (...)
	ويكون كبير <sup>13</sup> العين مائلين يسيروا إلى العور متوسطاً فيما بين الكهل والزرقه، وذلك هو الأشهب <sup>14</sup> ، متوسط العنق فيما بين الطول <sup>15</sup> والقصر وفيما بين العظ والذقة مستويها ويكون مع ذلك مائل الأكتاف عديم اللحم في الصلب و الأور الكه <sup>16</sup> ، في صوته صفاء <sup>17</sup> مع ترسبه فيما بين الجهارة والانهفاض.	... أصهب الشعر، متوسط العينين مائلتين إلى العور، معتدل الرأس، في رقبته تنواء، مائل الأكتاف مجتمعهما، عديم اللحم في الصلب والأور الكه، في صوته اعتدال بين الغلظ والرقة،
	ويكون مع ذلك قليل الكلام إلا عند الحاجة إلى ذلك.	Cf. <i>Sirr</i> 123.5–13, in particular 123.9–12:

سبب الكف، طويل الأصابع مملحة إلى الرقة قليل الضحك والمزاح  
والمرء، كأنما يخاطب نظره سروره أو فرح...

ويكون سبب الكفين طويل الأصابع صائلاً إلى الرقة ويكون مع ذلك قليل  
الضحك والمزاح<sup>18</sup> كأنما يخاطب نظره فرح وسرور.

[118.15-16] فيهذه أُنْعَل خَلْفَهُ أَرْضَاهَا لَكَ وَصَحْبِكَ وَأَنَا أَفْسِر  
لَكَ أَفْبَاهٍ عَلَى الْإِفْرَادِ وَنَمَزَجَهَا أَنْتَ بِصَحَّةٍ نَظْرَكَ...

فيهذه أعل صورة أرضاها بصحبك يا اسكندر وها أن<sup>19</sup> مفسر ما لك  
على الإفراة تَمَزَجَهَا أَنْتَ بِصَحَّةٍ نَظْرَكَ إِنَّ شَاءَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى.

[#124.1-4] قَانَا ظَفَرْتُ، يَا اسكندر، بِنَعْنِ هَذِهِ صَفْتَهُ فَمُسْتَخَصِهِ  
لِنَفْسِكَ وَرَأَى أَمْرَهُ رَعِيكَ وَحَوْرَانِكَ<sup>20</sup> وَيُرِيكَ، يَا اسكندر، أَنْ لَا تَسْرِعَ  
فِي الْحُكْمِ بِنَيْلِ أَحَدٍ. وَلَكِنْ اجْمَعْ شُؤْمَ أَهْلِكَ كُلِّهَا. وَمَتَى جَاءَتْكَ شُؤْمُ أَحَدٍ  
مُتَضَعَّةً، فَمَنْ إِلَى الْأَفْرَى وَالْأَرْجَحِ تُصِيبُ وَتُنْجِجُ أَمْوَالَكَ بِعَوْنِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى  
وَكِرْمِهِ وَاللَّهُ الْمَوْفِقُ.

وينبغي، يا اسكندر، أن لا تسرع في الحكم بنيل واحد.  
ولكن تجمع شؤم اهلك كلها. ومتى جاءك شؤم احد متضعدة، فمن إلى الأفري  
والأرجح تصيب إن شاء الله وتنجج أموالك بالتوفيق.

[#119.1-5]<sup>x</sup>  
...فَالْقَفْرُ اللَّيْنُ بَيِّنٌ عَلَى الْجَيْنِ وَبُرْدُ الدِّمَاغِ وَقَلَّةُ الْعُنْدَةِ وَالشَّعْرُ الْخَشْنُ  
دَلِيلُ الشُّجَاعَةِ وَصَحَّةُ الدِّمَاغِ.  
وكثرة الشعر على الكفتين والعنق يدل على الحمافة والجراة. وكثرة الشعر  
على الصدر والبطن يدل على الوحشة في الطبع وقلة الفهم وحب الجور.  
والشقرة دليل الحق وكثرة الغضب والتسلط. والأسود يدل على الأناة  
وحب العمل – التوسط بين هذين.

القول في الشعر.  
الشعر اللين بَيِّنٌ عَلَى الْجَيْنِ وَبُرْدُ الدِّمَاغِ [41] وَقَلَّةُ الْعُنْدَةِ وَالشَّعْرُ  
الْخَشْنُ<sup>20</sup> بَيِّنٌ عَلَى الشُّجَاعَةِ وَصَحَّةُ الدِّمَاغِ وَكَثْرُ الشَّعْرِ عَلَى الْكَفْتَيْنِ  
وَالعُنُقِ بَيِّنٌ عَلَى الْحَمْفَةِ  
وَالجْرَاءَةِ. وَكَثْرَةُ الشَّعْرِ عَلَى الصُّدْرِ وَالْبَطْنِ بَيِّنٌ عَلَى وَخْشِيَةِ الطَّبْعِ وَقَلَّةُ  
الفهم وحب الجور.  
والشقرة دليل على الحق وكثرة الغضب والتسلط.<sup>21</sup> والأسود بَيِّنٌ عَلَى  
الأناة وحب العمل، وكذلك المتوسط ما بين هذين.

[H.3.] His hands should be large, with lank fingers,  
tending to thinness. And he should not laugh or joke  
too much as if his gaze was [always] busy with joy and  
happiness.

[I.] This is the rightest figure I wish you to take as a  
friend, O Alexander. And I will now detail them [i.e.  
these characteristics] for you separately and you will  
then combine them in your clever understanding. God  
willing.

[J.] You must not hurry, O Alexander, in your judgment  
basing [yourself] on one sign only, but collect all your  
evidence. And if you have contradictory evidence, go  
for the stronger and more likely and you will be correct,  
if God wills, and through Him comes success.<sup>vi</sup>

[K.1] The section on hair: Soft hair is a sign of  
cowardice, of a cold brain and of a lack of intelligence.  
Coarse hair is a sign of courage and of a sound brain.  
Much hair on the shoulders and the neck is a sign  
of stupidity and boldness. Much hair on the breast  
and the belly is a sign of a ferocious nature, of little  
comprehension and wrong doing.<sup>ix</sup> Blond [or 'reddish',  
or 'chestnut' hair] is a sign of stupidity, of much anger  
and tyranny. And black [hair] is a sign of equanimity  
and of the love of justice – the intermediate is between  
these two.

(Continued)

Table 1 (Continued)

Translation of BL Or. 12070, 39v-43r	BL Or. 12070, Risāla fi al-firāsa, fol. 39v-43r	Sirr al-astār, 116.10–124.4 Badawī
<p>[K.2] The section on the eye. The one whose eyes are large and protruding is envious, and not to be trusted, especially if they are blue. And the one whose eyes are of intermediate size, tending to hollowness, darkness and blackness, is alert and trustworthy. Who has slit eyes following the length of the body is wicked. And someone whose eyes resemble those of the cattle, turning away after observing, he is ignorant and of a coarse nature. And who has eyes that move naturally and give piercing looks, he is cunning, and a hoarding thief. And if the eye is red, the person is courageous and bold. The worse eyes are the blue ones, and the worse blue [-eyes] are the turquoise ones. And if they are circled with black, white or reddish stains around them, the person is the most evil and wicked of all people.</p>	<p>القول في العين. مَنْ عَظُمَتْ عَيْنَاهُ وَجَحَنَتْ فَهُوَ حَسُودٌ غَيْرُ مَأْمُونٍ لَا سَمِيحًا إِنْ كَانَتْ زُرْقًا. وَمَنْ كَانَتْ عَيْنَاهُ مَثْوَسَطَتَيْنِ مِثَالَتَيْنِ إِلَى الْغُورِ<sup>23</sup> وَالْكَحْلَةِ وَالسُّوَادِ فَهُوَ يَقْطَانٌ مَحْبَبٌ قَبِيحٌ وَمَنْ كَانَتْ عَيْنَاهُ بَالِطَتَيْنِ<sup>24</sup> فِي طُولِ الْبَيْنِ فَصَاحِبُهُمَا خَبِيثٌ. وَمَنْ كَانَتْ عَيْنَاهُ يَشْبَهُانِ عَيُونَ الْبَهَامِ فِي الْحَمْدِ بَعْدَ الْمَلَاخِظَةِ فَهُوَ جَاهِلٌ غَلِيظُ الطَّبَعِ. وَمَنْ تَحَرَّكَتْ عَيْنَاهُ بِالطَّبَعِ وَحَدَّةٍ نَظَرٌ، فَهُوَ مَخْتَالٌ<sup>25</sup> لِمَنْ مَتْرُوصٌ. وَإِنْ كَانَتْ الْعَيْنَانِ حَمْرًا<sup>26</sup> فَصَاحِبُهُمَا شَجَاعٌ مَقْدَامٌ. وَأَرَادَ الْأَعْيُنَ الزُّرْقَةَ، وَأَرَادَ<sup>27</sup> الزُّرْقَ مِنْهَا الْفَيْرُوزِيَّةَ. وَإِنْ كَانَ حَوْلَ بَيْنِهَا نُقْطٌ سَوْدَانٌ وَبَيْضَانٌ وَحَمْرَانٌ وَإِنْ صَاحِبُهَا أَسْرَ النَّاسِ وَإِلَهُمْ.</p>	<p>[119.6–12] مَنْ عَظُمَتْ عَيْنَاهُ وَجَحَنَتْ فَهُوَ حَسُودٌ وَقَعَّ كَسَلَانٌ غَيْرُ مَأْمُونٍ، وَلَا سَمِيحًا إِذَا كَانَتْ زُرْقًا. وَمَنْ كَانَتْ عَيْنَاهُ مَثْوَسَطَتَيْنِ مِثَالَتَيْنِ إِلَى الْغُورِ وَالْكَحْلَةِ وَالسُّوَادِ فَهُوَ يَقْطَانٌ قَبِيحٌ وَإِنْ كَانَتْ ذَاهِبَتَيْنِ فِي طُولِ الْبَيْنِ فَصَاحِبُهُمَا خَبِيثٌ وَمَنْ كَانَتْ عَيْنَاهُ يَشْبَهُانِ عَيُونَ الْبَهَامِ فِي الْحَمْدِ بَعْدَ الْمَلَاخِظَةِ فَهُوَ جَاهِلٌ غَلِيظُ الطَّبَعِ. وَمَنْ تَحَرَّكَتْ عَيْنَاهُ بِسِرْعَةٍ وَحَدَّةٍ نَظَرٌ فَهُوَ مَخْتَالٌ لِمَنْ مَتْرُوصٌ. وَإِنْ كَانَتْ الْعَيْنَانِ حَمْرًا فَصَاحِبُهُمَا شَجَاعٌ مَقْدَامٌ. فَإِنْ كَانَ حَوْلَ بَيْنِهَا نُقْطٌ بَيْضٌ أَوْ سَوْدٌ أَوْ حَمْرٌ، فَإِنَّ صَاحِبَهَا أَسْرٌ<sup>28</sup> النَّاسِ وَإِلَهُمْ.</p>
<p>[K.3] The section on the eyebrows. Very hairy eyebrows are a sign of faltering and of silly talk. If the eyebrows [lacuna]<sup>29</sup>: “reach” the two temples, the person is haughty and vainglorious. Whose eyebrow are [lacuna: “thin”], of a medium length and black, he is alert and understanding.</p>	<p>القول في الحاجب. وَالْحَاجِبُ الْكَثِيرُ الشَّعْرُ بَيِّنٌ عَلَى الْعِيِّ وَغَيْثُ الْكَلَامِ. وَإِذَا كَانَ الْحَاجِبُ [مَمْتًا] إِلَى الصَّدْعِ<sup>[41v]</sup> فَصَاحِبُهُ<sup>30</sup> تَيْبَهُ صَنِيفٌ. وَمَنْ [رَقَّ] حَاجِبُهُ وَعَظِلَ فِي الطُّولِ وَكَانَ أَسْوَدَ فَصَاحِبُهُ<sup>31</sup> يَقْطَانٌ قَبِيحٌ.</p>	<p>[120.1–3] وَالْحَاجِبُ الْكَثِيرُ الشَّعْرُ بَيِّنٌ عَلَى الْعِيِّ وَغَيْثُ الْكَلَامِ. فَإِنْ كَانَ الْحَاجِبُ مَمْتًا إِلَى الصَّدْعِ فَصَاحِبُهُ تَيْبَهُ صَنِيفٌ. وَمَنْ رَقَّ حَاجِبُهُ وَمَنْ رَقَّ حَاجِبُهُ وَعَظِلَ فِي الطُّولِ وَالْقَصِيرُ وَكَانَ أَسْوَدَ فَهُوَ يَقْطَانٌ قَبِيحٌ.</p>

<p>[K.4] The section on the nose. If the nose is thin, the person is impetuous. The one whose nose is long and nearly enters his mouth is courageous. Who is flat-nosed is lecherous. Someone whose nostrils are flared is irascible. If the nose is thick in the middle and tends to be flat, he is a liar. The best nose is the one that is not exaggeratedly long, its thickness intermediate, [added: "its nostrils"] not too large either.</p>	<p>القول في الأنف: الأنف إذا كان رقيقاً فصاحبه نرقي. ومن كان أنفه طويلاً يدخل 32 في فيه فهو شجاع. ومن كان أنفه قريباً تقياً أنفه شديدة الانتفاخ فهو عضوب. ومن كان أنفه غليظاً أو وسطه مائلاً إلى الفطس فهو كذب. وأصل الأنوف ما طال غير طول فاحش، وكان غلظه متوسطاً وكان تقياً أنفه 33 غير فاحش أيضاً.</p>	<p>[120.4-8] الأنف: إذا كان الأنف رقيقاً فصاحبه نرقي. ومن كان أنفه طويلاً وكان 34 يدخل في فيه فهو شجاع. ومن كان أنفه قريباً تقياً أنفه شديدة الانتفاخ فهو عضوب. وإن كان الأنف غليظاً أو وسطه مائلاً إلى الفطس فهو مهذار كذب. وأصل الأنوف ما كان غير طول فاحش، وكان غلظه متوسطاً إلى الطرف، حسناً غير فاحش.</p>
<p>[K.5] The section on the forehead. A flat forehead without wrinkles is a sign of quarrel, mischief, insolence and vainglory. The one whose forehead is of intermediate width and has some wrinkles, he is honest, reliable, affable, knowledgeable, alert, organized and skillful. And God knows best.</p>	<p>القول في الجبهة: المنبسطة التي لا 35 لا عضون، 36 فيها يدل على المخاصمة والتشعيب والوقاحة والصلف. ومن كانت جبهته متوسطة في السمة كانت فيها أعضاء ما فهو صبور وفي محب عالم يقظان حائق والله أعلم.</p>	<p>[120.9-12] الجبهة المنبسطة التي لا عضون فيها دليل على المخاصمة والشعيب والوقاحة والصلف. ومن كان جبهته متوسطة في السمة والتتوء كان فيها عضون فهو صنوق فيهم يقظان حائق. ومن كانت جبهته ظاهرة التتوء فهو سيكت متوقف في الأمور حازم.</p>
<p>[K.6] The section on the face. Who has a fleshy face is ignorant, blunt and a liar. Who has a thin face is mindful of (his) affairs and understanding. Someone whose face [often] turns yellow or tends to yellowness is evil, ignorant, wicked and argumentative. Who has a long face is blunt. And God knows best.</p>	<p>القول في الوجه: من كان لحم الوجه فهو جاهل فيج كذاب. ومن كان نحيف الوجه فهو مهتم 37 بالأمور فهم. ومن أصفر وجهه أو كان مائلاً إلى الصفرة فهو ردي خفيف خبيث جليل. ومن طال وجهه فهو فتج والله أعلم.</p>	<p>[#120.15-121.1] ومن كان لحم الوجه فهو جاهل كذاب. ومن كان نحيف الوجه فهو مهتم بالأمور فهم. ومن صغر وجهه وكان مائلاً إلى الصفرة فهو ردي خبيث خذاع شكس. ومن طال وجهه فهو فتج (...).</p>
<p>[K.7] The section on the mouth. If his mouth is wide he is courageous. Who has thick lips, is stupid.<sup>x1</sup></p>	<p>القول في الفم: وإن كان واسع الفم فهو شجاع. ومن كان غليظ الشفتين فهو أحمق.</p>	<p>[120.13-14] الفم: من كان واسع الفم فهو شجاع. ومن كان غليظ الشفتين عريض الأسنان فهو أحمق.</p>

(Continued)

Table 1 (Continued)

Translation of BL Or. 12070, 39v-43r	BL Or. 12070, Risāla fir al-firāsa, fol. 39v-43r	Sirr al-asrār, 116.10–124.4 Badawī
[K.8] On the temples. The one whose temples are protruding and someone whose jugular veins are bulging is irascible.	في الصدغين: من كان أصداعه منتفخة وأرداجه منتفخة فهو غضوب.	الصدغان: من كانت أصداعه منتفخة وأرداجه منتفخة فهو غضوب.
[K.9] On the ears. Who has small ears is stupid, a thief, an adulterer and a coward.	في الأذنين: من كان صغير الأذنين فهو أحمق سارق زان جبان.	[121.5–7] (...) ومن كان صغير الأذنين جذاً فهو أحمق سارق زان جبان (...)
[K.10] The neck. <sup>38</sup> The one whose neck is long is vociferous, stupid and a coward. And the one whose neck is very short is cunning and wicked. And someone whose neck is very thick is ignorant and a glutton.	العنق: [من كان عنقه طويلاً فهو صياح جبان] ومن كان عنقه قصيرة فهو صياح أحمق جبان. <sup>39</sup> ومن كان <sup>40</sup> عنقه قصيرة جذاً فهو مكار خبيث. ومن كان عنقه غليظة جذاً فهو جاهل أكول.	[#121.19–20] ومن كان عنقه طويلاً رقيقاً فهو صياح أحمق جبان. ومن كان عنقه قصيراً جذاً فهو مكار خبيث. ومن كان عنقه غليظاً فهو جاهل أكول (...)
[K.11] The voice. Who has a loud voice is courageous.	الصوت من كان <sup>43</sup> جبير الصوت فهو شجاع.	[121.11–15] الصوت: من كان جبير الصوت فهو شجاع جبور متقام. ومن كان خشن الصوت مثالا إلى الحدة فهو جاهل فخم صبور على الجاه والتعب، ومن رقى صوته إلى الغاية فهو نزيه سيء الخلق وخيرهما المعتدل المثالي إلى الغنى واليومية. الكلام: من كان كلامه معتدلاً بين العظمة والرقّة والكنكة والتأني فهو عاقل مدبر صدوق طيب الأخلاق حسن المرافقة. ومن كان كلامه سريعاً، لا سيما إن كان صوتيه رقيقاً، فهو رقيق جاهل كذوب. ومن كان كلامه غليظاً فهو غضوب سيء الخلق. ومن كان كلامه أغن صوّفاً فهو حسود متجمل. ومن كان حسن الصوت فهو دليل على الحمق وقلة الفطنة وكبر النفس. <sup>44</sup> (...)
The one whose voice is moderate, between delicacy and roughness, is intelligent, organized, trustworthy. Who speaks fast, especially if his voice is high, <sup>41</sup> is ignorant and a liar. The one whose voice is coarse is a liar with bad manners. And the one whose voice is nasal is deceitful. [And for] who has a beautiful <sup>42</sup> voice, this is a sign of stupidity, of lack of intelligence.	ومن كان صوتيه معتدلاً في الرقة والعظمة فهو عاقل مدبر صدوق. ومن كلامه سريعاً ولا سيما إن كان رقيقاً فهو جاهل كذوب. وإن كان صوتيه غليظاً فهو غضوب سيء الخلق. ومن كان أغن الصوت فهو متجمل. ومن كان حسن الصوت، فهو دليل على الحمق وقلة الفطنة.	ومن كان كلامه معتدلاً بين العظمة والرقّة والكنكة والتأني فهو عاقل مدبر صدوق طيب الأخلاق حسن المرافقة. ومن كان كلامه سريعاً، لا سيما إن كان صوتيه رقيقاً، فهو رقيق جاهل كذوب. ومن كان كلامه غليظاً فهو غضوب سيء الخلق. ومن كان كلامه أغن صوّفاً فهو حسود متجمل. ومن كان حسن الصوت فهو دليل على الحمق وقلة الفطنة وكبر النفس. <sup>44</sup> (...)

<p>[K.12] [The shoulders and the back] [lacuna: Large]<sup>44</sup> shoulders are a sign of courage and of a weak intellect. Protruding shoulders is a sign of bad intention and ugly conduct.</p> <p>The back: A bended back is a sign of an unfriendly nature. A straight back is a sign of a good nature.</p>	<p>[الكفتين والظهر] [عرض] 45 في الاكتشاف يدلان الشجاعة مع طمّة العقل.</p> <p>بروز الكفتين يدلان على سوء النية وتقيح المذهب.</p> <p>الظهر: الخناء الظهر يدل على شكاسة الخلق.</p> <p>استواء الظهر [42v] يدل على جودة في الخلق.</p>	<p>[#122.3-6] و <u>عرض الكفتين والظهر</u> يدلان على الشجاعة مع خفة العقل.</p> <p>والخناء <u>الظهر</u> من غير كبر يدل على شكاسة الخلق وتؤافة الصدر واستواء <u>الظهر</u> علامة محمودة.</p> <p><u>وإذا برزت الكفتان</u> فانهما يدلان على سوء النية وتقيح المذهب.</p>
<p>[K.13] The chest and the belly.<sup>46</sup> A generous chest and a gracious belly are signs of a good intellect and sound reason. Someone who has a big belly is stupid, ignorant and loves fornication.</p>	<p>الصدر والبطن</p> <p>جودة الصدر وطمّة البطن يدلان على جودة العقل وحسن الرأي.</p> <p>ومن كان كبير البطن فهو جاهل محجب بنفسه يجب التناح.</p>	<p>[#122.1-2] وطمّة البطن وطمّة صدر سمّة العقل وحسن الرأي.</p>
<p>[K.14] The arms and the hands. When the arms are so long that the hands reach the knee, it is a sign of courage and magnanimity. When the arms are short, the person loves evil and is a coward. A long hand with lank fingers is a sign of mastery in [technical] crafts and of judgements in tasks and leadership. Thick and short fingers are a sign of ignorance and stupidity.</p>	<p>الذراعين والكفتين<sup>48</sup></p> <p>إذا طالت الذراعان حتى تبلغ الركبة يدل على الشجاعة والكرم.</p> <p>وإذا قصرت الذراعان فصاحبهما محب الفخر جبان. والكف الطويل مع الأصابع الطوال تدل 49 على التفوذ في الصناعات وإحكام الأعمال والرياسة. وغلظ الأصابع مع قصرها يدل على الجهل والحماق.</p>	<p>[122.7-11] وإذا طالت الذراعان حتى يبلغ الكف الركبة يدل على الشجاعة والكرم. وإذا قصرتا، أي الذراعان، فصاحبهما محب الفخر جبان. والكف الطويل مع الأصابع الطوال تدل على التفوذ في الصناعات وإحكام الأعمال وتدل على الرياسة. وغلظ الأصابع وقصرها يدل على الجهل والحماق وقصر الهمة (...)</p>
<p>[K.15] On the calves. Thick calves are a sign of absent-mindedness [or 'excessive pride']?, of a light intellect and a strong body.</p>	<p>في الساقين</p> <p>غلظ الساقين تدل على التيبؤ 50 والخفة وقوة الجسم.</p>	<p>[123.1-2] وغلظ الساقين والعتوئين يدل على التلبه والفتنة وقوة الجسم. وكذلك كثرة التحرف في الورك يدل على ضعف القوة والاسترخاء.</p>

(Continued)



Table 1 (Continued)

Translation of BL Or. 12070, 39v-43r	BL Or. 12070, Risāla fir al-firāsa, fol. 39v-43r	Sirr al-asrār, 116.10-124.4 Badawī
[K.16] On the steps. Someone whose steps are wide and graceful is successful in all his affairs. And the one whose [steps] are short and fast is hasty, vain, has a poor judgement and bad intentions.	في الخطى من كانت خطاه واسعة بطيئة <sup>51</sup> دلَّ على نجاح في جميع الأمور. ومن كانت يده قصيرة سريعة فهو عجول متكبر <sup>52</sup> غير محكم للأمر، سيء النية.	[123.2-4] ومن كانت خطاه واسعة بطيئة فهو مُنْجَحٌ في جميع أمورهِ وأعماله مُفَكِّرٌ في عواقبه. ومن كانت خطاه قصيرة سريعة فهو عجولٌ متكبرٌ غير محكم للأمر، سيء النية فيها <sup>53</sup> . (...)
[K.17] On the feet. Flethy, big and thick feet are a sign of ignorance and of tyranny. A small foot and a thin heel are a sign of immorality, wrongdoing and cowardice.	في القسمن الجمجمة <sup>54</sup> العظيمة الطيبة تدل على الجهل وحب الجور. والقدم الصغيرة مع رقة <sup>55</sup> رقبته تدل على الفجور والجور والجهن. [43]	[122.12-15] وكذلك القمم العظيمة الجميلة العريضة تدل على الجهل وحب الجور. والقدم الصغيرة النية تدل على الفجور. وخيرها ما كان بين ذلك حينئذ الاستواء والجودة وحقن اللحم وسلامة الأظفار والتنظيم الأصليح. و رقة العقب تدل على الجبن، و غلظتهما تدل الشجاع <sup>56</sup> . (...)
[K.18] Movement of the body A man whose body moves fast and repeatedly or plays with his hands is simple-minded and treacherous. <sup>xii</sup>	حركة البدن من كان يده سريعة الحركة كثيراً أو كان يلعب <sup>57</sup> بيده فهو صلف خداع.	[121.15-16] (...) ومن يحرك جسمه كثيراً من الرجال ويلعب بيده فهو خفيف صخيف صلف خداع مهين <sup>58</sup> . (...)
[L.] This is what we thought about recording for you here, in the shortest possible way, of the interpretation of the signs given by the human bodily parts. So be pleased with it, O excellent brother, noble son, knowledgeable and perfect king, if God the Highest is willing so.	وهذا ما رأينا أن ننتبه هاهنا من تفسير دلالات أعضاء بدن الإنسان بأخصر ما أمكن. وكُنْ بها الأخ الفاضل والابن النبيل والملك الخبير الكامل سعيًا أن شاء الله تعالى.	

- 1 MS: عنى. The orthography غناء in Badawī is modernized. For the expression عنى لا غنى cf. H. Wehr, *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic* (4th ed.), Urbana (Il.), 1994, p. 803.
- 2 MS: التقييات : mistake for orthography of التقييات , cf. Lane, *Dictionary*, vol. 4, p. 338b.
- 3 MS: الموتيات. The London Physiognomy's reading is identical with that in manuscript من (= Paris, Bib. Nat. 2418, a 17th c. Yemenite manuscript) in Badawī, *Sirr*, p. 116, n. 6.
- 4 MS: الطم (old orthography). The *Sirr*-Badawī, where the sentence makes grammatically little sense, could here be corrected with the London MS.
- 5 MS: الطم.
- 6 MS: للمجرة.
- 7 MS: undotted. Both words are graphically identical and the meaning makes little difference, but the verb *athbata* is used repeatedly by "Aristotle" throughout the *Sirr*.
- 8 Likely an abbreviated phrase for "paleness of face, with blue eyes and blond hair," see the corresponding section in the Short Form versions infra. "Blond" may as well refer to bronze, reddish, or chestnut hair.
- 9 The use of a dual to refer to three elements may possibly hint at the influence of a Greek speaker as Greek dual can be used to designate two or three elements.
- 10 MS: انسان .
- 11 MS: التذوير .
- 12 MS: سفرة for سفرة .
- 13 MS: كثير .
- 14 MS: الطول .
- 15 MS: الإدراك .
- 16 MS: صفًا .
- 17 MS: المزاج .
- 18 MS: ها نا .
- 19 MS: الحسن .
- 20 MS: التسلط .
- 21 MS: عينية .
- 22 MS: العور .
- 23 MS: داهيتين .
- 24 MS: مختال , a possible synonym of مختل which may be interpreted as 'disordered' (in his mind or his affairs), cf. Lane, *Dictionary*, vol. 2, p. 782.
- 25 MS: الحمر اوين .
- 26 MS: ارنا .

- 27 The expression *sharru al-nās* in *Sirr* corresponds to Rāzī's, *Ṭibb al-Manṣūrī*, 99.2 against the London Physiognomy and the Leiden Short Form (cf infra Table3) where we read *asharru al-nās*, also correct.
- 28 The lacunas were completed with *Sirr* (Badawī).
- 29 MS: فصاحته .
- 30 MS: فصاحته .
- 31 MS: (redundant third person pronoun, possibly resulting from Syriac influence).
- 32 MS: فيها انه , undotted, for فيها انه ؟
- 33 Should be corrected with the London manuscript (paleographic accident or misprint).
- 34 MS: الذي .
- 35 MS: غضو .
- 36 MS: معيم , emended with *Sirr*.
- 37 The section comes after the movements of the body in the *Sirr*-Badawī.
- 38 Dittography with one word missing in the first version, the copyist seems to have forgotten to bar the mistaken sentence.
- 39 MS: كانت . From here on and until the end of the section, neck is treated in Arabic as a feminine, or the possessor of the neck is (see also in the next section). Emended with *Sirr*.
- 40 On the expression *raff' al-ṣawt*, cf. Lane, *Dictionary*, vol. 3, p. 290.
- 41 It would be possible to emend حسن (beautiful) and read خشن (coarse) but the parallel in the *Sirr* seems to favour 'beautiful'.
- 42 MS: كانت .
- 43 The *Sirr* has here three additional sentences on (1) the agitated person (see infra [K.19], (2) the taciturn and (3) the stammer and whoever has a speaking deficiency.
- 44 Added with *Sirr* to fill the lacuna.
- 45 This section [K.13] comes before 'the shoulders and the back' [K.12] in the *Sirr*. Both sections show a different inner organization.
- 46 MS: كانت .
- 47 MS: والكثير .
- 48 MS: يدان .
- 49 MS: القاهة . Sc. القاهة? The word *tayyāh* carries two meanings: "absent-minded" or "proud" (cf. Lane, *Dictionary*, vol. 1, p. 326). The ductus of this adjective and that of the next one are close enough with what we read in the *Sirr*, where *al-balah wa-l-qīḥāh*, meaning "foolishness and imprudence."
- 50 The reading of the *Sirr* corresponds to Rāzī and should not be corrected; *baṭī'ah* ("slow") and *laṭīfah* ("graceful" or "large") might have been seen as synonyms unless the reading of the London manuscript is the result of a paleographical accident. The antonyms in the following sentence point to 'slow' as the correct reading.
- 51 Neither the *Sirr* (with *shakis*, "quarrelsome, ill-tempered") nor the London manuscript (*mutakabbir*, "vain, haughty") follow the exact reading of Rāzī's *Ṭibb al-Manṣūrī* ("meticulous, self-conscious," *dhū 'ināyah*) but the London text has a closer synonym.

- 52 The *Sirr* continues here with the portrait of the ideal person.
- 53 MS: الحمية: الحمية.
- 54 MS: بقية.
- 55 The section on the 'feet' appears in the *Sirr* between the 'arms' [K.14] and the 'legs' [K.15].
- 56 MS: بعقب. Emended with *Sirr*.
- 57 This sentence comes in the *Sirr* to the end of the section on the 'voice,' see supra *Sirr*, 121.11–15, facing [K.11].
- i Ali and Fulton's translation of the MS Gotha Arabic 1869 (cf. Manzalaoui, "The Pseudo-Aristotelian *Kitāb Sirr al-Asrār*," p. 154) in Steele, *Secretum Secretorum*, p. 218, reflects the reading of the London Physiognomy against *Sirr*-Badawī.
- ii This section seems more coherent in the London version than in the Long Form of the *Sirr* as edited by Badawī, in which corrections by reviser(s), copyists and Badawī himself have blurred the original meaning. The type of purification recommended here is reminiscent of Eastern practices (Buddhist, Chinese, Indian) more than of any Greek theories. The syntax of the last sentence is correct with the addition and should be used to correct the text edited by Badawī. Our rendering comes close to Ali/Fulton's translation of the Gotha manuscript (cf. Steele, p. 218 and infra Table 2).
- iii The syntax of this sentence is awkward. It may also be interpreted as meaning "The priestly art which existed in some people was capable of predicting invisible phenomena of unknown origin. And the basis for this was in the benefic conjunction [they had in their nativity] for this art and in their horoscope; and the science of physiognomy enters under this kind [of arts, i. e. divination]."
- iv The *Sirr* adds here the famous Socrates/Zopyrus anecdote, with Hippocrates and Polemon for protagonists. The anecdote is missing altogether from the London Physiognomy and of the Short Form. The author of the text is addressing an audience which had little care for chronology (Aristotle lived half a millennium before Polemon) but who knew of the existence of a translation of Polemon's *Physiognomy*.
- v The word *ashqar* can be translated as "reddish, blond, bay or sorrel (for horses and camels), chestnut." We have opted for "blond" to reflect ancient traditional Arab superstitions against blue-eyed blond-haired persons.
- vi See the continuation of this sentence in the next section infra, *Sirr* 118.15-16.
- vii The corresponding paragraph comes to the end of the Physiognomy chapter in LF and SF. What follows was presumably abbreviated from Abū Bakr Rāzī *Ṭibb al-Manṣūrī* and added to an initial short section. Sections [H.] and [J.] of the London Physiognomy correspond to elements appearing to the end of the physiognomy chapter in the *Sirr*-Badawī, indicating an interpolation or displacement at some stage in the transmission.
- viii This sentence (missing in the London Physiognomy) concludes the ideal portrait as elaborated in LF. The verb *ẓafara*, introducing it, is commonly used by the author of the *Sirr*.
- ix What follows appears in the *Sirr* in the section on the 'colour' [of hair].
- x This section directly follows 118.15-16 above.
- xi [K.6] and [K.7], on the 'face' and the 'mouth' are inverted in comparison to *Sirr*-Badawī.
- xii [K.17] and [K.18] on the 'feet' and the 'movement of the body' are inverted in comparison to *Sirr*-Badawī.

abbreviated from the Long Form, while agreeing at the same time on the possibility of a lost archetype from which both versions derived.<sup>85</sup> Steele for his part suggested, following Förster, that the Long Form made a greater use of Abū Bakr Rāzī *Ad Mansorem* (i.e. the *Ṭibb al-Manṣūrī*) than the Short Form, an expansion which seems to argue for Manzalaoui's hypothesis.<sup>86</sup> Nevertheless, as will be seen in what follows, the London text simultaneously bears traces of the Long Form revisions and an organisation of the text that is closer to the one witnessed in the Short Form (see *infra* Tables 2 and 3).

This difference in the organisation of the text can be partly explained by the role played by the "ideal portrait," a summary of the bodily characteristics of the ideal figure whom Alexander should be seeking as a friend (in the London text) or as an advisor (in the Long Form). In the *Sirr-Badawī*, not one but two portraits are given. The first one is placed before the enumeration of the body parts (*Sirr*, 118.11–16 Badawī) while the second one appears at the conclusion of the chapter (*Sirr*, 123.5–13 Badawī). In the London text however, we find only one portrait, introduced by a statement of Aristotle [H.1], according to which if someone corresponding to these features could be found, Alexander should take him as a friend. The parallel in *Sirr-Badawī* gives a somewhat different portrait, introduced as an epitome of "the most harmonious and favorable composition (*a'dal al-khalqa al-muwāfiqa*)" (*Sirr*, 118.11 Badawī). The second portrait in LF is introduced by an original element, missing in the London text and in the Short Form versions (see *infra* Tables 2 and 3) in which Aristotle states that if such a character is found, he would be a suitable personal advisor to whom Alexander could delegate his affairs and the supervision of the subjects (*ra'īya*).<sup>87</sup> The comparison of the ideal portrait(s) will be discussed in a separate section (cf. *infra* The Ideal portrait(s)).

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**85** On the relation between SF and LF and Grignaschi's critics of Manzalaoui's thesis, see Grignaschi 1976, 15–16. Trying to verify his hypothesis by resorting to the London Physiognomy and to the relation of the SF and LF versions, Grignaschi summarized Förster's hypotheses on the Physiognomy and added a fully developed theory of the relations of the Physiognomical texts in Grignaschi 1976, 35–45, pointing to a dozen new texts discovered after Förster. A whole book would be needed to verify Grignaschi's suggestions. His understanding of the relation of SF and LF evolved throughout the decades he devoted to the *Sirr al-Asrār*, with what seems to be his final position expressed in Grignaschi 1982, 6.

**86** Cf. Steele 1920, lxiii.

**87** Grignaschi 1976, 43, noticed that the sentence is missing in three of the Arabic versions he used (Istanbul and two Gotha manuscripts) as well as from Philip of Tripoli's Latin translation. He believed that it should be considered an addition from the copyists of one of the later manuscripts of the Long Form used by Badawī.

## The inner title of the Physiognomy section and the anecdote on Hippocrates and Polemon

In the London text (Table 1, section [A.]) and in most versions of the Short Form (see *infra* Tables 2 and 3), a title is given to the section on Physiognomy at the beginning of the text with some minor variations. We find in the London text: “Epistle on Physiognomy (*Risāla fī al-firāsa*)”; in the Short Form: “Discourse on Physiognomy (*al-Qawl fī al-firāsa*).” In the Long Form however, this title appears in the middle of the introduction, following the anecdote about Hippocrates and Polemon which is missing from both the London text and Short Form.<sup>88</sup> The author of the Long Form further adds in a comment missing from the Short Form, but extant in the London text (see Table 1, section [D.]), that the chapter was “abbreviated”: “Abbreviated chapter on the Science of Physiognomy (*Bāb mukhtaṣar fī ‘ilm al-firāsa*)” [*Sirr*, 117.12 Badawī]. Having in mind the comparison offered by Regula Forster of the *Sirr*-Badawī with Abū Bakr al-Rāzī’s chapter on physiognomy in his *al-Ṭibb al-Manṣūrī*, one is tempted to consider this as a possible reference to Rāzī’s full text. Grignaschi however, was under the impression that both Rāzī and the London text derive from a common source.<sup>89</sup>

The importance of this divergence between the texts is reinforced by the relationship between these sources and the Hippocrates-Polemon anecdote. In the London text, a cursory reference to Polemon appears (see Table 1, section [C.]) as one of the most famous authorities in the field of physiognomy, while the *Sirr*-Badawī has instead the anecdote about Polemon’s commenting on Hippocrates portrait with the specification “Polemon, the author of the Physiognomy” (*Sirr*, 117.1). Both the London text and the Long Form of the *Sirr* then explain in a similar manner (see Table 1, [D.]) that what will follow has been abbreviated from a more complete text, as was just mentioned. But the London text has the addition “and this is where it starts (*wa-hā hunā muḩtadā’ dhālika*)” where the *Sirr*-Badawī 117.12. has what I have referred to as the “inner title,” possibly once a title in the margin. A somewhat similar organisation of the contents appears in the Topkapi recension of the Arabic

<sup>88</sup> Grignaschi 1976, 42–43, remarked that the Latin translation of Philip of Tripoli, a Long Form, has indeed two titles: one, “General physiognomy,” preceding the short introduction and another one, “Particular physiognomy,” before the detailed bodily parts. Using a 13th-century manuscript from Istanbul (MS Ayasofia 2890) which he believed was one of the oldest witness of the Long Form, Grignaschi adds that the manuscript lacks the second title or a reference to the body parts section as being abbreviated, and that the section belongs to Book II.

<sup>89</sup> Grignaschi 1976, 40. In my opinion, Grignaschi overinterprets the variant between *ḩasan* and *khashan*. Both words are identical when undotted, but the mere presence of the word written undotted in a manuscript does not necessarily imply that the readers read it *ḩasan* rather than *khashan*. Correcting the Arabic with the Greek, as Grignaschi does, may also be misleading because of the possibility that a translation was verified with another manuscript and later corrected, thus leading to the recontamination of the tradition from an outside source.

Polemon, in which Gherseti remarked that the anecdote about Hippocrates and Polemon is given before the incipit of what is stated to be the book of Polemon, which is clearly identified by the words: “This book of his begins with his statement...”.<sup>90</sup> But the order is not the sole parallel between the *Sirr* and the Arabic Polemon. The London text and the *Sirr*-Badawī seem to echo the Istanbul text when we read that “Polemon [...] could determine from the constitution of a man his character (*yastadilla bi-l-insān ‘alā tarkīb nafsihi*)” (cf. Table 1, Section [C.]). We find an exact parallel in Badawī’s edition of the *Sirr* (apart from the addition that Polemon was “the author of the Physiognomy” as mentioned above). The parallel sentence we read in the Istanbul Polemon betrays a more elegant translation: “He would determine the moral character [of a man] from his outer attributes (*fa-stadalla ‘alā l-khalq bi-l-khuluq*).”<sup>91</sup> The polysemic root *kh-l-q* might have caused some confusion to readers and possibilities of confusion are reinforced by the fact that *khalq* and *khuluq* share an identical ductus, خلق.<sup>92</sup> It is unclear whether the two versions represent two alternative translations or if the London text derives from Istanbul Polemon, via a series of intermediaries. The different transliterations of the names offered in the London text (Polemon: *Aflimūn*) versus the Istanbul one (Polemon/Hippocrates: *Afilāmūn/Hiwāfaqrātīs*) would argue for two different translations.

Returning to the oddly constructed sentence found in the *Sirr*-Badawī and in the London text, it is paralleled by a number of later witnesses to the anecdote, which are usually believed to be borrowings. One of them, Ibn Juljul (d. 987), whose *Generations of the Physicians and the Sages* (*Ṭabaqāt al-aṭibbā’ wa-al-ḥukamā’*) was composed in 975, is often quoted by later compilers.<sup>93</sup> His testimony is of particular value because he is one of the first authors to mention the *Sirr al-Asrār* explicitly.<sup>94</sup> However, Ibn Juljul’s knowledge of the anecdote may have been borrowed directly from Polemon’s *Firāsa* rather than from the *Sirr*, as can be deduced from the introductory lines to the anecdote about the encounter between Hippocrates and Polemon: “And it is what Polemon the author of the *Physiognomy* was stating in his [Book on] *Physiognomy* (*wa-dhālika anna Aflimūn ṣāhib al-firāsa kāna yaz’amu fī firāsatihi*).”<sup>95</sup> But the use by

<sup>90</sup> Gherseti 2007a, 465, 476–477 for the text and translation. See the remarks of Hoyland 2006, 317.

<sup>91</sup> The verb *istadalla* can be constructed with the particle *bi-* or with the particle *‘alā* with an identical semantic value; Arabic is unfortunately not as clear as German in this regard. Arabic text and translation in Gherseti 2007a, 468–469. The confusion is attenuated by the addition of “and from his outward [appearance] towards his inner [nature] (*wa-bi-l-zāhir ‘alā l-bāṭin*).”

<sup>92</sup> For the meanings of *khalq* and *khuluq*, see Lane, *Dictionary*, vol. II, s.v. *khalq*, p. 801c. *Khalq* is often used in ninth-century Arabic to refer to “humans in general” (for example in Jāhiz’s writings), most probably derived from the religiously connoted expression *khalq Allāh*, i.e. “God’s creation.”

<sup>93</sup> See supra n.47.

<sup>94</sup> He is in fact the first author to mention the *Sirr al-Asrār* under this title and to give a number of quotations which can all be found literally in the textbook we possess today. See Ibn Juljul 1955, 17 and Forster 2006, 17, nn. 65 and 66.

<sup>95</sup> Ibn Juljul, *Ṭabaqāt al-aṭibbā’ wa-al-ḥukamā’*, 179–11 Sayyid.

Ibn Juljul directly afterwards in the same sentence of the phrase *yastadillu bi-l-insān ‘alā tarkīb nafsihi* rather than the more elegant version found in the Topkapi Polemon, seems to confirm the possible existence of two distinct translations.<sup>96</sup> Ibn Abī Uṣaybī’a, a thirteenth-century physician who quotes repeatedly from Ibn Juljul in his encyclopaedic work on the history of medicine, makes use of a small variant on one occasion: *wa-aḥkama ‘alā akhlāq nafsihi min tarkībihi* with *aḥkama* (‘to judge’) instead of *istadalla* (‘to determine, to deduce’). Ibn Abī Uṣaybī’a, who had access to the main Ayyubid libraries of Cairo and Damascus, also bears witness to the existence of a recension of the story closer to the classical version, where Socrates appeared instead of Hippocrates.<sup>97</sup> Hence, all the testimonies of the anecdote may ultimately be derived from an original close enough to the version known to Ciceron (involving Socrates and Zopyrus) who reports that “Zopyrus [...] claimed to discern every man’s nature from his appearance...”<sup>98</sup>

Finally, some epistemological affinities between the Topkapi Polemon and the *Sirr* can be detected. The theoretical introduction of the Topkapi Polemon’s justifies physiognomy as a development of medical practices. According to Ghersetti, the author of this introduction based himself on Plato’s theory of the tripartite soul in the *Republic* and on humoral physiology.<sup>99</sup> She adds that the introduction of the Arabic Polemon should not be ascribed to the celebrated Greek physiognomist, but to another author.<sup>100</sup> Traces of humoral theory applied to the description of the favourable features may also be found in the different versions of the *Sirr*’s physiognomy, as will be seen in the comparative tables below.

<sup>96</sup> Ibn Juljul mentions the anecdote although it is usually agreed that he knew a Short Form version (*loc. cit.*, 17 and 67 Sayyid, where Ibn al-Bīṭrīq’s *Fundgeschichte* is quoted from the *Sirr* in the very exact wording of the MS Leiden, Or. 749, an SF8, against the variants of the Sohag manuscript, another SF8 witness, quoted by Sayyid in his notes, *loc. cit.*, 69. Could it be that Ibn Juljul’s version had been annotated and should we consider the possibility that the anecdote was once part of some marginalia on a Short Form manuscript available in tenth-century Cordoba?

<sup>97</sup> Ibn Abī Uṣaybī’a, *‘Uyūn al-anbā’*, vol. I, 28.1–2 Müller, quoted by Hoyland 2006, . 315.

<sup>98</sup> Hoyland 2006, 315, cf. Ghersetti 2007b, 282, n. 4, and the references given there to Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations and On Fate*.

<sup>99</sup> Ghersetti 2007b, 284; Hoyland 2006, 318–319 develops the philosophical and medical aspects of physiognomy and relates the pseudo-science with the widespread Arabic literary genre of “Correction of characters (*tahdhib al-akhlāq*)”.

<sup>100</sup> It is possible to say that its theoretical introduction was certainly available to the Shiite philosopher Miskawayh (d. 421/1030), as can be shown from the detailed answers he gave to Abū Ḥayyān al-Tawḥīdī (d. ca 414/1023) on the definition and purposes of physiognomy (*Hawāmil wa-Shawāmil*, n° 63, 163–171 Amīn/Saqr). The book, a four-hand composition resulting of Tawḥīdī and Miskawayh’s epistolary exchanges was titled *Hawāmil wa-Shawāmil* (“The Roving [questions] and the Exhaustive [answers]” as a token of its genesis, as underlined by the pun on *Hawāmil*, which has the meaning of “carriers”). I used the Cairo 2009 reprint of the A. Amīn and A. Saqr edition, the pagination of which differs from Hoyland. Hoyland mentions the *Hawāmil* among the witnesses of the anecdote and notes the influence of the Topkapi Polemon (Hoyland, “Polemon’s encounter,” 317, n. 16). Hoyland is unintentionally misleading in ascribing to Tawḥīdī the statements made by Miskawayh (Hoyland 2006, 313–314 and 317–318), which leads him to date the Topkapi Polemon according to Tawḥīdī’s dates.



## The bodily characteristics

Some brief remarks can be made about the section devoted to the physical characteristics of each bodily parts and the interpretation they suggest. The comparison of the London text with the *Sirr-Badawī* shows that both texts are almost identical in a number of sub-sections, once the paleographical slips are recognized. The main divergences appear in the ordering of the parts of the body, especially in the second half of the text. The main difference, however, lies with the portrait(s) of the ideal physical characteristics, to which we will turn in the next section. The attempts made by Manzalaoui to reconstruct the transmission by basing himself on the order of the bodily parts were not fruitful.<sup>101</sup> His main witness, the Sohag manuscript (Sohag [Egypt], Municipal Library, History 167), is criticized by Grignaschi as inferior to the better text preserved in the other witnesses of the Short Form.<sup>102</sup> As will be explained in what follows, Grignaschi's own reconstruction suffers from a number of mistakes and approximations. It is worth mentioning too that one manuscript of the Short Form version (Oxford, Laud. 210 = W in Steele's siglae) is said to have the characteristics and their qualities in the form of tables. This type of presentation could well be the reason for some of the discrepancies observed in the different versions of the *Physiognomy*.<sup>103</sup>

[K.1] "on the hair"<sup>104</sup> to [K.4] "on the nose" are almost identical with minor scribal omissions and stylistic adaptations. [K.5] "on the forehead" has in *Sirr-Badawī* an addition about the "protruding forehead." This rather rare feature might have been seen as irrelevant by the copyist of the London text who decided to skip it or it may have been altogether missing from the text he had before his eyes. In this section, a number of adjectives are different in the London text and in the *Sirr-Badawī* but they are generally simple synonyms, with a tendency to rarities and archaisms in the London *Physiognomy* (which generally follow the identical formulation of the Short Form, as will be seen in Tables 2 and 3).

More variants can be detected in the section of the 'face' [K.6]. They might be explained by a reviser's adaptation of the text to his own tastes, although a number of variants may also be the result of paleographic corruptions (by the reviser or some copyist): rare *fijj* ("rude") is replaced in one of its two occurrences with *waqih* "impudent shameless," which might be considered a synonym. But the graphical proximity of فح and وقح with the initial و misunderstood for a particle or added in the transmission process calls for some prudence. Similarly *jadil*, rarely used as an adjective might

<sup>101</sup> Manzalaoui 1974, 222–223.

<sup>102</sup> Manzalaoui 1974, 149; Grignaschi 1976, 15.

<sup>103</sup> Grignaschi 1976, 15, wrongly refers to the tables of the Leiden manuscript, in addition to those of the Oxford one.

<sup>104</sup> The "soft hair" designating "cowardice" and the "coarse hair" pointing to "courage" already appear in the Pseudo-Aristotle's *Physiognomy*, see Ghersetti 1999, 21, l. 5; Swain 2007, 640(Gr.)/641(tr.).

have been replaced with *khadā' shakis*, unless خداع should be seen as a corruption of جدل. The original word is more likely to have been *jadil* جدل reinforced in *Sirr*-Badawī by resorting to a hendiadys, resulting in *khadā' shakis*.

In comparison to the *Sirr*-Badawī, the London text also inverts the order of the sections on 'face' [K.6] and 'mouth' [K.7], with *Sirr*-Badawī following the order (but not necessarily the contents) of Rāzī's *Ṭibb al-Manṣūrī*. In the Gotha manuscript used by Ali and Fulton for Steele's study of Roger Bacon's commentary of the *Secretum Secretorum*, we find in the section on the 'face' a fully coherent portrait, going from 'face' to 'cheeks' and 'beard,' that is missing in the London Physiognomy, where we find instead elements corresponding to the Short Form (see infra Table 3).<sup>105</sup> In [K.7] the reference to the characteristics of the 'teeth' is missing in the London text which is otherwise identical with *Sirr*-Badawī. It was possibly dropped by the copyist because he considered it as anecdotal and wanted to abbreviate his model (it consists of just two words within a sentence on the 'lips'), or it was missing in his text. The repeated use of "And God knows best (*wa-Allāhu a'lam*)" at the end of some sections [K.5] and [K.6] points to the author's puzzlement at his model(s) and possibly as to the London text abbreviating its model(s). Rāzī's *Ṭibb al-Manṣūrī* (p. 100 al-Ṣiddīqī) has more details on 'teeth' but they differ entirely from *Sirr*-Badawī.

Despite some strong divergences, Mario Grignaschi believed there was a common model from which the *Sirr* and Abū Bakr al-Rāzī would have borrowed. His study of the differences in the body-parts sections from one version to another (including the London Physiognomy) led him to believe that rather than a mere borrowing to Rāzī's text, we should admit the existence of a common source, which he calls the "Ancien épitomé arabe." However, the argument is impaired by a degree of imprecision. Grignaschi states about the characteristics of the 'voice' that the oldest manuscripts<sup>106</sup> of the *Sirr* would have preserved a trace of Polemon when we read that a "coarse voice" ("la voix rude" in Grignaschi) is a sign of "stupidity."<sup>107</sup> But the matter is more complex than Grignaschi seemed to believe. For the text of Polemon (269.6 Förster), which Grignaschi quotes solely in Arabic,<sup>108</sup> has in fact no literal parallel in any version of the *Sirr*. The closest sentence ("*wa-man kāna ḥasan al-ṣawt fa-huwa dalil 'alā al-ḥumq wa-qillat al-fiṭna*") appears at the end of the 'voice' section. However, this section differs in the London text from

<sup>105</sup> Steele 1920, 222, cf. Table 1, section [K.11] and Table 2, 222 for the comparison of the Gotha text translated by Ali/Fulton with the London text.

<sup>106</sup> Grignaschi 1976, 40. What Grignaschi sees as the oldest *Sirr* manuscripts is an odd mixture where we find together the Istanbul Ayasofia 2890, the Oxford Laud. Or. 210, the Berlin Sprenger – with no further precision, but most probably he is referring to Ar. 943 – and the Sohag manuscript used by Manzalaoui (cf. Manzalaoui 1974, 221).

<sup>107</sup> Grignaschi 1976, 40–41.

<sup>108</sup> Grignaschi 1976, 40, n. 3: *wa-thiql al-ṣawt al-musta'jil yadullu 'alā al-ḥumq wa-qillat al-fiṭna* [sic].

what we read in either Badawī's edition or Ali/Fulton's translation. The section [K.11] as we find it in the London Physiognomy has only a section on the 'voice (*al-ṣawt*)' while *Sirr*-Badawī (121.11–15) has two sub-sections, one on the 'voice' and one on the 'speech.' In the Gotha text as we find it translated in Steele (p. 222), the two sub-sections on the voice and on speech are part of a larger section on the 'face', where they follow a discussion of the 'ears.' Also misleading is Grignaschi's statement that the error appears in the manuscripts of Razi's *Ṭibb al-Mansurī*: the al-Ṣiddīqī edition used by Regula Forster (see her article in this volume), where the sentence can be found on p. 101, has *khashan*, i.e. "coarse." As to the Paris manuscript quoted as evidence by Grignaschi, it does read *ḥasan* ("beautiful") which seems to be the correct reading if we recognize that the short paragraph (where discussions of the 'voice,' *ṣawt*, and 'speech,' or 'language' here rendering *kalām*, are alternately given) has already mentioned twice the "coarse voice (*man kāna ṣawtuḥu ḡalīz*)" and the "heavy voice (*man kāna ṣawtuḥu thaqīlan*)" in the three preceding lines.<sup>109</sup> The indication in Rāzī that a "beautiful voice (*ḥusn al-ṣawt*)" is a sign of "stupidity" and of "coarse nature" is completed in the *Sirr*-Badawī and in the London text with "vainglory."<sup>110</sup> The same imprecision can be found in the London text [K.11], where the 'loud' (*jahīr*) voice has been addressed at the beginning of the section (as in *Sirr*-Badawī 121.11) while the 'coarse' voice (*ḡalīz*) has been attached to lying and bad manners. In *Sirr*-Badawī however, the sentence differs, and it is now stated that someone who uses "coarse language (*kalām*)" is irascible and of bad manners. The fluidity of such texts (and the common practice of correcting previous translations either to adjust the Arabic or to suggest a new translation), make any reconstruction of the stemma on the sole base of the variants an impossible task. Resorting to the Greek "originals" (when those can be identified with any certainty!) should not go without caveats. The evolution of the vocabulary within Arabic, a conservative language which has managed to go on for centuries using the same grammar and syntax, is displayed by the choices made by copyists, whose role is to adapt the text they copy to their audience and to possible dialectal evolutions. Arabic writing and its common use of scriptio defectiva in manuscripts leads to paleographic homographs which in turn are attemptively deciphered by copyists of various degrees of expertise. Retrieving the original Greek behind adaptations is therefore hazardous.

The order of the London text for [K.12] 'shoulders' and 'back,' followed with [K.13] 'chest' and 'belly' differs from *Sirr*-Badawī and Abū Bakr Rāzī, where we find the 'belly' and the 'back' before the 'shoulders' and the 'back.' Contrary to the London text, where they are distinguished, *Sirr*-Badawī and Rāzī have the characteristics

<sup>109</sup> Grignaschi 1976, 40, n. 4.

<sup>110</sup> As noted by Grignaschi 1976, 40, where he offers the correct translation "la sottise, une nature peu douée et l'orgueil."

related to the ‘back’ inserted within the sentences addressing those of the ‘shoulders.’ For the ‘shoulders’ and ‘back’ section, the vocabulary employed in the description varies widely but can be reduced to a mere choice of synonyms and a different construction of the sentences. In *Sirr-Badawī* we find the ‘belly’ and the ‘chest’ together in one sentence, while the London text has the ‘chest’ first. It seems that the London text is here sticking more closely to the head-to-heel description than the versions of Rāzī and the Long Form as in *Sirr-Badawī*.

The section of the ‘arms’ and ‘hands’ [K.14] is almost identical in the London Physiognomy, the *Sirr-Badawī*, and Rāzī. Interestingly, the positive characterization of long arms “reaching to the knees” (!) ultimately stems from the Pseudo-Polemon.<sup>111</sup> It is intriguing that, as was underlined by Professor Kenneth Zysk in an oral intervention during the conference, this characteristic is commonly encountered in Indian literature, where it refers to the warrior-king and to the Buddha.<sup>112</sup> Hopefully, these proceedings will participate in enhancing our understanding of Polemon’s sources, or alternately that of Indian literature.

On the ‘calves’ [K.15], the comparison reveals that *Sirr-Badawī* is closer to Rāzī than the London Physiognomy. The characteristics of the ‘thighs’ are missing in the London text, while *Sirr-Badawī* stems from Rāzī or the latter’s source. Some paleographical accidents in the transmission can also be recognized: Rāzī’s *al-balah* (“foolishness”) and *al-nafkha* (“conceit”) becomes *al-balah* and *al-qihā* (“impudence”) in *Sirr-Badawī*. It seems likely that الفحة is the result of a corruption of النفخة. On its side, the London text reads *al-tāh* possibly for *tayh* (n.) or *tā’ih* (adj. used here improperly), likewise meaning “conceit”<sup>113</sup> and *al-khiffa* الخفة resulting from the paleographic corruption of البلة and النفخة.<sup>114</sup>

On the ‘steps’ [K.16], the London Physiognomy appears to be standing somewhere between Rāzī and the *Sirr-Badawī*. They all appear to be closer to the Pseudo-Aristotle’s *Physiognomy* – which for the other sections does not seem to show much affinity with the *Sirr* – than they are to the Arabic Polemon.<sup>115</sup> However, it is possible to find in Adamantius a possible echo of what we read in the *Sirr* witnesses and in Rāzī. These examples demonstrate the fluidity of a text like this to the utmost degree. In particular, before concluding that there were in fact two different translations, attention should be paid to the semantic evolution of adjectives, which made constant revisions by the copyists and translators a necessity.

<sup>111</sup> Hoyland 2007, 408 (Ar.)/409 (tr.), *Bāb* 21/B19; Repath 2007, 524 (Gr.)/525 (tr.), B19.

<sup>112</sup> See Zysk 2015, 165; 648; 741.

<sup>113</sup> Lane, *Dictionary*, vol. I, p. 326, s.v. *t-y-h*.

<sup>114</sup> For possible influence, see Hoyland 2007, 400 (Ar.)/401 (tr.), *Bāb* 9/B9; Repath 2007, 520 (Gr.)/521 (tr.), B9.

<sup>115</sup> The Pseudo-Polemon seems entirely unrelated to the *Sirr* for this section, see Hoyland 2007, 438 (Ar.)/439 (tr.), *Bāb* 50/B39.

London text: “Someone whose steps are wide and graceful (*wāsi’a laṭīfa*) is successful in all his affairs (*dalla ‘alā najḥ fi jamī’ al-umūr*). And the one whose [steps] are short and fast (*qaṣīra sarī’a*) is hasty (*‘ajūl*), vain (*mutakabbir*), has poor judgement (*ghayr muḥkam li-l-umūr*) and bad intentions (*sayy’ al-niya*).”

*Sirr-Badawī*, 123: “Someone whose steps are wide and slow (*wāsi’a baṭī’a*) is successful in all his affairs and his deeds (*fa-huwa munajjih fi jamī’ umūrihi wa-a’ mālihi*) and thoughtful of consequences (*mufakkir fi ‘awāqibihī*). The one whose steps are short and fast (*qaṣīra sarī’a*) is rash, quarrelsome (*‘ajūl shakis*), has poor judgement (*ghayr muḥkam li-l-umūr*) and a bad intention in them (*sayy’ al-niya fihā*).”

Abū Bakr al-Rāzī, *al-Ṭibb al-Manṣūrī*, 124: “One whose steps are wide and slow (*wāsi’a baṭī’a*) is deliberate and successful (*fa-huwa muta’annin munajjih*). One whose steps are short and fast is rash (*‘ajūl*), does mind [his] affairs (*dhū ‘ināya bi-l-umūr*) but does not judge them well (*ghayr muḥkam lahā*).”

Adamantius (B39): “Those who take large steps accomplish every deed and are great-minded (*megalonoī*). Those who take small steps are unsuccessful, bitter, and some are also parsimonious and thievish in character and make secret plots. (...) If a man walks quickly (...) he provides reliable signs of parsimony and cowardice and mischief and meanness. (...) The man who is swift but who takes small steps, is greedy, villainous and a consummate coward.”<sup>116</sup>

Pseudo-Aristotle: “Someone whose steps are wide and slow (*wāsi’a baṭī’a*), he is successful (*munajjih*), efficient (*nāfidh*), steady in his ambitions (*muta’ayyid* [sic for *mutta’id?*] *fīmā yaqṣud*), and this is because wide steps are a sign of success (*najḥ*) while slow steps are a sign of deliberateness (*tu’ada*) and perseverance (*al-anā*). Someone whose steps are short (*mutaqāriba*) but slow, he is unsuccessful and not [or: “but remains”] firm in his ambitions (*ghayr munajjih muta’ayyid*), and this is because short and slow steps are a sign of failure (*al-taqṣīr*). And someone whose steps are wide (*wāsi’a*), he is successful, thoughtful about things (*bāḥith ‘an al-ashyā*), and this is because quick steps are a sign of completion while their wideness is a sign of success. And someone whose steps are short and fast (*mutaqāriba sarī’a*), he is thoughtful but unsuccessful.”<sup>117</sup>

In the section on the ‘feet’ and ‘heels’ [K.17], we find in *Sirr-Badawī* a great number of details missing from the London text. Details such as the best “foot” being one with “even toes” and a “soft flesh” might have been considered as superfluous by the redactor of the London Physiognomy. Grignaschi, noticing a different organisation of the sections (‘legs,’ ‘steps,’ and ‘feet’ in both the Short and Long Forms of the *Sirr*; ‘feet,’ ‘legs,’ and ‘steps’ in the London text), thought that this could be used as an argument against Manzalaoui’s hypothesis that the London Physiognomy was a “mixed version” somehow intermediate between the Short and

<sup>116</sup> Repath 2007, 538 (Gr.)/539 (tr.), B39.

<sup>117</sup> Gherseti 1999, 46–47 (Arabic text).

the Long Form. But nowhere does Manzalaoui state that the London text should be placed in a stemma between the Short and the Long Form; rather, he argues that the London Physiognomy derives from a missing common ancestor of these two versions.<sup>118</sup> In turn, the organisation might also be explained by the different point of insertion of a section on the ‘movements of the body’ [K.18]. In the Leiden Polemon, these indications are found at the end of the section on ‘walking and movement,’ that is, directly alongside the mention of the ‘steps’.<sup>119</sup> This section, oddly situated in the Leiden Polemon between the ‘hair of the eyebrows’ and the ‘breath’, seems to have been inserted in various positions in the different *Sirr* witnesses.

The section on bodily characteristics concludes in the London Physiognomy with a summarizing statement of “Aristotle” to “Alexander” [L.] while the Long Form inserts within its own, slightly different, concluding statement, a reference to the use that should be made of one sign or more or of the eventuality of contradictory signs (*Sirr*-Badawī, p. 224). The *Sirr*’s Long Form follows here a similar organisation as Abū Bakr al-Rāzī (see in this volume the paper of Regula Forster, referring to Rāzī, *Ṭibb al-Manṣūrī*, 107 Ṣiddīqī). This element, which appears in the London text before the bodily parts [J.], is ultimately derived from Adamantius’s epitome (A3), where it is found in the prologue.<sup>120</sup> The insertion of additions from scrap papers added at different stages of the transmission should certainly be taken into account, as they are not uncommonly found during the inspection of a manuscript. Short-lived and most often uncatalogued, they hinder any attempt to make a stemma based solely on the organisation of the sub-sections in a text whose thematic structure already guarantees some form of fluidity. Paleographical mistakes (to some degree), scribal corrections and omissions cannot be taken as the sole evidence for the reconstruction of a complex transmission, even more so when a great number of manuscripts remain inaccessible to researchers. Without making more manuscripts available to readers for comparison, no conclusions can be made and the same goes for the very little-knowledge we have of Abū Bakr al-Rāzī’s works, almost entirely lost or unpublished.<sup>121</sup>

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**118** Grignaschi 1976, 46, n.1; Manzalaoui 1974, 223.

**119** Hoyland 2007, 438–441 (Ar./tr.), *Bāb* 50/B39–40.

**120** Repath 2007, 496–497.

**121** According to Ibn Abī Uṣaybi’a, ‘*Uyūn al-anbā*’, vol. I, 314 Müller, we owe the preservation of some of Rāzī’s books and the edition of his magnum opus, the *Kitāb al-Ḥāwī*, to the efforts of the Buyid vizier and scholar Abū al-Faql Ibn al-ʿAmīd (d. 971)

## Table 2: The Long and Short forms of the *Sirr's* Physiognomy

Before turning to the ideal portrait(s) in the different witnesses of the *Sirr*, we should address some of the questions raised by Badawī's edition and its comparison to the Ali/Fulton translation published by Steele in his own study of the *Sirr al-Asrār*.<sup>122</sup> The comparison of the London Physiognomy with Steele's text shows that the latter cannot explain the discrepancies between the London text and the Long Form. Badawī's text is close enough to the Long Form manuscripts used by Ali/Fulton but in one significant case, an element reminiscent of the formulation of the Short Form is present in Ali/Fulton but missing in Badawī. The purpose of this table is two-fold: (1) it helps to make clear the kind of criticism that can be addressed to Badawī, whose footnotes to the text should not be considered as a real apparatus criticus; (2) it also betrays some short-comings in Steele's publication of Ali and Fulton's translation, particularly in the way they provide the variant readings of the different manuscripts in their notes on the translation of the Long Form (apparently, only when they considered them significant) and chiefly among them, the variants and additions of a Short Form manuscript preserved in Oxford. Unfortunately, they give no precise information about the inversions between elements or their diverging ordering, so that as much as in the case of Badawī, resorting to Steele's study of the Physiognomy chapter should not be done without caveats. In the footnotes to Table 2, we have reproduced Ali and Fulton's own notes on their translation *in toto*, so that the alternative text offered by the Oxford Short Form (MS Laud. Or. 210) could be easily followed. Interestingly, Ali and Fulton's text happens to be extremely close to Gaster's translation of a thirteenth- or fourteenth-century Hebrew version, based on the Short Form. This seems to reflect a close relationship between the Oxford manuscript and the manuscript used by Gaster for his edition and translation (MS London, British Library Or. 2396).<sup>123</sup> We have supplied the references to the parallels in Gaster in the footnotes in order to facilitate future studies of the Short Form versions. The parallels between the London text and the Short Form are addressed in the two next sections and the Appendix.

<sup>122</sup> Only as "A.S. Fulton," about whom I could not find any information, appears on the cover of Steele's edition of Bacon's commentary to the *Sirr* and the English translation of the Arabic text attached to it. Ismail Ali and Fulton worked (the latter as an editor of Ali's text) under the supervision of Steele, cf. Steele 1920, vii.

<sup>123</sup> On Gaster's edition, see Spitzer 1982, 34–54. Spitzer noticed the use of Gaster's translation by Ali and Fulton and lamented it. Nevertheless, as the comparison with the Leiden manuscript will put in evidence (see *infra* Table 3), the two seem to present a remarkable homogeneity.

Table 2 : Long and Short Form translations in Steele compared to London Physiognomy.

Ali/Fulton in Steele, pp. 218–223	London Physiognomy
<p>[p.218] And one of those things which thou must know, O Alexander, is this, that the soul acquires the power of finding out inner truths, by external signs, when it happens to be free from lust and pain. This power is known by thought.</p> <p>And when the soul predominates over the body and nothing intervenes between the spiritual substance which lies in the heart and the soul, and the animal part which lies in the brain, the intellect is freed from impurities and the object is reflected in it.</p> <p>Hence divination, which is mentioned in many books, and of the truth of which many wonderful instances are recorded. But this also depends upon the conjunction of stars happening at the time of the creation of this power. Therefore the Science of Physiognomy is as much necessary for thee as those other sciences which rest upon conjecture. It is a great science, and the ancients knew it and practised it, and prided themselves upon possessing it. It is a true science, and I could bring proofs as to its being true were I not afraid of prolonging the discourse. One of those ancients who excelled in this art and who professed its truthfulness is Aklimün. He used [p. 219] to tell the character of a man by the construction of his body.</p> <p>There is a wonderful story connected with him which I shall relate for thy consideration:</p> <p>The disciples of the learned Hippocrates drew his picture on a parchment and, showing it to Aklimün, asked him to describe his character. He looked at the formation of the body and compared the various parts of it. Then he said: 'This man must be deceitful, cunning, and sensuous, and one who loves fornication.' Thereupon the disciples of Hippocrates wanted to kill him,</p>	<p>[B.1.] And among the things you really should know, O Alexander, is the knowledge of what the soul can deduce from the external features when it has been purified of desires and freed from evils.</p> <p>And this happens when the soul is firm on the body and superior to it, and that nothing interferes between the luminous substance concealed in the heart and the psychic substance concealed in the brain, and that the mind has been purified of opaqueness and is reflecting [faithfully] what it seeks.</p> <p>[B.2.] The priests who existed in some parts of the world were truthful in their predictions of invisible phenomena of unknown origin. And the basis for this is in the correct association [of the signs] according to this capacity [i.e. the knowledge of physiognomy] and of the nativity; and the science of physiognomy enters under this kind [of arts, i.e. divination]. It is a great science, which the Ancients used in the past and about which they boasted of their natural disposition for it. It is a true science, and if not [for fear] of prolixity in a place where it does not pertain, I would have proven you its veridicity with all requisite proof. [C.] Polemon was among the ancient people who were prominent in this science and whose name became attached to its validity. He could determine from the composition of a man his character.</p>

(continued)



Table 2 (Continued)

and said: 'O ignorant fool, this is the picture of the learned Hippocrates!' He replied: 'You asked me to read his character from this picture, and I did so according to my art.'

When they went back to Hippocrates they informed him of what had happened. Hippocrates replied to them: 'Aklīmūn is right. By God! In all his reading he has not spoken a single untruth. This is indeed my character, and such is my disposition. But when I saw that these qualities were bad, I restrained myself from following them, and my reason overcame my passions. And the philosopher who cannot subjugate his desires to his reason is no philosopher at all.' And this added to the excellence of Hippocrates, for philosophy is merely mastering desires.

A Short Chapter on Physiognomy<sup>v</sup>

O Alexander, I am writing for thee a brief description of Physiognomy which, on account of thy possessing such good sense and exalted soul, will suffice for thee instead of a longer description, God willing.<sup>ii</sup>

Thou knowest that the womb is for the embryo like the pot for the food,<sup>iii</sup> therefore the whiteness or blueness, or extreme redness [of the face] indicates imperfect coction, and if to them [p. 220] is added any imperfection of nature it is a strong proof of the body being imperfect as well. Therefore beware of such people, blue or very red and smooth,<sup>iv</sup> for they must be shameless, perfidious, and sensuous.

O Alexander, if thou shouldst see a person who looks often at thee, and who, when thou lookest at him, turns red in the face, or is ashamed, or blushes,<sup>v</sup> or whose eyes fill with tears, be sure that such a person loves thee, and is afraid of thee. But if he shows signs contrary to the above, he is thy enemy and ill-wisher.

Beware of one of a defective make, or having some physical imperfection.<sup>vi</sup>

[D.] I have established here [for you], O Alexander, some summarized prescriptions in the science of physiognomy to exempt you of too much of the same —because of your excellent disposition and your noble nature. And this is where it starts, with God's grace and his generous help.

[E.] Therefore I say, that just as the womb is to the foetus what a pot is to food, whiteness with blue and blond are two [!] signs of immaturity. And if a disability is added to these, the whole nature is defective. Be aware of any blue-[eyed] blond born disabled, as this is an immoral, treacherous and vicious nature.

[F.] O Alexander! If you see someone who looks at you with insistence and who blushes, looks ashamed, and has an involuntary smile or tearing eyes when you look at him, [it is a sign that] he likes you in secrecy. And if it is the opposite, he is envious of you and trying to conceal it.

[G.] O Alexander! Be aware of anyone disabled or, handicapped from birth, you should protect yourself from an enemy

The best proportioned construction is of him who possesses medium stature, black hair and eyes—the latter somewhat deep set—round face, white mixed with red or moderately brown colour, with perfect form and well-proportioned body, head neither too large nor too small. Who speaks little except on necessary occasions, a voice neither too loud nor too low, inclining towards thinness but not too thin. And whose temperament inclines towards spleen and bile.

[H.1.] O Alexander! Know that the best and most appropriate person I wish you as a friend is a man of middle-stature, neither tall nor short, with a medium waist, neither too thick nor too slender, who has a middle-sized head, neither small or big, showing a good countenance and a beautiful appearance and face, meaning that [his face] should be between round and fleshy, pale but permeated with light red or brown.

[H.2.] [And he must have] reasonably long hair, neither too flat or too curly, neither too thick or fine, between black and blond [or 'chestnut'], that is, red-brown.

And he must have big eyes, tending slightly to hollowness, between black and blue, that is deep-blue. [His] neck should be neither [too] long or [too] short, and neither fat nor slender, but regular. And with this, he should have bending shoulders and his loins and hips should not be too fleshy. His voice should be clear, balanced between being pleasant and soft. In addition to this, he should not speak much, except when it is needed.

[H.3.] His hands should be large, with lank fingers, tending to thinness. And he should not laugh or joke too much as if his thinking was [always] busy with joy and happiness.

[I.] This is the rightest figure I wish you to take as a friend, O Alexander. And I will now detail them [i.e. these characteristics] for you separately and you will then combine them in your clever understanding, God willing.

Such a man is of a perfect formation. Choose him for thy company. Now I shall describe to thee some parts of the body separately, the knowledge of which coupled with what has been mentioned above will enable thee to read character.

[J.] You must not hurry, O Alexander, in your judgment basing [yourself] on one sign only, but collect all your evidence. And if you have contradictory evidence, go for the stronger and more likely and you will be correct, if God wills, and through Him comes success.

[K.1] The section on hair. Soft hair is a sign of cowardice, of a cold brain and of a lack of intelligence. Coarse hair is a sign of courage and of a sound brain. Much hair on the shoulders and the neck is a sign of stupidity and boldness. Much hair on the breast and the belly is a sign of a ferocious nature, of little comprehension and wrongdoing.

Soft hair denotes timidity, coldness of the brain, and scarcity of understanding. Coarse hair denotes courage and soundness of the brain. Excess of hair on the shoulders and the neck denotes stupidity and rashness. And much hair on the chest and the belly denotes wildness of nature, scarcity of understanding and excess of tyranny.

(continued)

Table 2 (Continued)

<p>Red hair is a sign of stupidity and love of power.<sup>vi</sup> And black hair is a sign of mildness of nature and love of justice.<sup>viii</sup></p>	<p>Blond [or 'reddish', or 'chestnut' hair] is a sign of stupidity, of much anger and tyranny. And black [hair] is a sign of equanimity and of the love of justice – the intermediate is between these two.</p>
<p>The man whose eyes are large and protruding is envious, shameless, and lazy, and is unworthy of being trusted, especially if his eyes are blue.<sup>ix</sup> But one whose eyes are moderate in size inclined to deepness and darkness, he should be intelligent and [p. 221] quick-witted.<sup>x</sup> But he whose eyes are slanting is wicked.<sup>xi</sup> He whose eyes are motionless, like those of animals, is rough natured and ignorant. And he whose eyes are constantly moving and revolving is cunning and of treacherous and thieving propensities. He whose eyes are red is bold and reckless. And the worst of all eyes are blue ones of a turquoise colour, and if there happen to be white, black, or red spots around them, their owner must be the worst and most pernicious of all mankind.</p>	<p>[K.2] The section on the eye. The one whose eyes are large and protruding is envious, and not to be trusted, especially if they are blue. And the one whose eyes are of intermediate size, tending to hollowness, darkness and blackness, is alert and trustworthy. Who has slit eyes following the length of the body is wicked. And someone whose eyes resemble those of the cattle, turning away after observing, he is ignorant and of a coarse nature. And who has eyes that move naturally and give piercing looks, he is cunning, and a hoarding thief. And if the eye is red, the person is courageous and bold. The worse eyes are the blue ones, and the worse blue [eyes] are the turquoise ones. And if they are circled with black, white or reddish stains around them, the person is the most evil and wicked of all people.</p>
<p>Eyebrows of bushy hair<sup>xii</sup> denote impotence and unintelligibility of speech. And if they are united to the temples, the owner of such eyebrows is conceited and boastful. And he whose eyebrows are thin, and of moderate length, and are black, he is quick-witted.</p>	<p>[K.3] The section on the eyebrows. Very hairy eyebrows are a sign of faltering and of silly speech. If the eyebrows [lacuna1: "reach"] the two temples, the person is haughty and vainglorious. Whose eyebrow are [lacuna: "thin"], of a medium length and black, he is alert and understanding.</p>
<p>If the nose happen to be thin, its owner is impetuous.<sup>xiii</sup> And if the nostrils are so long as to almost enter the mouth it betokens courage. And he who is flat-nosed is lustful. And he whose nostrils are very wide is irascible. And when the middle of the nose is thick inclining to snubness its owner shall be vainglorious and lying. But the most symmetrical of all noses is that which is not too long, is of moderate thickness and height, and with nostrils not too wide.</p>	<p>[K.4] The section on the nose. If the nose is thin, the person is impetuous. The one whose nose is long and nearly enters his mouth is courageous. Who is flat-nosed is lecherous. Someone whose nostrils are flared is frascible. If the nose is thick in the middle and tends to be flat, he is a liar. The best nose is the one that is not exaggeratedly long, its thickness intermediate, [added: "its nostrils"] not too large either.</p>

<p>A wide forehead without any wrinkles in it, indicates quarrelsomeness, mischievousness, carelessness, and vaingloriousness. But he who forehead is of moderate width and height and with wrinkles in it, is truthful, faithful, intelligent, and skilful. And he whose forehead is of conspicuous protrusion is taciturn and prudent.</p>	<p>[K.5] The section on the forehead. A flat forehead without wrinkles is a sign of quarrel, mischief, insolence and vainglory. The one whose forehead is of intermediate width and has some wrinkles, he is honest, reliable, affable, knowledgeable, alert, organized and skilful. And God knows best.</p>
<p>He whose mouth is wide is brave, and he whose lips are thick and teeth long is stupid.</p>	<p>[#K.7] The section on the mouth. If his mouth is wide he is courageous. Who has thick lips, is stupid.</p>
<p>And he whose face is thin is careful in his actions and intelligent.<sup>xiv</sup> He<sup>xv</sup> whose face is small inclining to sallow is vile, wicked, deceitful, and arrogant. He whose face is long is shameless. [p. 222] And the best of faces is one of good width, modest looking, neither too wide nor too small, with soft cheeks, thin lips, good teeth, without having too much hair in beard or eyebrows.</p>	<p>[#K.6] The section on the face. Who has a fleshy face is ignorant, blunt and a liar. Who has a thin face is mindful of (his) affairs and understanding. Someone whose face [often] turns yellow or tends to yellowness is evil, ignorant, wicked and argumentative. Who has a long face is blunt. And God knows best.</p>
<p>He whose temples are protruding and the veins of his neck full is irascible.</p>	<p>[K.8] On the temples. The one whose temples are protruding and someone whose jugular veins are bulging is irascible.</p>
<p>He whose ears are very large is foolish, but of a good memory. And he whose ears are very small is stupid, a thief, sensuous, and cowardly.</p>	<p>[K.9] On the ears. Who has small ears is stupid, a thief, an adulterer and a coward.</p>
<p>[On the neck, see infra after K.18 'movements of the body.']</p>	<p>[K.10] The neck. The one whose neck is long is vociferous, stupid and a coward. And the one whose neck is very short is cunning and wicked. And someone whose neck is very thick is ignorant and a glutton.</p>
<p>He whose voice is strong is brave. He whose voice is neither too loud nor too low, and who speaks neither too fast nor too slow, is wise, prudent, and truthful. He whose voice is harsh inclining to shrillness is foolish, but patient in hardship and oppression. And he whose voice is extremely soft is insolent and ill-natured. But the best voice is one with moderate nasal twang and softness.</p>	<p>[K.11] The voice. Who has a loud voice is courageous.</p>

(continued)

Table 2 (Continued)

<p>He whose speech is moderate in harshness and softness, fastness and slowness, is wise, prudent, sincere, good natured, and of social habits. And he whose speech is fast, especially if his voice happens to be soft, is shameless, foolish, and a liar. He whose speech is harsh is irascible and ill-natured. He whose speech has a strong nasal twang is envious and deceitful. And he who is harsh of speech<sup>xvi</sup> is foolish, stupid, and conceited.</p> <p>He who moves his body too much in speaking or plays with his hands is talkative, shameless, boastful, and deceitful.</p>	<p>The one whose voice is moderate, between delicacy and roughness, is intelligent, organized, trustworthy.</p> <p>Who speaks fast, especially if his voice is high, is ignorant and a liar. The one whose voice is coarse is a liar with bad manners. And the one whose voice is nasal is deceitful. [And for] who has a beautiful voice, this is a sign of stupidity, of lack of intelligence.</p> <p>[#K.18] Movement of the body</p> <p>A man whose body moves fast and repeatedly or plays with his hands is simple-minded and treacherous.</p>
<p>And he who is grave and taciturn is perfect in nature, prudent, and intelligent. But one who stammers in speech or minces his words is defective in reason. He whose neck is long and thin is stupid and timid.<sup>xvii</sup> He whose neck is extremely short is foolish, cunning, and vile. He whose neck is very thick is foolish and a glutton. The best neck is one of moderate size and thickness, with conspicuous veins and with little flesh.<sup>xviii</sup></p> <p>He whose <b>belly</b> is large is stupid, ignorant, conceited, and fond of lechery.<sup>xx</sup> Thinness of the belly and moderation in the width of the <b>chest</b> indicate<sup>xx</sup> courage with stupidity. Crookedness of the <b>back</b> indicates ill-nature and low-mindedness. And evenness and straightness of the back, prominence of the chest, are good [p. 223] signs. Prominence of the <b>shoulders</b> indicates evil intentions and bad character.</p>	<p>[See supra K.10]</p> <p>[#K.13] The <b>belly</b> and the chest.</p> <p>A generous chest and a gracious belly are signs of a good intellect and sound reason.</p> <p>[#K.12] [The shoulders and the back] [lacuna: Large]<sup>2</sup> <b>shoulders</b> are a sign of courage and of a weak intellect. Protruding <b>shoulders</b> is a sign of bad intention and ugly conduct. The back: A bended back is a sign of an unfriendly nature. A straight back is a sign of a good nature.</p> <p>[K.14] The arms and the hands.</p> <p>When the arms are so long that the hands reach the knee, it is a sign of courage and magnanimity. When the arms are short, the person loves evil and is a coward. A long hand [or palm] with lank fingers is a sign of mastery in [technical] crafts and of judgements in tasks and leadership. Thick and short fingers are a sign of ignorance and stupidity.</p>
<p>When the arms are long so that the hands reach the knees it is a sign of courage and generosity. And if the arms are short their owner shall be a lover of mischief and cowardly. Long palms and fingers indicate aptitude for arts and business and good government. Short and thick fingers indicate ignorance, stupidity and <u>low aims</u>.</p>	

Similarly, broad and fleshy **feet** indicate ignorance and love of oppression, and small and soft feet indicate wickedness.<sup>xxi</sup> The best feet are those of moderate size and asymmetrical of form, with little flesh, sound nails, and symmetrical toes. Thinness of the ankles<sup>xxii</sup> denotes timidity, and their thickness indicates courage. And fullness of the **calves** and ankles denotes foolishness and shamelessness.<sup>xxiii</sup> Likewise too full thighs show weakness and softness.

He whose **steps** are wide and slow<sup>xxiv</sup> is successful in his actions and undertakings and prudent for the issue of his affairs. He whose steps are short and quick is hasty in his actions, ill-natured, unmethodical in his affairs, and of evil design.<sup>xxv</sup>

The best of men is one having a moderate-sized mouth, soft and moist flesh, neither too thin nor too fat, neither too tall nor too short, in colour either white inclining to red, or a clear brown colour, oval in face, and of even features,<sup>xxvi</sup> hair long—neither too thick nor too thin<sup>xxvii</sup>—of a colour between red and black,<sup>xxviii</sup> moderate-sized<sup>xxix</sup> eyes, somewhat deep-set, moderate-sized head, straight neck, square shoulders inclined to sloping, moderately broad chest, back and thighs not too full, a clear and moderate voice, smooth palms, long fingers inclined to thinness, grave, thoughtful, amiable, cheerful so as to inspire others with his cheerfulness, and high minded.<sup>xxx</sup> [p. 224] Therefore, O Alexander, whenever thou findest such a man choose him for thy company and for governing thy people and for serving thyself. But thou must not, O Alexander, form thy judgement of a man's character by one sign only, but judge them on the whole. And when thou findest contrary signs lean towards those that are stronger and more conclusive so that thou mayest be rightly guided and achieve thy objects, by the help of God.

[#K. 17] On the **feet**.

Fleshy, big and thick feet are a sign of ignorance and of tyranny. A small foot and a thin heel are a sign of immorality, wrongdoing and cowardice.

[K. 15] On the **calves**.

Thick calves are a sign of absent-mindedness [or 'excessive pride?'], of a light intellect and a strong body.

[K. 16] On the **steps**.

Some whose steps are wide and graceful is successful in all his affairs. And the one whose [steps] are short and fast is hasty, vain, has no control over his affairs and has bad intentions.

[See supra H.2 and H.3]

[See supra I.]

[See supra J.]

[L.] This is what we thought about recording for you here, in the shortest possible way, among the signs of the human bodily parts. So be pleased with it, O excellent brother, noble son, mighty and perfect king, if God the Highest is willing so.

(continued)

**Notes:**

- 1 The lacunas were completed with *Sirr* (Badawi).
  - 2 The Leiden Short Form and the Hebrew translation enable us to correct the lacuna of the London manuscript (cf. *infra* Table 3 and Appendix).
- i Ali/Fulton in Steele p. 219, n.1: “W: Discourse on Physiognomy. MS H: Book XI.
  - ii Ali/Fulton in Steele p. 219, n.2: “W: O Alexander, since the science of physiognomy is one of the subtle and speculative and intellectual sciences which it is necessary for thee to know and to understand, because of the great need in which thou standest when appointing men to stand before thee, I will therefore put down for thee in this chapter all the tokens of physiognomy which are proved true and known in the days gone by, and which we have tested in sooth from olden times.” Gaster §80 is identical with the exception of ‘since’ where he reads ‘know that the science.’
  - iii Ali/Fulton in Steele p. 219, n.3: “W: The temperaments differ according to the creature, and the natures differ according to their composition. A clear white complexion with a tinge of blue and much ruddiness betokens shamelessness, cunning, and small intelligence.” Cf. Gaster §81.
  - iv Ali/Fulton in Steele p. 220, n.1: “W: or has much hair on his head, as thou bewarest of poisonous snakes.” Cf. Gaster §81.
  - v Ali/Fulton in Steele p. 220, n.2: “W: do not befriend him. But if his eyes...” Cf. Gaster §86.
  - vi Ali/Fulton in Steele p. 220, n.3: “W: as much as thou eschewest thine enemy.” Cf. Gaster §87.
  - vii Ali/Fulton in Steele p. 220, n.4: “W: a sign of great and swift ire.” Cf. Gaster §88.
  - viii Ali/Fulton in Steele p. 220, n.5: “W: and the mean between the two betokens fairness.” Identical in Gaster §88.
  - ix Ali/Fulton in Steele p. 220, n.6: “W inserts: and probably he is evil-eyed.” Cf. Gaster §83.
  - x Ali/Fulton in Steele p. 221, n.1: “W inserts: loving faithfulness.” Cf. Gaster §84.
  - xi Ali/Fulton in Steele p. 221, n.2: “W: deceitful.” Identical in Gaster §84.
  - xii Ali/Fulton in Steele p. 221, n.3: “W: denote talkativeness.” Cf. Gaster §89.
  - xiii Ali/Fulton in Steele p. 221, n.4: “W: He who has tender nostrils will be a man of soft temperament.” Identical in Gaster §90.
  - xiv Ali/Fulton in Steele p. 221, n.5: “W: A large mouth betokens courage, thick lips betoken simplicity, and one who has red lips of mean thickness is a just man. He whose teeth stand out prominently and close together is treacherous, scheming, and unfaithful: he who has straight teeth well set with space between them is intelligent, trusty, and faithful.” Cf. Gaster §93
  - xv Ali/Fulton in Steele p. 221, n.6: “W: who has a face with swollen cheeks is ignorant and of rough disposition: he.” Cf. Gaster §94.
  - xvi Ali/Fulton in Steele p. 222, n.1: “W: pleasant.” Cf. Gaster §96.
  - xvii Ali/Fulton in Steele p. 222, n.2: “W: clamorous, stupid, and simple.” Cf. Gaster §98.
  - xviii Ali/Fulton in Steele p. 222, n.3: “W: whosoever has a neck well-proportioned in length and thickness is wise, able, and a faithful friend.” Cf. Gaster §98.
  - xix Ali/Fulton in Steele p. 222, n.4: “W: and faint-hearted.” Cf. Gaster §99.
  - xx Ali/Fulton in Steele p. 222, n.5: “W inserts: generous understanding and good counsel. Broad shoulders and back betoken.” Almost identical in Gaster §§99-100.

- xxi Ali/Fulton in Steele p. 223, n.1: “W: courage.” Cf. Gaster §104.  
 xxii Ali/Fulton in Steele p. 223, n.2: “W: heel.”  
 xxiii Ali/Fulton in Steele p. 223, n.3: “W: hardness and strength of body.”  
 xxiv Ali/Fulton in Steele p. 223, n.4: “W: are moderate.”  
 xxv Ali/Fulton in Steele p. 223, n.5: “W: hasty in his work and not resolute in his affairs.” Cf. Gaster §105.  
 xxvi Ali/Fulton in Steele p. 223, n.6: “W: smooth of cheek.”  
 xxvii Ali/Fulton in Steele p. 223, n.7: “W: between the lank and the curly.”  
 xxviii Ali/Fulton in Steele p. 223, n.8: “W: of a fair colour.”  
 xxix Ali/Fulton in Steele p. 223, n.9: “W: big, black.”  
 xxx Ali/Fulton in Steele p. 223, n.10: “W: Sparing in words, except when it is absolutely necessary, not gluttonous or sensual beyond measure. This is the most perfect creature of the sons of man, and this is the man I would chose for thee: search therefore for a man who answers this description, and thou shalt thereby prosper. Thou knowest already that a ruler is more dependent on the subjects than they are on him. So comprehend these signs which I have mentioned to thee, and try them with thy sure discernment and acute examination, for thou shalt profit much thereby, if God will.” Cf. Gaster §106.



## The ideal portrait(s)

While the London Physiognomy has only one ideal portrait (section [H.]), preceding the bodily signs, the Long Form offers two often contradictory portraits set up as enclosing the bodily characteristics (corresponding to London's [H.1] and [H.2–H.3] sections). In the London Physiognomy, the portrait of who could be taken for “friend” or “company” (London text, section [I.]; *Sirr*-Badawī, 118.13) is thus entirely given before the announcement of the detailed rules for each bodily part and a section ([J.]) on the number of signs that should be taken into account.<sup>124</sup> In the Long Form, a second ideal portrait is given following the bodily characteristics, where “Aristotle” states that such a person would be the best company and administrator for “Alexander.”<sup>125</sup>

Affinities can be detected between London, the Short Form, and the ideal portraits at the end of Abū Bakr Rāzī's chapter on physiognomy in his *Ṭibb al-Manṣūrī* (pp. 104–105) while in the Long Form, the bodily details seem to preserve more of Rāzī than does the Short Form. The comparison of our sample argues for a number of lost intermediaries between the Short and the Long Forms of the *Sirr al-Asrār*. The possible influence of a common source or a different version of Rāzī's text might also have been in play. The chapter on Physiognomy in Abū Bakr al-Rāzī's *Ṭibb al-Manṣūrī* (Lat. *Ad Mansorem*) ends with a series of portraits in which a number of the positive or negative characteristics are assembled to depict a character.<sup>126</sup> Rāzī's interest for physiognomy is attested in a number of his works, and a section copied from his lost *Description of women (Waṣf al-nisā')* shows him quoting Polemon.<sup>127</sup> For Rāzī, physiognomy is part of medical knowledge and it appears as such in the *Ṭibb al-Manṣūrī* after a section on the four Galenic humors and their influence on characters. As

<sup>124</sup> See the parallels in Abū Bakr al-Rāzī, *al-Ṭibb al-Manṣūrī*, 107, where it appears at the very end of the chapter on physiognomy, after eight short portraits. Rāzī specifies that in the case of contradictory signs, precedence should be given to the face and the eyes. This point is missing from the *Sirr* versions. On the number of signs that should be taken into account, cf. Adamantius (A3), supra n. 120.

<sup>125</sup> Cf. *Sirr*-Badawī, 124.1–4; Steele 1920, 224.

<sup>126</sup> The “man of good understanding and composition,” “the philosophically inclined,” “the man of coarse manners,” “the impudent man,” “the bitter man,” “the lustful man,” “women's characteristics and character,” “the behaviour of eunuchs.” Cf. Abū Bakr Rāzī, *Ṭibb al-Manṣūrī*, 104–105. Another work of Abū Bakr al-Rāzī, the *Spiritual Medicine (al-Ṭibb al-Rūḥānī)*, which he dedicated to the same patron as the *Ṭibb al-Manṣūrī*, includes an ideal portrait of the virtuous man but is limited to ethics (see the translation by Arberry 1950, 102). The *Ṭibb al-Rūḥānī* addresses the private behaviour and ethics of someone seeking virtue (defined as a way of moderation between two extremes, although in Rāzī, this doctrinal point cannot be limited to an Aristotelian influence). In his preface, Rāzī states that the *Ṭibb al-Rūḥānī* was composed as a complement for the *Ṭibb al-Manṣūrī*, where he addressed “corporal medicine (*al-ṭibb al-jismānī*)” and that he has composed a larger book on spiritual medicine, but without giving its title. We will return to the traces of Rāzī in the *Sirr* in the conclusion.

<sup>127</sup> Cf. al-Shayzarī, *Jamharat al-Islām dhāt al-Nathr wa-l-Niẓām*, MS Leiden, Or. 287 (copied in 1300), fol. 146v.

much as with Rāzī's ideal bodily characteristics in the *Ṭibb al-Rūḥāwī*, the ideal man depicted by "Aristotle" for "Alexander" in the *Sirr al-Asrār* is an epitome of the Greek *metriotēs*, but the vocabulary used in Rāzī differs from that of the *Sirr*.<sup>128</sup> Steele, after Förster, identified a number of parallels between the *Ṭibb al-Manṣūrī* (which he used through a Latin medieval translation) and the *Sirr* but no reference is made there to the teachings as being those of Aristotle for Alexander. Differences in the vocabulary do not necessarily argue for two distinct sources and may be the result of geographical variations in the use of Arabic.

As could be seen with Table 1 *supra*, the ideal portrait in the London manuscript cannot simply be derived from the addition of the two portraits of the Long Form. If some elements of [H.1] can be found in the Long Form, they are scarce and not always literal (highlighted in the following table with italics, and if displaced, in bold and italics). For [H.2] and [H.3], more parallels can be found between them and the second and concluding portrait of the Physiognomy in *Sirr-Badawī* (see below for the comparison). Since the Arabic of Badawī and that of the London text can be compared in Table 1 *supra*, we will focus on the comparison of the translated texts (with parallel elements in italics, additions underlined and displaced elements in bold). Although a number of common elements can be found between the London Physiognomy and that of the Long Form, we will see in the next section that a comparison of the two different versions of the Short Form (the Berlin SF7 and the Leiden SF8) reveals an even higher number of parallels between the Long Form and the Short Form in seven chapters.<sup>129</sup>

The portrait, as it appears in the London text, can be divided into three main sections: (1) the stature and general appearance, (2) a succession of the best characteristics from head to trunk, followed by the voice and speech and (3) the hands and fingers, followed by a discussion of general humours and behaviour. Compared to the Short and Long Forms, the portrait thus seems shorter and may have been abbreviated from a longer model. Apart from the stylistic differences ("medium stature" versus "of middle-stature, neither tall nor short"; "head neither too large nor too small" versus "a middle-sized head, neither small or big"), the Long Form's first ideal portrait is based on a summary of what would have been the best of the bodily characteristics, although these characteristics follow. Some of these elements (about the 'hair,' the 'eyes' and the 'speech' and 'voice') are missing in the London text (see *supra* Table 1). In the Short Form however, the (single) ideal portrait concludes the text and follows the enumeration of the signs expressed by each bodily characteristic.

<sup>128</sup> On the medical background of the theory, see Hoyland 2006, 318–319 and André 1981, 9–16.

<sup>129</sup> See *infra* Appendix, the seven-book Short Form (SF7) agrees with the Long Form (as of *Sirr-Badawī*) in most of the additions it presents against SF8.

A number of elements in the ideal portrait are reminiscent of the characteristics of the ideal vizier, which forms an important part of Book IV in both the Long and the Short Forms.<sup>130</sup> An element which appears to be stemming from the ideal vizier's portrait and is common to the *Sirr* and the London Physiognomy is the straightness of limbs (or the warning against handicap). The *Sirr* gives a political flavour to the necessity for counsellors to have healthy limbs: "...counsel depends on the body; and when the body grows decrepit through age counsel also becomes weak" (Ali/Fulton, in Steele, *Secretum Secretorum*, p. 233; cf. *Sirr*-Badawī, p. 134). The matter figures at the head of the fifteen qualities expected of a vizier: "His limbs should fulfil their functions perfectly" (Ali/Fulton, in Steele, *Secretum Secretorum*, p. 237; cf. *Sirr*-Badawī, p. 138).<sup>131</sup> In both the London text and the Long Form according to *Sirr*-Badawī, the warning is repeated twice (London text: [E.] and [G.]; *Sirr*-Badawī: 118.3–4 and 118.8). The first warning is attached to a rejection of "blue-eyed blond [persons]," the source of which also appears to be the section on the best vizier, although the element is missing from the Long Form versions.<sup>132</sup> In both texts, such a note might have found its way into the Physiognomy chapter by being added to the alchemical metaphor of the womb and the pot as a gloss.<sup>133</sup> This process would explain most of the disparities witnessed between the two main versions of the *Sirr al-Asrār*. The language of the various witnesses in reference to "people born disabled" is different, and betrays a number of paleographical corruptions: London text, section [E.], "*a'war min aṣl al-khalqa*" where *a'war* but *Sirr*-Badawī, 118-3-4: "*jan' az'ar*," sc. "insolent and thin-haired," possibly resulting from a probable corruption of *a'war* اعور and *az'ar* اعزر. Both readings possibly stem from the corruption of "[with] prominent cheeks (*awjan*) and thin-haired" as in Leiden SF8 manuscript (fol. 107r13), corresponding to the Hebrew version (Gaster §81 cf. infra Table 3 and Appendix).

Yet another portrait, that of the best sovereign, forms the subject of Book II (once the medical and pseudo-scientific tractates added to it in the version of the text represented in *Sirr*-Badawī are removed)<sup>134</sup> but is not as systematical as the vizier's portrait. The title of Book II indicates that its focus is on the king's appearance or

<sup>130</sup> Forster 2006, 26–27.

<sup>131</sup> The Short Form, according to the Oxford manuscript, has a somewhat different form of the sentence: "He must be perfect in all his limbs, trained for the work for which and to which he is chosen" (Ali/Fulton in Steele, 1920, 238, n.1). On handicap in Islam and the influence of Greek medical theories, see Ghaly 2009, 68–72, referring to Polemon and to the Aristotelian tradition in Arabic.

<sup>132</sup> Cf. Ali/Fulton in Steele 1920, 239, n. 8 and infra, Table 3).

<sup>133</sup> See the paper by Regula Forster in this volume.

<sup>134</sup> The tractates are usually localized outside of Book II in the Short Form witnesses (cf. Forster 2006, 25) as noticed by Manzalaloui 1974, 169–170. He further points (*loc. cit.*, 208–210) to the strongly Platonic background of Books II and III when read according to the Short Form version. Steele had already stated the possible externality of the material added to Book II in the Long Form, cf. Steele, 1920, xxxix–xl.

etiquette (“About the king and his appearance...,” *fī ḥāl al-malik wa-hay’atuhu*).<sup>135</sup> The reader is informed in terms reminiscent of the chapter on Physiognomy (cf. supra Table 1, sections [H.2] and [K.18]) that the king should have a melodious, eloquent and loud voice, though not speak much (*Sirr*-Badawī, p. 78; Ali/Fulton in Steele, p. 185), and laugh little (*Sirr*-Badawī, p. 80; Ali/Fulton in Steele, p. 187). Manzalaoui’s analysis of the vizier’s portrait and its parallel in the works of al-Fārābī confirms in his eyes the influence of Plato’s *Republic* on the ideal model which formed the background of the sovereign and/or that of the good administrator according to the *Sirr al-Asrār*.<sup>136</sup> Manzalaoui believed that both Fārābī – in whose *Virtuous City* a very similar portrait (that of the “imam-philosopher”) appears – and the *Sirr* were under the influence of the Brethren of Purity, which he believed came first chronologically.<sup>137</sup> Fārābī died some twenty-five years before the Short Form version of the *Sirr* was available to Ibn Juljul in Cordoba. He may have known the *Sirr*, for he knew other Pseudo-Aristotelian letters to Alexander.<sup>138</sup> But Fārābī’s familiarity with the translations realized within the Baghdadian circles and that of the Abbasid chancellery makes it necessary to allow for the possibility that he might have relied on similar sources, such as the ones used by the Brethren and the author(s) of the *Sirr al-Asrār* as we know it. Fārābī’s contribution to political philosophy was achieved in a context where the search for a definition of the ideal sovereign – be he imam,

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**135** Or, according to the SF7 Sprenger 943, fol. 4v, “kingly etiquette (*fī tadbīr al-malik*).” *Ḥāl* is an extremely wide notion, meaning “state, position, condition” while *tadbīr* also carries a number of meanings, such as “management, self-government, results, regimen” and seems to me synonymous but somehow more elegant than *ḥāl*, which sounds slightly archaic or colloquial when applied to a king. On the variants of the chapter’s titles in the tables of contents of the Short Form manuscripts, see Grignaschi 1976, 97–101.

**136** See Manzalaoui 1974, 196–199; cf. Walzer 1985, 238–241 (on the necessary perfection of the limbs) and 246–249 (on the twelve required qualities of the ideal ruler according to Fārābī). The vizier’s portrait thus seems adapted from Plato’s philosopher-king, while the ideal sovereign depicted in Book II of the *Sirr* has other influences (Indian and Persian). Manzalaoui gave a full comparison of the different versions of the portrait with the parallels in Fārābī and the Epistles of the Brethren of Purity but Grignaschi 1976, 15–16, criticized his findings, pointing to the fact that the Sohag manuscript on which Manzalaoui relied was of inferior quality than the other witnesses of the Short Form.

**137** On the dating of the *Sirr al-Asrār* and that of the Brethren of Purity, cf. Forster 2006, 18–19.

**138** The *De Mundo* was certainly available at the Hamdanid court in Northern Syria, where Fārābī stayed during the last years of his life, for a translation from Syriac into Arabic was made there by ‘Īsā b. Ibrāhīm al-Nafīsī, the physician of Sayf al-Dawla [r. 947–967]. It belonged, with other letters in which echoes and parallels to the *Sirr al-Asrār* can be detected, to the Pseudo-Aristotelian *Epistolary Novel* once assembled at the Umayyad court in Syria under the authority of Sālīm Abū al-‘Alā’, a secretary and physician of the caliph Hishām ibn ‘Abd al-Malik [r. 724–743]. Fārābī quotes a letter of Aristotle to Olympias (lacking in the Pseudo-Aristotelian *Epistolary Novel* as we know it) in his *Harmony between the Opinions of the Two Sages, Plato and Aristotle (Kitāb al-jam’ bayn ra’ay al-ḥakīmayn Aflātūn al-ilāhī wa-Aristūṭālis)*, of which a French translation by Abdel-Messih 1969, 305–358 (see 353) is easily accessible.

caliph, or philosopher-king – was so common that the influence of Plato’s *Republic* cannot be circumscribed to the well-defined milieu of Aristotelian or Neoplatonist philosophers.<sup>139</sup> The fact that some of the detailed qualities of the imam-philosopher of Fārābī or that of the philosopher-king of Plato are ascribed to the vizier in the *Sirr al-Asrār* must be seen as part of the mistakes and oddities of a work in which material of diverse origins were often compiled unskilfully.<sup>140</sup>

The first portrait, as it appears in the physiognomy chapter in the Long Form, cannot be the source of the one we read in the London Physiognomy. Some of its additions are parallel to what will constitute the second portrait of the Long Form, coming as a conclusion to the bodily characteristics and the interpretation of the signs they betray. In the case of the second portrait, the impossibility of direct influence seems evident too. If some common elements could be found between the Long Form and the London text, missing intermediaries seem to be taken into account in order to explain the discrepancies. Some of the elements of the Long Form’s first portrait, especially those on the voice and talkativeness, can be detected in the London text, section [H.2]. The second portrait of LF comes closer to the SF (unique) portrait and to a portrait “of the man of understanding and of good nature” according to Abū Bakr al-Rāzī than does the portrait of the London Physiognomy, where the echoes of SF are more important in the second part of [H.2] and very clear in [H.3]. The beginning of the LF second portrait and that of the unique portrait in SF is almost entirely parallel to Rāzī’s portrait of the “man of understanding and good nature” although this part seems unknown to the source of the London Physiognomy. To suggest that Rāzī was used by the author(s) of the *Sirr al-Asrār* (the original author but also, possibly, a revisor making his own use of Rāzī) should certainly be seen as a hypothesis worth of investigation, but without analysing more manuscript witnesses, we cannot judge the question here. The matter is complicated, as will be seen in the conclusion, by the fact that Rāzī used Ibn al-Biṭrīq’s translations in his works.

Another element, best exemplified by a comparison of the Leiden SF8 with the Berlin Sprenger SF7 texts, is the role of revisors and copyists in the way the vocabulary was adapted and understood. Thus, the omission of an adjective in a series of

<sup>139</sup> Daiber 1986, 6, for the parallels to and echoes of the *Republic* in the works of Fārābī.

<sup>140</sup> See in particular the remarks of Manzalaoui 1974, 180–181, and Grignaschi 1976, 20–22, on the emanationist scheme of the *Sirr*.

<sup>141</sup> Missing in Regula Forster’s translation (*supra* in this volume) because of the absence of an exact parallel to Abū Bakr al-Rāzī’s bodily characteristics. It echoes, nevertheless, his portrait of the “man of good understanding and disposition (*al-rajul al-jayyid al-fahm wa-l-ṭab*)” (*al-Ṭibb al-Manṣūrī*, 104–105 Ṣiddīqī).

<sup>142</sup> Ali/Fulton’s translation interprets the sentence somewhat differently, with “proportioned” for *muwāfaqa*, which I have translated “appropriate.”

<sup>143</sup> The phrase “pale but permeated with light red or brown” appears in both the portrait of the “man of good understanding” and in that of the “philosopher” in Rāzī, *al-Ṭibb al-Manṣūrī*, 105 Ṣiddīqī. Both portraits also include the characteristics of middle-size and medium waist, but use a different vocabulary.

synonyms will result in a possibly different interpretation of the remaining words. The succession of two synonyms could be the result of a “double-translation”<sup>144</sup> but it may also be seen as an example of hendiadys. However, once a synonym was seen as redundant by a copyist and omitted, a shift in the meaning of the sentence would occur that is difficult for us to distinguish from a paleographic mistake. The role of copyists and revisors could thus be all the more effective when small details were added or omitted to adapt the ideal portrait(s) and make it fit a patron or a pretender to the position. This “common-sense” or “practical factor” bears a great deal of weight in any attempt to construct a stemma.

The Arabic wording in the last sentence of [H.3] is almost identical (the addition in LF, here underlined, is possibly the result of a double-translation or that of the choice by the translator of resorting to a hendiadys). We read in the London text:

ويكون بسيط الكفين طويل الأصابع مائلاً إلى الدقة ويكون مع ذلك قليل الضحك والمزاح كأنما يخالط نظره فرح  
وسرور.

And in the Long Form (according to *Sirr*-Badawī, 123.10–11):

سبط الكف، طويل الأصابع مائلة إلى الرقة قليل الضحك والمزاح والمراء، كأنما يخالط نظره سروره أو فرح ...

The first element, about the hands or palms (*kaff* has both meanings in Arabic), is italicized to indicate a possible paleographic corruption: *basīt*, in the London text, usually means ‘large,’ while *sabiṭ* is said of ‘well-built [hands]’ and has the metaphorical meaning of open-handed when used about a ‘hand.’ Most of the elements in the London Physiognomy can be found in the Short Form portrait, apart from the additions at the beginning of [H.2]. Moreover, the Short Form has a single portrait, as opposed to the two divided portraits of the Long Form. In the Short Form, the portrait concludes the section, while in the London text, it precedes the enumeration of the bodily characteristics (as does the first portrait of the Long Form). For Grignaschi, the differences in the three versions of the Physiognomy represented by the *Sirr*’s two versions and the London manuscript could be explained by the possibility that the *Kitāb al-Qānūn* referred to in the first lines of the London Physiognomy might have been a complete text composed of several medical or pseudo-scientific sections which were entirely integrated to a preceding version of the *Sirr al-Asrār*.<sup>145</sup> Grignaschi’s hypothesis is worth investigating and could possibly explain why the comparison of the texts tends to show that, if indeed a common source should be assumed, the London text seems to have diverged at an early stage and should not be seen as a direct ancestor of either the Short or the Long Form.<sup>146</sup>

<sup>144</sup> Double-translations were common in the process of revising texts. The addition of a synonym might also be the result of the insertion within the text of a marginal note in which a reader clarified the meaning of a word by adding a synonym that was more familiar to him (or to his location and epoch).

<sup>145</sup> Grignaschi 1976, 44–46.

<sup>146</sup> As was also assumed by Manzalaoui 1974, 183–184.

## The Two portraits.

Long Form's first portrait [Steele, p. 220]<sup>141</sup>

The *best proportioned* construction is of him *who possesses medium stature, black hair and eyes—the latter somewhat deep set—round face, white mixed with red or moderately brown colour, with perfect form and well proportioned body, head neither too large nor too small. Who speaks little except on necessary occasions, a voice neither too loud nor too low, inclining towards thinness but not too thin. And whose temperament inclines towards spleen and bile.*

London Physiognomy

[H.1.] O Alexander! Know that the *best* and *most appropriate*<sup>142</sup> person I wish you as a friend is a man of *middle-stature, neither tall nor short, with a medium waist, neither too thick nor too slender, who has a middle-sized head, neither small or big, showing a good countenance and a beautiful appearance* and *face*, meaning that [his *face*] should be between *round* and *fleshy, pale but permeated with light red or brown*.<sup>143</sup>

Long Form's second portrait [Ali/Fulton in Steele, p. 223–224]

*Sirr*-Badawī, p. 123.5–13, tr. R.Forster (see supra chap. 13)

London Physiognomy

The best of men is

one having a moderate-sized mouth,  
soft and moist flesh, neither too thin nor too fat,

neither too tall nor too short, in colour either white inclining to red, or a clear brown colour,

oval in face, and of even features, *hair long—neither too thick nor too thin*—of a colour between red and black,

moderate-sized eyes,  
somewhat *deep-set*, moderate-sized head, straight neck,

square *shoulders inclined to sloping*, moderately broad chest, *back and thighs not too full*,

*a clear and moderate voice*,

*smooth palms, long fingers inclined to thinness*,

The best man is  
the balanced man,  
understanding and of good nature; his flesh should be soft, moist, in the middle between thin and coarse,

neither tall nor short, white, with a tendency towards red and brown, of pure brown, with smooth cheeks, of an easy face, with beautifully arched eye-brows, with beautiful *hair, neither lank nor smooth nor curly*, of reddish hair,

of medium-sized eyes, tending to be *deep*, of a

medium head, of a straight neck, his *shoulders tending to meet each other, without flesh in the backbone and on the hips*,

with a *balanced voice, neither thin nor coarse*,

*of open hand, with long fingers tending to be thin*,

[H.2.] [And he must have] *reasonably long hair, neither too flat or too curly, neither too thick or fine, between black and blond [or 'chestnut'], that is, red-brown. And he must have big eyes, tending slightly to hollowness, between black and blue, that is deep-blue. [His] neck should be neither [too] long or [too] short, and neither fat nor slender, but regular.*

And with this, he should have *bending shoulders and his loins and hips should not be too fleshy.*

*His voice should be clear, balanced between being pleasant and soft. In addition to this, he should not speak much, except when it is needed.*

[H.3.] *His hands should be large, with lank fingers, tending to thinness. And he should not*

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<p><i>grave</i>, thoughtful, <i>amiable</i>, cheerful so as to inspire others with his cheerfulness, and high minded.</p>	<p><i>laughing, joking</i> and <i>disputing little</i>, so that rather his look is merging with his joy and happiness. (...)</p>	<p><i>laugh or joke too much so that his gaze would reveal joy and happiness.</i></p>
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Comparison with the portrait in the Short Form (SF8).

Leiden, Or. 749, foll. 106v5–16

And the moderate [person], understanding and of good nature is the one whose ***flesh is soft and tender, neither too thin or too thick***. He should be ***neither short nor tall***, [of] fair [complexion] tending to red or yellow, with ***a pleasant face, long-haired, [but that his hair would be] neither too flat or too curly. Dark blond hair***, of a medium range, ***[having] big eyes [of a colour] tending to dark or black***.

***The head of medium size***, with a straight ***neck***,

London Physiognomy

[H.1.] O Alexander! Know that the best and most appropriate person I wish you as a friend is a man of middle-stature, ***neither tall nor short, with a medium waist***<sup>147</sup>, ***neither too thick nor too slender***,

***Who has a middle-sized head***, neither small or big, showing a good countenance and ***a beautiful appearance and face***, meaning that [his face] should be between round and fleshy, pale but permeated with light red or brown.

[H.2.] [And he must have] reasonably *long hair*, *neither too flat or too curly, neither too thick or fine, between black and blond*, that is, red-brown. ***And he must have big eyes, tending slightly to hollowness, between black and blue***, that is deep-blue. ***[His] neck*** should be neither [too] long or [too] short, and neither fat nor slender, but regular.

*the shoulders a little bent, his back and thighs not too corpulent.*

And with this, he should have *bending shoulders and his loins and hips should not be too fleshy*.

[And he should have] *a clear and gentle voice, moderate between strength and softness, lank palms with long fingers, almost slender. He should not speak or laugh much* and do it only when necessary.

*His voice should be clear, balanced between being pleasant and soft*. In addition to this, he ***should not speak much, except when it is needed***.

***His temperament should be inclined to melancholy and sanguinity, and his gaze should also be between contentment and happiness***.

[H.3.] His hands should be large, with lank fingers, tending to thinness. And he should ***not laugh or joke too much so that his gaze would reveal joy and happiness***.

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<sup>147</sup> The Leiden MS has “*an yakūn laḥmuḥu layyinan*,” possibly seen as too archaic a wording for someone’s corpulence. This use of *laḥm* (“flesh”) to designate corpulence is common to the Short and Long Form, and to Abū Bakr al-Rāzī



The comparison with Abū Bakr al-Rāzī's portraits of the "man of understanding and of good manners" and that of the "philosopher" reveal a large number of parallels between him and the two main versions of the *Sirr*, albeit the vocabulary used by Rāzī differs in several cases. The different vocabulary used by Rāzī would point to a common source rather than to either the direct influence of the *Sirr al-Asrār* on him, that of the *Qānūn* (if we accept Grignaschi's theory) or alternatively the use of Rāzī (d. 923 or 933) by the author(s) of the *Sirr al-Asrār*.<sup>148</sup> Of interest is the fact that Rāzī seems to have coalesced two portraits together (indicated in the translation with the numbers in brackets).

في دلائل الرجل الجيد الفهمه والطبع أن يكون لحمه لينا رطبا قليلا، و يكون بين العبل و القضيف و لا يكون لحيم الوجه. و يكون شائل الاكتاف، عديم اللحم في الصلب، لونه بين الأبياض و الأحمر، لونه رونق و بريق، رقيق الجلد، ليس شعره بالكثير و لا بالصلب و لا بالشديد السواد، عيناه شهلا و تان رطبتان فيهما رطوبة و صفاء. و من علامات الرجل المعتدل الجيد الفهم و الطبع أيضا، أن يكون بين الطويل و القصير و القضيف و اللحم، أبيض مشرب حمرة، معتدل الكف و الرجل في الصغر و الكبر و قلة اللحم و كثرتة، معتدل الرأس في العظم، في رقبته غلظ قليل، و شعره يميل الى الحمرة قليلا بين السبط و الجعودة، و وجهه مستدير، و انفه مستو حسن جدا معتدل في العظم، و عينه شهلاء فيها رطوبة و صفاء.

[1] On the signs of the man of good understanding and character, that his flesh [sc. "corpulence"?] should be slightly soft and fresh, his face neither too chubby or too narrow, and not fleshy. And that his shoulders be large but without fleshy loins. His complexion should be between pale and reddish, but be bright and resplendent. His skin should be thin and he should not be too hairy nor should he have hairy loins or that his hair would be too dark. His eyes should be dark-blue and deep-set, wet with moist and purity. [2] And among the signs of a moderate man of good understanding and character also, that he would be neither too tall or too short, neither too slim or too corpulent, pale but permeated with red. With medium-size hands (*kaff*) and legs, that should be of reasonable corpulence, neither slender nor fleshy, of medium-sized head, with a slightly thick neck, his hair slightly tending to redness [sc. "brown"?], [half-way] between lank and curly, a round face, a straight nose, very elegant and of harmonious proportions, his eyes dark-blue, with moist and purity in them.

The comparison of Rāzī's portrait of "the man of good understanding" with the second portrait in the Long Form reveals a close affinity. Some mistakes in the LF texts can be corrected with the help of Rāzī: thus, the erroneous "the best of men is one having a moderate-sized mouth" at the very beginning of the portrait shows the paleographic corruption of *fahm* فهم into *fam* فم (the correct version is the one we read in *Sirr*-Badawī, who relied here on better manuscripts than Ali/Fulton). Following it shortly, another element about "large shoulders" (*shā'il al-aktāf*) seems a preferable reading than "bending shoulders" (*mā'il al-aktāf*), which is also the result of the paleographic corruption of شائل into مائل. The first reading is confirmed by the SF7 version (see infra Table 3 and Appendix).

The second positive portrait in Rāzī's chapter on physiognomy in his *Ṭibb al-Manṣūrī* is that of the "philosopher (*al-rajul al-faylasuf*)," i.e. of the man loving wisdom, according to a Greek etymology which was certainly known to Rāzī.

<sup>148</sup> Manzalaoui 1974, 227, considers the possibility that Rāzī used the *Sirr al-Asrār* directly or had for his Physiognomy section a source common to the one used in the *Sirr*.

في دلائل الرجل الفيلسوف: استواء القامة و اعتدال اللحم، أبيض مشرب حمرة، معتدل الشعر في القلّة و الكثرة و السيّوطة و الجعودة و السواد و الحمرة، سبط الكف منفرج ما بين الأصابع، عظيم الجبهة، أشهل العين رطبها كأنما يخالطها أبدا نظرة ضحك و سرور

Among the signs of the man loving wisdom: a straight stature and a moderate corpulence [lit. “flesh”], pale [of complexion] tending to reddish, halfway between [having] scarce hair and a full head of hair, [and that those be] between lank and curly, between dark and red, with well-built hands (*kaff*) and clear separation of the fingers, a large forehead, dark-blue eyes the moist of which betrays constant mixture of laughter and happiness in his reflection (*naẓra*).

In the portrait of the philosopher, Rāzī seems to be influenced by an Eastern (Buddhist?) model rather than a Greek one.<sup>149</sup> Of special interest for the comparison of the different versions is his last point, on the merry gaze of philosophers, which is paralleled only in the Short Form versions of the portrait (see infra Table 3 and Appendix). The Long Form and the London Physiognomy seem to be more familiar with unhappy philosophers, unless they are under the influence of elements given in Book II and Book IV about the behaviours expected from sovereigns and viziers.

### Table 3: The Short Form Physiognomy

We will now turn to a sample of the witnesses for the Short Form versions in order to verify their possible proximity to the London Physiognomy, but setting aside for the moment the complicated case of the portrait (where the “practical factor” of human interest may have been in play). The *Sod ha-Sodot*, a Hebrew medieval translation of the Short Form in eight books, was made in the late 13th- or the early 14th-century.<sup>150</sup> As Spitzer discovered, the Hebrew text may at times contain additions or glosses known only from the Long Form manuscripts or, for a number of sections, from the Sohag manuscript (an SF8 as well) discovered by Manzalaoui.<sup>151</sup> If more parallels in the variants could be traced to the Long Form, we would be in a similar situation to what we saw in the London physiognomy where some of the variant readings and stylistic adjustments are parallel to those in the Long Form versus the Short Form.

Next to the Hebrew medieval version in Gaster’s English translation, two Arabic Short Form versions of the Physiognomy chapter are provided with a translation (infra

<sup>149</sup> Rāzī is well-known for his use of a wide range of medical sources. See Kahl 2015, esp. 14–28 and 71–159.

<sup>150</sup> The mistaken attribution to Judah al-Ḥarizī (fl. early 13th-c.) stems, according to Spitzer, “The Hebrew Translations,” p. 35, from the presence of his translation of Ḥunayn ibn Ishāq’s *Ādāb al-falāsifa* in the same Vatican manuscript as the *Sod ha-Sodot* (Vatican, Or. 53). It is unclear to Spitzer whether the translation might have been realized in Spain, Italy or Provence.

<sup>151</sup> Spitzer 1982, 43–45. The Hebrew version edited by Gaster is an SF8, according to its own table of contents (§7, in Gaster 1908a, 116). The table of contents (Gaster, *loc. cit.*, §7, p. 116) announces eight books but the “gates” of book eight (“On Occult sciences”), are numbered continuously in Gaster, resulting in the thirteen “books” of his translation, although Gaster noticed some discrepancies in the manuscripts he used (cf. Gaster 1908b, 1075–1076).

Table 3): MS Leiden Or. 749 (an SF8) and MS Berlin, Sprenger 943 (an SF7). The Arabic text follows in an Appendix where I have used the Leiden manuscript as a base text, because of the relations noted between it and the Oxford manuscript Or. Laud. 210 (as witnessed from the footnotes to Ali/Fulton translation, see *supra* Table 2). In the annotation to the Leiden Arabic text, I gave the variants of the Berlin Sprenger text. A long lacuna in the Leiden manuscript (see the blank sections in Table 3) can be read in the translation according to the Berlin Sprenger manuscript (see *infra* Table 3), but as to the Arabic text, I have not deemed it necessary to give it in full since the manuscript is freely available on the website of the Berlin Staatsbibliothek.<sup>152</sup>

The Leiden manuscript is undated but some indications show that it is certainly later than the Hebrew translation. The Leiden manuscript (MS Leiden, Or. 749, foll. 76v–111b) was considered by Grignaschi as a good copy, and our own study of the text reveals that even if it is not free from mistakes and lacunae, it seems to preserve an early version of the text that included difficult expressions which later copyists usually left out.<sup>153</sup> The manuscript is presumably not as old as Grignaschi believed.<sup>154</sup> It betrays a late Maghribi hand, using non-maghribi shapes for the letters *fā'* and *qaf*, and was possibly copied at the request of Levinus Warner (d. 1665) during the time he spent in the Ottoman Empire. The texts preserved in the manuscript were copied on types of European paper common in the Warner collection and the quires are irregular.<sup>155</sup> In Book III, “On the Representation of Justice (*fī šūrat al-'adl*)” (foll. 88r–89v), the drawing of the “Octagon” or “Circle” of Justice, a representation of a poem in eight verses forming the essence of Justice in an octagon (made of two visible squares and inscribed in a circle, as in the Leiden manuscript) or in a circle (as in the Berlin manuscript), was inserted from a separate folio (the stub is visible on fol. 90r) and pasted on the verso of fol. 89. As the hand and the ink of the drawing differ from that of the rest of the texts preserved in the Leiden manuscript, it seems that the

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**152** [http://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht?PPN=PPN889280428&PHYSID=PHYS\\_0003](http://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht?PPN=PPN889280428&PHYSID=PHYS_0003).

**153** Grignaschi 1976, 15. Forster used the Leiden manuscript for her comparison of Johannes Hispalensis' text with the Arabic versions, cf. Forster 2006, 250–283. A description of the manuscript is given by Badawī, *Sirr al-Asrār*, 64–66.

**154** See *supra*, fn. 58. The contents of the manuscripts (two works are copied in addition to the *Sirr al-Asrār*) are mentioned by Forster 2006, 41, n. 198 and in Witkam 2007 (<http://www.islamicmanuscripts.info/inventories/leiden/or01000.pdf>).

**155** Watermarked papers were used in the composition of the quires. Letters W and E appear in the first quires while the quires on which the *Sirr al-Asrār* are copied carry a watermark showing letters B and G separated with an upper flower in-between (fols. 73, 80, 88, 90, 95, 96, 101). The quires are not following standard rules: in majority of seven-sheet (the 2nd, 4th, 6th, 8th and 11th quires are septinions) interspersed with ternions (1st, 5th and 7th quires), quarterternions (3rd and 10th quires) and quinions (9th quire) with more irregularities in the part where the *Sirr al-Asrār* is copied (fols. 76r–110r). The final 12th quire is a binion. A full study of the text would be needed to detect if the irregularities correspond to lacunae in the text.

drawing was taken from another manuscript and pasted in. Possibly as a result of this insertion, the Leiden manuscript does not have a title of any kind for Book IV, the text of which starts directly on the recto of folio 90r, which is facing the drawing.<sup>156</sup> At the end of Book IV, the title of Book V (starting on fol. 93r), “On the ambassadors and messengers”, is highlighted with red ink, and so are the titles of Book VI (93v: “On the government [*siyāsa*] of his [army] chiefs and horsemen [*al-asāwir*]<sup>157</sup> among his soldiers”); Book VII (95r: “On the conduct [*siyāsa*] of wars”) and Book VIII (103r: “On Special sciences and revealed secrets [*asrār nāmūsiyya*]).<sup>158</sup> Other sections (such as the addresses “O Alexander!”) and the sub-chapters or “gates” are highlighted with red ink as well. Some interpolated material can be detected in the Leiden manuscript, as was already noted by Badawī and Forster.<sup>159</sup>

As to the Sprenger manuscript (MS Berlin Sprenger, Or. 943, fols. 1r–22v), where only the *Sirr al-Asrār* is copied (on fols. 22v, 1–3), the colophon suggests that it is a copy of a model whose copyist was the otherwise unknown Ibrāhīm b. Yaḥyā b. Qāsim b. Aḥmad b. al-Mahdī b. Yaḥyā b. Maṣṣūr b. Yaḥyā b. Maṣṣūr b. al-Mufaḍḍal al-Hādī. If genuine, the name points to a possible Zaydite origin.<sup>160</sup> The actual copyist’s name might have been preserved at the end of the book, but the Berlin codex has a lacuna, ending with the first lines of a treatise titled *Book of the Selected invocations and Experienced remedies* (*Kitāb al-ad’iyya al-muntakhaba wa-l-adwiyya al-mujarraba*) ascribed to a certain al-Biṣṭāmī.<sup>161</sup> The Sprenger manuscript was used for comparative purposes by Grignaschi, who noticed in it parallels with elements he found solely in the Long Form and in what he regarded as one of the sources of the *Sirr al-Asrār* – the Umayyad *Book*

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**156** The quire is nevertheless composed of eight bifolia (a quaternion), and the folio on which the drawing was pasted (fol. 89v) was left blank and so is half the recto of fol. 89. Did the copyist initially plan that a smaller drawing would be executed there? Alternately, the missing title of Book IV might have been copied on the same bifolio as the lacuna witnessed in the text (see infra Table 3), which corresponds to a part of the bodily characteristics in the Physiognomy. The Leiden MS offers a number of variants in the eight verses of the Octagon, the most important of which is certainly its replacing the term “king (*malik*)” by “imam (*imām*)” but these cannot be fully discussed here (the geometry of the drawing reproduced in *Sirr*-Badawī, p. 127 is not faithful to the original).

**157** See Lane, *Dictionary*, vol. IV, p. 1465.

**158** Thus, Leiden Book V = *Sirr*-Badawī (p. 145) Book VI while Leiden Book VI = *Sirr*-Badawī (p. 147) Book VIII. *Sirr*-Badawī Book V (p. 144) and Book VII (p. 146) appear as “gates” in the Leiden manuscript within Book VII (“on Wars”) directly following the portrait of the ideal vizier. On *nāmūs* rendering “secret” or “revelation” see Lane, *Dictionary*, vol. VIII, p. 2854.

**159** Cf. Badawī, *Sirr al-Asrār*, 156, n.1; Forster 2006, 29, n. 121 and 97, n. 590. Another truncated citation for which no parallel in *Sirr*-Badawī can be found appears on MS Leiden Or. 749, fol. 99r, shortly before a short paragraph paralleled in the London Physiognomy (section [L.]) and in LF, within the section on the portrait of the ideal vizier in Book IV (*Sirr*-Badawī, 118.13).

**160** According to Ahlwardt’s catalogue (n°5603), the manuscript would be from the 16<sup>th</sup> c. The collection of Aloys Sprenger (d. 1893) was offered for the library of the King of Prussia in 1857.

**161** The title, as well as the Sufi overtones of these lines, point to the ninth-century Abū Yazīd Biṣṭāmī as the putative author.

of *General Politics* (*Kitāb al-Siyāsa al-'Ammiyya*), which like the *Sirr* circulated as a letter purportedly written by Aristotle for his disciple Alexander.<sup>162</sup> Our comparison of the Physiognomy chapters in the Sprenger text and in the Leiden manuscript (infra Table 3 and Appendix) confirms the value of the Berlin manuscript. In the Berlin text (an SF7), what constituted Book VII of the Leiden manuscript is inserted within Book VI, the title of which encompasses the topics of Leiden Book VI and Book VII. The final book (Book VII of the Berlin MS and Book VIII of the Leiden MS) is entitled (“On Special sciences and revealed secrets...”) in the table of contents of both but the title given within the text of the Berlin manuscript (fol. 18r) is simply “Book VII on medicine (*al-maqāla al-sābi'a fi al-ṭibb*).”<sup>163</sup> As to the date of this recension, the Short Form in seven-books already existed in the year 432 of the Hegira (= 1030 CE) according to two manuscripts, one of them (the Charfet MS in Lebanon)<sup>164</sup> stating explicitly that it is a copy of a model giving this date while the other one (Vienna 1828/Neue Folge 278) only has a note providing this date, without any specific details on the source of the information.<sup>165</sup>

The comparison of LF with the Short Form versions shows that the Berlin SF7 often preserves variants parallel to those of LF (as per *Sirr*-Badawī) against the Leiden SF8 while the London text would seem to stand between the two versions (cf. Table 3).<sup>166</sup> In several cases, these variants concern two adjectives in the Leiden text that are reduced to one in the Berlin SF7 or inversely, one adjective in the Leiden

**162** Grignaschi 1976, 24. Another parallel between an SF7 and the *Siyāsa al-'Ammiyya*, this time missing from LF, was noted by Manzalaoui 1974, 175. Grignaschi probably took advantage of the Latin translation of the Sprenger Physiognomy chapter by Förster 1893, 183–222.

**163** On the differences in the organization of LF and SF, see Forster 2006, 30. For a comparison of the contents of the last book in the different LF and SF manuscripts, including the Leiden and the Berlin Sprenger manuscript, see Forster 2006, 28–29.

**164** Cf. Forster 2006, 13, n. 18 and 16, n. 58, referring to Armalet' catalogue of the Charfet library, 267, n°17/3,2.

**165** Manzalaoui 1974, 148 gives the following information about the Vienna manuscript: it was once part of the belongings of the Shihabiyya Library (in 17th–18th c. Lebanon; members of the Shihabi dynasty converted over time and Druze, Sunnis and Christians alike would be found among the members of the court); the manuscript was in Venice in 1542; reader's notes in Syriac script were made in 1362. Badawī, *Sirr al-Asrār*, 69–71 deciphers the reader's marks and states that about one third of the text is missing, but it is unclear whether these lacunae are parts of the SF7 text or in comparison to LF. Needless to say, further study of the two manuscripts will be needed before the dates and the relation between the manuscripts can be accepted with any certainty.

**166** Manzalaoui 1974, 222–224 shows that the London text is an intermediate version. On SF7, Manzalaoui 1974, 174–175, remarked that it seems later than SF8 (apart from one SF7 branch and the Hebrew tradition, which should be earlier) and attempted to correct some of its readings. Steele believed – judging from the Oxford SF7 – that the main difference between SF7 and SF8 was the concatenation of Books VI and Books VII into one, Steele 1920, xiv–xv. But he himself adds (*loc. cit.*, 242, n.1) that parts of Book V according to the Gotha 1869 (an LF) manuscript used for the translation of Ali/Fulton are in fact thought to belong to Book IV in the Oxford manuscript while the last section of the same Oxford Book IV belongs in the Gotha manuscript translated by Ali/Fulton to Book VII (*loc. cit.*, lvii, section H).

Table 3: Comparison of three witnesses of the Short Form text.

<p><i>Sirr al-Asrār</i> (Short Form), Hebrew version, transl. Gaster (1908), pp. 148–152</p>	<p><i>Sirr al-Asrār</i> (SF7), MS Berlin Sprenger 94.3 (see the Appendix for the text of the SF8 Leiden manuscript and the variants of the Berlin SF7 manuscript)</p>	<p><i>Sirr al-Asrār</i> (SF8), MS Leiden Or. 749 (see the Appendix for the Arabic text)</p>
<p><b>[p. 148] §80.</b> Book XI:<sup>i</sup> Of physiognomy. “O Alexander, know that the science of physiognomy is one of the subtle and speculative sciences which it is necessary for thee to know and to understand, because of the great need in which thou standest when appointing men to stand before thee. I will therefore put down for thee in this chapter all the tokens of physiognomy which are proved true and known in the days gone by, and which we have tested in sooth from olden times.</p>	<p><b>[16r1–5]</b> Discourse (<i>qaww</i>) on Physiognomy. O Alexander, since the science of physiognomy is among the subtle, speculative (<i>naẓariyya</i>) and rational (<i>fikriyya</i>)<sup>ii</sup> sciences which you must learn and examine thoroughly—because of your great need for people and their constant activity in your presence<sup>iii</sup>—I will write down for you in this section the tokens of physiognomy which have been proved true through times gone by and which experience has verified as the days elapsed, God willing.</p>	<p><b>[106v17–107r4]</b> Chapter (lit. ‘gate,’ <i>bāb</i>) on Physiognomy.<sup>iv</sup> O Alexander, the science of physiognomy is one of the speculative (<i>naẓariyya</i>) [107r1] and rational (<i>fikriyya</i>) sciences which you must learn and examine thoroughly, because of your great need for people, so look at them when they are standing in front of you! I have written down for you in this section the tokens of physiognomy which have been proved true through the days gone by and which experience has verified as time elapsed.</p>
<p><b>§81.</b> “Alexander, though knowest that the womb is for the child what the pot is for the broth. The temperaments differ according to the creature, and the natures differ according to their composition. Know that a clear white complexion with a tinge of blue (purple?) and much sallowness betokens shamelessness, cunning, lust, and unfaithfulness. Behold the people of ‘Ashkenaz,’ who have all these qualities and are foolish, unfaithful, and impudent. Therefore, beware of any man whose complexion is blue (purple) and sallow, and if besides having a large forehead, he is beardless, and has much hair (on his head), beware of him as thou bewarest of the poisonous snakes.</p>	<p><b>[16r5–10]</b> You already know, o Alexander, that the womb is to the foetus what the pot is for cooking. The humors (<i>al-amziya</i>) differ according to the dispositions (<i>khilaaq</i>), and the natures are opposed (<i>mutaḡāddā</i>) according to their combination. Know that a radiantly pale [complexion] with blue [eyes] and a vivid blondness are signs of rudeness, deceitfulness, lust and simple-mindedness. Keep yourself away from any blue [-eyed] blond [-haired person], and if in addition to this he has a large forehead, a narrow chin, or that he has much hair on his head, beware of him as you do with snakes.</p>	<p><b>[107r4–14]</b> O Alexander, know that the womb is to the foetus what the pot is for the food [prepared in it]. The humors differ according to the creature, and the natures are outwardly appearing (<i>mutaẓāhira</i>) according to their combination. Know that a very fair [complexion]<sup>v</sup> with blue [eyes] and a vivid blondness are signs of rudeness, deceitfulness, lust and simple-mindedness. Beware of those who are naturally white or reddish<sup>vi</sup> and of who would add to these madness, fearfulness and deceitfulness. Keep yourself away from any blue [-eyed] blond [-haired person], and if in addition to this he has a large forehead, a narrow chin, prominent cheeks (<i>awjan</i>) and thin (<i>az ar</i>)<sup>vii</sup> but much hair on his head, beware of him as you would of poisonous snakes.</p>

(Continued)

Table 3 (Continued)

<p><b>\$82.</b> “And in the eyes there are also unfailing tokens which betoken mercy, wrath, love, and envy. The worst of complexions is the blue (purple), which is of the colour of the stone called ‘Ahlamah,’ and in Arabic ‘Firuzg [s.c. ‘Turquoise’].”</p>	<p><b>[16r10–16r13]</b> O Alexander, the signs of the eyes cannot fail you (<i>lā takādu tukhrāfī’uka</i>), to the point that in it will be evident for you good will and anger, affection and antipathy. And the worst eyes are the blue ones, and the worst blue [eyes], the turquoise.</p>	<p><b>[107r14–16]</b> In the eyes are signs to ascertain the fidelity [s.c. ‘nearness, favour’] (<i>taḥazzū</i>) [of someone] to the extent that affection or animosity and love or hatred is made evident. And the worst [type] of eyes are the turquoise blue.</p>
<p><b>\$83.</b> “He that has large and protruding eyes is envious, impudent, slothful, faithless, and lying; and if they are blue, then he is even worse; he has then undoubted envious eyes./”</p>	<p><b>[16r13–16r18]</b> He who has large and protruding or bulging eyes is envious, impudent, lazy and dishonest. And if they are blue, he will have these shortcomings even more strongly, and they are rarely healthy eyes.<sup>viii</sup></p>	<p><b>[107r16–107v16]</b> <sup>xii</sup>He who has large and protruding eyes is envious, impudent, lazy and dishonest. And if they are blue, it is even worse, and he could well be violent.</p>
<p><b>[p. 149] \$84.</b> “He that has little and sunk eyes, dark and black, is alert, understanding, faithful, and loyal. He that is squint-eyed, looking along the length of the nose, is deceitful. He that has eyes like the eyes of an animal, that stare and move little, is of hard understanding.</p>	<p>And the one whose eyes are of intermediate size, tending to hollowness, darkness or blackness, is alert, understanding and trustworthy. And the one whose eyes resemble the eyes of cattle in [their] impassivity, and absence of movement, he is ignorant and of coarse nature.</p>	<p>And the one whose eyes are of intermediate size, tending to hollowness, darkness or blackness, is alert, understanding and trustworthy. And if his eyebrows are deeply carved along the eyes, he is wicked.<sup>xii</sup> And the one whose eyes resemble the eyes of cattle, in [their] impassivity, absence of movement, and dullness, he is ignorant and of coarse nature.</p>
<p><b>\$85.</b> “He that has shifting eyes, and has sharp sight and turns quickly, is treacherous, sly, and faithless; and if the eye is red it betokens courage and fearlessness. If the eyes are speckled on all sides, then such a man is worse than all others, and most vicious in disposition and in deed.</p>	<p><b>[16r18–16v1]</b> The one who moves his eyes with quick and superficial<sup>x</sup> looks, he is cunning and a perfidious thief. And if the eye is red [i.e. brownish], the person is courageous and bold. But if around it are yellow stains, the person is the most evil and wicked of all people.</p>	<p>The one whose eyes are quickly moving and [gives] piercing looks, he is cunning and a perfidious hoarding thief. And if the eye is red [i.e. brownish], [the person] is courageous and bold. But if it is circled with yellow stains, the person is the most evil and wicked of all people.</p>
<p><b>\$86.</b> “Alexander, if thou seest a man who looks often at thee, and if thou lookest at him he blushes, and he looks ashamed, and looks as if he were jesting, do not befriend him. If there are</p>	<p><b>[16v1–7]</b> O Alexander! If you see a man who looks at you with insistence but that if you look at him turns red and looks ashamed, smiling involuntarily<sup>x</sup> and with a tearing eye, he loves</p>	<p>O Alexander! If you see a man who looks at you with insistence and who turns red, looks ashamed and has an involuntary smile with happiness or tearing eyes, he loves you, is afraid for you and</p>

<p>tears in his eye, he fears thee and loves thee, he will be true and faithful, especially if his eyes have all the good tokens which I have already mentioned. And if thou look at a man and he looks at thee shamelessly and fearlessly, it betokens that he is envious of thee, and that he holds thee in contempt and is unfaithful unto thee.</p> <p>“Alexander, beware of any man that is deformed (imperfect) as much as thou eschewest an enemy.</p>	<p>you and is afraid of you, especially if his eyes are among the favorable ones just described. But if when you look at him he looks at you shamelessly and fearlessly, he envies you and despises you and is not a reliable [person] for you.</p> <p>O Alexander ! Beware of any disabled [person] as you protect yourself of an enemy.</p> <p><b>[16v7–11]</b> And know that thick hair is a sign of courage and of a sound brain. And soft hair is a sign of cowardice, of a cold brain [sc. idiocy]. Much hair on the shoulders and on the neck is a sign of stupidity. And much hair on the chest and the belly is a sign of savagery, of little-understanding, and of wrongdoing.</p>	<p>devoted to you, especially if his eyes are among the favorable ones just described. But if when you look at him he looks at you shamelessly and fearlessly, he envies you and despises you and is not a reliable [person] for you.</p> <p>O Alexander ! Beware of any disabled from birth [as much as] you protect yourself of an enemy.</p> <p><b>[107v16–108r1]</b> And thick hair is a sign of courage and of a sound brain. Soft hair is a sign of cowardice, of a cold brain and of little intelligence. Much hair on the chest and the shoulders is a sign of savagery, obtuseness and wrongdoing.</p>
<p><b>§88.</b> “Of the colour of the hair: -Fair hair (light) denotes foolishness and great ire, and flippancy and also tyranny; black hair betokens intelligence and softness (patience) and love of play; and the mean between the two betokens fairness (righteousness).</p> <p><b>§89.</b> “Of brows: -Much hair on the eyebrows betokens weakness, and boldness of speech; when the eyebrows/ [p. 150] extend sideways (to the temple) they betoken vainglory (pride), and he who has the eyebrows wide apart, equal in length and shortness, and black, is alert and wise.</p>	<p><b>[16v11–13]</b> Blondness is a sign of excessive and quick anger. And the black hair is a sign of intelligence, of equanimity and of the love of justice. And the intermediate between these two is a sign of moderation.</p> <p><b>[16v13–15]</b> Hairy eyebrows are a sign of talkativeness. And if the eyebrows are reaching the temples, the person is haughty, vainglorious and vain. And as for the one who has thin eyebrows of medium length, and dark, he is attentive and understanding.</p>	<p><b>[108r1–4]</b> Blondness is a sign of stupidity, of excessive and quick anger, and of tyranny. Black hair is a sign of intelligence, of equanimity and of the love of justice. And the intermediate between these two is a sign of moderation.</p> <p><b>[108r4–7]</b> Hairy eyebrows are a sign of faltering and of abundant speech. If the eyebrows reach the temples, the person is haughty and vainglorious. And as for the one who has thin eyebrows of medium length, it is a sign that he is well-organized.<sup>xiii</sup></p>

(Continued)



Table 3 (Continued)

<p><b>\$90.</b> “Of nostrils: -He who has tender nostrils will be a man of soft temperament, long nostrils close to the mouth betoken courage; and he who has extended nostrils is a man who will brave danger; he whose nostrils are wide open (strong in blast) is a violent man; he whose nose rises up in the middle and declines again towards the extremity is a vainglorious man and a liar. The best nose is a long nose, but not too long, just even, moderately thick, and declining in its extremity to thinness; it betokens intelligence and understanding.</p>	<p><b>[16v16–17r2]</b> If the nose is thin, the person is thoughtless. If the nose is so long that it comes to the mouth, the person is courageous, and who has a flat nose is lustful, driven by sex. And who has flared nostrils, he is irascible. And if the nose is thick in the middle and almost flat, the person is a babbler and a thief. The harmony for noses is to be long but not excessively, intermediate in thickness and well-arched, and this is a sign of intelligence and understanding.</p>
<p><b>\$91.</b> “Of the forehead: -A broad forehead in which the veins cannot be seen signifies quarrel and interference; but a broad and prominent forehead where the veins are visible signifies wisdom, friendship, trust, understanding, secrecy, plan, and acuteness.</p>	<p><b>[17r2–4]</b> Someone whose forehead is of middle-size and medium protruding, and who has on it wrinkles, he is honest, affectionate, knowledgeable, understanding and very well organized.</p>
<p><b>\$92.</b> “Of the mouth: -A large mouth betokens courage (strength of heart), thick lips betoken simplicity, and one who has red lips and of mean thickness is a just man.</p> <p><b>\$93.</b> “Of the teeth: -He whose teeth stand out prominently (var. are serrated) is a man of hard speech and treacherous, unfaithful; he who has straight teeth well set with space between them, is intelligent, faithful, and a man of foresight.</p>	<p><b>[17r4–8]</b> Who has a wide mouth is courageous. And who has thick lips is stupid. And who has lips of a medium thickness and a strong red (<i>ma’a hamra sādiqa</i>), he is balanced. And who has protruding but [adjacent] teeth, he is treacherous, fanciful and unreliable. And who has slightly spread teeth with gaps in between, he is intelligent and trustful.</p>

**§94.** "Of the face: -He who has a full fleshy face and swollen cheeks is a man of low disposition; he who has a lean sallow face is wicked, treacherous, and deceitful; he who had a long face is impudent; he who has swollen temples and full of veins, is of a violent temper.

**[17r8-10]** Who has a fleshy face with swollen lower cheeks, he is stupid and of coarse manners. Who has a slender face, turning yellow (*asfarrahu?*)<sup>94</sup>, he is evil, wicked and treacherous. And who has a long face is impudent.  
**[17r10-11]** And who has protruding temples and bulging jugular veins, he is irascible.

**§95.** "Of the ear: -He who has big ears is a simpleton, save in that which he understands; he who has little ears, is a fool and a thief.

**[17r11-13]** And who has big ears, he is ignorant but has a good memory/who keeps his word (*hāfiẓan*). And who has small ears, he is stupid and a thief.

**§96.** "Of the voice: -A strong voice betokens courage; but a man who has a mean voice, neither over great nor / [p. 151] over small, neither over quick nor over slow, is intelligent (var. and faithful); he who is hasty in words, and especially if he has a small voice, is impudent, ignorant, and a liar; and if his voice be right great, he is of quick temper and of evil manners; he who has an ugly voice is envious and treacherous; he whose voice is full great (?) is stupid, of little understanding, and pride.

**[17r13-18]** Who has a loud voice is courageous. And whose way of speaking (*kalāmuhu*) is moderate between roughness and delicacy, haste and gravity, he is intelligent, organized and honest. And whose way of speaking is fast, especially if he has a soft voice, he is impudent, ignorant and a liar. But if his voice is coarse, he is irascible and has bad manners. And who has a nasal voice, he is envious and deceitful. And whose voice in coarse, it is a sign of stupidity, lack of intelligence and vainglory.

**§97.** "He who makes many movements is vainglorious and deceitful, and whoever is quiet in his demeanour and whose speech is perfect, and moves his hands at certain set portions, is perfect of understanding and thoughtful in mind.

**[17r18-17v1]** Who moves a lot is deceitful, a chatter and an impostor. And who sits with gravity and speaks in an careful and organized manner, moving his hand according to the parts of his speech, he has a perfect intelligence and a good organization.

(Continued)

Table 3 (Continued)

<p><b>§98.</b> “Of the neck:—He who has a very short neck is deceitful and a liar. He who has a long thin neck is lewd, stupid, and faint-hearted. Whosoever has a long neck and a small head is a fool beyond measure; he who has a long thick neck is a fool and a glutton; and whosoever has a neck well-proportioned in length and thickness is ingenious, discreet, and a faithful friend.</p>	<p><b>[17v2–17v6]</b> Someone who has a long and thin neck is clamorous, stupid and a coward. And if on top of that he has a small head, he is stupid to the utmost. And who has a thick neck, he is ignorant and a glutton. And as for someone whose neck is of medium-length and the thickness of which is moderate, he is intelligent, organized, honest and trustworthy.</p>	<p><b>[106r1–5]</b> Know that someone who has a long and thin neck is noisy, stupid and a coward. And the one who has a thicker neck at the base of the head, he is stupid, foolish and incapable. Someone who has a thick neck is ignorant and a glutton. And as for someone whose neck is of medium-length, without excesses and the thickness of which is moderate, he is intelligent, organized, careful, truthful and trustworthy.</p>
<p><b>§99.</b> “Of the belly and chest:—He who has a thick belly is simple and a fool, and faint-hearted. A small belly and a narrow chest betokens good understanding and good counsel.</p>	<p><b>[17v7]</b> Someone who has a big belly is stupid, ignorant and a coward. And a gracious (<i>laṭīfa</i>) belly with a small chest are signs of a good intellect and a sound reason.</p>	<p><b>[106r6–7]</b> Someone who has a big belly is stupid and a coward. And a gracious belly with a small chest are signs of a good intellect and sound reason.</p>
<p><b>§100.</b> “Of the shoulders and back:—Broad shoulders and back betoken prowess and foolhardiness. A bent back betokens discordant nature, an even back is an excellent sign. Upraised shoulders betoken bad thoughts and evil will.</p>	<p><b>[17v8–10]</b> Large shoulders and [a large] back are signs of courage and a weak intellect. A bent back is sign of a wicked (<i>sharāsa</i>) nature and of foolishness (<i>nizāqa</i>)<sup>v</sup>. An even back is a laudable sign. Protruding shoulders is a sign of bad intention and ugly conduct.</p>	<p><b>[106r8–11]</b> Large shoulders and [a large] back are signs of courage and a weak intellect. A bent back is a sign of an unfriendly nature. A large chest and an even back are laudable signs. Protruding shoulders is a sign of bad intention and ugly conduct.</p>
<p><b>§101.</b> “Of the arms:—When the arms reach so far that the hand touch the knee, it betokens courage, liberality, honour, and goodness of soul; but if they are short, then the person loves discord and is faint-hearted.</p>	<p><b>[17v10–14]</b> If the arms are so long that the palms (<i>al-kaff</i>) reach the knees, it is a sign of courage, magnanimity and of a noble soul. When the arms are short, the person is tyrannical and loves evil. A long palm with long fingers is a sign of efficiency in the crafts, of mastering the tasks and of organizing the government (<i>tadbīr al-riyāsa</i>).</p>	<p><b>[106r11–14]</b> When the arms are so long that the palms reach the knee, it is a sign of courage, magnanimity and of a noble soul. When the arms are short, the person loves evil and is a coward. <b>[106r14–16]</b> A long palm with long fingers is a sign of efficiency in the crafts, of mastering the tasks [and] of the organisation of the government (<i>tadbīr al-riyāsa</i>).</p>
<p><b>§102.</b> “Of the hand:—The long (palms of) hand with long fingers betoken cleverness in crafts, excellence in work and in governance of the kingdom.</p>		

<p><b>§103.</b> #”Of the <b>thigh</b> and the <b>leg</b>: -Feet full of flesh betoken weakness and slackness; thick thighs and houghs, hardness, arrogance, and strength.</p> <p><b>§104.</b> #”Of the <b>foot</b>:-A big foot betokens folly and love of falsehood; a small foot betokens courage.</p> <p><b>§105.</b> “Of the steps: -Whoever makes wide, deliberate steps, welfare shall follow him in all his work and he shall foresee the future; he who makes quick, short steps, he is hasty in his work, he does not foresee the future, and is of evil disposition.</p> <p><b>§106.</b> “The tokens of perfect body and best nature are that the flesh be soft and tender, neither over thin nor over thick, neither over short nor over long, of white complexion, middling between red and sallow; soft-looking, long hair, just between the crisp and the plain, midling fair; big eyes, being somewhat deep-set, and between dark and black; the head of even size, the neck straight (and lean), the shoulders a little bent, without much flesh on the back and thighs, the voice clear, tempered between strong and weak; the palm smooth, the fingers long and tending to tapering; sparing in words, little given to frivolity or laughter except when it is absolutely necessary, and in his</p>	<p>[17v14–18] A fleshy and thick <b>foot</b> is a sign of ignorance and wickedness. A small and soft <b>foot</b> is a sign of immorality. A thin heel is a sign of cowardice; its thickness, a sign of courage.</p> <p>Thick <b>legs</b> and <b>ankles</b> are a sign of idiocy, shamelessness and a strong body. And a fleshy <b>thigh</b> is a sign of weakness in the strength [of the body].</p> <p>[17v18–19] The one whose steps are wide and slow, he is successful in all his affairs, conscious about consequences. And whose steps are quick but short, he is hasty, has no mastery over affairs.</p>	<p>[106r16–18] A fleshy and thick <b>foot</b> is a sign of ignorance and tyranny. A small and soft <b>foot</b> is a sign of immorality.</p> <p>A narrow heel is a sign of cowardice and its thickness is a sign of courage.</p> <p>[106v1–3] Thick <b>legs</b> and <b>ankles</b> are a sign of foolishness, shamelessness and a strong body. And a fleshy <b>thigh</b> is a sign of weakness and languor.</p> <p>[106v3–5] The one whose steps are short and fast is hasty, ill-tempered, has no good judgement over his own affairs and carries bad intentions</p>	<p>[106v5–16] And the moderate [person], understanding and of good nature is the one whose flesh is soft and tender, neither too thin or too thick. He should be neither short nor tall, [of] fair [complexion] tending to red or yellow, with a pleasant face, long-haired, between flat and curly. With reddish [or ‘chestnut’?] hair, medium-sized, [having] big eyes [of a colour] tending to dark or black.</p> <p>The head of medium size, with a straight neck, the shoulders a little bent, his back and thighs not too corpulent.</p> <p>A clear and gentle voice, moderate between strength and softness.</p>	<p>(Continued)</p>
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Table 3 (Continued)

<p>temperament inclined to melancholy and also to being sanguine, and in whose looks pleasure and joy are mixed without malignity, just as thou art (?), and who does not wish to rule over thee nor over things over which he has no power.</p> <p>This is the most perfect creature which the Lord has created, and this is the man whom I would choose for thee; search, therefore, for a man who answers this description, and thou shalt thereby prosper.</p> <p>Thou knowest already that a ruler is more dependent on the subjects than they are on him.</p>	<p>A large palm (<i>baṣf al-kaff</i>) with long fingers, almost slender. Not talkative except when necessary. Without excessive desire for foods or sexual relations.</p> <p><sup>xvii</sup>This is the rightest constitution (<i>khalqa</i>) among the sons of Adam and this is the one I wish you for company. So attempt with all your efforts to find [someone] with these traits, and you will be on the right way.</p> <p>For you have learned that the ruler (<i>al-ra'īs</i>) is more in need of people than the people are of him. So understand these signs I have enumerated to you and examine them with your sound discernment and your acute perception, you will make great benefit from it, God willing.</p>	<p>A smooth palm with long fingers, almost slender. The one who does not speak much and laughs only when it is necessary. His temperament should incline to melancholy and sanguinity, and his gaze should also be between contentment and happiness.</p>
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**Notes:**

- i On the numbering of the Hebrew version(s) books, see A.I. Spitzer, "The Hebrew translation of the *Sod ha-Sodot* and its place in the transmission of the *Sirr al-Asrār*", in W.F. Ryan and C.B. Schmitt, *Pseudo-Aristotle. The Secret of Secrets. Sources and Influences*, London 1982, pp. 43-49.
- ii The disparition of "rational (*fikriyya*)" from later versions could be explained by the process of expurgating texts from any trace of al-Ma'mūn's and al-Mu'tašim's rationalizing tendencies.
- iii The reading of the Berlin MS is here to be preferred to the one of the Leiden MS.
- iv The Short Form witnesses lack the introductory paragraphs of the London Physiognomy and the Long Form as well as the Hippocrates/Polemon anecdote of *Sirr*, 117.3-12.
- v In the Leiden MS, *al-bayāḍ al-šāliq*, compare *Sirr-Badawī: al-bayāḍ al-sāṭi'*.
- vi The meaning of *šaqḻab* is according to the *Lisān al-'arab* (s.v. š-q-l-b) quoting Ibn al-A'rābi and Abū 'Amr "of white complexion" or "reddish." Cf. Kazimirski, *Dictionnaire*, vol. I, p. 1354. The word derives from Greek *sklabos*, "Slav," and is also used in Arabic to designate the Slavs. This second acception is certainly behind the gloss on the Ashkenazi in the Hebrew text.
- vii These two rare adjectives were misunderstood by the reviser(s) of SF, leading to the meaningless *aw jarī' az 'ar* in LF (cf. *Sirr-Badawī*, 118.3)

- viii The text of the Leiden manuscript “he could well be violent” should here be preferred; the readings of the Berlin manuscript betray some paleographical accidents.
- ix The Leiden reading (“piercing”) is here to be preferred.
- x The Berlin text *turīduhu* (“you wanting it”) should here be corrected to *yurīduhu* (“he wanting it”).
- xi Cf. the [K.2] section of the London Physiognomy.
- xii It is possible to read *aqarāt* or *ukhidhat*, either “deeply carved in the skin” or “that the eyebrows reach the extremities of the eyes by turning down on the temples.” This element is common only to the LF and the London text (section [K.2]).
- xiii What follows directly in MS Leiden, Or. 749, 108r7, without any indication of a new section is the chapter on onomancy, beginning with “And as for what I have been concealing and hiding from your knowledge O Alexander, I will now start with it... (*Ya Iskandar, wa mā kuntu aktumu ‘alayka ‘ilmahu wa lā aḡharu laka, fa-bitadī ‘uhu...*)”.
- xiv Possibly: “with a thin lower part of the face (*man kāna nahīf al-wajh aḡgaruhu*).”
- xv The Berlin reading [*al-]mizāqa*] is to be preferred to the reading of the Leiden manuscript and to that of LF as in Sirr-Badawī (*tarāfa*, تَرَافَة, a paleographic corruption of the former).
- xvi The text in the manuscript (“picture,” *صورة*) seems a paleographic corruption of “voice,” *صوت*.
- xvii See the London Physiognomy, Table 1, section [i.]. Compare the Oxford manuscript quoted by Ali/Fulton, in Steele, *Secretum Secretorum*, p. 223, n.10: “Sparing in words, except when it is absolutely necessary, not gluttonous or sensual beyond measure. This is the most perfect creature of the sons of man, and this is the man I would chose for thee: search therefore for a man who answers this description, and thou shalt thereby prosper. Thou knowest already that a ruler is more dependent on the subjects than they are on him. So comprehend these signs which I have mentioned to thee, and try them with thy sure discernment and acute examination, for thou shalt profit much thereby, if God will.” In the Leiden manuscript, a shorter version parallel to the Gaster and London texts appears on fol. 99r, that is to say in Book VII “On Wars,” directly before the beginning of the Hygiene (*bāb fī al-ruṭba al-ḡusna fī tadbīr al-jism*). It is at the beginning of this Book according to the Leiden manuscript that we find the portrait of the ideal vizier, followed by a ‘gate’ on secretaries (fol. 98r) corresponding to Book V in the Long Form, and another ‘gate’ on the administrators (fol. 98v) corresponding to Book VII in LF.

text for which two synonyms are found in the Berlin one.<sup>167</sup> It is not easy to decide whether these variants should be seen as simple omissions or as stylistic modifications. The missing synonym could have been eliminated because it was felt to be redundant, or on the contrary two close synonyms may be the result of a correction or a marginal gloss by a translator. Retaining two synonyms would then be the result of using hendiadys to nuance the meaning of the first adjective in a specific direction.<sup>168</sup> In some cases, the addition could also simply be the result of copyists' and reader's glosses, which were meant to explain a term that was seen as obscure or archaic.

## Conclusions

The Short Form in eight books is of interest in that it seems to be the form which was in circulation in al-Andalus as early as the second part of the tenth-century. Ibn Juljul (d. 994 CE), a physician at the Umayyad court in Cordoba, refers to the eight books of the *Kitāb al-Siyāsa fī tadbīr al-riyāsa al-ma'rūf bi-Sirr al-asrār* ("The Book of Government in the organisation of the state, known as the Secret of Secrets") and gives a number of quotations from the book.<sup>169</sup> One of these quotations is the famous Circle or Octagon of Justice, a "chain poem" with eight maxims on the organisation of the State.<sup>170</sup>

"The world is a garden, whose fence (*siyāj*) is the State (*dawla*). The State is a sovereign (*sultān*), who perpetuates (*yuḥyā bihi*) the custom (*sunna*). The custom is a policy (*siyāsa*), directed by the king (*malik*). The king is a shepherd (*rā'in*) supported by the army (*jaysh*). The army is [composed of] helpers (*a'wān*) guaranteed by money (*māl*). Money is provision (*rizq*) accumulated by the subjects (*ra'iyya*). The subjects are

**167** See the variants in the notes to the Appendix, nn. ii; xxiii; xliii; xlvi; liv; lvi–lvii; lviii; ci.

**168** On the methods of the translators, see Rosenthal and the various publications of Sebastian Brock dealing with the specificities of Syriac translations, as most of the Abbasid translators were Christians who had been trained in the same methods.

**169** Ibn Juljul, *Ṭabaqāt al-aṭibbā' wa-l-ḥukamā'*, ed. Sayyid, 26–27. Grignaschi's attempts to find elements proving that LF was older than SF suffer from too much imprecision. Among other problems mentioned earlier in this paper, his statement that the *Sirr*-Badawī should be considered a reliable edition of LF is embarrassing. Manzalaoui 1974, 224–225 made definitive remarks on the often weak variants of LF versus the two SF versions.

**170** Cf. Forster 2006, 32. The eight maxims forming a chain poem are believed to be of Persian origin, see Forster 2006, 60–63; Van Bladel 2004, 151–172. Manzalaoui 1974, 214, supported the theory of a Persian origin with a parallel on the sovereign's (*sultān*) need of viziers and helpers (*a'wān*) in the *Ādāb al-ṣaḡhīr* of Ibn al-Muqaffa' (d. ca 757 CE). The genre is however very ancient and several examples of it can be found in Lao-Tse's *Tao Te Ching*.

servants (*ʿabīd*) made subservient through justice (*ʿadl*). Justice is harmony (*maʿlūf*) and it is the sustainer (*qiwām*) of the world.”<sup>171</sup>

As Regula Forster emphasized in her work on the *Sirr al-Asrār*, the chapters constituting a mirror for princes should be distinguished from the rest of the text, in both versions (LF and SF).<sup>172</sup> The mirror proper makes constant allusion to the Octagon of Justice to the extent that the poem may well be considered the backbone of the *Sirr al-Asrār*.<sup>173</sup> What could today be seen as an early definition of feudalism is said to form “the best part of the entire book and the utmost you can achieve (*zabdaʿ hādihā al-kitāb wa-ḥāmidaʿ matlabika*)” (*Sirr*-Badawī, 126). According to a report shared by Ibn Juljul and Ibn Abī Uṣaybiʿa (who probably copied it from Ibn Juljul), it would have been engraved on the (eight) walls of Aristotle’s own tomb, as of an epigram.<sup>174</sup> Thus, the *Sirr al-Asrār* culminates with the proper understanding of a harmonious system of justice and the eight maxims can be taken by “Alexander” as a summary of the policies he should be applying for a viable State. The vocabulary and themes of the two shortest “Books” of the Short Form (Books V–VI, cf. *Sirr*-Badawī’s Books V–VIII) are reminiscent of the Octagon of Justice (*bustān, raʿiyya, quwwād, māl*), while (as per the Short Form) Book I addresses the different types of king, Book II the sovereign and his etiquette, Book III the definition of justice and Book IV the vizierate, the administration and the commanders of the troops. The mirror proper can then be considered as a commentary on the Octagon. Its non-systematic and compendial character reflects an epoch, most probably the ninth-century, where the Arabic genre of *adab* was the literary norm. In the comments to the Octagon, the role of ethics and politics is emphasized while the medical and “scientific” teachings are supposed to complete the landscape of an Aristotelian *paideia*. This is certainly not entirely clear from the text we read in *Sirr*-Badawī, where the interruption in Book II by medical and pseudo-scientific matters renders the structure of Books I–IV illogical. Accidents such as the missing titles of Book III in the Berlin Sprenger manuscript or that of Book IV in the Leiden Short Form manuscripts should be investigated alongside the oddities of the tables of contents.<sup>175</sup> The inadequacy of a title

<sup>171</sup> Cf. Forster 2006, 62; Van Bladel 2009, 216, and a slightly different version in Van Bladel 2004, 160–162.

<sup>172</sup> Forster 2006, 56.

<sup>173</sup> See Steele 1920, xiii; Manzalaoui 1974, 191. Variants in the formulation of the eight verses from one manuscript to the other have hardly been addressed (but see Forster 2006, 63).

<sup>174</sup> Cf. Badawī, *Sirr al-Asrār*, 126; two manuscripts used by Badawī ascribe the Octagon to the Caliph ʿAlī [r. 656–661], cf. *loc. cit.*, 128, n.1; cf. Forster 2006, 32 and 60–63. On early references to the Octagon elsewhere in Arabic and Persian literature (the earliest one being al-Masʿūdī ascribing it to Khusrāw Anushirwan [sc. Chosroes I, r. 531–579]), cf. Steele 1920, lii; Manzalaoui 1974, 214; Bladel 2004, 160; Forster 2006, 62, n. 337. The motif of the octagonal grave of Aristotle must have been known to Frederick II of Hohenstaufen (r. 1220–1250) for he ordered such a grave to be built for him in Castel del Monte.

<sup>175</sup> The interrupting materials in Book II precede a chapter whose main object was the drawing of the Octagon. Likewise, the missing titles of Book III or Book IV may have been the result of codico-



guided by the illustration such as “On the Drawing (*ṣūra*) of Justice” for Book III seems to betray that the table of contents was added at some stage in the composition or revision of the text.<sup>176</sup> Discrepancies between the different versions of the tables of contents were already pointed out by Grignaschi, who noticed that the table of contents of the Short Form versions as in the Oxford and the Leiden manuscripts were not entirely present in the body of the text.<sup>177</sup> The missing elements, on the “properties of the animals” and “on poisons” are strikingly close to themes for which Ibn al-Biṭrīq is elsewhere (in the *Fihrist* of Ibn al-Nadīm and in Abū Bakr al-Rāzī) credited.<sup>178</sup> The omission of our manuscripts may have found its way to Roger Bacon’s model, for his commentary on the *Secretum Secretorum* has a section “On vipers (*de viperis*)” coming directly after the Physiognomy (in Bacon, corresponding to the place where we find the *Ṭibb al-Rūḥānī* in the Arabic *Sirr*). This was noted by Steele who believed it was a late interpolation taken from Avicenna’s *Canon*, book V.<sup>179</sup> But Steele himself pointed out parallels between the section “on vipers” and Galen, Ibn Serapion, and even Abū Bakr al-Rāzī’s *Ṭibb al-Manṣūrī* so that a borrowing from the Avicennan “*Qānūn*” is not fully established. Vipers form an important section in both the Pseudo-Galenic *Ad Pisonem* and in the *Commentary on the Theriac* ascribed to John the Grammarian and the role of their flesh as an antidote was well-known, just as the extraction of snakes’ poison formed an essential part of the literature on poisons and of the works related to the “properties of animals.” Tables on the types of vipers used for different theriacs also appear in Ibn ‘Arabī’s *Qabs al-anwār* (cf. MS Leiden, Or. 5, fols 25v–26r) in between material related to the *Sirr al-Asrār*.<sup>180</sup>

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logical accidents related to the necessity to leave some space or insert the drawing of the Octagon of Justice. See Forster 2006, 24–29, for tables representing the differences from one manuscript to the other and between the two main versions.

**176** As suggested by Manzalaoui 1974. In comparison, the Berlin Sprenger manuscripts has a section “Speech on Justice (*al-kalām fl-‘adl*)” (fol. 7v) while the drawing (in a circle divided in eight parts) follows on fol. 8r shortly before the title of Book IV on the same folio (8r ult.). The title “Book III, on the drawing of justice through which sovereignty is achieved and by which the nobles and the common folk are ruled (*al-Maqāla al-thālītha fī ṣūrat al-‘adl al-ladhī bihi yukmal al-mulk wa bihi yusās al-‘amma wa al-khaṣṣa*)” announced in the table of contents (fol. 3r) does not appear, simply replaced with “Speech on Justice.”

**177** See Grignaschi 1976, 97–101 for a comparison of the table of contents in the Leiden and Oxford Short Form manuscripts, and the Hebrew and Slavic medieval translations.

**178** Dunlop 1959, 146–147, cf. Ibn al-Nadīm, *Kitāb al-Fihrist*, VIII.3, 317 Flügel/ 379 Tajaddod.

**179** Steele 1920, xlvi, points to Avicenna as probably borrowing the *de viperis* section from Abū Bakr al-Rāzī’s *Ṭibb al-Manṣūrī*.

**180** Grignaschi 1976, 13, noticed that the table of contents of SF alluded to sections now missing from both SF and LF, without mentioning Bacon’s possible use of the missing section(s). Manzalaoui 1974, 227 remarked that a section on poisons is extant between the talismans and the lapidary in the Hebrew translation and in the Sohaj SF8 manuscript. On the *Qabs al-Anwār*, see Ghersetti 1999, xiii. The Physiognomy of the *Sirr al-Asrār* is presented in the form of tables (fols.

We find in the conclusion of the SF7 Physiognomy text what seems to be yet another possible reference to the Octagon of Justice when “Aristotle” tells “Alexander” that he is more in need of people than they are of him.<sup>181</sup> This element may indicate that the Physiognomy was part of the original *Sirr al-Asrār*, unless the remark was taken from the portrait of the vizier (*Sirr*-Badawī, pp. 138–140) and added to the Physiognomy at some stage in the transmission to enhance the chapter. The Physiognomy may in turn have been part of a “*qānūn*” and at least some of the scientific material could also stem from this lost text. But without new discoveries of some “*Qanūn*-related material” in library collections, the history of the composition of the *Sirr al-Asrār* will remain a mystery. What can be said for now is that, if indeed Aristotle’s reminder to Alexander that the ruler is in need of his subordinates and subjects more than they are of him (as an individual who could easily be replaced?) was part of the Physiognomy from the beginning, the fusion of comments on the Octagon of Justice<sup>182</sup> with scientific excerpts must have occurred at an early stage. Whether the original (by Ibn al-Biṭṭīq?) was such a balanced Pseudo-Aristotelian treatise on politics, or if the idea came to an early revisor tasked with organizing some existing materials that included Persian, Indian, Arabic fragments and a selection of fragments from Ibn al-Biṭṭīq’s translations, is not known at this stage of research. Systematic comparisons of the three main Arabic versions of the *Sirr* with all known fragments by Ibn al-Biṭṭīq would certainly help disclose some of its mysteries. According to Manzalaoui, the main difference between the Long and the Short Forms consists in the addition to the former of long excerpts taken from the *Epistles of the Brethren of Purity*.<sup>183</sup> These additions, next to repeated allusions to astrology – a topic nearly absent from the Short Forms – tend

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12b–22a) next to other materials deriving from the *Sirr* (such as the Onomancy, fol. 12b and possibly, but this would be a unique testimony and thus deserves further investigation, a chapter on the decorum of kingly receptions at Indian courts which should be compared with the elements on Indian courtly etiquette and administration in the *Sirr* for which Manzalaoui discovered direct borrowings from famous Indian treatises on administration such as the *Arthashastra*, cf. Manzalaoui 1974, 200–201, 211–213).

**181** Steele 1920, 223, n. 10 (from the Oxford SF7, cf. identical statement in the SF7 Sprenger 943, 18r; missing in Leiden Or. 749, which is an SF8); Manzalaoui 1974, 223.

**182** On the mirror proper, see Forster 2006, 56–75.

**183** Manzalaoui 1974, 175–184. Manzalaoui acknowledged his debt to Andries A. Verdenius (1876–1950), an early twentieth-century Dutch scholar who discovered traces of the *Sirr al-Asrār* in a 13th-century Dutch poem by Jacob van Maerlant and made the parallel between its contents and the *Epistles of the Brethren of Purity* (see Verdenius 1917, 27–39). Grignaschi, who had also noticed parallels between the *Sirr* and the *Brethren* in his earlier publications tried to dismiss Manzalaoui’s findings but no critical edition of the *Epistles of the Brethren of Purity* was available at the time. The portrait of the ideal vizier is the sole parallel between the *Sirr al-Asrār* and the *Epistles of the Brethren of Purity* to be found in both SF and LF. Apart from this section, all the parallels are limited to LF. Cf. Manzalaoui 1974, 176. The additions to the Long Form for which parallels with the *Epistles of the Brethren of Purity* (*Rasā’il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā’*) were discovered by Manzalaoui belong to a larger reediting in which most of the astrological material was also added. A specialist of the

to indicate that the Long Form conforms to a certain mindset differing from the one found in the Short Forms. Keeping in mind the central role of the Octagon of Justice, differences between LF and SF might reflect a different organisation of government.

The eight verses of the Octagon of Justice, and the eight books of the Short Form, would point to a composition in eight-books as the original version of the text. In fact, insistence on number eight reappears throughout the *Sirr al-Asrār*. A section (pp. 108–114 *Sirr-Badawī*) on an electuary in eight parts composed by eight physicians is inserted between the recommendations on baths and advice on the propitious time for medical bleedings and the drinking of medicines.<sup>184</sup> “Aristotle” after referring to a book of his composition “On Water” and another one “On Simple remedies, potions, balms and ointments according to the traditions of the Rūm [i.e. the Romans or the Byzantines], Indians, Persians and Ancient Greeks (*yūnāniyyin*)” explains that people differ on the inventor of the panacea, ascribing it to either Adam or Asclepius (*Sirr-Badawī*, p. 107). The pompous sentence “the honorable eight sages who studied the hidden sciences – the secret of creation, what is above physics, from void, full and the limit<sup>185</sup> – agreed on the compo-

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*Epistles* concluded that there was a single authorship for the *Sirr al-Asrār* and the *Epistles*, cf. al-Turaykī 1973.

**184** The reference to eight physicians is reminiscent of a famous “ogdoad” of physicians found in a romanticized biography of Galen preserved in its fullest version in the *Choicest Maxims and Best Sayings*, by the Fatimid author al-Mubashshir ibn Fātik (composed in 1048). The spurious ogdoad, starting with Asclepius I and ending with Galen, is somehow related to a late Alexandrian text ascribed to one “John the Grammarian” (whose medical commentaries to Galen were wide-spread). The ogdoad was also known to Ishāq ibn Ḥunayn (d. ca 910) who made use of it in his *Ta’rikh al-aṭibbā’*, from which it passed in various subsequent works. The parallel with the ogdoad of physicians in the *Ta’rikh al-aṭibbā’* was noticed by Steele (1920, xlvi) via a quotation from Ibn al-Nadīm’s *Fihrist*. The spurious Galenic biography was studied by Swain 2006, 395–433. The ogdoad borrows the idea of an Asclepiad genealogy from the Pseudo-Hippocrates’ *Letter II* (also found in the London manuscript, see supra sections I.1 and I.2 of this paper). Another series, this time of nine physicians, appears (with Andromachus the Elder and the Young instead of Asclepius I and II) as a literary motif used in the preface and the illustrations of the *Book of the Theriac* (*Kitāb al-Diryāq*), a late avatar of the Pseudo-Galenic *Ad Pisonem* said to be transmitted according to the summary (purportedly?) made by the Alexandrian John Philoponus or another Alexandrian physician who shared the widespread nick-name of John the Grammarian. Interestingly, Bacon has nine remedies (see Steele 1920, 103 and 276) where LF has only eight. According to Ḥunayn ibn Ishāq, who owned a copy, the Arabic version of the *Ad Pisonem* was probably translated by Ibn al-Biṭrīq from Syriac, on a text provided to him by Job of Edessa, who had translated it from Greek (before 832 CE). On the *Ad Pisonem*, see Leigh 2013; Richter-Bernburg 1969. Ḥunayn’s epistle on the translations of Galen was edited twice, by Bergsträsser 1925, and Mohaghghegh 2001 (the *Ad Pisonem* is n°83 in both editions). The names of the physicians in the *Sirr al-Asrār*’s ogdoad have been corrupted, modified and corrected through the times by copyists borrowing from these lists (Ishāq b. Ḥunayn, the Arabic *Ad Pisonem* and related works, such as Yahyā al-Nahwī’s commentary of Galen’s Electuaries, *Fī al-mā’jūnāt*, sc. the *Ad Pisonem* or possibly de *De antidotis* [MS St Petersburg, Saltykova-Stchedrina, cf. Dorn n° 123, copied 993 AH]). Cf. Richter-Bernburg 1969, 90 for the names of the authors of theriacs according to the Arabic *Ad Pisonem*.

**185** *Al-nihāya* would need to be emended into *al-lānihāya* (“the infinite”).

sition of this sublime medicine and they divided it into eight parts (*al-ḥukamā' al-jilla al-thamāniyya al-ladhīna aṭla'ū 'alā al-'ulūm al-khafiyya min sirr al-khalīqa wa mā ba'd al-ṭabī'a min al-khalā' wa al-milā' wa al-nihāya, ittafaqū 'alā tarkīb hadhā al-dawā' al-jalīl wa qasamūhu thamāniyyat aqsām*)” makes transparent allusion to the *Sirr al-khalīqa* and to the *Metaphysics*, further pointing to Ibn al-Biṭrīq and early ninth-century Abbasid circles as involved in the Pseudo-Aristotelian forgery that is the *Sirr al-Asrār*. The eight remedies are supposed to form, once taken together, a panacea. As with the theriac of the *Ad Pisonem*, the base ingredient of each recipe should be honey. The echoes of works related to the preparation of the theriacs raise the possibility that the section on the eight remedies was actually part of what Grignaschi considered the missing sections on “the antidotes of poisons” and “the properties of the animals,” announced in the table of contents of some Short Form manuscripts but missing from the preserved text.<sup>186</sup> Finally, yet another instance of a symbolical use of the number eight was discovered by Manzalaoui in what he calls an “analogue” (not an exact literary parallel) to the section on Hygiene in the *Sirr* in the Pseudo-Ghazālī’s *Counsel for Kings (Nāṣiḥat al-Mulūk)*, where the Sasanid vizier Buzurgmīhr gives a list of eight pieces of advice related to the eyes, the body, the heart, etc.<sup>187</sup>

The comparison of the Physiognomy chapter preserved in the London manuscript has allowed us to establish that the manuscript should not be seen as a simple “forgery.” The parallels between the London Physiognomy and both the Long and the Short Forms in some specific details confirms its value as a witness of the text, as was already understood by Manzalaoui and by Grignaschi. Grignaschi’s hypothesis, namely that the London Physiognomy belonged to a *Kitāb al-Qānūn* used in the process of compiling the *Sirr al-Asrār*, will be hard to establish without the discovery of new fragments of the *Qānūn*. Among the questions raised by these parallels are the availability of the *Qānūn* to Abū Bakr al-Rāzī or the anteriority of the latter, and the possibility that Rāzī’s own files and archives were used and compiled during the process of composing the *Sirr al-Asrār*.<sup>188</sup> Alternately, if the *Kitāb al-Qānūn* could be traced to Ibn al-Biṭrīq, we may wonder if it was known to Rāzī – who used Ibn al-Biṭrīq’s in his medical writings – as can be seen from the quotations in the *Kitāb al-Ḥāwī* (the *Liber Continens* of the Western medieval physicians).<sup>189</sup>

<sup>186</sup> Rāzī vaguely mentions “Ibn al-Biṭrīq in his book on poisons.” Richter-Bernburg 1969, 111–215, gives the parallels between the Arabic *Ad Pisonem* and Rāzī’s *Ḥāwī* in his commentary to the text.

<sup>187</sup> Manzalaoui 1974, 221.

<sup>188</sup> The parallels with Abū Bakr al-Rāzī’s physiogomical section in the *Ad Mansorem (al-Ṭibb al-Manṣūrī)* were noted as early as Förster, cf. Manzalaoui 1974, 227, adding the hypothesis that Rāzī may have used the *Sirr*.

<sup>189</sup> No critical edition of Rāzī’s opus magnum, the *Kitāb al-Ḥāwī*, is available. A searchable version of the text (based on the Hyderabad edition [1955–1970] or on the pirate version of it published in Beirut 2000) is hosted on [www.alwaraq.net](http://www.alwaraq.net). Unfortunately, none of the paper editions I have seen offered an index. An automatized search on the “alwaraq” website for Ibn al-Biṭrīq’s quotations in the *Ḥāwī* turns more than twenty results.

Unfortunately, Rāzī's works were almost entirely lost, because of his reputation as an atheist, his strong advocacy of philosophy, and his attacks on the theory of prophecy.<sup>190</sup> Nevertheless, Steele and Badawī showed that traces of Rāzī were everywhere in the medical contents of the *Sirr al-Asrār*. Steele in particular noticed several parallels between the medical sub-sections of the *Sirr* and the works of Rāzī, and a full comparison will be needed.<sup>191</sup> Among these parallels, the chapter of the *Sirr* on anatomy, which Steele traced to a treatise by the Pseudo-Diocles of Carystus, was known to the seventh-century Paul of Aegina, a medical authority regularly quoted by Rāzī.<sup>192</sup> A literal parallel can be further noticed between Rāzī's *Ṭibb al-Rūḥānī* and the *Sirr al-Asrār* in the quote ascribed to Hippocrates according to which "one should eat to live and not live to eat."<sup>193</sup> As already mentioned, Grignaschi remarked that a paragraph on "spiritual medicine (*ṭibb rūḥānī*)" concludes the section on Hygiene in the Long Form (albeit missing in Badawī, see Ali/Fulton in Steele 1920, 216–217 where it follows the panacea and paragraphs on cupping and the appropriate time for taking remedies – according to astrological configurations).<sup>194</sup> The paragraph on spiritual medicine addresses mental diseases and the efficiency of music in curing them, echoing Pythagoras on the role of music in conveying the harmonious melodies produced by the celestial spheres. Another hidden reference to Rāzī appears at the end of the section on baths, when "Alexander" is being told that should he follow the advice, he will not be in need of a physician. But if borrowings from Rāzī can be detected throughout the *Sirr al-Asrār*, its philosophical and astrological contents seem rather alien to anything ascribed to him. The constant reference to astrology in the inserted medical sections were possibly added to some genuine Rāzī material, and the numerous references to titles of his works may eventually turn out to be attempts to ascribe to him theories entirely foreign to his way of thinking.<sup>195</sup>

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**190** A list of his books was drawn up by al-Bīrūnī, who lived a century after Rāzī. The traditional religious formulas and invocations in the *Ṭibb al-Rūḥānī* strike me as possible late additions. Alternately, the fact that the book was dedicated to a Samanid prince may have obliged the author to a certain degree of formality.

**191** See Steele 1920, xlvi (*de viperis*); xl (on the "poison maiden"); lxiii (physiognomy); xlv (*de divisione corporis; de conservantibus sanitatem; de cibus*); 273–274; 277.

**192** Steele 1920, xlv; 272–273. See the recent study of the text by Pormann 2004, 50–56. Pormann's analysis of the quotations of Paul in Rāzī enabled him to state that the latter often reformulates his model.

**193** The maxim is common in medical literature, see Manzalaoui 1974, 232–233.

**194** Grignaschi 1976, 43. Manzalaoui 1974, 169, lists the manuscripts from where the "spiritual medicine" section is missing. Steele 1920, 217.

**195** In the same vein, the Ismaili propagandist Ḥamid al-Din al-Kirmānī (d. after 1020 CE) used Rāzī's *Ṭibb al-Rūḥānī* thoroughly to compose a refutation of it and of the thinking of Rāzī's in general. See Al-Kirmānī 1977. The title is plagiarizing the Arabic version of Pythagoras' *Golden Verses (al-aqwāl al-dhahabiyya)* in Arabic.

To emphasize the likeliness of the role of Ibn al-Biṭrīq in the composition of the *Sirr al-Asrār*, an element of the preface can be related to works he translated. The legendary story of the discovery of the *Sirr al-Asrār* by Ibn al-Biṭrīq in a Greek temple is paralleled by yet another such legend, this time in the Pseudo-Hippocratic *Signs of Death (fī ‘alāmāt al-mawt)*, for which a commentary or paraphrase seems to have been composed by Ibn al-Biṭrīq.<sup>196</sup> According to Ibn Juljul, Ibn al-Biṭrīq’s father was a practicing physician while his son focused on philosophy more than on medicine.<sup>197</sup> If true, the father’s translations – made at a time when translators were simply considered as low-level employees of the chancellery whose names were not worthy to be mentioned – could well have passed under the son’s name, who by all means would certainly have inherited his father’s archives, so some of the medical and scientific sections of the *Sirr* may belong to either one of them. Ibn al-Biṭrīq’s name is attached to the lost translation of Plato’s *Timaeus* but also to that of a number of Aristotelian works: *On Heaven*, the *Meteorology*, and possibly some of Aristotle’s works on animals (which include the *History of Animals*, the *Generation of Animals* and the *Parts of Animals*).<sup>198</sup> As Ibn al-Biṭrīq’s translation of an Aristotelian work on zoology has not been identified,<sup>199</sup> we cannot know for sure if the bibliographers were not confusing the famous Aristotelian books with the sections on the animals in the Pseudo-Aristotle’s *Physiognomy*, or even with Ibn al-Biṭrīq’s contributions on the knowledge of poisons and on the “types of crawling animals (*ajnās al-ḥasharāt*)” (*Fihrist*, p. 317 Flügel/p. 379 Tajaddod). Possibly related is also a paragraph on the vices and virtues that were seen as characteristic of various animals which follows directly the portrait of the ideal vizier in Book IV and has been shown to bear echoes of Galen’s *On Character Traits* (Greek *Peri Ethôn*, Latin *De moribus*, Arabic *Fī quwā al-naḥs* and *Kitāb al-akhlāq*).<sup>200</sup>

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**196** Mourad 1939, 41–43. The Pseudo-Hippocratic “On the Signs of Death (*fī ‘alāmāt al-mawt*)” is also known under the title “On pustules (*fī al-buthūr*).”

**197** Ibn Juljul, *Ṭabaqāt al-aṭibbā’*, 67 (ed. F. Sayyid). Ibn Abī Uṣaybi’a, *‘Uyūn al-anbā’*, vol. I, p. 205 (ed. Müller) judged Ibn al-Biṭrīq’s translations as weak, referring to him as a *lāṭīnī* who had no knowledge of ancient Greek (i.e. of Ionian, Dorian and/or Attic versus Byzantine Greek?). Endress 1966, 94, may be right when he interprets the sentence as meaning that Ibn al-Biṭrīq knew only the modern script and orthography but not the uncial one, however, the role of his father at al-Manṣūr’s court (r. 754–775) and his own position in al-Ma’mūn’s circle points to the fact he certainly grew up at the Abbasid court and was for this reason not trained in the classical curriculum in the same way his father had been. Oddly enough, the Leiden MS (Or. 749, fol. 78r) reads *rūmānī*.

**198** On the works ascribed to Ibn al-Biṭrīq, see Dunlop 1959; Endress 1966, 89–98. Echoes of Plato’s *Timaeus* and *Republic* or that of Aristotle’s *Meteorology* are noticed by Steele and Manzalaoui throughout the *Sirr al-Asrār*.

**199** Stylistic comparisons led Endress 1966, 113–115, to reject the attribution of the translations from Aristotelian books on zoology we possess to Ibn al-Biṭrīq. Brugman and Drossart Lulofs 1971, in their edition of the *Generation of the Animals*, and Kruk 1978, in her edition of the *Parts of the Animals*, have agreed with Endress’ findings.

**200** Manzalaoui 1974, 198–199, further pointing to the parallels with Plato’s *Republic*, which is certainly (with the *Timaeus*) one of the sources of inspiration of Galen in this treatise. The title *Kitāb*

The portrait of the ideal vizier, whose relation with the philosopher-king of Plato's *Republic* VI has long been noted, is in turn likely to stem from Ḥunayn's translation of an epitome of the *Republic* which may well have been Galenic.<sup>201</sup>

Ibn al-Biṭrīq and Job of Edessa's association situates the composition of at least some parts of the *Sirr al-Asrār* to the first quarter of the ninth-century and earlier.<sup>202</sup> The association of the two scholars, whose backgrounds made them more at ease in Greek and Syriac than in Arabic, in an environment where Persian was used between members of the court on the same level as Arabic, could argue, in my opinion, for the awkward syntax often encountered in the earliest versions of the *Sirr*, mainly represented by Short Form witnesses. Al-Ma'mūn's court would also be a place where Persian and Indian treatises on administration and government could be discussed. Despite the little we know about Ibn al-Biṭrīq, the contents and the context of the *Sirr al-Asrār* led modern authorities such as Badawī and Van Ess to accept the attribution to Ibn al-Biṭrīq. This does not imply of course that everything we read about Ibn al-Biṭrīq in the introduction of the *Sirr* should be taken for granted.<sup>203</sup> But the majority of the philosophical and medical themes found in the *Sirr* can be paralleled with one or the other of the translations ascribed to him or to his father. Some striking formulas could even possibly reflect his Christian background: "...think about what Cain did to Abel his brother..." (Steele, *Secretum*, 247; cf. *Sirr*-Badawī, 149) or "...and I left this composite, earthly temple (*haykal*) to corruption and annihilation..." (Steele, *Secretum*, 261; cf. *Sirr*-Badawī, 165).<sup>204</sup>

To conclude on the value of the London manuscript for future studies, the internal evidence lines up perfectly with the dating of the manuscript that is provided in the colophon, which may well have been copied by a modern copyist who tried to remain faithful to his model. Whether this copyist was an 18th-century figure ordered to make a book "look old," or someone in early 20th-century Tehran working for a bookseller and antiquarian who specialized in fakes and facsimile reproductions should be further investigated by specialists in codicology. As far as its scientific examination is concerned, discarding an ancient artefact as a "fake" without fully analyzing its contents does not hold up outside of the auction room. Scientific methods describe and

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*al-Akhlāq li-Jālīnūs* (Galen's *Ethics*) is the title found in the Cairo manuscript (MS Dār al-kutub, Akhlāq 290, 191–235) edited by Kraus 1937.

**201** Manzalaoui 1974, 198–199.

**202** Job of Edessa's dates are not debated, but those of his younger contemporary Ibn al-Biṭrīq (d. ca 840) are more obscure because of the confusion made by several authors between him and his father. The date corresponds with the rising popularity of physiognomical treatises. Polemon's name is mentioned by al-Jāhīz (d. 255/869) and al-Ya'qūbī (d. 284/897), cf. Hoyland 2006, 312; Thomann 2003.

**203** Forster 2006, 12, n. 10; cf. Badawī, *Sirr al-Asrār*, introd., 33–39 and Ess (van) 1991, 411. Endress 1966, 92, notes however that Ibn al-Biṭrīq is mentioned as a member of the expeditions sent in quest of books to the Byzantine Empire by al-Ma'mūn. The legendary overtones of the preface of the *Sirr al-Asrār* should be seen as reflecting the taste of the day.

**204** Manzalaoui 1974, 221, notes that the expression is in the (Arabic) New Testament.

examine objects from different angles which all have their own specific value. To give but one example, Galen of Pergamon (129–216) had to publish his own bibliography (under the title “On My Own Books”, Lat. *De libris propriis*) to counter the number of forgeries under his name on the markets of Rome and Alexandria, but there is no doubt that any such text, if extant, would inform us about the philosophical and medical debates of his time.

## Appendix : Arabic text of the Physiognomy chapter in MS Leiden, Or. 749 (SF8) and the variants of MS Berlin, Sprenger 943 (SF7).

MS Leiden, Or. 749, fols. 106v17–108r7

باب<sup>١</sup> في الفراسة

يا اسكندر لما كان علم الفراسة من العلوم النظرية<sup>ii</sup> الفكرية التي<sup>iii</sup> يلزمك علمه وتفردسه لكثرة ضرورتك الى الناس، وتصرفهم بين يديك. فاثبت<sup>١</sup> لك في هذا الفصل من<sup>iv</sup> دلائل الفراسة ما صح<sup>v</sup> على قر<sup>v</sup> الأيام<sup>v</sup> علمه. وأبدت<sup>٢</sup> التجربة مع مر<sup>٣</sup> الزمان<sup>vi</sup> حقيقة<sup>vii</sup>. اعلم<sup>viii</sup> يا اسكندر أن<sup>٤</sup> الرحم للجنين بمنزلة<sup>ix</sup> القدر للطبيخ<sup>x</sup>، والأمزجة مختلفة بحسب الخلق والطباع متظاهرة<sup>xi</sup> على قدر التركيب. فاعلم<sup>xii</sup> أن<sup>٥</sup> البياض الصادق<sup>xiii</sup> مع الزرقة والشقراء الكثيرة دليل<sup>xiii</sup> على القحة<sup>٦</sup> والخيانة والفسق وخفة العقل.<sup>xiv</sup> وحسبك بما الصقلب عليه من هذه الخلقة وما جميعهم عليه من الجنون والفرن والقحة. فتحفظ من كل أزرق أشقر، فإن<sup>xv</sup> استضاف على ذلك أن يكون واسع الجبهة ضيق<sup>٧</sup> الذقن أوجن<sup>xvi</sup> أزع<sup>xvi</sup> كثير شعر الرأس. فتحفظ منه تحفظاً من الأفاعي القتالية<sup>xvii</sup>.

وفي العين دلائل<sup>xviii</sup> لا تكاد تحطوي<sup>xix</sup> حتى<sup>٨</sup> أنه يستبين<sup>xx</sup> فيه<sup>xx</sup> الرضى والسخط<sup>xxi</sup> والمحبة والبغضة. فأردي العيون الزرق<sup>xxii</sup> الفيروجية. فمن عظمت<sup>xxiii</sup> عيناه<sup>xxiii</sup> وحظت<sup>xxiv</sup> فهو حسود وقح كسلان غير مأمون. فإن<sup>٩</sup> كانت زرقاء كان أشر<sup>xxv</sup> في ذلك وقد أمأ<sup>٩</sup> يسع أن يكون عاتفاً<sup>xxvi</sup>. | ومن كانت عيناه متوسطة مائلة إلى الغور<sup>xxvii</sup> والكحلة<sup>xxviii</sup> والسواد فهو يقظان<sup>xxix</sup> فهم محب ثقة<sup>xxx</sup> فإن<sup>xxx</sup> كانت<sup>xxxi</sup> امتدت في طول العين حاجبه فهو خبيث. ومن كانت عيناه تشبه عيون البهائم في الجُمود وقلة الحركة وتماوت الملاحظة<sup>xxxi</sup>، فهو جاهل غليظ الطبع. ومن تحركت<sup>١٠</sup> عيناه بسرعة وحدة<sup>xxxiii</sup> نظر، فهو محتال لص<sup>xxxiv</sup> متربص<sup>xxxiv</sup> غادر. وإن<sup>١١</sup> كانت<sup>xxxv</sup> حمراء فهو<sup>xxxvi</sup> شجاع مقدم وإن<sup>١٢</sup> كانت<sup>xxxvii</sup> حولها<sup>xxxviii</sup> نقط<sup>١١</sup> صفراً، فإن<sup>١٢</sup> صاحبها أشر<sup>١٢</sup> الناس وأرداهم. يا اسكندر إذا رأيت رجلاً يكثر النظر إليك فإن<sup>١٣</sup> نظرت<sup>xxxix</sup> أنت<sup>xl</sup> إليه أحمر<sup>xli</sup> وخجل وظهر منه تبسم<sup>xlii</sup> وسرور<sup>xlili</sup> أو<sup>xliv</sup> دمعته<sup>١٣</sup> عيناه فهو محب<sup>١٣</sup> فيك خائف لك<sup>xliv</sup> متودد<sup>xlvi</sup> إليك<sup>xlvi</sup>، لا سيما إن<sup>١٤</sup> كانت<sup>١٤</sup> عيناه من العيون المحمودة المتقدمة الذكر. وإن<sup>١٥</sup> نظرت<sup>xlvii</sup> إليه فنظر<sup>xlviii</sup> إليك غير خجل ولا هائب فهو حاسد لك مستخف<sup>١٥</sup> بك غير مأمون عليك. يا اسكندر تحفظ<sup>١٦</sup> من كل ناقص الخلقة تحفظك من عدوك.

و<sup>xliv</sup> الشعر الخشن يدل<sup>١٦</sup> على الشجاعة وصحة الدماغ. والشعر اللين يدل<sup>١٦</sup> على الجبن وبرد الدماغ وقلة الفطنة. وأكثر<sup>١٦</sup> الشعر على الصدر<sup>١٦</sup> والكفتين يدل<sup>١٦</sup> على وحشية الطبع وقلة الفهم وحب الجور. والشقرة دليل<sup>١٦</sup> على الحمق<sup>١٦</sup> وأكثر<sup>١٦</sup> الغضب وسريعته<sup>liii</sup> والتسلط<sup>liv</sup>. والأسود في<sup>lv</sup> الشعر يدل<sup>١٦</sup> على العقل والأناة وحب العدل. المتوسط بين هذين يدل<sup>١٦</sup> على الاعتدال.

والحاجب الكثير الشعر يدل<sup>١٦</sup> على العي<sup>١٦</sup> وغيث<sup>lvi</sup> الكلام<sup>lvii</sup>. وإذا كان الحاجب ممتد<sup>١٦</sup> إلى الصدغ فصاحبه تياه صلف<sup>lviii</sup>. ومن رق<sup>١٦</sup> حاجبه واعتدل في الطول<sup>lix</sup>، فإن<sup>١٦</sup>ه يدل<sup>١٦</sup> على حسن التدبير في الأمور<sup>lx</sup>.

[108r7-8] يا اسكندر وما كنت<sup>١٦</sup> أكرم عليك علمه ولا أظهر لك<sup>lxi</sup>...



MS Leiden, Or. 749, fols. 106r1–106v16

lxii العين؟ العنق؟ لتعلم أن lxiii من كان lxiv عنقه طويلاً رقيقاً<sup>xv</sup> فهو صَيَّاحٌ أحمقٌ جَبَّانٌ. فإنَّ استضاف<sup>lxvi</sup> إلى طول العنق مقرَّر أسه فهو أحمقٌ سخيفٌ لا حيلة فيه<sup>lxvii</sup>. و من كان غليظ العنق<sup>lxviii</sup> فهو جاهلٌ أكل. و من كان lxix عنقه<sup>lxx</sup> معتدلاً في طول (!) غير فاحشٍ و غلظه (ه) معتدل<sup>lxxi</sup> فهو عاقلٌ مدبِّرٌ محبِّبٌ صدوقٌ ثقةٌ. و من كان بطنه كبير<sup>lxxii</sup> فهو أحمقٌ جَبَّانٌ<sup>lxxiii</sup>. و lxiv لطافة البطن و ضيق الصدر يدلَّان على جودة العقل و حسن الرأي. عرض الكتفين و الظهر يدلَّان على الشجاعة مع خفة العقل. انحناء الظهر يدلُّ على شكاسة<sup>lxxv</sup> خلق. و ترفافة<sup>lxxvi</sup> الصدر و lxvii استواء<sup>lxxviii</sup> الظهر علامة محمودة. بروز الكتفين يدلُّ على سوء النية و قبح المذهب. إذا طالَّت الذراعان حتَّى تبلغ الكفَّ الركبة دلَّ على الشجاعة الكرم و نبيل النفس. و إذا قصر<sup>lxxix</sup> الذراعان فصاحبها<sup>lxxx</sup> محبِّبٌ للشَّر<sup>lxxxii</sup> جَبَّانٌ<sup>lxxxiii</sup>. و lxiii الكفَّ الطويلة مع طول الأصابع<sup>lxxxiv</sup> تدلُّ<sup>lxxxv</sup> على النفوذ في الصناعات و إحكام الأعمال<sup>lxxxvi</sup> تدبير الرياسة. و القدم اللحيم الغليظ<sup>lxxxvii</sup> يدلُّ<sup>lxxxviii</sup> على الجهل و حبِّ الجور. و lxxxix القدم الصغير اللتين<sup>xc</sup> يدلُّ<sup>xc</sup> على الفجور. رقة<sup>xcii</sup> العقب يدلُّ<sup>xciii</sup> على الجبن. و غلظه يدلُّ على الشجاعة. | و xciv غلظ الساقين مع العرقبين يدلُّ<sup>xcv</sup> على البلة و القحة و قوَّة الجسم. و xcvi كثرة اللحم في الورك يدلُّ على ضعف القوَّة و الاسترخاء<sup>xcvii</sup>. و xcvi<sup>xcviii</sup> من كانت خطاه قصيرةً سريعةً فهو عجولٌ شكس<sup>ci</sup> غير . محكمٌ للأموال<sup>cii</sup> سيء النية<sup>ciii</sup>.

و المعتدل الفهم الجيِّد الطبع<sup>civ</sup> هو أن يكون<sup>cv</sup> لحمه<sup>cvi</sup> ليِّناً رطباً متوسطاً بين الرقة و الغلظ و يكون بين القصير و الطويل، أبيضاض مائلاً إلى الحمرة و الصفرة، أسيل الوجه<sup>cvii</sup>، طويل الشعر بين السبط<sup>cviii</sup> الجعد. أصهب الشعر متوسطاً<sup>cix</sup>، كبير العينين مائلاً إلى الغور<sup>cx</sup> و السواد. معتدل الرأس في العظم<sup>cxii</sup> في رقبته استواء<sup>cxiii</sup>. مائل الأكتاف<sup>cxiiii</sup>، عديم اللحم في الصلب و الأوراك. في صوته<sup>cxiv</sup> صفاء و خفاء<sup>cxv</sup> مع الاعتدال في غلظه و رقيقته<sup>cxvi</sup>. سبط<sup>cxvii</sup> الكفَّ، طويل الأصابع، مائلاً<sup>cxviii</sup> إلى الرقة، قليل الكلام و الضحك<sup>cxix</sup> إلا عند الحاجة إلى ذلك<sup>cxx</sup> و ميِّل طباعه إلى السوداء و الصفراء، كمايما يخالط نظره سرور و فرح<sup>cxxi</sup>

**Notes:**

- i B [= MS Berlin, Sprenger 943, fols. 16r-18r].  
 ii B. النظرية اللطيفة.  
 iii B. الذي.  
 iv omitted in B.  
 v B. على الزمان.  
 vi B. الأيام.  
 vii B. حقيقته ان شاء الله تعالى.  
 viii B. قد علمت.  
 ix B. مثل.  
 x B. للطبخ.  
 xi B. متضادة.  
 xii B. الساطع.  
 xiii B. دليلة.  
 xiv B. وحسبك... والقحة.  
 xv B. فإن كان مع ذلك.  
 xvi B. أوجن أزر: أو كان.  
 xvii omitted in B. القتالية.  
 xviii B. يا اسكندر دلائل العيون.  
 xix B. تحظريك.  
 xx B. لك فيها.  
 xxi B. الغضب.

- xxii فاردي العيون الزرق واردي الزرق B.
- xxiii وجمحت اي برزت B.
- xxiv MS Leiden : جحضت .
- xxv اشد B.
- xxvi وقل ما يسلم ان يكون عيوننا B.
- xxvii الغورة B.
- xxviii والكحل B.
- xxix يقضان B.
- xxx The whole sentence is missing from the Berlin manuscript.
- xxxi MS Leiden : فإن كانت dittography.
- xxxii وتماوت الملاحظة omitted in B.
- xxxiii وخفة B.
- xxxiv متربص omitted in B.
- xxxv فإن كانت العينان B.
- xxxvi فصاحبها B.
- xxxvii كان B.
- xxxviii حواليتها B.
- xxxix و B.
- xl أنت omitted in B.
- xli فأحمر B.
- xlii وظهر منه تبسم ولا تريده B.
- xliii وسرور omitted in B.
- xliv وإن B.
- xlv خانف منك B.
- xlvi متوّد إليك omitted in B.
- xlvii فإن B.
- xlviii ونظر B.
- xliv واعلم أنّ B.
- li وكثرة الشعر على الكتفين والعنق يدلّ على الحمق وكثرة الشعر على الصدر والبطن يدلّ على وحشية الطبع وسوء الفهم وحبّ الجور  
الهرة : MS Leiden .
- lii و الحمق omitted in B.
- liii وسرعته B.
- liv والتسلطّ omitted in B.
- lv من B.
- lvi العي و غيث omitted in B.
- lvii على كثرة الكلام B.
- lviii يتباه صلف معجب B.
- lix في الطول وكان اسوداً فهو يقضان (!) فهم B.
- lx غير راغب الى ماكل و منكح الا ما قدر له B.
- lxi What comes here in the Leiden manuscript is the beginning of the Onomancy. Instead of the Onomancy, the Physiognomy is followed in the Berlin manuscript with the heading of Book VII "On Medicine (*al-Maqāla al-sābi'a fī al-ṭibb*).” What should have followed the sentence on the eyebrows is, according to the Berlin manuscript, the sections on the nose, forehead, lips, teeth, face, temples, ears, the voice and way of speaking, the movements and way of sitting (MS Berlin, Sprenger 943, foll. 16v16-17v1, i.e. about the length of one side of a folio). At the end of the Physiognomy section on 108r7, the word *karrir* ("repeat, reiterate") is visible as well as on the last line of the folio, possibly a copyist's note after he realized his mistake.
- lxii An accident in the binding (or already in that of the archetype used by the copyist) of the Leiden manuscript resulted in some accidents in the order of the parts and of the disappearance of

the sections between the eyebrows and the neck. None of the folios in the Leiden manuscript gives the catchword العين “*al-‘ayn*” which would be expected to come before the beginning of folio 106. It is not entirely impossible that a paleographical accident resulted in that العنق was misunderstood and copied العين and in fact the reading *al-‘ayn* seems the result of added dots by another hand on what was initially العنق “*al-‘unq*.” The length of the lacuna between the two remaining parts of the text in the Leiden manuscript (see Table 3) would correspond to one side of a folio.

lxiii لا تعلم ان omitted in B.

lxiv و من كانت عنقه قصيرة جدا فهو مكار خبيث و من كانت B.

lxv طويلة رقيقة B. The use of ‘neck’ in the feminine is also attested in the London Physiognomy, cf. supra Table 1, [K.10].

lxvi MS Leiden: استظاف. The expression *istaḍāfa ilā* appears already at the beginning of the text. Cf. Kazimirski, *Dictionnaire*, vol. II, p. 147, *zāf* and *zūf* mean ‘the neck’s skin,’ a possible reason for the confusion of the copyist?

lxvii The whole sentence reads in B : فان كان مع ذلك صغير الراس فهو احمق لا حيلة فيه :

lxviii و من كانت عنقه غليظة B.

lxix كانت B.

lxx معتدلة في الغلظ فهو عاقل ... B.

lxxi omitted in B. في طول غير فاحش و غلظ(ة) معتدل

lxxii كبيرا B.

lxxiii جاهل جبان B.

lxxiv و omitted in B.

lxxv شراسة B.

lxxvi والنزاقة B.

lxxvii الصدر omitted in B.

lxxviii استواي B.

lxxix قصرت B.

lxxx فصاحبهما B.

lxxxi جبار محب للشر B.

lxxxii جبان omitted in B.

lxxxiii و omitted in B.

lxxxiv الأصابع الطول B.

lxxxv يدل B.

lxxxvi و تدبير B. The و is missing in the Leiden MS.

lxxxvii اللحيمة الغليظة B.

lxxxviii تدل B.

lxxxix و omitted in B.

xc الصغيرة اللبنة B.

xci تدل B.

xcii و رقة B.

xciii تدل B.

xciv و omitted in B.

xcv يدل B.

xcvi و omitted in B.

xcvii والاسترخاء و omitted in B.

xcviii من كانت خطاه واسعة بطينة فهو منجح في جامع اعماله مفكر في عواقبه added in B.

xcix و omitted in B.

c سريعة قصيرة B.

ci شكس omitted in B.

cii الامور B.

- ciīī سميء النية omitted in B. الامور repeated in B (dittography).
- civ The phrase والمعتدل الفهم الجيد الطبع, corresponding to the title of one of the ideal portrait in Rāzi (see supra section IV.2), is entirely missing from the text of the Berlin manuscript.
- cv هو أن يكون omitted in B.
- cvi من كان لحمه B.
- cvii الخد B.
- cviii و الجعد B. The و is missing in the Leiden MS.
- cix متوسطاً omitted in B.
- cx الغورة B.
- cxī في العظم omitted in B.
- cxii استوائي B.
- cxiii مائل الاكتفاف omitted in B.
- cxiv صورته B. A (modern ?) correction mark in the form of two parentheses around the *rā* is visible.
- cxv صفا و خفا : MSS B.
- cxvi دقته B.
- cxvii بسط B.
- cxviii مائلا B.
- cxix والضحك omitted in B.
- cxix غير راغب الى ماكل و منجح الأما قدر له added in B.
- cxxī في هذه اعدل خلقه بني ادم و هي التي ارضاهما لصحبتك فاجهد جهدك في طلاب من هذه صفته فانك ترشد فقد علمت ان الراس احوج الى : الناس من الناس اليه فتفهم هذه الدلائل التي ذكرت لك و اعتبرها بتميزك الصحيح و نظرك المصيب فانك تنتفع بها كثيرا ان شاء الله تعالى
- In the Leiden MS, this element comes on fol. 99r, directly before the title of the ‘gate’ on Hygiene (“*Fī al-rutba al-ḥusnā fī tadbīr al-jism*,” literally “On the good preservation in the bodily regime”). It appears in Book VII, “On Wars” (foll. 95r-103r) after the vizier’s portrait (95r ult.-96v), the ‘gate’ on the scribes (foll. 98r-98v, cf. Book V of *Sirr-Badawī*, p. 144), that on the administrators and the tax-collectors (foll. 98v-99r, cf. Book VII of *Sirr-Badawī*, p. 146). The interpolation of an element of the Physiognomy at this place in the Leiden manuscript may be the result of a wrongly inserted marginalia, but the issue deserves further comparisons with the other Short Form manuscripts. In the Long Form and the London Physiognomy, this element forms part of the Physiognomy, cf. *Sirr-Badawī* 118.15-16 and London Physiognomy, supra Table 1, section [I.].

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Johannes Thomann

# 15 A lost Greek text on physiognomy by Archelaos of Alexandria in Arabic translation transmitted by Ibn Abī Ṭālib al-Dimashqī: An edition and translation of the fragments with glossaries of the Greek, Syriac, and Arabic traditions

The aim of this study is to reconstruct a Greek work on physiognomy from scattered fragments in an Arabic work on physiognomy compiled in the early 14th century by Muḥammad al-Dimashqī, a Sufi shaykh who lived in the region of Damascus.

## The compiler al-Dimashqī (1256–1327 AD)

In previous studies on al-Dimashqī biographical information has been scarce. Except for his name and date of death in 727 AH / 1327 AD, all that is said about his biography is that he was shaykh at al-Rabwa in Syria, and no source is given for this information.<sup>1</sup> However, there is ample biographical source material available.<sup>2</sup> Its full discussion would go beyond the scope of this article and will be presented in detail elsewhere. According to al-Birzālī (1267–1339) al-Dimashqī was born in the year 654 AH / 1256 AD.<sup>3</sup> Next he became shaykh of a Sufi convent at Ḥittīn in Palestine, the site of an important sanctuary for the Druse. After an incident in which one of his disciples robbed a guest, slaughtered him and fled, al-Dimashqī was severely punished by Sayf al-Dīn, the *nāʾib* of Şafad, the capital of Northern Galilee.<sup>4</sup> Later he became shaykh at al-Rabwa, a village (*rāwīya*) not far from Damascus. Thus his two surnames were Shaykh Ḥittīn and Shaykh al-Rabwa.<sup>5</sup> The biographies describe him as an encyclopedic scholar who wrote on many scientific subjects, including theology, sufism, letter magic and alchemy.<sup>6</sup> The only work of his that is mentioned by title is his *al-Riyāsa fī*

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1 Dunlop 1956; Mourad 1939: 8; Fahd 1966: 386; Ökten 1994; Hoyland 2007a: 265; Gherstetti 2007: 301; Thomas 2013: 798–801.

2 Information on biographical sources is available in Ebied 2005: 23 n. 41.

3 Quoted in Şafadi 1998: 4: 476.

4 Şafadi 1998: 4: 477.

5 Şafadi 1998: 4: 475.

6 Şafadi 1998: 4: 476; Şafadi 1949–2013: 3: 163–164; English translation in Ebied 2005: 24.

*‘ilm al-firāsa*.<sup>7</sup> It is noteworthy that the work for which he is most well known today, the cosmography *Nukhbat al-dahr fī ‘ajā’ib al-barr wa-l-baḥr* (“Selection of the epoch on the marvels of earth and sea”) is not mentioned, nor his preoccupation with geography. Therefore, the authorship of the work should be reconsidered. It is also noteworthy that Dunlop referred to its author as “Ibn Shaykh Ḥittīn”, without further discussion.<sup>8</sup> If taken seriously it would indicate that *Nukhbat al-dahr* was written by a son of al-Dimāshqī. More recently, the *Jawāb risālat ahl jazīrat Quprus* (“Response to the letter from the people of Cyprus”), a theological work of al-Dimashqī has been edited and translated.<sup>9</sup> It is a polemical work in response to a set of questions from a Christian author, which were first sent to Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328 CE), who responded with *al-Jawāb al-ṣaḥīḥ li-man baddala dīn al-Masiḥ* (“The correct reply to those who altered the religion of Christ”).<sup>10</sup>

A further work is only available in manuscripts. It is called *al-Maqāmāt al-falsafīyya wa-l-tarjamāt al-ṣūfīyya* (“Philosophical sessions and sufic interpretations”). There is one known manuscript of the work in Cambridge (University Library MS Qq: 19).<sup>11</sup> There are two more manuscripts, one in Jordanie (University Mu’tah, unknown shelfmark).<sup>12</sup> Another may exist at an unknown location, formerly in the Koverkian collection.<sup>13</sup> It consists of fifty session on a variety of topics. Most noteworthy in the context here is session 34 *Fī ma‘ālim ‘ilm al-firāsa wa-l-ḥukm bi-mithlihā* (“On the characteristics of physiognomy and the judgment of that manner”), which is a treatise on physiognomy.<sup>14</sup> It is different from the other physiognomical work of Dimashqī, but it refers to the same authorities, which will be discussed later.

Finally, the existence of a hitherto unknown work, possibly written by al-Dimashqī can be announced. It has the title *‘Ilm al-ḥaqā’iq* (“Science of the true meanings”) and is a commentary on a *rubā‘ī* of Ibn ‘Arabī. It is inticated to exist in a manuscript in Tehran (Majlis 1405).<sup>15</sup> However, the work is also ascribed to two later authors in other manuscripts.

Al-Dimashqī visited the town of Ṣafad several times, where he frequently met with al-Ṣafadī, his primary biographer. He died at Ṣafad in Jumādā II 727 AH (24 April – 22 May 1327 AD).<sup>16</sup>

7 Ṣafadī 1998: 4: 478.

8 Dunlop 1956: 291: “Ibn Shaykh Ḥittīn”.

9 Ebied 2005; Sarrió Cucarella 2015: 2–3.

10 Ebied 2005: 23; Thomas 2013; Sarrió Cucarella 2015: 2.

11 Ebied 2005: 24 n. 45.

12 See “Arabic Union Catalogue” <https://www.aruc.org/search> (18.3.2017).

13 See [http://dla.library.upenn.edu/dla/schoenberg/record.html?q=ansari&id=SCHOENBERG\\_29778&](http://dla.library.upenn.edu/dla/schoenberg/record.html?q=ansari&id=SCHOENBERG_29778&) (2.4.2017).

14 MS Cambridge U.L. Qq: 19, ff. 100r–107r.

15 Fankhā 22, 885.

16 Ṣafadī 1996: 4: 476.

## The book on physiognomy (*al-Riyāsa fī ‘ilm al-firāsa*) by al-Dimashqī and its sources

Al-Dimashqī’s work on physiognomy appears under different titles in the manuscripts: *al-Riyāsa fī ‘ilm al-firāsa* (“Leadership in the science of physiognomy”), *Risāla fī ‘ilm al-firāsa* (“Epistle on the science of physiognomy”), *al-Firāsa li-ajl al-siyāsa* (“Physiognomy for politics”), *Aḥkām al-firāsa* (“The judgments of physiognomy”).<sup>17</sup> In biographical sources its title is given as (*al-Kitāb*) *al-Riyāsa fī ‘ilm al-firāsa*.<sup>18</sup> Another form of the title is [*Kitāb*] *Siyāsa fī ‘ilm al-firāsa*.<sup>19</sup> For the sake of convenience the short title *Riyāsa* will be used here. It was printed in 1882 A.D. and was used by Richard Foerster and Georg Hoffmann in their edition of Greek and Latin texts in the Bibliotheca Teubneriana, which appeared in 1893.<sup>20</sup> The *Riyāsa* has occasionally received some attention among historians of physiognomy.<sup>21</sup> However, a number of questions – some of them already raised by Foerster and Hoffmann in 1893 – have not yet been answered.

The *Riyāsa* is unique in the premodern history of physiognomy since it states explicitly the sources on the basis of which each individual physiognomical judgment is reached. Al-Dimashqī used a system of sigla to indicate his sources. This is an early example of a quotation system with abbreviated references to authors in the text. It remains to be seen who used such a system in scientific work for the first time.<sup>22</sup> The sigla are explained at the beginning of the text: these explanations vary, however, in the manuscript tradition. There are two main versions, one with seven sources, and another with eight sources. Six sources [Ps.-]Aristotle, Polemon, al-Manṣūrī, al-Shāfi‘ī, Ibn ‘Arabī, and Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī are found in both versions of the text. The version with eight sources also mentions Hippocrates and (as one source) the Indian sources Ṭumṭum, Tinkalūshā and the female author Sarāshīm. The Indian sources are indicated by the siglum ۛ. In the relevant versions, this siglum occurs exclusively in the section on lines and marks on the hand. The attribution of these judgments to Indian authorities appears convincing, since no texts on palmistry are known from classical antiquity, but they are well known in Sanskrit literature.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>17</sup> See the checklist of manuscripts in Appendix III.

<sup>18</sup> Şafadī 1998 4: 478, l. 4; Ibn Ḥajar 1993: 459, l. 6.

<sup>19</sup> Fluegel 1835–1858: 3: 633 no. 7304.

<sup>20</sup> Dimashqī 1882; Foerster 1893: 1: xxvi–xxxii and lxxxiv–lxxxvii; other prints: Dimashqī 1872 and Dimashqī 1983.

<sup>21</sup> Mourad 1939: 31–33 and passim; Fahd 1966: 386–387; Thomann 1997: 7; Hoyland 2007a: 265; Ghergetti 2007: 301.

<sup>22</sup> On abbreviations in general, see Gacek 2009: 2–6; Gacek 2006; Quiring-Zoche 1998: 202–205.

<sup>23</sup> Pingree 1981: 76–79; see the contribution of Kenneth Zysk in this volume.

## Derived versions of the *Riyāsa*

Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Anṣārī, known as Ibn al-Akfānī (d. 1348 CE) was a prolific author of 49 works on a variety of subjects.<sup>24</sup> He was a professional physician and was employed in a hospital in Cairo, where he died during the great plague. His *Kitāb Ikmāl al-siyāsa fī ‘ilm al-firāsa*, also transmitted under the title *Asās al-Riyāsa fī ‘ilm al-firāsa* contains as its main part a catalogue of physiognomical signs from head to toe, based on version A of al-Dimashqī’s *Siyāsa*. The authorities are not indicated by sigla but with their names written out in full.

## The problematic name ‘YL’WS

In the version with seven sources, the additional source (in contrast with the eight-source version) is indicated by a name which poses a philological problem that has not yet been solved. Most manuscripts spell it ايلوس (‘YL’WS). One manuscript has ايلدوس (‘YLDWS), probably a scribal mistake since ل and ل (L’ and LD) are likely to be confused in a word that was meaningless to the scribe. The same name ‘YL’WS occurs in the biography of Hermes Trismegistos in Ibn al-Qiftī’s *Ta’riḫ al-ḥukamā’*, as the name of the first of the four kings who ruled after Hermes.<sup>25</sup> The name is interpreted in the text as *al-raḥīm* (“the merciful”). This would lead us to Greek ἔλεος (“compassion”), and to a presumptive pronunciation of ‘YL’WS as /‘ilā’ūs/. However, since Greek ε was pronounced /i/ and could well be represented by a vocalic Y in Arabic script, as in the second letter of the name, its representation in the fourth letter by vocalic ’, pronounced as /ā/ is odd.<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, ἔλεος is not used as a personal name.<sup>27</sup> The same is true for ἔλαος, ἦλαος and ἴλαος, which would be perfect models for ‘YL’WS. It is not uncommon that Greek personal names were shortened in Arabic transliteration. Greek Aristotelēs became Arabic ‘RSTW (/‘aristū/), and Hippokratēs became BWQR’Ṭ (/būqrāt/). In the case of ‘YL’WS it is likely that it was shortened at the beginning, because -laos (-λαος) is a common element in many Greek two-part personal names.<sup>28</sup> The most frequent name with this ending in antiquity was Archelaos, followed by Nikolaos and Menelaos. Archelaos seems the most promising candidate, since it has an ἄ (pronounced /‘a/) at the beginning, an ε (pronounced /i/) in the second syllable. This corresponds well with the first two Arabic letters ’ and Y. From an original

<sup>24</sup> Witkam 1989: 47–108; Faziloğlu 2000.

<sup>25</sup> Ibn al-Qiftī 1903: 3, l. 16.

<sup>26</sup> For historical phonology of the Greek language in general see Gignac 1976, Horrocks 1997.

<sup>27</sup> A singular exception is found in Fraser 2000: 3: B: 131.

<sup>28</sup> There are 138 such names on -laos in the online version of the *Lexicon of Greek personal names* (<http://www.lgpn.ox.ac.uk/database/lgpn.php>, retrieved 22.1.2017).

from ῬῬYL'WS<sup>29</sup> (pronounced /'arḥīla'ūs/) a shortened form ῬYL'WS could have been derived, pronounced as /'a'īla'ūs/, and later on read as /'īla'ūs/. A longer form for the Greek name Archelaos is mentioned in Ibn al-Nadīm's *Fihrist*.<sup>30</sup> Among the authors who have written on alchemy there is a ῬῬL'WS (pronounced /'arḥīla'ūs/), evidently a transliteration of the Greek name Archelaos. The same form of transliteration is found in the Arabic version of Barhebraeus' history *Ta'riḫ mukhtaṣar al-duwal*. Archelaos, Ethnarch of Judaea, Idumaea and Samaria, son of Herod was installed by the emperor Augustus as the successor of his father (*wa-wulliya makānahu Arḥīlāwūs ibnuhu tis'a sinīna*).<sup>31</sup> In the Syriac version his name is spelled ῬKL'WS.<sup>32</sup>

There are Arabic texts on alchemy and vision under the name Archelaos.<sup>33</sup> Its possible identification with the author of a Greek alchemical poem is a matter of controversy,<sup>34</sup> since there is another possibility: the *Ġawāmi' al-iskandarāniyyīn* ("Summaries of the Alexandrinians"), generally known as the *Summaria Alexandrinorum* is a collection of commentaries on Galen's works, produced in the 6th century by a group of Neoplatonic scholars in Alexandria in Greek and preserved in Arabic translation. According to Ibn an-Nadīm's *Fihrist* four members of this group were ṢṬFN, Ġ'SYWS, ῬNQYL'WS and M'RYNWS. The first name refers to a Stephanos, probably to the author of three commentaries on Galen, whose identity is uncertain.<sup>35</sup> The second name corresponds to Gessios, the name of a well-known physician, Gessios of Petra (475–520 A.D.).<sup>36</sup> The last name evidently refers to Marinus, but an identification with the famous Philosopher Marinus of Neapolis (Samaria) is doubtful, even if he was contemporary with Gessios of Petra and had an interest in the sciences.<sup>37</sup> More ambiguous is the third name ῬNQYL'WS. The Greek names Ankilaos, Ankelaos or Ankēlaos do not seem to exist. The closest name is Akelaos, but no ancient scholar with this name is known. A biography of ῬNQYL'WS is found in Ibn al-Qiftī's *Ta'riḫ al-ḥukamā'*.<sup>38</sup> It has been proposed to identify him with Nikolaos of Alexandria, a physician who commented Galen's works.<sup>39</sup> Ibn Buṭlān mentioned three additional editors of the *Summaria Alexandrinorum*: Yaḥyā al-Naḥwī, Balādhīyus and ῬKYL'WS. The first two names refer to Johannes Philoponos and Palladios of Alexandria. Palladius lived in the 6th century A.D. and wrote commentaries on Hippocrates and Galen. He might well have been

<sup>29</sup> In linguistic transliteration Ḥ is used, instead of *Kh*.

<sup>30</sup> Ibn al-Nadīm 1871–1872: 1: 353, 25; Ibn al-Nadīm 2009: 2: 1: 447, 6; Ibn al-Nadīm 1970: 2: 849.

<sup>31</sup> Barhebraeus 1958: 66, l. 12.

<sup>32</sup> Barhebraeus 1890: 46, l. 22; Barhebraeus 1932: 1: 48.

<sup>33</sup> Ullmann 1972: 153.

<sup>34</sup> Ullmann 1972: 153; edition Ideler 1842: 2: 343–352; translation Browne 1946–1948: 131–137.

<sup>35</sup> Wolska-Conus 1989.

<sup>36</sup> Keyser/Irby-Massie 2008: 347–348.

<sup>37</sup> Saffrey 1999: 7: 899–900.

<sup>38</sup> Ibn al-Qiftī 1903: 71–72.

<sup>39</sup> August Fischer in Ibn al-Nadīm 1871–1872: 2: 139, no. 7.

member of the editorial group behind the *Summaria Alexandrinorum*. The involvement of Johannes Philoponos is controversial, however.<sup>40</sup> Finally the name 'KYL'WS represents a middle stage of abbreviation between 'RKYL'WS/'RḤYL'WS and 'YL'WS and could refer to Archelaos (pronounced 'akīlā'ūs). In the Syriac script this could easily have resulted from a ascribal error. In the eastern Estrangelo script the letter Resh ܪ and the letter Kaf, when connected to the left, ܟ look similar, and the omission of the Resh could have been a case of haplography: ܩܘܠܘܟܘܬܐ > ܩܘܠܘܟܘܬܐ. The last step from 'KYL'WS to 'YL'WS could have been induced by the well known Greek medical term εἰλεός (“intestinal obstruction”), which was transliterated in Arabic as 'YL'WS/YL'WSH.<sup>41</sup> The Latin translation of εἰλεός was spelled *ileus*, which indicates an Arabic pronunciation /'ilā'us/.

If these identifications are correct, a clear profile for 'YL'WS/'RKYL'WS can be suggested. He was a member of the group of neoplatonic scholars who prepared a collection of abbreviated Galenic works for teaching.<sup>42</sup> He might have been the author of some alchemical works as well. Then it would come as no great surprise if he wrote a treatise on physiognomy. The example of Admantios, who was a physician, shows that writings on medicine and on physiognomy from the same author were not uncommon. Therefore, nothing seems to speak against the attribution of the physiological material transmitted by al-Dimashqī to Archelaos of Alexandria.

## The physiognomy of Archelaos used by al-Dimashqī discovered in a unique manuscript

In a number of manuscripts and in the printed editions Archelaos is mentioned among the sources of al-Dimashqī's *Riyāsa* and indicated by the letter *sīn*. But the letter *sīn* never occurs later on in the text, and no statement was attributed to this author.<sup>43</sup> It was a happy surprise to discover that this generalization does not hold for MS Sprenger 1930 in the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin. This MS was already noted by Foerster in 1893, but it was not used for the translated passages.<sup>44</sup> Ahlwardt wrote in his description of the manuscript that it contains a shorter version of the work than that found in MS Sprenger 125, since it does not contain the chapter on the physiognomy of the temperaments.<sup>45</sup> The second text in MS Sprenger 1930 on ff. 28r–29v is

<sup>40</sup> Positive Sezgin 1970: 140–146; negative Meyerhof 1931: 94.

<sup>41</sup> Dozy 1881: 1: 46 b; for a description see Sābūr ibn Sahl 2009: 27 and 123.

<sup>42</sup> Touwaide 2008; Van Bladel 2008.

<sup>43</sup> Mourad 1939: 32.

<sup>44</sup> Foerster 1993: 1: xxvi “Etiam codice Berolinesī Sprengeriano 1930 continetur, ut Mauricius Stein-schneider benigne mecum communicavit”.

<sup>45</sup> Ahlwardt 1887–1899: 4: 555–556, no. 5372.

a didactic poem by the poet Ibn al-Wardī (1292–1349 A.D.).<sup>46</sup> The presence of the two texts, which are totally unrelated in their themes, in the same codex seems to have resulted from the fact that the two authors of these unrelated texts lived at the same place and in the same region. This could imply that the manuscript was copied from an early manuscript, dating to the 14th century A.D., which would corroborate the idea that this version of the *Siyāsa* goes back to the epoch of its author.

There is clear evidence that the mentioning of Archelaos as one of the sources goes back to al-Dimashqī himself. Archelaos is mentioned by al-Dimashqī in the physiognomical chapter in his *Maqāmāt*. At the beginning of the chapter he refers to the seven sources in the following sequence: Archelaos (*Īlāwūs*), Polemon, Ptolemy, al-Shāfi‘ī, Ibn al-Khaṭīb al-Imām, al-Manṣūrī, Hippocrates, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī and Ibn ‘Arabī following (‘*an*) Socrates.<sup>47</sup> It is noteworthy that Archelaos is mentioned as the first author, and that Aristotle is not mentioned. This version likely represents a particular phase in the author’s work on his text.

MS Sprenger 1930 is the only manuscript, among the manuscripts examined so far, which contains any physiognomical statements attributed to Archelaos by marking them with the letter *sin* (or *shin* in a few cases). They all occur in chapter nine on the physiognomy of the parts of the human body. In many cases these indications agree with attributions of material to Aristotle and Polemon (letters *ṭā’* and *nūn*), but also in some cases with Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī and with Abū Bakr al-Rāzī’s *Kitāb al-Manṣūrī* (letters *rā’* and *ṣād*). In a number of cases Archelaos is the only source indicated, in two cases on laughing and in one case on the forehead. Altogether there are 61 physiognomical statements attributed to Archelaos.

Based on the references in chapter nine of the *Riyāsa* a minimal stemma of the dependencies of the seven Sources has been established. As a first step, cases in which only two authors share the same item were taken into consideration. The combinations of sigla (with their frequency in brackets) are ‘B (9), ṢM (62), NB (1), NS (12), ṬB (1), Ṭ’ (1), ṬS (5), ṬN (5). In a second step the cases with more than two authors were looked at. The combinations of three authors are S‘B (1), MS’ (3), ṢMS (10), ṬSB (1), ṬMS (1), ṬSM (1), ṬN’ (1), ṬNS (12), ṬNṢ (1). The combinations of four authors are ṬṢMS (2), ṢM‘B (1), NṢMS (1), ṬNṢM (3), ṬNMS (1). The only combination with five authors is ṬNṢMS (1), and there is no combination with six authors. Only logically necessary dependencies were added to the stemma, but not any further possible dependencies. In this sense the result is the minimal stemma compatible with al-Dimashqī’s references to the sources. To avoid any misunderstanding, the stemma is not based on a comparison of the original texts. It has been pointed out that al-Dimashqī included substantial parts of text which are not found in the original texts as we have them today.<sup>48</sup> The sole

<sup>46</sup> Sobjeroj 2016: 194; cf. Ahlwardt 1887–1899: 3: 458, no. 3998.

<sup>47</sup> MS Cambridge UL Qq 19 f. 101v.

<sup>48</sup> Foerster 1893: 1: XXXI–XXXII.



purpose of the stemma is to give a concise overview of the co-occurrence of authors combined with their assumed chronological order. (see Figure 1). Doubts have been raised about the authenticity of the work attributed to al-Shāfi‘ī.<sup>49</sup> Since its text shares one item with Aristotle, it cannot have been written by al-Shāfi‘ī (d. 820 A.D.), since the Aristotelian work was translated into Arabic by Ḥunayn ibn Iṣḥāq (808–873 A.D), after al-Shāfi‘ī’s death. The name of al-Shāfi‘ī might have been attractive since in later times he was believed to have been gifted with divinatory *firāsa* in the sense of clairvoyance, and physiognomy was widely discussed in the legal school of the Shāfi‘ites.<sup>50</sup> The stemma indicates that Archelaos was used directly in al-Manṣūri, [Ps.-]al-Shāfi‘ī and ar-Rāzī.

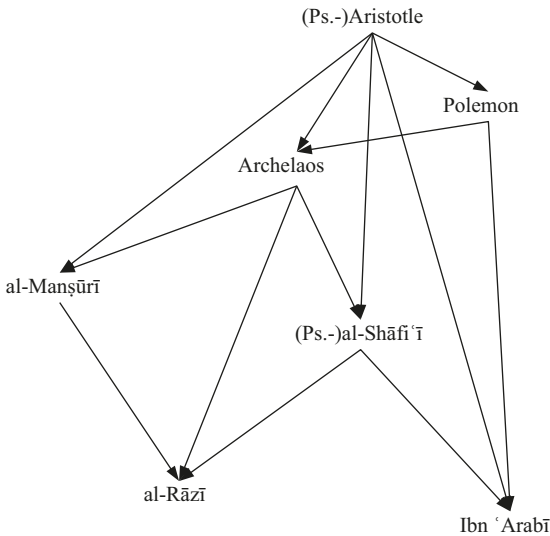


Figure 1: Stemma of al-Dimashqī’s sources.

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## Appendix I: Arabic text of al-Dimashqī's material attributed to Archilaos

Transcribed from MS Berlin, Sprenger 1930. The sigla are in bold face.

19v

المقالة التاسعة في ذكر الأعضاء الجزئية  
وما يدل عليه وهو جل المقصود فاعلم من كلام ه قال  
**سط** في حدّ الفراسة وإن لم يكن مستوفي الفراسة عبارة [عنده MS]  
عن الاستدلال بالأحوال الظاهرة على الأخلاق الباطنة  
فمن ذلك الأعضاء الجزئية الرأس المعتدل المحمود إمارته  
اتّفقوا على أنّه هو المعتدل الوضع والمقدار وإلى العظم أميل  
المناسب لينيته المستدير الشكل الذي كأنّه أكرة قد غمزت  
عند صدغية بأصبعين إلى داخل وفيه نتوء يسير من مؤخرة  
عند القمحدوة ومن مقدمته وهو الناصية ومن أمّ الرأس  
مواطن البطون الثلاث فإنّه دليل العقد والفهم والفتنة  
والفكر الصحيح والروية الصالحة وصحته التخيّل وجودة الحفظ  
وقوة التذكّر

20r

٤ **طسن** عظم الرأس وقلة استوائه إذا لم يكن مفرطاً دالّ على علوّ الهمة وارتفاعها [وارتفاها MS] وحسن الفهم  
والإتياد وتغلّب على صاحبه الغفلة غالباً

....

٩ **طسمنص** انخفاض أمّ الرأس وهو موضع الدماغ العاقل دليل الحرص  
١١ ه انخفاض موضع القرنين ودخولهما دالّ على العشّ وخبث السريرة والعبث  
١٤ **سط** الرأس الكبير جدّاً دليل البله والاضطراب  
١٧ **طسن** الشاخص دالّ على سوء الفهم لقرب شبهة من شعور البهايم

20v

١٩ ه الصهوبة المفرطة كأشعار الصقالبة دالة على سوء الفهم وخبث النية والحرص  
٢٠ **طنع** الشعر القائم الكثّ الخشن الأسود الأزب من الرأس والصدر وسائر البدن دالة على [...] ]  
٢١ **سمص** دليل الشجاعة  
٢٣ **سط** لبين الشعر دليل الجبن والخنق والمكر  
٢٤ ه كثرة الشعر على البطن دالّ على الشيق والصلب دالّ على الشجاعة وعلى الكتفين والرقبة دالّ على حمق والجرأة  
٣١ **طسن** الشعر على الكتفين دون سائر البدن دالّ على الغفلة والشجاعة  
٣٢ ه كثرة شعر الرقبة دالة على الشدة والقوة والكبر والجرأة لشبهه بالأسد  
٣٣ ه متفقون على أحمد الشعور وأدائها على الخير والعقل وجودة الطبع هو الرجل اللين المتوسط بين الكثرة والقلة والسواد  
والصهوبة والجعادة والسباطة والدقة والغلظ والطول والقصر  
٣٥ اتّفق ه على أنّ أحمد الحواجب وأدائها على كلّ طبع جيّد ووصف جميل هو الحاجب /21r/ الحاجب المعتدل الممتدّ الحسن  
الوضع وإنبات الشعر وتلمسين الطرفين ودقته وارتفاع مؤخره إلى جهة الصدغ وملحه وارتفاعه عن العين قليلاً  
٣٩ **طسن** الحاجب العريض المتأثّ في تقويسه دليل خبث النية  
٤٠ **سعب** الحاجب العريض المقرون دالّ على الزهو وحبّ اللهو والمزح /21v/

- ٤٩ **نممص** العين التي تشبه نظرها نظر الصبيان مع تيسم وسرور وفرح في وجه صاحبها دليل طول العمر وقوة الروح وكثرة الفرح
- ٥١ **طممص** العين الصغيرة الزرقا المرتعدة دليل قلة الحياء والاحتيايل وحب النساء
- ٥٥ **سنطمس** الحدقة التي حولها مثل الطوق دليل على الحسد والهدر والجبن والشر
- ٥٩ **سممص** الحدقة الناتئة مع لظو العين دالة على الحمق /22r/
- ٦٥ **سممص** العين الزرقا أو الشديدة الخضرة تدل على الشر والخيانة
- ٧٥ **سممص** الجبهة العظيمة دليل الكسل
- ٧٨ **طنس** الجبهة العالية دليل الشجاعة والقحة
- ٨٠ ش الجبهة المحدبة دليل الحياء
- ٨٣ **طسب** الجبهة الأخذة في التدوير /22v/ والملوسة دالة على الغفلة والبلادة والله أعلم
- ٨٥ ه الأذن<sup>51</sup> [المفطرة] في الكبر الخارجة على القدر المناسب لأعضاء الرأس دالة بيّنة على حمق وسوء الهمة والكذب وسوء الفهم
- ٨٦ **سط** عظم الأذن وغلظها دلالة على الحرص وصغر الهمة
- ٩٠ **سطن** الأذن الرقيقة العظيمة دلالة [قلة] الفهم والجهل وزنا وسبما إن كان شعرا نابتا من صماخهما /23r/
- ٩٣ ه اتفقوا على صفة الأنف الجيد الدال على كل خير إنه هو الحسن المعتدل الوضع المتناسب في الأرنبة والقصبية والمنخرين والكثافة واللفظ والرقة ظاهرة تخاطيطه
- ١٠٢ **نطممص** قصر الأنف وفطوسته دليل الأنف وخبث النية
- ١٠٣ **نس** الأنف الذي بمنخرية اتساع وعبالة دليل الغضب والشر /23v/
- ١١٦ **سطنس** الاسنان المفلجة جدا دالة على طبع زري
- ١١٧ **طنس** الاسنان الناتية إلى فوق اللثة دالة على الحرص وسوء الهمة
- ١٢٢ س لحامة الوجه دليل الكسل والجهل
- ١٢٤ **نس** الوجه النحيف دال على الاهتمام بالأمور والحرص
- ١٢٨ **نس** سماجة الوجه دلالة على سوء الخلق
- ١٢٩ سن طول الوجه دليل القحة والجهل
- ١٣٠ ه الوجه المثلث دال على الجرأة والقحة والشر وكلما كان أشد تثلثا كان أشد جراءة
- ١٣١ **طسن** طول الوجه مع انتفاخ الصدغين وصغر الرأس والعينين والانتفاخ الأوداج دليل الحمق والجهل وقلة الحياء /24r/
- الأصوات
- ١٣٨ **طسن** الصوت الحسن الرقيق دال على حمق والخفة
- ١٤١ سن حسن الصوت وقوته دليل الفطنة والحمق
- ١٤٣ س عالي الكلام سريعه يكون غضوبا عجولا في الأمور سئ الخلق والله أعلم
- ١٤٧ سن من غلب على نفسه عند الضحك فهو مجنون جاهل
- ١٥٠ س من اعتراه نخرة عند لضحك فهو غافل أحمق والله أعلم
- الأنفاس/24v/
- ١٥٣ س ضعف النفس دليل على قلة الفطنة وبالعكس الألوان
- ١٥٧ **طنس** اللون الأخضر والأسود مع زعارة الجلد دليل سوء الخلق وقلة الفهم
- ١٦٠ سن اللون الذي مثل لهب النار دال على العجلة والجنون /25r/
- اللحاء

١٧٨ سطن الذقن المنخرطة دالة على العقل والدعابة  
 ١٧٩ سنن الذقن الخلية العنقفة دالة على سوء الفهم وقلة الحياء  
 الأعناق

١٨٤ سنن قصر العنق دال على المكر والخبث ومع قصره ممثلي دليل الغضب والشر  
 ١٨٥ طنس العنق المتوسط المعتدل محمود الدلالة والعنق الرقيق الطويل دليل الجبن والحقد /25v/  
 ١٨٩ سنن العنق البادي العروق المنتفخ الأوداج دال على الغضب والحقد والجهالة  
 ١٩٠ سنن وغلظ العنق وغلظ عروقه دالة على قلة الفهم  
 ١٩١ طنس طول العنق ولبينه ودقته دال على سوء الفهم  
 الأكتاف

٢٠١ ه ارسال الكتف وامتلاه دال على المحمدة والله أعلم  
 البطون

الصدور /26r/

٢٠٦ سطن الصدر المفطح دال على الحمق والله أعلم  
 ٢٠٨ سنن شدة الأضلاع وكثرة لحمها دال على الجهل  
 ٢٠٩ سنن خفة الأضلاع ودقتها دالة على ضعف القلب



## Appendix II: English translation of the texts attributed to Archelaos

Chapter nine on the account of the particular members and what they signify, which is the main part of the intended [matter]. Learn from the speech of H [i. e. all seven authors].

1. SṬ on the definition of physiognomy: Even if there has not been assigned [a definition], physiognomy is an interpretation of the hidden features of character based on the visible properties. Extremities belong to these [properties]. They agree that a middle head, in laudable position is of middle position and size, rather towards greatness (*uẓm*), much inclined towards proportionality in its structure (*binya*), having a round form as if it were a sphere which had been pressed inside at the temples by two fingers, and on it is a slight swelling (*nutū'*) at the rear part close to its most prominent rear part (*'inda l-qamḥaduwa*), and at its front part, which is the fore part of the head (*nāṣiya*), and at the skull (*umm al-ra's*), the places of the three depths (*al-buṭūn al-thalāth*). This is a sign of intelligence (*'aql*), understanding (*fahm*), cleverness (*fiṭna*), correct thinking (*al-fikr al-ṣaḥīḥ*), sound reflection (*al-rawiyya al-ṣāliḥa*), healthy imagination (*ṣiḥḥat al-takhayyul*), with good memory (*jūd al-ḥifẓ*), with power of recollection (*quwwat al-tahdakkur*).
2. MṢ: A small head indicates recklessness, deficit in intelligence according to it (i.e. the small head?).
3. N: It is a sign of perishing except if the head is in proportion to the body, having much moisture, and a beautiful form.
4. ṬSN: If greatness and smallness are equal and are not exceeding the due bounds, it indicates high and elevated ambition (*'uluww al-himma wa-rtifā'uhā*), beautiful understanding, obedience (*al-inqiyād*), surmounting his partner (*taghallub 'alā ṣāḥibihi*), negligence in most cases.
9. ṬSMS: Reduction of the skull (*inkhifādh umm al-ra's*), which is the place of the thinking brain, is a sign of greed (*ḥirṣ*).
11. H: Reduction inside at the place of the two horns [*? al-qarnayn*] indicate adulteration, badness of secret thought, and frivolous play (*'abath*).
14. SṬ: A very big head is a sign of stupidity (*balah*) and restlessness (*iḍṭirāb*).
17. ṬSN: Raised [hairs], indicate bad understanding, because of the close similarity to the hairs of beasts.
- 19: H: Excessive reddishness (*ṣuhūba mufrīṭa*) like the hairs of the Slavs (*ṣaqāliba*) indicates bad understanding, badness of intention (*ḥubth al-nīya*), and greed.
21. SMS: [20. ṬN': Hair standing, thick (*al-qā'im al-kathth*), coarse (*khashin*), black (*aswad*), hairy (*azabb*) on the head, breast, belly and the rest of the body,] a sign of bravery (*shajā'a*)
23. SṬ: Soft hair (*layyin al-sha'ar*) is a sign of cowardice (*jubn*), fury and slyness.

24. H: Many hairs on the belly indicate a desirous character, and [on] the cross indicate bravery, and on the shoulder and the neck, stupidity and courage.
31. ἮΣ: Hair on the shoulders and not on the other parts of the body indicates negligence and bravery.
32. H: Hair of the neck is an indication of strength, power, greatness, and courage, because of the likeliness with the lion.
33. H: They agree in the most laudable hairs and [that it is] most indicative of the superior, intelligence, goodness of the character, it is a man [with] soft [hair], [which is] in the middle between multitude and fewness, between blackness and reddishness, between curly and straight, between fineness and thickness, and between length and shortness.
35. H: They agree in the most laudable eyebrow and [that it is] most indicative of a good character, beautiful portrayal; it the eyebrow [which is] even, extended, beautiful in placing and growing of the hair, and the two parts touch each other; [it has] fineness, elevation of the rear part in the direction of the temple, prettiness, and a little elevation away from the eye.
39. ἮΣ: A wide eyebrow, triangular in its curving is a sign of bad intention.
40. Σ'Β: Wide connected eyebrows indicate pride, love of amusement and joking.
49. ΝΣΜΣ: If the gaze of the eye is similar to the gaze of a boy, together with smiling, happiness and joy on the face of its owner, it is a sign of longevity and power of the spirit.
51. ἮΣΜΣ: A small blue eye is a sign of shamelessness, use of stratagems and love of women.
55. ΣἮΣ: If something like a necklace is around the pupil, it is a sign of envy, squandering, cowardice and evil.
59. ΣΜΣ: A prominent pupil with a very little eye is a sign of stupidity.
65. ΣἮΜΣ: A blue or intensively green eye indicates evil and faithlessness.
75. ΣΜΣ: A great forehead is a sign of laziness.
78. ἮΝΣ: A high forehead is a sign of bravery and.
80. Σ: A convex forehead is a sign of shame.
82. ἮΣΒ: A forehead with engraved lines on its rounding and the even part is a sign of negligence and stupidity, but God knows best.
85. H: If the ear is excessive in size, exceeding in proportion the other extremities of the head, it is a sign which shows stupidity, bad ambition, lying, and bad understanding.
86. ΣἮ: A big and thick ear is a sign of greed and little ambition.
90. ΣἮΝ: A big and thin ear is a sign of [lack of] understanding, ignorance, adultery, a sign, consisting in hair growing out of the ear opening.
93. [H]: They agree that the good quality of the nose indicates everything good; it is beautiful, even in its position, appropriate in the tip and the ridge; the nostrils; [appropriate] in thickness and thinness, with visible lines.
102. ΝἮΣΜΣ: A short snub-nose is a sign of pride and bad ambition.
103. ΝΣ: A nose whose nostrils are wide and chubby, is a sign of fury and evil.

116. SṬNS: Teeth very much split into two parts are a sign of miserable character.
117. ṬNS: Teeth protruding out of the gums are a sign of greed and bad ambition.
122. S: Fleshiness of the face is a sign of laziness and ignorance.
124. NS: A slim face indicates concern about things and greed.
128. NS: Ugliness in the face is a sign of a bad character.
129. SN: A long face is a sign of impudence and ignorance.
130. H: A triangular face indicates courage, impudence, evil. The more triangular it is, the more courage he has.
131. ṬSN: A long face with inflated temples, small head and eyes, and inflated jugular veins are a sign of stupidity, ignorance and shamelessness.
138. ṬSN: A fine beautiful voice indicates stupidity and triviality.
141. SN: A powerful beautiful voice is a sign of cleverness and stupidity.
143. S: A fast high speaking [person] will be furious, quick in his affairs, and has a bad character.
147. SN: One who overwhelms himself with laughing is vicious and ignorant.
150. S: One who is overcome with snorting, when he laughs, is negligent and stupid, – but God knows best.
153. S: Weakness in breath is a sign of little cleverness and vice versa.
157. S: Green and black color with lightly-hairy skin is are a sign of a bad character and lack of understanding.
160. SN: A color which is similar to the flame of fire indicates precipitance and madness
178. SṬN: A turned chin is a sign of intelligence and joking.
179. SN: A chin free of beard hair is a sign of bad understanding and shamelessness.
184. SN: A short neck indicates slyness and badness; together with shortness
185. ṬNS: A middle even neck is of laudable significance,
186. ø: and a long thin neck is a sign of cowardice and malice.
189. SN: A neck with visible veins and swollen jugular veins indicates fury, malice and ignorance.
190. ø: A thick neck and thick veins indicate lack of understanding.
191. ṬNS: A long, soft and fine neck indicates bad understanding.
201. H: Full shoulders hanging down indicate laudable acting, – God knows best.
206. SṬN: A breast made broad indicates stupidity, – God knows best.
208. SN: Tight and fleshy ribs indicates ignorance.
209. S: Light and fine ribs are a sign of a weak heart.

## Appendix III: A checklist of manuscripts containing the *Riyāsa*

A. Manuscripts of the the physiognomical work of Ibn Abī ibn abi Ṭālib al-Dimashqi. Items with a square “□” have been studied with digital images. Items with an asterisk “\*” have been consulted in the original.

1. □ Alexandria, Al-Maktaba al-Baladiyya, 3612 (olim Fun. 53 ?)  
1298 h. / 1880 CE.<sup>52</sup>
2. Ankara, Milli Kütüphane, A 5574  
74 pp.; 16.1 x 11.5 cm; 13 lines;
3. Baghdad, Maktabat al-Awqāf al-Markaziyya, 5514  
75 ff.<sup>53</sup>
4. Baghdad, Maktabat al-Awqāf al-Markaziyya, 6279  
25 ff., 1255 h. / 1839 CE.<sup>54</sup>
5. Baghdad, al-Maktaba al-Qādiriyya, 1345  
59 ff., 1322 h. / 1904 CE; 23 x 17.5 cm.<sup>55</sup>
6. □ Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Landberg 125  
B; 89 ff.; 930 h. / 1524 CE; (; ca. 900/1494; ).<sup>56</sup>
7. □ Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Sprenger 1930  
C; ff. 1v–26 (28 ff.); 20.5 x 14.7 cm; 19 lines; middle of 12th/18th century.<sup>57</sup>
8. Birmingham, University of Birmingham, Islamic Arabic 1128 I  
41 ff., 21.8 x 16.7 cm, 16 lines; 1904 CE; *al-Firāsa li-ajl al-siyāsa*.<sup>58</sup>
9. □ Bursa, Yazma ve eski basma eserler kütüphanesi, Hüseyin Celebi 882 (or 885?)<sup>59</sup>  
ff. 1–53; 18 x 13 cm; *Kitāb al-firāsa*; ff. 54–83; *al-Siyāsa fī ‘ilm al-firāsa*.<sup>60</sup>
10. Bursa, Yazma ve eski basma eserler kütüphanesi, Hüseyin Celebi Edeb. 36  
ff. 1v–53v (89 ff.); 18.5 x 13.3 cm; 17 lines; *al-Firāsa li-ahl al-Siyāsa*; ff. 54r–83v.<sup>61</sup>

52 Abū ‘Alī 1929: 53; Brockelmann 1937–1949: 2: 130.

53 Karabulut 2008: 2497

54 Karabulut 2008: 2497

55 Ra’ūf 1974–1980: f: 285–286; Karabulut 2008: 2497.

56 Ahlwardt 1887–1899: 4: 554–555 no. 5371.

57 Ahlwardt 1887–1899: 4: 555–556, no. 5372. c.1150/1737, ff. 1v–26v

58 Gottschalk 1985: 2: 163, no. 885.

59 Ghersetti 2007: 314; I thank Antonella Ghersetti for providing me copies of the manuscript.

60 Liste 1951: 45, no. 106; Karabulut 2008: 2497.

61 Ritter 1950: 91; Rescher 1914: 53, no. 33; Karabulut 2008: 2497.

11. Bursa, Yazma ve eski basma eserler kütüphanesi, Hüseyin Çelebi, 1847
12. Cairo, Dār al-Kutub, 1VI 150<sup>62</sup>
13. □ Cairo, Dār al-Kutub, 3506  
A;
14. Cairo, Dār al-Kutub, Ṭalʿat 452  
*Risāla fī ʿilm al-firāsa*.<sup>63</sup>
15. Cairo, Dār al-Kutub, ʿIlm al-firāsa 24  
*al-Siyāsa fī ʿilm al-firāsa*.<sup>64</sup>
16. Cairo, Dār al-Kutub, ʿIlm al-firāsa 25  
*al-Siyāsa fī ʿilm al-firāsa*.<sup>65</sup>
17. Cairo, Dār al-Kutub, ʿIlm al-firāsa 26  
*al-Siyāsa fī ʿilm al-firāsa*.<sup>66</sup>
18. Cairo, Dār al-Kutub, ʿIlm al-firāsa 32  
Anonymous; *Risāla fī ʿilm al-firāsa li-ajli l-siyasa*.<sup>67</sup>
19. Cairo, Dār al-Kutub, Ḥikma 37  
*Risāla fī ʿilm al-firāsa li-ajli l-siyasa*.<sup>68</sup>
20. Cairo, Dār al-Kutub, Ghaybāt Taymūr 95<sup>69</sup>
21. Cairo, Dār al-Kutub, İjtimāʿ Ṭalʿat 615  
Anonymous; *Kitāb al-siyāsa wa-l-firāsa fī tadbīr al-riyāsa*.<sup>70</sup>
22. Cairo, Dār al-Kutub, Firāsa 3  
*al-Siyāsa fī ʿilm al-firāsa*.<sup>71</sup>
23. Cairo, Dār al-Kutub, Firāsa 4  
*al-Siyāsa fī ʿilm al-firāsa*.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Brockelmann 1937–1949: 2: 130.

<sup>63</sup> Online catalogue <http://www.darelkotob.gov.eg/index.html> (27.3.2017).

<sup>64</sup> Online catalogue <http://www.darelkotob.gov.eg/index.html> (27.3.2017).

<sup>65</sup> Online catalogue <http://www.darelkotob.gov.eg/index.html> (27.3.2017).

<sup>66</sup> Online catalogue <http://www.darelkotob.gov.eg/index.html> (27.3.2017).

<sup>67</sup> Online catalogue <http://www.darelkotob.gov.eg/index.html> (27.3.2017).

<sup>68</sup> Online catalogue <http://www.darelkotob.gov.eg/index.html> (27.3.2017).

<sup>69</sup> Online catalogue <http://www.darelkotob.gov.eg/index.html> (27.3.2017).

<sup>70</sup> Online catalogue <http://www.darelkotob.gov.eg/index.html> (27.3.2017).

<sup>71</sup> Online catalogue <http://www.darelkotob.gov.eg/index.html> (27.3.2017).

<sup>72</sup> Online catalogue <http://www.darelkotob.gov.eg/index.html> (27.3.2017).

24. Cairo, Dār al-Kutub, Firāsa 5  
*al-Siyāsa fī ‘ilm al-firāsa.*<sup>73</sup>
25. □ Cambridge, University Library, Or. 707  
B; 52 ff.; 20 x 13.8 cm, 17 ll.; 1282 h. / 1865 A.D; *Al-Risāla fī ‘ilm al-firāsa.*<sup>74</sup>
26. □ Çorum, Hasan Paşa İl Halk Kütüphanesi, 3095.  
A; 44 ff.; 20.5 x 13.0 cm; 21 lines; *Al-Risāla fī l-‘ilm al-firāsa li-ajli l-Siyāsa.*<sup>75</sup>
27. Damascus, al-Maktaba al-Zāhiriyya, ‘amm ṭıbb 6735  
13 ff.; 21 x 15.5 cm; 23 lines.<sup>76</sup>
28. Damascus, al-Maktaba al-Zāhiriyya, ‘amm ṭıbb 8882  
70 ff; 17.5 x 11 cm; 15 lines; *Risāla fī ‘ilm al-firāsa.*<sup>77</sup>
29. Doha, Mu’assasat Qaṭar li-Tanmiyyat al-Mujtami’, [no shelfmark]  
59 ff.; 19 lines; 22 x 16 cm; *al-Siyāsa fī ‘ilm al-firāsa.*<sup>78</sup>
30. Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, 3220  
ff. 1–12 (100 ff.); 21.2 x 15.4 cm; 12th/18th century; *al-Siyāsa fī ‘ilm al-firāsa.*<sup>79</sup>
31. Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, 4727  
A; ff. 1–29 (98 ff.); 23 x 16.5 cm; 12th/18th century; *al-Siyāsa fī ‘ilm al-firāsa.*<sup>80</sup>
32. Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, 5434.  
26 ff.; 28 x 19.8 cm; 10th/16th century; *Risāla fī ‘ilm al-firāsa.*<sup>81</sup>
33. □ Edirne, Selimiye Yazmalar Kütüphanesi, 590  
B; ff. 1–62v (63 ff.) 1015 AH / 1606 CE<sup>82</sup>;
34. Erzurum, İl Halk Kütüphanesi, 23964  
89 ff.; 19.0 x 12.5 cm; 17 lines;<sup>83</sup>;

<sup>73</sup> Online catalogue <http://www.darelkotob.gov.eg/index.html> (27.3.2017).

<sup>74</sup> Browne 1922: 108, no. 665; I thank Nicolas Hintermann for having made photographs of sample pages of the MS.

<sup>75</sup> Karabulut 2008: 2497.

<sup>76</sup> Khūrī 1969: 312; Şabbāgh 1980: 314; Karabulut 2008: 2497.

<sup>77</sup> Khūrī 1969: 312; Karabulut 2008: 2497.

<sup>78</sup> <http://www.aruc.org/ar/web/auc/search> (18.3.2017).

<sup>79</sup> Arberry 1955–1966: 1: 90; Karabulut 2008: 2497.

<sup>80</sup> Arberry 1955–1966: 6: 71; Karabulut 2008: 2497.

<sup>81</sup> Arberry 1955–1966: 7: 128; Karabulut 2008: 2497.

<sup>82</sup> Karabulut 2008: 2497.

<sup>83</sup> [https://www.yazmalar.gov.tr/detay\\_goster.php?k=13847](https://www.yazmalar.gov.tr/detay_goster.php?k=13847) (18.3.2017).

35. □ \* Glasgow, University, Hunter 66 (T.3.4)  
ff. 83–110 (or 112?); 11 7/8 x 8 1/8 (= 30.2 x 20.6 cm); 21 lines.<sup>84</sup>
36. Heidelberg, Universitätsbibliothek, A 296,  
c. 1600 CE, ff. 117r–126r; 13 ll.; author in MS: Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, *Kitāb al-firāsa*;  
identified in the catalogue as *Kitāb aḥkām al-firāsa* by Muḥammad ibn abī Ṭālib  
al-Anṣārī, with reference to MS Berlin Ahlwardt 5371 and 5372 (= Landberg 125 and  
Sprenger 1930).<sup>85</sup>
37. Irbid, Jāmi‘at al-Yarmūk, [no shelfmark]  
20 ff.; 15.5 x 20 cm; 11th / 17th century; *Maqāṣid min ‘ilm al-firāsa li-ajl al-siyāsa*.<sup>86</sup>
38. Istanbul, Köprülü Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi, 1601.  
ff. 197v–235r; 16.5 x 12 cm; 15 lines; 8th c. / 14th c. CE; *Kitāb al-Firāsa li-ajl al-siyāsa*.<sup>87</sup>
39. Istanbul, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Ayasofya 3782
40. Istanbul, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Esad Efendi 1847.<sup>88</sup>
41. Istanbul, Topkapı Kütüphanesi, Ahmet III 3581.<sup>89</sup>
42. Istanbul, Topkapı Kütüphanesi, Ahmet III 3589  
38 ff., 19.5 x 13.5 cm; 9th/15th c.; *al-Firāsa li-ajli l-siyasa*.<sup>90</sup>
43. Istanbul, Üniversitesi Kütüphanesi, Câmîiatü İstanbul 490.<sup>91</sup>
44. □ Leipzig, Universitätsbibliothek, Vollers 857  
B; ff. 1r–46r (59 ff.); 15 x 21 cm; 997 H. / 1588 A.D.; *Kitāb al-siyāsa fī ‘ilm al-firāsa*.  
Incomplete at the end.<sup>92</sup>
45. \* London, British Library, Or. 6655, (DL 41)  
68 ff.; 15th c. A.D., lacunae supplied 18th century; *Risāla fī ‘ilm al-firāsa*.<sup>93</sup>
46. □ London, Wellcome Institute Library, WMS Arabic 34  
B; 37 ff. 8 Rab. II 1262 / 5 April 1846 CE; 20.4 x 15.2 cm; 17 lines.<sup>94</sup>

<sup>84</sup> Young/Aiken 1908: 458–459, no. 66; Robson 1948: 17.

<sup>85</sup> Berenbach 1937: 383–384.

<sup>86</sup> <http://www.aruc.org> (18.3.2017).

<sup>87</sup> Şeşen 1986: 2: 312; Karabulut 2008: 2497.

<sup>88</sup> Karabulut 2008: 2497

<sup>89</sup> Karabulut 2008: 2497.

<sup>90</sup> Karatay 1964: 3: 799–800; Karabulut 2008: 2497.

<sup>91</sup> Karabulut 2008: 2497.

<sup>92</sup> Vollers 1906: 284–285, no. 857; Shawwāl 1006 / 26 May – 11 June 1598 AD; Wiesmüller 2016: 268–269.

<sup>93</sup> Ellis/Edwards 1912: 41.

<sup>94</sup> Iskandar 1967: 189–190.

47. London, Wellcome Institute Library, WMS Arabic 120  
23 ff.; 214 x 160 mm; 21 lines; naskh; 1845 CE.<sup>95</sup>
48. □ Los Angeles, University of Los Angeles, Arabic Medical Manuscript Collection Ms. 27  
B; ff. 1r–21v; incomplete at the end; 340 x 210 mm (230 x 125); 25 lines; clear large naskhī; undated (modern).<sup>96</sup>
49. Los Angeles, University of Los Angeles, Arabic Medical Manuscript Collection Ms. 78 D; pp. 41–49; 235 x 145 mm (180 x 80); 25 lines; small nasta‘liq; 10th / 16th c.; *Risālat ‘ayn fī l-firāsa*; date of the *ijāsāt riwāya* for the *Siyāsa* on p.41, ll. 2–9: Šafar 724 AH / 29 January – 26 February 1324 CE.<sup>97</sup>
50. □ Manisa, İL Halk Kütüphanesi 2918/1  
D; ff. 1–51v; 23.5 x 14.5 cm; *Risālat al-‘ayn fī l-firāsa*.<sup>98</sup>
51. Mashhad, Astān-i Quds-i Raḍawī, 22135  
13th/19th.<sup>99</sup>
52. Mashhad, Astān-i Quds-i Raḍawī, ḍ 11016  
55 ff.; 13 lines; 20 x 15 cm; 1259 h. / 1843 CE.<sup>100</sup>  
[Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, arabe 625 = 1941 ??]
53. Medina, al-Jāmi‘a al-Islāmiyya, [no shelfmark]  
20 ff.; 29 lines; *al-Siyāsa fī ‘ilm al-firāsa*.<sup>101</sup>
54. Medina, al-Jāmi‘a al-Islāmiyya, [no shelfmark]  
43 pp.; 22 lines; 1349 AH / 1930 AD.; *Risāla li-‘ilm al-firāsa*.<sup>102</sup>
55. Medina, al-Jāmi‘a al-Islāmiyya, [no shelfmark]  
2 ff.; 29 lines; *al-Firāsa li-ajl al-siyāsa*.<sup>103</sup>
56. □ Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, arabe 2759  
B; 44 ff. 21.5 x 15.5 cm; 21 lines; 1075 H. / 1664 A.D.<sup>104</sup>

95 Iskandar 1967: 190.

96 Iskandar 1984: 75.

97 Iskandar 1984: 37–39.

98 [https://www.yazmalar.gov.tr/detay\\_goster.php?k=13847](https://www.yazmalar.gov.tr/detay_goster.php?k=13847) (18.3.2017).

99 Fankhā 2012–2015: 18: 579–580.

100 Fankhā 2012–2015: 18: 580; Fikrat 1990: 314; Karabulut 2008: 2497.

101 <http://www.aruc.org/ar/web/auc/search;jsessionid=674F07397E2BB3C12078C9AAB968A5E-A?page=FullDisplay&searchType=Bib&mId=2831461> (18.3.2017).

102 <http://www.aruc.org> (18.3.2017).

103 <http://www.aruc.org/ar/web/auc/search;jsessionid=674F07397E2BB3C12078C9AAB968A5E-A?page=FullDisplay&searchType=Bib&mId=2967346> (18.3.2017).

104 Slane 1883–1895: 497 (Ancien fonds 963); Vajda 1953: 626 *Siyāsa fī ‘ilm al-firāsa*.



57. □ Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, arabe 5928  
45 ff.; 19 x 14 cm; 17th c. A.D.; *al-Firāsa li-ajl al-siyāsa*.<sup>105</sup>
58. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Suppl. Turk. 241  
A; ff. 2v–48r, 16.5 x 11 cm; 21–30 Shawwāl 952 AH / 25 Dec. 1545– 3 Jan. 1546 AD.  
*Risālat al-qiyāfa*.<sup>106</sup>
59. Qum, Fayḍiyye, 663  
55 ff.; 13 lines; 20 x 15 cm.<sup>107</sup>
60. □ Riyādh, Maktabat al-Malik ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-‘āmma, 415  
B; 100 ff.; 25 x 17 cm; 9 lines; 954 AH / 1547 AD; *Kitāb fī ‘ilm al-firāsa*.<sup>108</sup>
61. Riyādh, Maktabat al-Malik ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-‘āmma,  
39 ff.; 20 lines; 18 x 22 cm; *al-Siyāsa fī ‘ilm al-firāsa*.<sup>109</sup>
62. □ Riyādh, Jāmi‘at al-Malik Sa‘ūd 3524  
B; 6 ff.; 15 x 21.7 cm; 12th/18th century.<sup>110</sup>
63. Riadh, Jāmi‘a al-Imām Muḥammad Ibn Sa‘ūd al-Islāmiyya, [no shelfmark]  
41 ff.; 20 lines; 13 x 21 cm.; 1322 AH / 1904 AD; *Risāla fī l-firāsa*.<sup>111</sup>
64. Riadh, Jāmi‘a al-Imām Muḥammad Ibn Sa‘ūd al-Islāmiyya, [no shelfmark]  
12 x 18 cm; 873 AH / 1468 AD; *Risāla fī l-firāsa*.<sup>112</sup>
65. Riadh, Jāmi‘a al-Imām Muḥammad Ibn Sa‘ūd al-Islāmiyya, [no shelfmark]  
16 x 23 cm; 11th / 17th century; *al-Siyāsa fī ‘ilm al-firāsa*.<sup>113</sup>
66. Qum, Mar‘ashī, 14999  
26 ff.; 15 lines; 21.5 x 18 cm; end of 13/19 cm.<sup>114</sup>
67. □ Tehran, Majlis, 4550  
B; 37 ff. 17 lines; 17.5 x 13.5cm; 12th/18th c..<sup>115</sup>

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105 Blochet 1925: 141–142.

106 Blochet 1932: 278–279.

107 Fankhā 2012–2015: 18: 580; f. 1, 130.

108 <http://www.al-mostafa.info/data/arabic/depot/gap.php?file=m013356.pdf> (18.3.2017).

109 <http://www.aruc.org/ar/web/auc/search> (18.3.2017).

110 <http://makhtota.ksu.edu.sa/search/makhtota/3808/1#.WM0qJLGX-gQ> (18.3.2017).

111 <http://www.aruc.org/ar/web/auc/search> (18.3.2017).

112 <http://www.aruc.org/ar/web/auc/search> (18.3.2017).

113 <http://www.aruc.org> (18.3.2017).

114 Fankhā 2012–2015: 18: 580; Ḥusaynī 1975–2013: 37: no. 829, pp. 704–705.

115 Fankhā 2012–2015: 18: 579; Dānish Pazhūh / Anwarī 1995–2011: 7: 5547; photo (1v ?) p. 6074.

68. □ Tehran, Majlis, 15588  
13th / 19th c.; *‘ilm al-firāsa li-ajli l-siyāsa*.<sup>116</sup>  
B; 13th c. h. / 19th c. CE
69. Tehran, Malik, 3194/2  
ff. 83–187; 17 lines; 22 x 14 cm; 12th/18th .<sup>117</sup>
70. Tehran, Sipahsālār, 2925  
ff. 247–273; 1082 h.<sup>118</sup>
71. Tunis, Dār al-Kutub al-Waṭaniyya, 3878  
32 ff.<sup>119</sup>
72. Tunis, Dār al-Kutub al-Waṭaniyya, Ḥasan Ḥuṣṣnī ‘Abd al-Wahhāb 18514/3  
ff. 10–35.<sup>120</sup>
73. □ Washington-Bethesda, National Institute of Health, MS A 58  
B; c. 1400 A.D., 92 ff.; 21 x 15.7 cm; 9 lines; *Kitāb jalīl fī l-firāsa li-Muḥammad ibn abī Ṭālib al-Anṣārī al-Ṣūfī al-Dimashqī*.<sup>121</sup>

Manuscripts of the abbreviated version by Ibn al-Akfānī:

74. Istanbul, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Ayasofya 3782  
33 ff.; 17 lines; 15./16. Jhd.; *Ikmāl al-Siyāsa fī ‘ilm al-firāsa*.<sup>122</sup>
75. Istanbul, Topkapı Kütüphanesi, Hazine 556  
66 ff.; 20.0 x 13.0 cm; 12 lines; *Asās al-riyāsa fī ‘ilm al-firāsa*.<sup>123</sup>
76. Medina, ‘Ārif Ḥikmet Library, 23 ḥikma wa-falsafa  
*Ikmāl al-Siyāsa fī ‘ilm al-firāsa*.<sup>124</sup>
77. Oxford, Bodleian Library, Huntington 348  
ff. 5r–156r; *Kitāb ar-Riyāsa fī ‘ilm al-firāsa li-Ibn Waḥshiyya*.<sup>125</sup>

**116** Fankhā 2012–2015: 18: 579.

**117** Fankhā 2012–2015: 18: 579.

**118** Fankhā 2012–2015: 18: 579.

**119** Karabulut 2008: 2497.

**120** Karabulut 2008: 2497.

**121** Schullian/Sommer 1950: 316; Scans of ff. 2R, 86v and 87 r: <https://www.nlm.nih.gov/hmd/arabic/physiognomy3.html> [retrieved 5.2.2017]; description: [http://dla.library.upenn.edu/dla/schoenberg/record.html?q=Dimashqi&id=SCHOENBERG\\_36018&](http://dla.library.upenn.edu/dla/schoenberg/record.html?q=Dimashqi&id=SCHOENBERG_36018&).

**122** Witkam 1989: 72; Karabulut 2008: 4: 2457, no. 6685, 2.

**123** Karatay 1964: 3: 900–901, no. 7480; Karabulut 2008: 2497.

**124** Witkam 1989: 72.

**125** Uri 1787: 120, no. 479.

78. □ Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, arabe 2762  
32 ff. 21 x 15 cm; 23 lines; *Asās al-Riyāsa fī ‘ilm al-firāsa*. Attributed on the title page to “Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Sā‘id al-Anṣārī”.<sup>126</sup>

A partial Turkish translation

79. □ Princeton, University Library, Garret 373Y  
ff. 121v–126v;

Manuscripts erroneously indicated to contain Dimashqī’s physiognomy

- X1. Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Or. 10179  
Erroneously classified as a manuscript; it is a copy of the printed edition of 1882 CE.<sup>127</sup>
- X2. □ Leipzig, Universitätsbibliothek, Vollers 751  
Erroneously identified with the *Siyāsa*; the title in the manuscript is *Kitāb fī ‘ilm al-farāsa wa-ma‘rifat al-khayl*.
- X3. □ Leipzig, Universitätsbibliothek, Vollers 751  
Erroneously identified with the *Siyāsa*; the title in the manuscript is *‘Ilm al-farāsa fī ma‘rifat al-khayl*.
- X4. Patna, Nur Bakhsh Library, H.L. 2925  
*ff. 1–35r; al-Farāsa fī ‘ilm al-riyāsa*: A work on horsemanship.<sup>128</sup> ff. 35r–59v; *Kitāb al-Siyāsa fī ‘ilm al-farāsa*: also, on horsemanship.<sup>129</sup> ff. 85v–89v; *Kitāb al-Siyāsa fī ‘ilm al-farāsa*: also on horsemanship; in the catalogue the transliteration *firāsa* is used in all three cases, which led to the false attribution.<sup>130</sup>
- X5. Sanktpeterburg, Oriental Institute, B 871  
33 ff.; 1809 CE; In the catalogue with the misleading title *al-Siyāsa fī ‘ilm al-farāsa*; it is a work on horsemanship; the author’s name is ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib. Id is identified with the MS Gotha, Pertsch 2079.<sup>131</sup>

<sup>126</sup> Slane 1883–1895: 498; Witkam 1989: 72–74.

<sup>127</sup> Personal communication Rauch (4.4.2017).

<sup>128</sup> Brockelmann 1938–1948 :S 2: 16; but see Muqtaḍir 1908–1940: 28: 48–49.

<sup>129</sup> Muqtaḍir 1908–1980: 28: 50–52.

<sup>130</sup> Muqtaḍir 1908–1980: 28: 56.

<sup>131</sup> Chalidow 1986: 1: 492 no. 10342.

## Appendix IV: Arabic glossary

In the following glossary, references to Dimashqī (Dim.) refer to the paragraph numbers in appendices I and II, the references to Aristotle (Ari.) to the edition of Foerster 1893: 1: 4–90, the references to Polemon (Pol.) to the edition of Hoyland 2007b, and the references of Adamantios (Ada.) to the edition of Repath 2007.

اخر	<i>mu'akhhara</i>	rear part: Dim. 1, 35; Pol. 416.8; 380, 9; Ada. 528.11 ἄκρον.
اذن	<i>udhn</i>	ear: Dim. 85, 86, 90; Ari. οὖς 52.6; Pol. 420.4; Ada. 530.16 οὔς.
ارنب	<i>arnaba</i>	tip of the nose, hare: Dim. 93; Ari. λαγῶς 12.4 ;Ada. 502.22 λαγῶς.
اسد	<i>asad</i>	lion: Dim. 32; Ari. λέων 10.13 Pol. 384.5; Ada. 516.21 λέων.
اكر	<i>ukra</i>	ball: Dim. 1;
اله	<i>Allāh</i>	God: Dim. 83, 143, 150, 202; Pol. 342.5;
ام	<i>umm al-ra's</i>	skull: Dim. 1;
امر	<i>amr pl umūr</i>	thing, affair: Dim. 124, 143; Ari. ἐπιπρέπεια 44.7 Pol. 390.11;
امر	<i>imāra</i>	position: Dim. 1;
انف	<i>anf</i>	nose, pride: Dim. 102.103; Ari. ῥινία 36.14 Pol. 416.7; Ada. 504, 3; 528,11 ῥίς.
بدن	<i>badan</i>	body: Dim. 31; Ari. σῶμα 4.1 Pol. 376, 18; 410,15;
بدي	<i>bādin</i>	apparent: Dim. 189; Pol. 340.4;
بسم	<i>tabassum</i>	smiling: Dim. 49;
بطن	<i>baṭn pl buṭūn</i>	belly, depth: Dim. 1, 24; Ari. κοιλία 20.4
بطن	<i>bāṭin</i>	hidden: Dim. 1; Pol. 364.19;
بلد	<i>balāda</i>	stupidity: Dim. 83; Ari. μαλακός 18.10 Pol. 354, 15; 390, 10;
بله	<i>balah</i>	stupidity: Dim. 14; Ari. εὐήθης 22.10 Pol. 408.6; Ada. 524.3 μωρός.
بني	<i>binya</i>	structure: Dim. 1;
بهم	<i>bahīma pl bahā'im</i>	beast: Dim. 17; Pol. 374.16;
تفخ	<i>intifāḥ</i>	being inflated, swelling: Dim. 131;
ثلث	<i>tathlīth</i>	triangularity: Dim. 130;
ثلث	<i>muthallath</i>	triangular: Dim. 39, 13; Ada. 504.2 τετράγωνος.
جين	<i>jubn</i>	cowardice: Dim. 23, 185; Ari. δειλία 76.11; Pol. 418,16; 439, 9; Ada. 534.29 δειλός.
جبه	<i>jabha</i>	forehead: Dim. 75,78, 80, 83; Ari. μέτωπον 26.17; Pol. 344, 17; 416,19; Ada. 528.23 μέτωπον.
جد	<i>jiddan</i>	very: Dim. 14, 116;
جرأ	<i>jarā'a</i>	courage: Dim. 24, 32; Pol. 366.6;
جرأ	<i>jur'a</i>	courage: Dim. 130;
جزأ	<i>juz'ī</i>	singular: Dim. 1;

جعد	<i>ja'āda</i>	curliness: Dim. 33; Ari. οὔλος 64.17; Pol. 430.9; Ada. 532, 9; 534, 29 οὐλότριχης.
جلد	<i>jild</i>	skin: Dim. 157; Ari. χρώς, χρώμα 18.9
جمل	<i>jamīl</i>	beautiful: Dim. 35;
جن	<i>junūn</i>	madness: Dim. 160; Ari. μανία 40.12; Pol. 368,101; 378, 24; Ada. 508,25; 512, 25 μανία.
جن	<i>majnūn</i>	made broad: Dim. 147; Ari. μανικός 74.11
جهل	<i>jāhil</i>	ignorant: Dim. 147; Ari. μωρός, μαργός, ἀβέλτερος 64.15; Pol. 384.12;
جهل	<i>jahl</i>	ignorance: Dim. 90,122, 129, 131, 208;
جهل	<i>jahāla</i>	ignorance: Dim. 189;
جود	<i>jayyid</i>	goodness: Dim. 35; Pol. 380.8;
جود	<i>jūda</i>	goodness: Dim. 33; Pol. 416.12; Ada. 528.12 συνेतός.
جود	<i>jūd</i>	generosity: Dim. 1, 33;
حب	<i>ḥubb</i>	love: Dim. 40, 51; Pol. 340.12;
حجب	<i>ḥājib pl ḥawājib</i>	eyebrow: Dim. 35,39, 40; Ari. ὄφρῦς 50.1; Pol. 494, 2; 418,9; Ada. 498.23 ὄφρῦς.
حد	<i>ḥadd</i>	definition: Dim. 1; Pol. 368.10;
حذب	<i>muḥaddab</i>	convex: Dim. 80; Ari. ἔγκρυτος 30.14
حنق	<i>ḥadaqa</i>	pupil: Dim. 55, 59; Pol. 109.4; Ada. 498.13 κόρη.
حرص	<i>ḥirṣ</i>	greed: Dim. 9,86,117, 124; Pol. 430.9; Ada. 534.29 κερδαλέος.
حسد	<i>ḥasad</i>	envy: Dim. 55; Ari. φθονερός 22.16; Pol. 418.14; Ada. 530.3 βάσκανος.
حسن	<i>ḥasan</i>	beautyful: Dim. 35,138, 141; Ari. κομψός 48.8
حفظ	<i>ḥifẓ</i>	memory: Dim. 1;
حقد	<i>ḥiqd</i>	malice: Dim. 185.189; Pol. 378.23;
حمد	<i>maḥmūd</i>	laudable: Dim. 1.185; Pol. 408.3; Ada. 424.1 ἐπαιετός.
حمد	<i>maḥmada</i>	laudable act: Dim. 201;
حمد	<i>aḥmad</i>	most laudable: Dim. 33.35;
حمق	<i>aḥmaq</i>	stupid: Dim. 150; Pol. 384.1;
حمق	<i>ḥumq</i>	stupidity: Dim. 24,59, 85, 131, 138, 141, 206; Pol. 109.4; Ada. 198,14; 500, 6 ἡλιθίσις, ἐμβρπντήτος.
حنق	<i>ḥanaq</i>	fury: Dim. 23;
حول	<i>ḥāl</i>	state, properties: Dim. 1; Ari. ἔθος, ἔξις, ἥθος, πάθημα.
حول	<i>iḥtiyāl</i>	use of stratagems: Dim. 51; Pol. 386.2;
حي	<i>ḥayā'</i>	shame: Dim. 51, 80, 131, 179; Ari. δειλία 76.11; Pol. 420.16; Ada. 530.21 ἀναιδής.
خبث	<i>khubth</i>	badness: Dim. 11,19, 39, 102, 184; Pol. 378.23;
خد	<i>khadd pl akhidda</i>	cheek: Dim. 83; Pol. 418.12; Ada. 530.1 παρειός.
خرج	<i>khārij</i>	exceeding: Dim. 85;

خرط	<i>munkhariṭ</i>	turned: Dim. 178; Ari. ἄνωθεν διεξυσμένος 36.14
خشن	<i>khashin</i>	rough: Dim. 20; Pol. 418.3; Ada. 528.27 τραχύς.
خضر	<i>khaḍra</i>	greenness: Dim. 65; Ari. ἔνωχρος 74.5; Pol. 342.6;
خضر	<i>akhḍar</i>	green: Dim. 65, 157; Ari. χλωρός – (306,17); Pol. 344.3; Ada. 500.5 ὠχρότερος.
خط	<i>takhṭīṭ</i>	lines: Dim. 93;
خف	<i>khiffa</i>	lightness, slightness: Dim. 209; Ari. ὀξύς 18.7; Pol. 370.4;
خف	<i>khiffa</i>	triviality: Dim. 138;
خفذا	<i>inkhifādh</i>	reduction: Dim. 9; Ari. ἀνεμμένος, ἄπνοος 20.14
خلق	<i>khulq</i>	nature: Dim. 128,143, 157; Ari. πάθος, πάθημα, ἦθος 12.8; Pol. 432.16; Ada. 536.9 ἄλλο προσ ἄλλος και ἀσελγεις.
خلي	<i>khaliyy</i>	free: Dim. 179; Pol. 352.5;
خول	<i>takhayyul</i>	imagination: Dim. 1; Pol. 386.21;
خون	<i>khiyāna</i>	treachery: Dim. 65; Pol. 418.19;
خير	<i>khayr</i>	superior: Dim. 33; Ari. ἀγαθός, δίκαιος 32.12; Pol. 340.8;
دخل	<i>dukhūl</i>	intrusion: Dim. 11;
دخل	<i>dākhil</i>	inward: Dim. 1;
دعب	<i>du‘āba</i>	joking, jesting: Dim. 178;
دق	<i>diqqa</i>	fineness: Dim. 33, 35, 191, 209; Pol. 408.4; Ada. 524.2 λεπτός.
دل	<i>dalīl</i>	sign: Dim. 9,39, 49, 51, 55, 75, 78, 80, 102, 103, 122, 129, 131, 141, 153, 157, 184, 185; Ari. σημείον 8.5
دل	<i>dalla</i>	show: Dim. 65; Pol. 109.5; Ada. 498.14 κατηγορεῖν.
دل	<i>dalāla</i>	showing: Dim. 86,90, 128, 185;
دل	<i>adall</i>	more/most indicative: Dim. 33.35;
دل	<i>istidlāl</i>	inference: Dim. 1;
دل	<i>dāll</i>	indicating: Dim. 40,59, 83, 85, 116, 117, 124, 130, 138, 160, 178, 179, 184, 189, 190, 191, 206, 208, 209;
دمغ	<i>dimāgh</i>	brain: Dim. 9;
دور	<i>mustadīr</i>	round: Dim. 1; Ari. στρογγύλος, περιφερής 30.5; Pol. 418.15; Ada. 530.4 στρογγύλος.
دور	<i>tadwīr</i>	rounding: Dim. 83;
ذقن	<i>dhakan</i>	chin: Dim. 178.179; Pol. 354, 17; 412,14;
ذکر	<i>tadhakkur</i>	recollection: Dim. 1;
رأس	<i>ra’s</i>	head: Dim. 1, 4, 9, 14, 85, 131; Ari. κεφαλή 34.2; Pol. 420.12; Ada. 531.22 κεφαλή.
رجل	<i>rajul / rijl</i>	man / foot: Dim. 33; Ari. σκέλος 28.5; Pol. 344, 2; 376, 15; Ada. 518.12 πούς.
ردع	<i>murtada‘</i>	kept, prevented: Dim. 51;
رفع	<i>irtifā‘</i>	elevation: Dim. 35; Ari. ἐπιτεινόμενος 20.14; Pol. 344.7;

رق	<i>raqīq</i>	thin: Dim. 90,138, 185; Ari. ὀξύς 18.7; Pol. 410.6; Ada. 524.19 λεπτός.
رقب	<i>raqaba</i>	neck: Dim. 24, 32; Ari. τράχηλος 26.12; Pol. 376, 15; 410,11; Ada. 524.19 τράχηλος.
روح	<i>rūh</i>	spirit: Dim. 49; Ari. ψυχή 4.6; Pol. 388.21;
روي	<i>rawiyya</i>	reflection: Dim. 1;
زب	<i>azabb</i>	hairy, shaggy: Dim. 20;
زرق	<i>azraq</i>	blue: Dim. 65; Ari. γλαυκός 76.13; Pol. 348.1; Ada. 502.1 γλαυκός.
زرق	<i>zurqa</i>	blueness: Dim. 51;
زري	<i>zariyy</i>	bad, miserable: Dim. 116;
زعر	<i>za‘āra</i>	thin-hairness: Dim. 157; Ari. λεῖτος 18.9
زني	<i>zinā’</i>	adulteration, fornication: Dim. 90; Pol. 344.7;
زهو	<i>zahw</i>	pride: Dim. 40;
سيط	<i>sabāṭa</i>	to be lank: Dim. 33; Ari. εὐθύς 38.8
سر	<i>surūr</i>	happiness: Dim. 49; Ari. εὐφραίνεσθαι 40.6
سر	<i>sarīra</i>	secret thought: Dim. 11;
سرع	<i>sarī’</i>	fast, quick: Dim. 143;
سمج	<i>samāḡa</i>	ugliness: Dim. 128; Ari. μικροπρεπής 68.8
سن	<i>sinn</i> pl <i>asnān</i>	tooth: Dim. 116, 117;
سوأ	<i>sū’</i>	badness: Dim. 17,85, 117, 128, 157, 179, 191; Pol. 416.12; Ada. 524.2 κακοήθης.
سوأ	<i>sayyi’</i>	bad: Dim. 143;
سود	<i>sawād</i>	black colour: Dim. 33;
سود	<i>aswad</i>	black: Dim. 20, 157;
سوي	<i>istiwā’</i>	evenness, equality: Dim. 4; Pol. 416.11; Ada. – .
سيمي	<i>sīmā’</i>	mark: Dim. 90;
شبه	<i>ashbaha</i>	to resemble: Dim. 49; Pol. 354.4; Ada. 504.22 ὄϊον.
شبه	<i>shubha</i>	similarity: Dim. 17, 23;
شجع	<i>shajā‘a</i>	bravery: Dim. 21, 24, 31, 78; Ari. ἀνδρεία, ῥώμη 12.9
شخص	<i>shākhīṣ</i>	raised, projecting: Dim. 17; Pol. 408.5; Ada. 524.2 ὀξύς.
شد	<i>shidda</i>	strength: Dim. 32, 208; Pol. 396.3;
شد	<i>shadīd</i>	strong: Dim. 65; Pol. 408.4; Ada. 524.1 καρτερός.
شد	<i>shadda</i>	strengthening, tightness: Dim. 208;
شد	<i>ashadd</i>	stronger: Dim. 130;
شر	<i>sharr</i>	evil: Dim. 55,65, 103, 130, 184; Ari. ἄδικος 46.3; Pol. 420.9; Ada. 530.2 κακοήθης.
شعر	<i>sha‘ar</i> pl <i>shu‘ūr</i>	hair: Dim. 17, 23, 24,31, 32, 33, 35, 90; Ari. τρίχωμα, θρίξ 18.9
شكل	<i>shakl</i>	form: Dim. 1; Ari. σχῆμα 16.12
شوق	<i>shayyiq</i>	desirous: Dim. 24;

صبع	<i>isba'</i>	finger: Dim. 1; Ari. δάκτυλος 54.6; Pol. 396.2; Ada. 520.1 δάκτυλος.
صبو	<i>ṣabiyy</i> pl <i>ṣibyān</i>	child: Dim. 49; Pol. –; Ada. 498 –.
صح	<i>ṣahīh</i>	correct: Dim. 1;
صح	<i>ṣihḥa</i>	truth Dim. 1;
صحب	<i>ṣāhib</i>	partner: Dim. 4, 49; Pol. 390.27; Ada. 498 –.
صدر	<i>ṣadr</i>	chest: Dim. 206; Ari. στήθος 26.13; Pol. 380.18;
صدغ	<i>ṣudgh</i>	temple: Dim. 35, 131; Ari. κρόταφος 38.9
صدغ	<i>ṣudghī</i>	temporal: Dim. 1;
صغر	<i>ṣaghīr</i>	small: Dim. 51; Ari. μικρός 28.5; Ada. PsPo 306, 11 μικρός.
صغر	<i>ṣighar</i>	smallness: Dim. 86, 131; Pol. 109.4; Ada. 498.14 μικρότης.
صقلب	<i>ṣaqāliba</i>	Slavs: Dim. 19;
صلب	<i>ṣulb</i>	cross, solidity?: Dim. 24; Ari. νῶτον 58.3
صلح	<i>ṣāliḥ</i>	sound: Dim. 1; Pol. 356; Ada. 498.13 χρηστός.
صمخ	<i>ṣimākh</i>	ear opening: Dim. 90;
صهيب	<i>ṣuhūba</i>	reddishness: Dim. 19, 33;
صوت	<i>ṣawt</i>	voice: Dim. 138, 141; Ari. φωνή 16.15; Pol. 354.2;
ضحق	<i>ḍahq</i>	laughing: Dim. 147; 150; Pol. 356.2;
ضرب	<i>iḍṭirāb</i>	restlessness: Dim. 14; Pol. 352.3;
ضعف	<i>ḍu'f</i>	weakness: Dim. 153, 209; Ari. ἀσθενής, μαλακός 24.15; Pol. 366, 4; 418,2; Ada. 502.8 ἀσθενής.
ضلع	<i>ḍil'</i> pl <i>aḍlā'</i>	rib: Dim. 208, 209; Ari. πλευρά 26.8; Pol. 402.14;
طبع	<i>ṭab'</i>	character: Dim. 33,35, 116; Ari. (εὐ)φύια; Pol. 354, 13; 356, 3;
طرف	<i>ṭaraf</i> pl <i>aṭrāf</i>	limb: Dim. 35; Ari. ἀκρωτήριον 20.11; Pol. 392.14;
طوق	<i>ṭawq</i>	necklace: Dim. 55, 129;
طول	<i>ṭawīl</i>	long: Dim. 185; Ari. προμήκης, συχνός 50.1; Pol. 388, 13; 394, 16; 410,12; Ada. 524,19; 518, 27 Μακρός; προμήκης.
طول	<i>ṭūl</i>	length: Dim. 33,49, 131, 191; Pol. 344.16;
ظهر	<i>zāhir</i>	visible: Dim. 1; Pol. 384.13;
عبث	<i>'abath</i>	frivolous play: Dim. 11; Ari. ἄθυμος 32.13; Pol. 390.14;
عبر	<i>'ibāra</i>	interpretation: Dim. 1; Ari. Ἑρμηνεία; Pol. 378.21;
عبل	<i>'abāla</i>	chubbiness: Dim. 103; Ari. εὐεκτική 20.8;
عجل	<i>'aǧūl</i>	quick, swift: Dim. 143; Ari. προπετής, ὀξύς, ἐπισπερχής 36.12;
عجل	<i>'aǧala</i>	hurry, precipitance: Dim. 160;
عدل	<i>mu'tadil</i>	Even, central: Dim. 35, 185; Ari. σύμμετρος, μέτριος 36.1; Pol. 416,12< 418, 5; Ada. 528; 528, 30 διηρθρωσθαι; μεγέθους εὖ ἔχον.
عرض	<i>'arīḍ</i>	wide: Dim. 39, 4; Ari. πλατύς 26.10; Pol. 109.3; Ada. 498.13 εὐρύτης.
عرق	<i>'irq</i> , pl <i>'urūq</i>	vein: Dim. 189, 19; Ari. φλέψ 74.18;
عري	<i>i'tarā</i>	to befall, strik, grip: Dim. 150;
عضى	<i>'uḍw</i>	member: Dim. 1, 85; Ari. μέρος 16.16;



عظم	<i>mufaṭṭar?</i> <i>Mu'aṭṭam</i>	split: Dim. 85;
عظم	<i>'aẓīm</i>	great: Dim. 75, 9; Ari. εὐμεγέθης 32.7;
عظم	<i>'uẓm, 'iẓam</i>	greatness: Dim. 1, 86; Ari. μέγεθος 50.1;
عقل	<i>'aql</i>	intelligence: Dim. 1,33, 178; Ari. διάνοια, τὸ φρονεῖν 4.1; Pol. 344.4;
عقل	<i>'āqil</i>	thinking: Dim. 9; Pol. 390.8;
عكس	<i>'aks</i>	opposite: Dim. 153;
علم	<i>a'lam</i>	having more/most knowledge: Dim. 83,143, 150, 206; Pol. 420.9; Ada. 530.19 εὐμαθής.
علو	<i>'ālin</i>	high: Dim. 78, 143; Pol. 352.11;
علو	<i>'uluww</i>	highness: Dim. 4; Pol. 410.13; Ada. 530.24 μεγαλοπρεπής.
عمر	<i>'umr</i>	life-time: Dim. 49;
عنفق	<i>'anfaqa</i>	beard hair: Dim. 179;
عنق	<i>'unuq</i>	neck: Dim. 184, 185, 189, 190, 191; Ari. τράχηλος, αὐχὴν 26.12;
عين	<i>'ayn</i>	eye: Dim. 35,49, 51, 59, 65, 131; Ari. ὄμμα, ὄψις 26.14; Pol. 107.17; Ada. 498.12 ὀφθαλμός.
غش	<i>ghashsh</i>	adulteration: Dim. 11; Pol. 378.18; Ada. 512.18 δόλον κρύπτειν.
غضب	<i>ghaḍab</i>	Fury, anger: Dim. 103,184, 189; Ari. θυμός, ὀργή 46.14; Pol. 416.8; Ada. 528.11 ὀργή.
غضب	<i>ghaḍūb</i>	irascible: Dim. 143; Ari. ὀργίλος, δυσὸργητος, θυμοειδής, θυμώδης 22.1; Pol. 342.6;
غفل	<i>ghafla</i>	negligence: Dim. 31.83; Pol. 352.2;
غفل	<i>ghāgil</i>	negligent: Dim. 150; Pol. 384.12;
غلب	<i>ghālib</i>	who surmounts: Dim. 4; Pol. 382.11;
غلب	<i>taghallub</i>	surmounting: Dim. 4;
غلب	<i>ghalaba</i>	overcome, seize: Dim. 147;
غلظ	<i>ghilaẓ</i>	thickness: Dim. 33,86, 190; Ari. παχύς, βαρύς 30.7; Pol. 408.3; Ada. 524.1 παχύς.
غمز	<i>ghamaza</i>	to press: Dim. 1;
فرح	<i>farah</i>	joy: Dim. 49;
فرس	<i>firāsa</i>	physiognomy: Dim. 1; Ari. φυσιογνωμονικά 4.1; Pol. 340.3; Ada. 494.3 φυσιογνωμονική μέθοδος.
فرط	<i>mufriṭ</i>	excessive: Dim. 4, 19, 85; Ari. ὑπερβολή 88.4; Pol. 386.19;
فطح	<i>mufaṭṭah</i>	made broad: Dim. 206;
فطر	<i>mufaṭṭar</i>	split: Dim. 85;
فطس	<i>fuṭūsa</i>	flatness of the nose: Dim. 102; Ari. σιμός 66.13
فطن	<i>fiṭna</i>	cleverness, intelligence: Dim. 1,141, 153; Pol. 420.14;
فكر	<i>fikr</i>	thinking: Dim. 1; Ari. διάνοια, ἔννοια 4.1; Pol. 342.15;
فلج	<i>mufallaġ</i>	split into two parts: Dim. 116;

فهم	<i>fahm</i>	understanding: Dim. 1,85, 90, 157, 179, 190, 191; Ari. φρόνησις 90.6; Pol. 109.4; Ada. 198.
فوق	<i>fawq</i>	up, over: Dim. 117;
قدر	<i>miqdār</i>	size: Dim. 1; Pol. 356.23;
قدر	<i>qadr</i>	measure: Dim. 85; Pol. 394.16;
قدم	<i>muqaddima</i>	front part: Dim. 1; Pol. 374, 10; 380, 8;
قرب	<i>qurb</i>	closeness: Dim. 17; Pol. 342.9;
قرن	<i>qarn</i>	horn: Dim. 11;
قرن	<i>maqṛūn</i>	connected: Dim. 40;
قسيب	<i>qaṣaba</i>	can, shaft: Dim. 93;
قسل	<i>irsāl</i>	hanging down: Dim. 201;
قصر	<i>qaṣr</i>	shortness: Dim. 33,102, 184; Ari. βραχύς 64.5
قل	<i>qalīl</i>	small, little: Dim. 35; Pol. 432.16; Ada. 536.9 κουφόνους.
قل	<i>qilla</i>	fewness, smallness, lack of: Dim. 4,33, 51, 131, 153, 157, 179, 190; Pol. 109.4; Ada. 498.13 μικρότης.
قل	<i>qillat al-ḥayā'</i>	shamelessness: Dim. 51, 131, 179;
قل	<i>qillat al-fahm</i>	lack of understanding: Dim. 157, 190; Ada. 498.14 κακομηχανία.
قلب	<i>qalb</i>	heart: Dim. 209; Pol. 340.4;
قصدوة	<i>qamḥaduwa</i>	the most prominent rear part of the head: Dim. 1;
قوس	<i>taqwīs</i>	curving: Dim. 39; Ari. κυρτός 60.11
قوم	<i>qā'im</i>	standing: Dim. 20; Ari. φριξαί 50.7
قوي	<i>quwwa</i>	power: Dim. 1, 32, 49, 141; Ari. ἰσχυρός, εὐρωστος, νεανικός, ῥωμαλέος, ἔρρωμένος 20.1; Pol. 416.11; Ada. 528.16 νδρεῖος.
قيد	<i>inqiyād</i>	obedience: Dim. 4;
كبر	<i>kabīr</i>	great: Dim. 14; Ari. μέγας 26.9; Pol. 342.1; Ada. 498.13 εὐρύτης.
كبر	<i>kibr/kubr</i>	magnitude, largness: Dim. 32, 85; Ari. μέγας 26.9; Pol. 420.5; Ada. 530.16 μέγας.
كتف	<i>katif</i>	shoulder: Dim. 24, 31; Ari. ὤμοπλατη, ὤμος 26.1; Pol. 408.2; Ada. 524.1 ὤμος.
كث	<i>kathth</i>	thick: Dim. 20;
كثر	<i>kathra</i>	multitude: Dim. 24, 32, 33, 49, 208; Pol. 109.5; Ada. 498.
كثف	<i>kaṭāfa</i>	thickness: Dim. 93;
كذب	<i>kidhb</i>	lie: Dim. 85;
كسل	<i>kasal</i>	laziness: Dim. 75, 122; Ari. ῥάθυμος, νωθρός 64.19; Pol. 418.13; Ada. 530.1 ῥάθυμια.
كل	<i>kull</i>	every: Dim. 35; Pol. 109.6;
كلم	<i>kalām</i>	speech: Dim. 143; Pol. 352.5; Ada. 502.28 φθεγγόμενος.
لثي	<i>litha</i>	gums: Dim. 117; Ari. οὖλον 64.17
لحم	<i>lahāma</i>	fleshiness: Dim. 122; Ari. σαρκώδης, περίπλεος 26.12
لحم	<i>lahm</i>	flesh: Dim. 208; Ari. σάρξ 16.15

لطأ	<i>luṭūʿ</i>	of very little size: Dim. 59;
لطف	<i>lutf</i>	Thinness (?): Dim. 93; Ari. στενός 54.4; Pol. 404.2; Ada. 506, 2; 522 8 Στενός; άσθενής.
لمس	<i>talammasa</i>	to touch: Dim. 35; Pol. 340.8;
لهب	<i>lahab</i>	flame, blaze, flare: Dim. 160; Ari. φλογοειδής 74.11
لهو	<i>lahw</i>	amusement: Dim. 40; Pol. 348.9; Ada. 500.37 εὔπαθειαν.
لون	<i>lawn</i>	colour: Dim. 157, 160; Ari. χρώμα, χροιά 16.13; Pol. 354, 1; 348,4; Ada. 504.11 χροιά.
لين	<i>layyin</i>	soft: Dim. 23,33, 191; Ari. μαλκός, άπαλός 18.10; Pol. 342.1;
مثل	<i>mithl</i>	equivalent: Dim. 55, 160;
مثل	<i>mumattilī</i>	representing: Dim. 184;
مد	<i>mumtadd</i>	extended: Dim. 35;
مزح	<i>mazḥ</i>	joking: Dim. 40;
مكر	<i>makr</i>	slyness, cunning: Dim. 23.184; Ari. κακουργός, επί οθλος, πανοῦργος 70.2; Pol. 109.6;
ملح	<i>malaḥ</i>	grey, between white and black: Dim. 35;
ملس	<i>mulūsa</i>	evenness, smoothness: Dim. 83;
ملي	<i>imtilāʿ</i>	imposing: Dim. 201;
ميل	<i>amiyal</i>	rather: Dim. 1; Pol. 352.13; Ada. 504.1 παρατετραμμένος.
نبت	<i>inbāt</i>	growing: Dim. 35; Ari. περιδρομος 34.15
نبت	<i>nābit</i>	growing: Dim. 90; Ari. περιδρομος 34.15
نتأ	<i>nātiʿa</i>	swelling, prominent A: Dim. 59; Ari. προεξεστικώς 48.18
نتأ	<i>nātiʿ</i>	protruding: Dim. 59, 117; Ari. προεξεστικώς 48.18
نتا	<i>nutūʿ</i>	swelling: Dim. 1;
نحف	<i>naḥīf</i>	slim: Dim. 124;
نخر	<i>minkhar</i>	nostril: Dim. 93.103;
نخر	<i>nakhr</i>	snorting: Dim. 150;
نسب	<i>munāsib</i>	corresponding to: Dim. 85;
نسو	<i>nisāʿ</i>	women: Dim. 51; Pol. 378.7;
نصي	<i>nāṣiya</i>	fore part of the head: Dim. 1;
نظر	<i>naẓar</i>	look, gaze: Dim. 49; Ari. ὄψις 8.3; Pol. 342.1;
نفخ	<i>muntafikh</i>	inflated, swollen: Dim. 189; Ari. κύστις 68.10; Pol. 380.1; Ada. 512.27 κυστίς.
نفخ	<i>intifākh</i>	inflation, swelling: Dim. 131; Ari. κύστις 68.10;
نفس	<i>nafs</i>	self, soul: Dim. 147; Ari. ψυχή, διάνοια 4.6; Pol. 340.4; Ada. 498.8 ψυχή.
نفس	<i>nafas</i>	breath: Dim. 153; Pol. 352, 11; 380,12; Ada. 502,28; 516, 4 ἄσθμα, πνεύμα.
نور	<i>nār</i>	fire: Dim. 160; Pol. 350.3; Ada. 504.21 πῦρ.
نوي	<i>niyya</i>	intention: Dim. 19,39, 102;

هدر	<i>hadr</i>	squandering: Dim. 55;
هم	<i>himma</i>	ambition, intention: Dim. 4,85, 86, 117; Pol. 410.17;
هم	<i>ihitimām</i>	concern, anxiety, ambition: Dim. 124; Pol. 370.8;
وجه	<i>wajh</i>	face: Dim. 49,122, 124, 128, 129, 130, 131; Ari. πρόσωπον 8.14; Pol. 418.12; Ada. 530.6 πρόσωπον.
وجه	<i>jiha</i>	direction: Dim. 35;
ودج	<i>wadaġ pl awdāġ</i>	jugular vein: Dim. 131, 189;
وسط	<i>mutawassiṭ</i>	middle: Dim. 33, 185; Pol. 376.14;
وسع	<i>ittisāʿ</i>	wideness: Dim. 103;
وصف	<i>waṣf</i>	portrayal: Dim. 35; Pol. 340.6;
وضع	<i>waḍʿ</i>	placing: Dim. 1, 35; Ari. τόπος 86.5
وطن	<i>mawṭan pl muwāṭin</i>	place: Dim. 1;
وفق	<i>ittafaqa</i>	to agree: Dim. 1, 35; Pol. 418.5; Ada. 528.3 κατα λογος.
وفق	<i>muttafiq</i>	agreeing: Dim. 33;
وفى	<i>mustawfā</i>	assigned: Dim. 1;
وقح	<i>qiḥa</i>	impudence: Dim. 78,124, 129, 130; Ari. ἀναδειά; Pol. 418.14; Ada. 530.3 βαστααβις.
يسر	<i>yasīr</i>	slight: Dim. 1; Pol. 352.14; Ada. 504.2 δεξιά.

## Appendix V: Greek glossary

References of Aristotle (Ari.) refer to the edition of Foerster 1893: 1: 4–90, and the references of Adamantios (Ada.) to the edition of Repath 2007.

ἀβέλτερος	Ari. 70.3: جهيل jāhil
ἀγαθός	Ari. 32.12: خير khayr
ἄδικος	Ari. 46.3; Ada. 530.2: شر sharr
ἄθυμος	Ari. 32.13: عبث ‘abath
ἄκρόν	Ada. 528.11: آخر mu’akhkhara
ἀκρωτήριον	Ari. 20.11: طرف ṭaraf pl aṭrāf
ἀναιδία	Ari. 44.17: وقح qiḥa
ἀνδρεία	Ari. 12.9: شجع shajā‘a
ἀνειμένος	Ari. 20.14: خفد inkhifādh
ἀπαλός	Ada. 520.19: لين layyin
ἀσθενής	Ari. 24.15; Ada. 502.8: ضعف ḍu‘f
ἄσθμα	Ada. 502.33: نفس nafas
πνεύμα	Ada. 516. 4: نفس nafas
ἄτονος	Ari. 86.1: خفد inkhifādh
αὐχὴν	Ari. 30.3; Ada. 524.31: عنق ‘unuq
βαρύς	Ari. 20.13: غلط ghilaz
βραχύς	Ari. 64.5: قصر qaṣr
γλαυκός	Ari. 76.13; Ada. 502.1: زرق azraq
δάκτυλος	Ari. 54.6; Ada. 520.1: صبع isba‘
δειλία	Ari. 76.11; Ada. 534.29: جبن jubn
δειλία	Ari. 76.11; Ada. 530.21: حي ḥayā‘
δεξιὰ	Ada. 504.2: يسر yasīr
διάνοια	Ari. 4.1: فكر fikr
διάνοια	Ari. 4.1: عقل ‘aql
διάνοια	Ari. 4.1: نفس nafs
διεξυσμένος	Ari. 36.14: خرط munkharit
δίκαιος	Ari. 46.3: خير khayr
δόλον κρύπτειν	Ada. 512.18: غش ghashsh
δυσόρηγτος	Ari. 66.3; Ada. 524.26: غضب ghaḍūb
ἔγκρυτος	Ari. 30.14: حذب muḥaddab
ἐμβόνητος	Ari. stultitia; Ada. 500, 6: حمق ḥumq
ἔνοια	Ari. 84.10; Ada. 512.7: فكر fikr
ἔνωχος	Ari. 74.5: خضر khaḍra
ἔξις	Ari. 40.2: حول ḥāl

ἐπαινετός	Ada. 424.1: حمد mahmūd
ἐπιπρέπεια	Ari. 44.7: امر amr pl umūr
ἐπισπερχής	Ari. 36.12: عجل ‘ağūl
ἐπιτεινόμενος	Ari. 20.14: رفع irtifā‘
ἐρρωμένος	Ari. 24.15; Ada. 540.29: قوي quwwa
εὐεκτική	Ari. 20.8: عبل ‘abāla
εὐήθης	Ari. 22.10; Ada. 524.3: بله balah
εὐθύς	Ari. 38.8: سبط sabiṭ
εὐμαθής	Ada. 530.19: علم a‘lam
εὐμεγέθης	Ari. 32.7: عظم ‘aẓīm
εὐπάθειαν	Ada. 500.37: لهو lahwa
εὐρωστος	Ari. 54.13; Ada. 352.30: قوي quwwa
εὐφραίνεσθαι	Ari. 40.6: سر surūr
εὐφύια	Ari. 18.8: طبع ṭab‘
ἥθος	Ari. 8.3; Ada. 494.24: حول ḥāl
θρίξ	Ari. 18.13; Ada. 532.2: شعر sha‘ar pl shu‘ūr
θυμοειδής	Ari. 24.5; Ada. 502.6: غضب ghaḏūb
θυμός	Ari. 46.14; Ada. 512.1: غضب ghaḏab
θυμώδης	Ari. 34.11: غضب ghaḏūb
ἰσχυρός	Ari. 20.1; Ada. 540.34: قو quwwa
κακοήθος	Ada. 524.2: سؤ sū‘
κακομηχανία	Ada. 498.14: قل qillat al-fahm
κακουργός	Ari. 70.2: مكر makr
καρτερός	Ada. 524.1: شد shadīd
κατὰ λόγον	Ada. 528.30: وفق ittafaqa
κατηγορεῖν	Ada. 498.14: دل dalla
κερδαλέος	Ada. 534.29: حرص ḥirṣ
κεφαλή	Ari. 34.2; Ada. 531.22: رأس rās
κοιλία	Ari. 20.4: بطن baṭn p. buṭūn
κομψός	Ari. 48.8: حسن ḥasan
κόρη	Ada. 498.13: حدق ḥadaqa
κουφόνους	Ada. 536.9: قل qalīl
κρόταφος	Ari. 38.9: صدغ ṣudgh
κυρτός	Ari. 60.11: قوس taqwīs
κύστις	Ari. 68.10; Ada. 512.27: نفخ muntafikh
κύστις	Ari. 68.10: نفخ intifākh
λαγώος	Ari. 12.4; Ada. 502.22: أرنب arnaba
λεῖτος	Ari. 18.9: زعر za‘āra
λεπτος	Ada. 524.2: دق daqīq

λέων	Ari. 10.13; Ada. 516.21: اسد asad
μαλακή διάνοια	Ari. 18.10: بلد balāda
μαλακός	Ari. 18.10: ضعف ḡu‘f
μανία	Ari. 40.12; Ada. 508,25; 512, 25: جن junūn
μανικός	Ari. 74.11: جن majnūn
μαργός	Ari. 38.10; Ada. 500.5: جهل jāhil
μεγαλοπρεπής	Ada. 530.24: علو ‘uluww
μέγας	Ari. 26.9; Ada. 498.13: كبير kabīr
μέγας	Ari. 26.9: كبير kubr
μέγας	Ari. 26.9; Ada. 530.16: كبير kibr
μέγεθος	Ari. 50.1: عظم ‘uẓm, ‘iẓam
μέρος	Ari. 16.16: عضي ‘uḏw
μέτριος	Ari. 50.1; Ada. 532.29: عدل mu‘tadil
μέτωπον	Ari. 26.17; Ada. 528.23: جبه jabha
μικροπρεπής	Ari. 68.8: سمع samāḡa
μικρός	Ari. 28.5: صغر ṣaghīr
μικρότης	Ada. 498.15: صغر ṣighar
μικρότης	Ari. 88.7; Ada. 498.15: قل qilla
μωρός	Ari. 64.15: جهل jāhil
νεανικός	Ari. 50.9; Ada. 532.3: قوي quwwa
νωθρός	Ari. 20.12: كسل kasal
νωτον	Ari. 58.3: صلب ṣulb
οἶον	Ada. 504.24: شبه ashbaha
ὄμμα	Ari. 26.14; Ada. 534.24: عين ‘ayn
ὄξύς	Ari. 18.7; Ada. 514.1: عجل ‘aḡūl
ὄξύς	Ari. 18.7; Ada. 524.19: رقى raqīq
ὄξύς	Ada. 524.2: شخص shākhiṣ
ὀργή	Ari. 76.8; Ada. 528.11: غضب ghaḏab
ὀργίλος	Ari. 22.1: غضب ghaḏūb
οὔλον	Ari. 64.17: لثي litha
οὔλος	Ari. 64.17; Ada. 532, 9; 534, 29: جعد ja‘āda
οὔς	Ari. 52.6; Ada. 530.16: اذن udhn
ὀφρύς	Ari. 50.1; Ada. 498.23: حجب ḡājib pl ḡawājib
ὄψις	Ari. 8.3: عين ‘ayn
ὄψις	Ari. 8.3: نظر naẓar
πάθημα	Ari. 4.6: حول ḡāl
πάθος	Ari. 12.8; Ada. 536.9: خلق khulq
πανοῦργος	Ari. 74.4; Ada. 502.2: مكر makr
παρατετραμμένος	Ada. 504.1: ميل amiyal

παρειός	Ada. 530.1: خد khadd pl akhidda
παχύς	Ari. 30.7; Ada. 524.1: غلظ ghilaz
περίδρομος	Ari. 34.15: نبت inbāt
περίπλευς	Ari. 56.1: لحم lahāma
περιφερής	Ari. 30.6; Ada. 522.10: دور mustadīr
πλατύς	Ari. 26.10; Ada. 498.13: عرض ‘arīḍ
πλευρά	Ari. 26.8: ضلع ḡil‘, pl. Aḡlā‘
προεξεστηκώς	Ari. 48.18: نتأ nāti‘
προμήκης	Ari. 50.1; Ada. 524,19; 518, 27: طول ṭawīl
προπετής	Ari. 36.12: عجل ‘aḡūl
πρόσωπον	Ari. 8.14; Ada. 530.6: وجه wajh
πῦρ	Ada. 504.21: نور nār
ῥάθυμος	Ari. 64.19; Ada. 530.1: كسل kasal
ῥινία	Ari. 36.14; Ada. 504, 3; 528,11: أنف anf
ῥωμαλέος	Ari. 50.9; Ada. 524.21: قوي quwwa
ῥώμη	Ari. 52.2: شجع shajā‘a
σαρκώδης	Ari. 26.12: لحم lahāma
σάρξ	Ari. 16.15: لحم laḥm
σημεῖον	Ari. 8.5: دل dalīl
σιμός	Ari. 66.13: فطس aḡṭas
σκέλος	Ari. 28.5; Ada. 518.12: رجل rajul / rijl
στενός	Ari. 54.4; Ada. 506, 2; 522 8: لطف luṭf
στήθος	Ari. 26.13: صدر ṣadr
στρογγύλος	Ari. 30.5; Ada. 530.4: دور mustadīr
σύμμετρος	Ari. 36.1; Ada. 530.23: عدل mu‘tadil
συνετός	Ada. 528.12: جود jūda
σχῆμα	Ari. 16.12: شكل shakl
σῶμα	Ari. 4.1: بدن badan
τετράγωνος	Ada. 504.20: ثلث muthallath
τόπος	Ari. 86.5: وضع waḍ‘
τράχηλος	Ari. 26.12; Ada. 524.19: رقبة raqaba
τραχύς	Ada. 528.27: خشن khashin
τρίχωμα	Ari. 18.9: شعر sha‘ar pl shu‘ūr
ὑπερβολή	Ari. 88.4: فرط mufriṭ
φθειγγόμενος	Ada. 502.28: كلم kalām
φθονερός	Ari. 22.16; Ada. 530.3: حسد ḥasad
φλέψ	Ari. 74.18: عرق ‘irq, pl. ‘urūq
φλογοειδής	Ari. 74.11: لهب lahab
φριξαί	Ari. 50.7: قوم qā‘im



φρονεῖν	Ada. 526.17: عقل 'aql
φρόνησις	Ari. 90.6; Ada. —: فهم fahm
φυσιογνωμονικά	Ari. 4.1; Ada. 494.3: فرس firāsa
φωνή	Ari. 16.15: صوت ṣawt
χλωρός	Ada. 498.21: خضر akhḍar
χρηστός	Ada. 498.13: صلح ṣāliḥ
χρῶμα	Ari. 16.13; Ada. 534.7: لون lawn
χρῶς	Ari. 18.9: جلد jild
ψυχή	Ari. 4.6; Ada. 498.8: روح rūḥ
ὤμοπλάτη	Ari. 26.10; Ada. 524.29: كتف katif
ῶμος	Ari. 50.9; Ada. 524.1: كتف katif

## Appendix VI: Syriac glossary

The glossary is based on Zonta 1992: 121–125. The references of Bar Hebraeus (BHe.) refer to the edition of Furlani 1929: 3–10.

ܩܥܘܫ	wicked, bad: BHe. 8.21: <i>κακομήχανος</i> .
ܩܥܘܫܐ ܩܥܘܫܐ	wicked custom: BHe. 7.18: <i>κακήθης</i> .
ܩܥܘܫܐ ܩܥܘܫܐ	wicked custom: BHe. 9.16: <i>κακήθης</i> .
ܩܥܘܫܐ ܩܥܘܫܐ	fearful, afraid: BHe. 9.20: <i>δειλία</i> ; ar. <i>jubn</i> .
ܩܥܘܫܐ ܩܥܘܫܐ	fearful, afraid: BHe. 4.10: <i>δειλός</i> ; ar. <i>bi-l-jubn</i> .
ܩܥܘܫܐ	evil: BHe. 5.2: <i>δολερὰ</i> (ἤθη); ar. <i>makr</i> .
ܩܥܘܫܐ ܩܥܘܫܐ	unskilled, simple, ordinary: BHe. 9,9: <i>ἄμαθία</i> ; ar. <i>qillat al-fahm wa-l-‘ilm</i> .
ܩܥܘܫܐ	fornicating: BHe. 9.10, 4.11: <i>ἀναιδής</i> , <i>λάγνος</i> ; ar. <i>qillat al-hayā’</i> .
ܩܥܘܫܐ ܩܥܘܫܐ	prostitution, defilement: BHe. 7.16: <i>μαχλοσύνη</i> ; ar. <i>kasal</i> .
ܩܥܘܫܐ ܩܥܘܫܐ	doing harm: BHe. 8.14: <i>κακοθελής</i> .
ܩܥܘܫܐ ܩܥܘܫܐ	reckoning, computation: BHe. 5.17: <i>νοήματα ὑψηλά</i> .
ܩܥܘܫܐ	weak: BHe. 9.12: <i>ἀσθενής</i> ; ar. <i>ḡa’īf</i> .
ܩܥܘܫܐ ܩܥܘܫܐ	irascible, angry: BHe. 7.6, 7.18: <i>δυσόργητος</i> , <i>ὄργή</i> ; ar. <i>sū’ al-ghaḡab, ghaḡab</i> .
ܩܥܘܫܐ	shrewd, sagacious: BHe. 9.10, 6.21: <i>πανουργία</i> , <i>πανοῦργος</i> .
ܩܥܘܫܐ ܩܥܘܫܐ	cunning: BHe. 7.13: <i>πανουργία</i> .
ܩܥܘܫܐ ܩܥܘܫܐ	intellectual, mental; experienced, expert: BHe. 9.14: <i>μεγαλόνοους</i> ; ar. <i>jūdat al-fīkr wa-l-‘ilm</i> .
ܩܥܘܫܐ ܩܥܘܫܐ	not experienced: BHe. 4.3: <i>ἡλίτιος</i> ; ar. <i>ḥumq</i> .
ܩܥܘܫܐ ܩܥܘܫܐ	lack of learning: BHe. 5.22: <i>ἀμαθής</i> ; ar. <i>qillat al-fahm</i> .
ܩܥܘܫܐ ܩܥܘܫܐ	lack of modesty: BHe. 4.13: <i>ἀναίδεια</i> ; ar. <i>qillat al-hayā’</i> .
ܩܥܘܫܐ ܩܥܘܫܐ	lack of intelligence: BHe. 6.10: <i>ἀμαθία</i> ; ar. <i>qillat al-fahm wa-l-‘ilm</i> .
ܩܥܘܫܐ	strong: BHe. 6.14: <i>ἀλκή</i> ; ar. <i>shajā’a</i> .
ܩܥܘܫܐ	foolish: BHe. 8.11, 7.22: <i>μωρία</i> , <i>μωρός</i> ; ar. <i>balah</i> .
ܩܥܘܫܐ	foolishness: BHe. 7.15: <i>μωρία</i> ; ar. <i>balah</i> .
ܩܥܘܫܐ ܩܥܘܫܐ	negligence: BHe. 7.12: <i>ῥαθυμία</i> ; ar. <i>kasal</i> .
ܩܥܘܫܐ ܩܥܘܫܐ	deceitful, deceptive: BHe. 4.15, 4.14: <i>δολερός</i> , <i>κερδαλέος</i> ; ar. <i>makr, ḥirṣ</i> .
ܩܥܘܫܐ ܩܥܘܫܐ	to deviate, turn aside: BHe. 6.11: <i>εὐμαθία</i> ; ar. <i>al-sur’a li-l-ta’allum</i> .
ܩܥܘܫܐ ܩܥܘܫܐ	prudent; intelligent: BHe. 7.20, 5.14: <i>συνετός</i> .
ܩܥܘܫܐ ܩܥܘܫܐ	custom: BHe. 5.8: ἤθη ἄριστα.
ܩܥܘܫܐ ܩܥܘܫܐ	difficult; troublesome: BHe. 6.21: <i>ἀμαθής</i> ; ar. <i>qillat al-fahm</i> .
ܩܥܘܫܐ ܩܥܘܫܐ	difficulty in learning: BHe. 6.7: <i>οὐλότριξ πάνυ</i> ; ar. <i>ju’ūdat al-sha’ar</i> .
ܩܥܘܫܐ ܩܥܘܫܐ	to become tasteless, insipid, dull: BHe. 8.6: <i>καλιστερος</i> ; ar. <i>yabdi’ al-kalām fī ghayr ḥīnihi</i> .

εὐ δὲ σαφῶς	plainly; clearly: BHe. 6,22, 8,17: εὐμαθής, εὐφυής; ar. <i>al-sur'a li-l-ta'allum</i> .
κῆλυσις	madness, insanity: BHe. 7,15: μανία; ar. <i>junūn</i> .
καταίο	shameless, lascivious: BHe. 7,21: λαγνεία.
κακὸν ἰσχυρὸν	broken, weak: BHe. 7,20: μεγαλοψυχία; ar. <i>kubr al-nafs</i> .
καταίο	intoxicated, inebriating: BHe. 9,13: οἰνόφλυξ; ar. <i>hubb al-sakr</i> .
καταίο καὶ ἄλλοι	desire learning: BHe. 8,24, 4.16: εὐφυής, φιλομαθής.
καταίο καὶ ἄλλοι	desire towards women: BHe. 5,11: φιλογύναιος; ar. <i>ṣāhib al-nisā'</i> .

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