

Working Paper on Astrological Physiognomy: History and Sources

© Regulus Astrology LLC, all rights reserved.

Initial Paper posted April 20, 2010

Revised September 6, 2011

Substantial Revision June 13, 2024

Objective

This paper summarizes the history and development of physiognomy from the earliest known sources in the Babylonian era to the present date. Both astrological and non-astrological concepts are considered. It is a literature review, catalog, and summary of rules for judging the form and shape of the body, focusing on the face. It is intended as a standalone instructional unit on astrological physiognomy for astrology students and practitioners with an understanding of basic astrology principles including planets, signs, and houses.

Special Note

By definition a working paper represents conclusions which are tentative in nature. Additional sources will be added as they become available and as time permits.

Latin-to-English translations made by ChatGPT for texts by Ibn abī al-Rijāl (Haly Abenragel), the anonymous author of *De Physiognomonica Libellus*, Michel Scot, Pietro d'Abano, and Giambattista della Porta are available by contacting the author.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I	Definition and Scope	3
II	Astrological Physiognomy: Sample Judgments and Tools of the Trade	4
III	Considerations Before Judgment	6
IV	Building Blocks: Signs, Decans, and Planets	8
V	Medical Astrology - Melothesia	12
VI	Related Divinatory Practices	15
VII	Aesthetics: The Beauty of Venus	16
VIII	Rectification	19
IX	Phrenology Redux: Crank science or ?	27
X	Recent Academic Research on Physiognomy	31
XI	Catalog of Physiognomy Texts	33

Grateful acknowledgement is made for permission to reprint previously published material:

American Federation of Astrologers:

(1) Excerpts on physiognomy rules from *Rhetorius the Egyptian, Astrological Compendium Containing His Explanation and Narration of The Whole Art of Astrology*, trans. James Holden, Tempe, Az.: American Federation of Astrologers, Inc., copyright © 2009.

(2) Images of sign-based rules for facial appearance from *The Rising Sign Problem*, by John Willner, American Federation of Astrologers, Inc., copyright © 1991.

Astrology House: For permission to include astrological charts calculated by Janus 6.1 software and Janus fonts, copyright © 1998-2024.

Arhat Publications/Robert Hand:

(1) Adapted excerpt on physiognomy from *On the Judgments of Nativities: Book I*, by Johannes Schoener, trans. by Robert Hand, copyright © 2001 by Robert Hand.

(2) Excerpt on physiognomy from *On the Judgment of Nativities Part 2*, by Antonius de Montulmo, trans by Robert Hand and ed. by Robert Schmidt, Project Hindsight, Latin Track Vol. XII, Berkeley Springs, Wv.: Golden Hind Press, copyright © 2001 by Robert Hand.

Judith Hill:

Excerpts on Significators of Physical Appearance in the Birth Chart from *The Astrological Body Types: Fact, Form, and Expression*. Bayside, Ca.: Borderland Sciences, copyright © 1993.

I. Definition and Scope

Definition. Derived from the Greek word φυσιογνωμονικά, physiognomics (more commonly physiognomy) means judging character from bodily features. What the Greeks named physiognomy was practiced long before by the Babylonians as one of their divination methods.¹ Within the Greek tradition, the earliest surviving treatise *Physiognomonics* dates to the 3rd Century BCE and represents the first systematic compilation of physiognomy rules in the West. Until the Middle Ages, this physiognomy tradition operated independently, apart from astrology.

Scope of Astrological Physiognomy. Astrological physiognomy is encountered in three branches of astrology and the related divinatory practices of chiromancy and metoposcopy. It also overlaps with aesthetics and can be deployed in rectification of horoscopes with unknown birth times.

Natal astrology includes rules for judging the shape and form of the face and physical body. In some natal astrology texts, judgments for the physical body are presented separately from character judgments. Other texts combine the two topics.

Horary astrology uses astrological physiognomy to identify the appearance of a thief. In modern parlance this is known as criminal profiling, also a widely sought after application of non-astrological physiognomy in the modern era beginning with phrenology in the early 1800s.

Medical astrology covers sufficient ground to comprise its own category, especially since it overlaps with both natal and horary categories. Using natal judgments for the shape and form of the body as a starting point, medical astrology often adds temperament and humoral theory as additional inputs necessary to develop a disease profile. Diagnosis of medical problems can also involve decumbiture horoscopes which are a specialized category of horary astrology. Medical astrology is further refined by the principle of *melothesia*, or the doctrine which assigns parts of the body to each zodiac sign. There are two sets of melothesia. The first assigns the head to Aries and the remaining body parts to the other eleven zodiac signs moving from head to foot. The second assigns a set of organs to each planet. These assignments form a largely uninterrupted tradition dating from the earliest known astrological texts.

Related divinatory practices. Chiromancy (palm reading) and metoposcopy (reading the forehead) are based on assignments of planets and/or signs to regions located on the palms and forehead.

Aesthetics. Astrological physiognomy pulls no punches. ‘Ugly’ and ‘beautiful’ are terms frequently deployed in physiognomy judgments. Less explored by astrologers but more explored by Renaissance artists is the relationship between Venus and beauty underscored by the mathematics of the constant phi, also known as the golden ratio. Simply put, faces and bodies whose proportions match the constant phi are deemed more beautiful. Since this constant is found in the orbital period of Venus, there is a mathematical linkage between Venus and beauty.

Rectification. Natal physiognomy rules are based on a variety of inputs, including the rising sign, planets in, and planets ruling the rising sign or its decan. Application of these rules can help confirm or rule out potential rising signs when the rising sign is unknown.

¹ According to Barton, the Babylonians used physiognomy for making predictions about individuals; not as a method to delineate character. See Tamsyn S. Barton, *Power and Knowledge: Astrology, Physiognomics, and Medicine under the Roman Empire*, Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1994, p. 100.

II. Astrological Physiognomy: Sample Judgments and Tools of the Trade

To demonstrate the range of physical features and types of character judgments made, consider the following examples:

Example 1 – Antigonus the Nicean: *He came to be of good size and manly and gracious because the two lights were pivotal, especially upon the Hour, and because they were in a masculine image of human shape.*²

Example 2 – Dorotheus of Sidon: *Now Aries indicates that he is skillful, with much hair, of good stature, his gaze directed at the earth, bald, tyrannical, happy-faced, having a sense of humor, with foul speech.*³

Example 3 – Sphujidhvaja: *A man born in the first Drekanā of the eighth sign (Scorpio) is light-skinned and has a thick, broad body and wide, red eyes; he is firm and furious in battle, fond of fighting, a fierce man who is an expert with a sword.*⁴

Example 4 – Anonymous/De physiognomonīa libellus: *Mars makes people light, clever, irascible, sickly, lean, warlike, slanderous, restless, desirous of praise, boasting of their own deeds, condemning others, talkative, very vigilant; and they will hardly pass the space of forty years. Martian signs of complexion are these externally: long forehead, straight eyebrows, sharp eyes, long and thin face, long and humped nose, large and often open mouth, long teeth; and he always thrusts himself into crowds of people, loves red clothes, and hardly listens to anyone about knowledge.*⁵

Example 5 – Johannes Schoener: *He will have the beauty of all limbs in proper proportion. He will have clarity, light, and a handsome color. He will be pale in body tending toward yellowness, with middling eyes, yet with small pupils; he will have moderate hair, not very curly or abundant, with a curly and elegant beard, high cheekbones, a middling body not too stout or too thin, with a proper height but somewhat taller. His body tends more toward stoutness and height. He has a round face and a venerable appearance with a certain majesty, and also abundant hair tending toward curliness and paleness. He is bald on the forward part of his head (when it will be time), has redness in the face, a mark on the left foot, and finally eyes going toward blackness. In going about he will make very great steps, and in movement he will be somewhat slower. His body will be without deforming marks, healthy and with a handsome composition. His limbs are robust and strong. The condition of his life will be more frequently turned toward health and rarely toward illness. His face corresponds more to the form of the mother than of the father. His constitution is composed of heat and temperate dryness which is called choleric.*⁶

² Nativity with Aquarius rising, Moon and Sun in Aquarius. Original delineation by Antigonus the Nicean with comments in this translation by Hephaistio. Robert Schmidt, translator and commentator, *The Astrological Record of the Early Sages: Antiochus, with Porphyry, Rhetorius, Serapio, Thrasyllus, Antigonus et al.*, Vol 2. Cumberland, MD.: The Golden Hind Press, 2009, p. 353.

³ Dorotheus of Sidon; 'Umar al-Tabari. *Carmen Astrologicum*, trans. and ed. Benjamin Dykes. Cazimi Press, 2017, V:92, p. 295.

⁴ *The Yavanajātaka of Sphujidhvaja*, Vol 2. Edited and translated by David Pingree. Harvard University Press. 1978, p. 75.

⁵ Roger A. Pack. "Auctoris Incerti De Physiognomonīa Libellus," *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire de Moyen Age*, Vol. 41 (1974), pp. 113-138.

⁶ Johannes Schoener, *On the Judgments of Nativities*: Book I, translated by Robert Hand, Reston Va.: Arhat Publications, 2001, pp. 89-90. Nativity of Maximilian I, Holy Roman Emperor. I have edited the translation to remove discussion of astrological signifiers. This list represents a compilation of different aphorisms which are not entirely consistent (e.g., 'marks' or 'no marks' on the body).

Example 1 is based on the **rising sign** and **planets placed in the rising sign**.

Example 2 is taken from a list of **sign-based** physiognomy rules beginning with Aries.

Example 3 is taken from a list of **decan-based** physiognomy rules.

Example 4 is taken from a list of **planet-based** physiognomy rules.

Examples 1-4 include comments on both physical appearance and character.

Example 5 differs by including a **greater range of physical features**. In addition, the passage includes the native's **elemental balance** ("heat and temperate dryness") and corresponding **temperament** ("choleric").

Setting aside character judgments, the following table summarizes a broad range of physical features and their descriptors found among primary texts in astrological physiognomy.

Table 1. Physiognomy: Sample Judgments.

Feature	Description
Height	tall, middling, short
Weight	fat, middling, thin
Body	overall impression (e.g., proportionality of limbs and head to torso), physical frame consistent with sex (e.g., strong/rugged 'handsome' bodies for males and soft/contoured bodies for females)
Posture	erect, slumping, powerful
Chest	proportion relative to overall body (wide)
Lower body	legs (thin, thick, bow-legged), hips (wide)
Gait	speed/style (walks side to side, fast, nimble)
Face ⁷	size (large, small) shape (long, short, round, full, fat-cheeked, finely formed, sloping)
Forehead	size (broad, protruding, narrow)
Eyes	size (large, small, fish-eyed), gaze (beautiful, sharp, piercing)
Nose	shape (sharp, hooked), nostrils (large, short, drawn, open)
Mouth/Lips	shape (thin, thick, big, drawn)
Teeth	overall appearance (straight/crooked, thin-set)
Hair	quantity (bald, thin, thick, abounding) style (curly, shaggy, smooth), beard (long, lanky, thin)
Color	identified for eyes and hair by general complexion (dark, flushed, light, pale) and by specific colors (black, grey, red, yellow, blue)

⁷ Judgments for the face are often included with the neck, e.g., not just 'long face' but 'long face and neck.'

III. Considerations Before Judgment

Before presenting the building blocks of physiognomy, there are four preliminary factors which must be considered: race, ancestry, location, and age.

Race. Mention of color for eyes and hair is a reminder that rules for physiognomy were developed primarily by persons of Caucasian, Semitic, and Indian descent. These rules may not apply to persons of different races. However, variance in general features such as height, weight, and body type do exist across racial types. What this means is that in practice one must consider descriptions like ‘short’ and ‘tall’ relative to the person’s race. A ‘short’ American might well be considered ‘tall’ for the Japanese. To be sure, as one moves down the list in Table 1 to increasing levels of refinement, one is more likely to encounter descriptions of physical features which are simply not relevant for a particular race. The dominance of brown skin among Arabic races is but one example, acknowledged by Māshā’allāh by his inclusion of brown as a skin color for Saturn, Sun, Venus, and Mercury in his list of planet-based physiognomy rules.⁸

Ancestry. Within a given race there are variations in physical appearance based on parents, grandparents, and other ancestors. One can be ‘tall’ or ‘short’ relative to persons in one’s family.

Location. Weight (fat, middling, thin) is one trait which can be influenced by mundane considerations including the native’s country, city, and neighborhood. For example, Americans are generally overweight compared to citizens of other developed countries because of the proliferation of high carbohydrate ‘comfort food’ consistent with the prominence of Venus/Cancer in the USA National Horoscope.⁹ Persistent climatic conditions also influence the variety of regional foodstuffs which have a corresponding influence on diet and health.

Age. A person’s age has considerable impact on the accuracy of physiognomy judgments. For natal astrology there are two primary models for making age-based adjustments when considering physiognomy. The first divides life into four sections based on seasons and modifies the constitution by the corresponding temperament. Lilly offers the opinion that judgments for body weight only apply after physical maturity (he says 30 years) implying that delineations for a fat body do not manifest until mature adulthood is reached.¹⁰ The implication is the influence of the hot element during the first half of life burns sufficient calories to offset weight gain. Not until cold replaces heat in the Autumn period of life will any natal predisposition for obesity reveal itself.

Table 2. Physiognomy: Age-based adjustments based on Elemental Seasons of Life.

Age	Season	Temperament	Elements
Youth to Puberty	Spring	Sanguine	hot + wet
Young Adulthood	Summer	Choleric	hot + dry
Mature Adulthood	Autumn	Melancholic	cold + dry
End-of-Life	Winter	Phlegmatic	cold + wet

⁸ Al-Qabīṣī. *The Introduction to Astrology*. Edited and Translated by Charles. Burnett, K. Yamamoto, and Michio Yano. London: The Warburg Institute, 2004. Planet-based rules attributed to Māshā’allāh for Saturn, p. 65; Sun, p. 73; Venus, p. 77; Mercury, p. 81. The color brown does not appear in planet-based rules of Dorotheus or Maternus.

⁹ *America is Born: Introducing the Regulus USA National Horoscope*, Regulus Astrology LLC, 2008, Chapter 14.

¹⁰ William Lilly, *Christian Astrology*. Book III: CXII, p. 549.

A second model for making age-based adjustments to physical appearance is based on dynamic changes to the Ascendant measured by the technique known as *Directing through the Bounds*. One example is US President Theodore Roosevelt. As a child, he suffered numerous asthma attacks, consistent with the directed Ascendant moving through the bounds of Mars/Gemini and Saturn/Gemini, both malefic bounds located at the end of Gemini. As Gemini is a double-bodied air sign, it is also associated with the lungs which links influence of the malefics to breathing difficulties. Once the Ascendant Distributor changed from Gemini to Cancer, Roosevelt's physique underwent a dramatic transformation from a thin and gangly 'Gemini' physique to a full-bodied 'Cancer' physique.¹¹

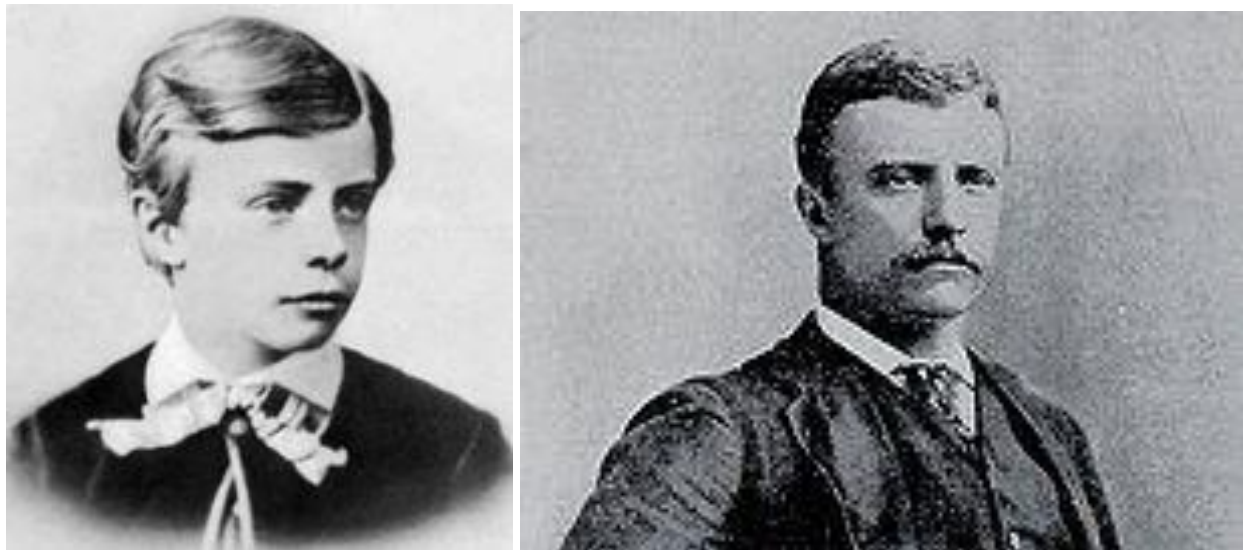


Figure 1. At left, Theodore Roosevelt, directed Ascendant = 28GE08'00" on 11th birthday.

Figure 2. At right, Theodore Roosevelt, directed Ascendant = 6LE32'35" on 37th birthday.

Notice the prominent lower jaw and the fullness of the face in adulthood compared to youth.

Variability in physical appearance over a lifetime also appears dependent on the modality of the Ascendant sign (e.g., placement in cardinal, fixed, or mutable signs). Just as authors make the connection between modality and manners, there is no reason why the same concept cannot be applied to physical appearance.¹² Modality of the Ascendant sign appears to impart the range of variability as a first order condition. My own findings suggest fixed rising signs are very resilient to change; cardinal rising signs change somewhat, and mutable rising signs are subject to the greatest modifications of physical appearance. If so, then Ascendant sign modality should be considered prior to either temperament or dynamic Ascendant models when making age-based adjustments to physiognomy assessments.

¹¹ *A Rectification Manual: The American Presidency*, Regulus Astrology LLC, 4th ed., 2023, p. 165-166.

¹² See for instance Montulmo's discussion of manners: "But if any of the aforesaid significators should be in fixed signs, the native will constant in purpose, firm in his own opinions, sincere, not false." Montulmo connects the fixed modality of sign placements for significators of manners with a fixed/constant mental style. Antonius de Montulmo, *On the Judgment of Nativities*, Part 2, trans R. Hand and ed. R Schmidt, Project Hindsight, Latin Track, Vol XII, Berkeley Springs, Wv.: Golden Hind Press, 1995, p. 47.

IV. Building Blocks: Signs, Decans, and Planets

The general form, shape, and appearance of the body and face is determined by the Ascendant which signifies the physical body. Some authors give equal power to the Moon. Sign-based and planet-based rules are deployed to judge the Ascendant and Moon. Sign-based rules reference the rising sign or Moon's sign directly. Sign subdivisions, most commonly the rising decan, are also used to refine physiognomy judgments. Planet-based rules reference planets ruling the rising sign, ruling the rising decan, positioned in the rising sign, or closely aspecting the Ascendant degree. Some authors also apply planet-based rules to the victor of the horoscope. These are the 'building blocks' of astrological physiognomy.

Sign-based rules. Signs occupy an important position in the hierarchy of natal physiognomy because placement of the Ascendant in a rational (or 'human') sign is the first indication of a well-proportioned physique. This rule is based on the symbolic representation of humans in constellations which are linked to specific signs of the zodiac.¹³ The logic is based on the assumption that humans prefer their own kind - opposed to animals like oxen, lions, scorpions, and fish depicted symbolically in other zodiac signs. Therefore, an individual whose horoscope features a rational sign as the Ascendant is more beautiful to other humans according to this logic. This is the reason why Antigonous the Nicean judged the male as 'manly' in Example 1 presented earlier. In that example, the rising sign was Aquarius, one of the human signs.

The bulk of sign-based rules are lists which begin with Aries and cycle through the remaining zodiac signs. These rules can be quite detailed and take into consideration not only the sign but implicitly the planet which rules the sign (e.g., there will be some overlap in descriptors for 'Aries' in sign-based rules and its ruler 'Mars' from planet-based rules). Depending on the author and era, sign-based rules can be limited to physical descriptions. Other authors mention both physical features and character judgments.

Decan-based rules. Each zodiac sign can be subdivided a number of ways. Decans are the most commonly mentioned sign subdivision related to physiognomy. Decans divide each 30-degree zodiacal sign into three sections of ten degrees making a total of thirty-six decans for the entire zodiac. Compared to other sign-based and planet-based rules which are reasonably consistent across authors, there is no consistent treatment for the application of decans in astrological physiognomy. Within the western Hellenistic tradition, only Hephaistio includes descriptions of physical appearance based on the decans. Here is a sample delineation when the Ascendant is placed in the first ten degrees of Aries:

In general, when no other cause is counteracting, they expected those who have the first decan marking the hour to marry badly in their early years, and marry well in their later years and make a good end. The signs: The breast is thin and not fleshed out; the legs bare and lean. He will have a mark on the left side or under the left armpit. And the critical periods of this decan were recorded as the 4th year, 9th, 12th, 21st, 33rd, 49th, 52nd, 64th, 74th.¹⁴

¹³ There are five of these human constellation-sign connections: Gemini (twins); Virgo (maiden); Libra (person holding the scales); Sagittarius (archer - but only the first half of the sign as the horse is 'bestial' and occupies the second half); and Aquarius (waterbearer). Some authorities reduce the assessment for beauty for Aquarius, presumably because it is the only rational sign ruled by Saturn, the greater malefic, who is an enemy of Venus, the lesser benefic and significator of beauty.

¹⁴ *Hephaistio of Thebes, Apotelesmatics, Book I.* trans. Robert Schmidt and ed. Robert Hand, Project Hindsight, Greek Track, Volume VI, The Golden Hind Press, 1994. See pp. 3-25.

The balance of decan delineations by Manilius and Rhetorius¹⁵ concern predicted life affairs such as illness, luck in marriage, and professional success with no mention of physical appearance. Among more prominent Hellenistic authors, neither Dorotheus, Valens, or Ptolemy mentioned decans. Given the prominent lineage between Ptolemy's *Tetrabiblos* and subsequent astrological texts, the absence of decans by Ptolemy has had an outsized impact on the limited appearance of decans in subsequent natal astrology texts. Authors relying heavily on Ptolemy including Kūsyār Ibn Labbān, Guido Bonatti, Luca Gauricus, and William Lilly do not include decans when making physiognomy judgments.

The uneven treatment of decans within astrological physiognomy is further complicated by competing decan systems. Based on current scholarship, the earliest use of decans dates to Egypt. Deployed as a method of timekeeping, prominent fixed stars - one for each 10 degree zodiac section or decan - were used to measure the passage of time. In a second Egyptian application, decans were deployed in healing rituals whereby medical authorities sought succor from gods/goddesses/spirits associated with each fixed star – based on assignment of each decan to the respective body part in need of healing. I speculate this Egyptian decan system based on stars and constellations is the source of subsequent decan systems which link physical appearance to constellation images. Apart from the **Egyptian star-based decan model**, one can also find decan systems based on images of persons with no obvious connection to constellations. This decan style appears to be used in astrological magic. For the purposes of this paper, I will refer to non-constellation decan systems as **image-based decan models**.

Apart from image-based decan systems, the **Chaldean decan model** was the most frequently cited and used by Medieval astrologers. The first decan of Aries is assigned to Mars with subsequent planet assignments made in the order of the signs using the Chaldean order: Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury, Moon, Saturn, Jupiter. After Jupiter, assignments begin again with Mars and repeat. Less common is the decan system based on signs, not planets. First introduced in the *Yavanajātaka* of Sphujidhvaja, the decans are organized by triplicity so that all members of an elemental triplicity are represented in a single sign. For example, the sign Aries defines Aries as the 1st decan, the next fire sign (Leo) as the 2nd decan, and the next fire sign (Sagittarius) as the 3rd decan. This system based on the triplicity of signs has been named the 'lords of the darījān' by Abu Ma'shar, the 'decans of Varahamihira' by my teacher Robert Zoller, the 'Hindu' decans, the 'oriental system of the decanates' by the Church of Light, or the 'Parāśara Dreskana' by Austin Coppock. For this paper, I have selected the phrase **Parāśara Dreskana** to describe this model.

As a final complication for the application of decan models in astrological physiognomy, several authors specifically mention either the rising decan or its ruler as legitimate inputs for determining the shape of the face but do not explicitly mention which decan system to use.

- Sahl includes the 'lord of the face' (or decan) in his physiognomy model but does not mention specific decan systems in *On Nativities*. It's unclear whether he means to use the image-based decans mentioned in *On Questions* to describe criminals or some other decan system mentioned in other texts which have either been lost or not yet translated.
- Similar to Sahl is Abu Bakr who suggests using the 'lord of the rising decan' to judge the face when the Ascendant is untenanted. But no specific decan systems are mentioned in *On Nativities*.

¹⁵ Rhetorius mentions decans three times. In Holden's translation, Chapter 10 lists predictions on life affairs with an unnamed decan system. In the Horoi Project by Levente László, both image-based and Chaldean decans are included with the broader discussion of each zodiac sign.

Table 3. Decan model variants used in Astrological Physiognomy, 1st Cent – 16th Cent CE

Author	Page	Decan system
The <i>Yavanajātaka</i> of Sphujidhvaja	15	Image-based
The <i>Yavanajātaka</i> of Sphujidhvaja	73	Parāśara Dreskana
The <i>Book of the Zodiac</i> (Sfar Malwašia)	5-37	Chaldean
<i>Apotelesmatics Book I</i> by Hephaistio	3-25	Unknown
<i>Rhetorius the Egyptian</i> trans by James Holden	9-12	Unknown
<i>Rhetorius the Egyptian</i> trans by Levente László	Online	Image-based
<i>Brihat Jataka</i> by Varāhamihira	276-288	Image-based
<i>The Great Introduction to the Science of the Judgments of the Stars</i> by Abū Ma'shar	313-342	Image-based
<i>On Questions</i> by Sahl	118-120	Image-based
<i>Complete Book on the Judgment of the Stars</i> by Haly Abenragel	3-5	Chaldean
<i>Book of Wisdom</i> by Ibn Ezra *After repeating Abu Mashar's three sets of image-based decans, includes a list of decan-based physiognomy rules which are consistent with the Parāśara Dreskana model though no actual decan system is specifically named.	14-77	Parāśara Dreskana (most likely)
<i>Introductiones Apotelesmaticae</i> by John Indagine	105-111	Unknown
<i>Opusculum Astrologicum</i> by Johannes Schoener	54-55	Parāśara Dreskana

Dwad-based rules. Dwads, or the 12th part of signs, are related to decans because signs for the 1st, 5th and 9th *dwads* of each 30-degree zodiacal sign are identical to the signs for the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd *decan* of the same sign. Said another way, dwads can be considered a fractal of all zodiac signs replicated within a single zodiac sign. Likewise, decans can be considered a fractal of all zodiac signs *with the same triplicity* within a single zodiac sign.

Table 4. Fractal linkage between Decans and Dwads for the sign of Aries.

Zodiacal Degree	Decan	Dwad
0AR00 – 2AR29	Aries	Aries
2AR30 – 4AR59	Aries	Taurus
5AR00 – 7AR29	Aries	Gemini
7AR30 – 9AR59	Aries	Cancer
10AR00 – 12AR29	Leo	Leo
12AR30 – 14AR59	Leo	Virgo
15AR00 – 17AR29	Leo	Libra
17AR30 – 19AR59	Leo	Scorpio
20AR00 – 22AR29	Sagittarius	Sagittarius
22AR30 – 24AR59	Sagittarius	Capricorn
25AR00 – 27AR29	Sagittarius	Aquarius
27AR30 – 29AR59	Sagittarius	Pisces

The earliest evidence for the use of dwads in physiognomy can be found in one of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Drawing on sign-based rules by Rhetorius, Popovic suggests a reference to the 'foot of Taurus' as evidence that individual body parts of the Taurus Bull were assigned to the 30 degrees of the sign of Taurus based on dwad sign subdivisions. As originally suggested by Neugebauer, specific rules for mixing melothesia with the dwads were inconsistent across the Hellenistic tradition.¹⁶

In subsequent historical periods, further mentions of dwads in astrological physiognomy are few to none.

¹⁶ Mladen Popović, *Reading the Human Body: Physiognomics and Astrology in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Hellenistic-Early Roman Period Judaism*, Leiden: Brill, 2007, pp. 166-170.

Planet-based rules. This type of physiognomy rule is written for each planet. Keywords are very similar across authors, but astrologers often added descriptive text in subsequent generations. What follows are three examples of planet-based rules for Mars: (1) Dorotheus in a horary application, (2) Ptolemy who adds solar phase as a modifying condition, and (3) the palmist William Salmon who is indicative of later generations who added new descriptions. Beginning with Dorotheus:

If the indicator of the characteristics of the thieves is Mars, then this thief will be red in his color, reddish in his hair, lank-haired, sharp in his vision, fat-cheeked in his face, having gaiety, a master of joking, capricious, turning himself from one condition to another condition, sharp in his glance; he rushes to injure men and to obliterate their things.¹⁷

Writing a century later, Ptolemy added modifications of planet-based rules based on solar phase. This may reflect Ptolemy's lack of detailed sign-based rules commonly supplied by other authors. Ptolemy provides limited indications for sign-based rules which focus on overall size and proportion of the body.

Mars, when rising, makes his subjects in appearance red and white of complexion, tall and robust, gray-eyed, with thick hair, somewhat curly, and in temperament showing an excess of the warm and dry. When he is setting, he makes them in appearance simply ruddy, of middle height, with small eyes, not much hair on the body, and straight yellow hair; their temperament exceeds in the dry.¹⁸

A contemporary of William Lilly is the palmist William Salmon. Here are his planet-based Mars rules:

Mars is the author of strife, contention, pride, presumption, tyranny, thefts, murders, victory, conquest, infortunacy, boldness and dangers: he signifies physicians, surgeons, apothecaries, the camp, all military men and preferments, edge tools, butchers, carpenters, gunners, bailiffs, and the like.

He is the author of war, fighting, blood and strife; and signifies one strong, bold quarrelsome, insolent, a traitor, or a subverter and overturner of states and kingdoms. He gives power and might, heat and burning; and signifies violence, contention, impudence, and all disordered, inconsiderate and heady actions.

His countenance is terrible, cruel, fierce, angry, proud, hasty and imperious. He gives a red complexion, deep yellow or black hair, round visage, fiery eyes, and a savage revengeful look: well placed, he signifies surgeons, captains, commanders, and great men under military discipline.¹⁹

Individual Degrees. As a final refinement, authors including Abu Ma'shar, al-Qabisi, and Bonatti classify individual degrees as masculine, feminine, bright, dark, smoky, and empty.²⁰ Whether or not these degrees are fixed in the tropical zodiac or refer to some implicit effect of fixed stars (which would require precession to adjust the degree definitions) remains unknown. To date, I have not worked with individual degrees.

¹⁷ Dorotheus of Sidon, *Carmen Astrologicum*, V.35.88.

¹⁸ Claudius Ptolemy, *Tetrabiblos*, trans. Robbins, 3.11.144.

¹⁹ William Salmon, *Polygraphice*, p. 658.

²⁰ Guido Bonatti, *Book of Astronomy*, trans. Ben Dykes, Treatise 2, Chapters 23-24, pp. 85-87.

V. Medical Astrology - Melothesia

As mentioned in part I, applications of physiognomy for medical purposes in both natal and horary (via decumbiture horoscopes) covers sufficient ground to comprise its own discipline. Most successful medical astrologers I know specialize completely in this area of astrology.

Melothesia. The term melothesia derives from the Greek words melos (μέλος) (“limb” or “part of body”) and thesis (θέσις) (“placement”, “arrangement,” or “setting down”). In an astrological context, melothesia means how body parts and limbs are assigned to the twelve zodiac signs and the seven visible planets. Exemplified by the Zodiac Man, a popular image found in Medieval art, the head is assigned to Aries and the remaining body parts are assigned to the other eleven zodiac signs moving from head to foot. The system concludes by assigning the feet to Pisces. Though some authors make slightly different assignments, variations are very minor in what can be considered a relatively unbroken tradition from the Hellenistic era to the present day.



Figure 3. Medieval Zodiac Man

Table 5. Antiochus/Porphyrus - Assignment of Zodiac Signs to Body Parts.²¹

Zodiac Sign	Body Part
Aries	The head
Taurus	The tendon and the neck
Gemini	The shoulders and upper arms
Cancer	The breast and ribs
Leo	The midriff and the stomach and the belly
Virgo	The abdomen and flanks
Libra	The kidneys and buttocks
Scorpio	The genitals and the hidden and generative places
Sagittarius	The hips (but according to some, also the glands and the bends of the elbow)
Capricorn	The loins and haunches
Aquarius	The legs and ankles
Pisces	The feet

Less commonly depicted in Medieval art but just as important for medical astrology is a second set of melothesia assignments which assign planets to organs of the body. Assignments of Jupiter to the liver and the Sun to the heart are examples of this method. Compared to assignments made between external body parts and the zodiac signs, slightly more variation among authors is encountered for this set of planet-based melothesia rules.

Table 6. Antiochus/Porphyrus - Assignment of Planets to Organs.²²

Planet	Organ
Saturn	The Phlegmatic fluid and the windpipe and the loosening of the bowels
Jupiter	The liver and its condition and the cords under the stomach
Mars	Blood and kidneys and the spermatic ducts
Venus	Lungs and gall bladder
Mercury	The sense of hearing and windpipe and tongue
Sun	Heart and the arrangement that is suited to life-breath (that is, the motion of the life-breath) and the sense of sight (the right eye in the case of a man and the left in the case of a woman)
Moon	The entire body in general, but more particularly spleen and membranes and marrow and sight (the left eye in men and the right eye in women)

²¹ See commentary of Antiochus on Porphyrus in *The Astrological Record of the Early Sages, Vol. 2, Definitions and Foundations*, Project Hindsight, Cumberland, MD.: The Golden Hind Press, 2009, p. 117.

²² Ibid, pp. 117-118.

Melothesia example: Dwight Eisenhower

What is the same for each human is assignment of zodiac signs to different parts of the body. What is different is how placement of various planets in each sign influences the body part associated with the respective sign. Using the malefic planets as examples, placement of either Mars or Saturn in specific zodiac signs causes harm to the body part assigned to the respective sign. Example: For Dwight Eisenhower placement of Mars in Capricorn predicts a knee injury because Capricorn is assigned to the knees and the nature of Mars is to cut, burn, or slice. Eisenhower suffered a knee injury while playing college football.²³ Torn cartilage and/or tendons (a common knee injury) is consistent with the nature of Mars. Eisenhower's Saturn placement in Virgo combines the Saturnian nature of blockage and obstruction with the intestines. Eisenhower suffered from intestinal and bowel obstructions which required surgery.²⁴

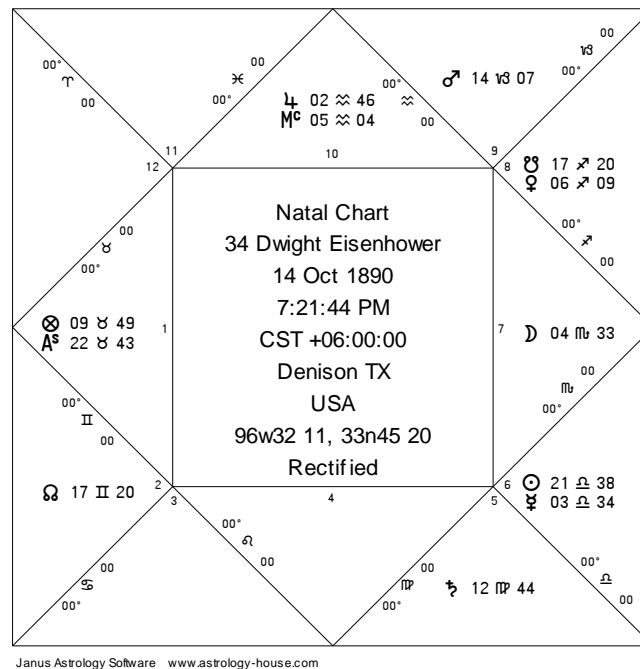


Figure 4. Dwight Eisenhower, natal horoscope. Source: *A Rectification Manual*, 4th ed, p. 652.

Both examples demonstrate the influence of planet/sign combinations on human body parts associated with the respective zodiac sign. Concerning illness and injuries, this style of analysis follows judgments of physiognomy and temperament as a first step. Why? Before illness and injuries can be predicted, one must know the body type and temperament which predisposes individuals to different kinds of illnesses and accidents. Example: an individual with a muscular torso and choleric temperament will more likely manifest Mars/Capricorn as a knee injury suffered while playing competitive sports compared to a phlegmatic person with the same Mars/Capricorn placement who may require knee surgery as a result of stress on ligaments and joints caused by excessive body weight.

²³ Knee injury timed by Mars directed to the MC by converse motion. See *A Rectification Manual: The American Presidency*, Regulus Astrology LLC, 4th Ed, 2023, p. 657.

²⁴ Bowel operation for ileitis on 9-Jun-1956 timed by sinister trine of Saturn directed to the Moon: 1-Apr-1956 by method of Regiomontanus, 7-Dec-1956 by method of Ptolemy.

VI. Related Divinatory Practices

The assignment of body parts to planets or signs via melothesia can be extended using fractal theory. Simply put, the same melothesia assignments applied to the entire body can also be applied to an individual body part. Palmistry [also known as palm reading, chiromancy, or cheirology] is the best-known example but there are others.

Table 7. Melothesia models based on Individual Body Parts

Name	Body Part	Melothesia	Author(s)
Chiromancy	Palm	Planets	John Indagine, Richard Saunders, Katherine St. Hill, William John Warner (Cheiro).
n.a.	Face	Planets/signs	Richard Saunders, Johan Sigismund Elsholtz, Frith
Metoposcopy	Forehead	Planets	Richard Saunders, Johan Sigismund Elsholtz
n.a.	Foot	Planets	Johan Sigismund Elsholtz
n.a.	Ear	Planets	Norbert Glas

This is not a comprehensive list; instead, it is intended to offer the range of melothesia body part assignments encountered during my literature review. The last three categories based on the forehead, foot, and ear appear idiosyncratic to the listed authors with no development or subsequent tradition.

For purposes of this physiognomy catalog/literature review, inclusion of palmistry texts is motivated by palmistry authors who included planet-based physiognomy rules which rival planet-based rules presented by purely astrological authors. Palmistry texts by William Salmon and William Benham are good examples. Benham's planet-based physiognomy rules are so comprehensive, in fact, that Joel Friedlander's 1992 book on body types using enneagram theory reprinted rules from William Benham's 1901 palmistry text in their entirety.

Moles and blemishes. Finally, the presence of a wide variety of dermatological conditions gave rise to models which linked their presence to natal signs, decans, and victors. These skin conditions include scars, birthmarks, warts, peas, wens, moles, and other anomalies. Many early astrological texts include remarks such as 'there will be a mark on the left ankle' and so forth. If there is a common logic to these statements it is that signs and decans which rule the native, e.g., rising sign or decan, extend their influence not just to the overall shape of the face and body but to specific body parts using a melothesia model. My speculation is that zodiac signs, decans, or planets linked directly to a native's physiognomy are more likely to demonstrate dermatological anomalies because those body parts are 'more active' since they represent the native. Active body parts are more likely to make physical contact with the native's surroundings with those contacts ultimately leaving their mark on the skin. As an alternative explanation which links moles and blemishes to physiognomy, signs and decans associated with images, constellations or otherwise, with known marks in the symbolic image will replicate those effects in the physical body. Based on the physiognomy catalog, It appears this facet of physiognomy reached its heyday during the Renaissance period with an author like Richard Saunders stating that an astrologer could rectify an unknown birth time by linking skin conditions to the horoscope based on melothesia alone.

The category of moles became so popular it engendered its own name and tradition: 'Moleosophy.' In addition to Saunders, Girolamo Cardano and Giovanni Battista Della Porta included sections on moles in their texts. Catherine de Medici was also a fan of the subject.

VII. Aesthetics: The Beauty of Venus

The sign-based portion of this literature review opened with the traditional aphorism that human signs are more beautiful than non-human signs, presumably because humans prefer their own kind. Human signs are so designated because their respective constellation images include humans. They are:

Table 8. Human Zodiac Signs

Zodiac Sign	Human Image
Gemini	Twin brothers
Virgo	Maiden or young woman
Libra	Justice figure, typically a person holding scales
Aquarius	Water bearer

Beauty as a descriptor also occurs in aphorisms tied to the planet Venus and the signs that Venus rules (Taurus and Libra). With Libra also a human sign, Libra is beautiful in both models.

But why is Venus beautiful?

The planet Venus, whose significations include beauty and harmony, embodies the mathematical constant known as the golden ratio. The golden ratio, approximately 1.618 (and its inverse 0.618), is universally recognized for its aesthetic appeal by schools of architecture and the fine arts. It is also embedded in the orbital mechanics of Venus. The sidereal period of Venus, which is the time it takes to orbit the Sun relative to the fixed stars, is approximately 224.7 days. When this period is compared to the Earth's calendar year of 365.24 days, the ratio is close to 0.618. Similarly, the synodic period of Venus, the time it takes to return to the same position relative to the Earth and Sun, is about 584 days, yielding a ratio to the calendar year close to 1.618. These proportions mirror the golden ratio which links Venus to this mathematical constant.

The golden ratio is also linked to the Fibonacci sequence, a series of numbers where each is the sum of the two preceding ones: 0, 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, and so forth. The limit of the ratio of successive pairs of Fibonacci numbers approaches the golden ratio of 0.618.

Table 9. Relationship between the Fibonacci sequence and the Golden Ratio

(a)	(b)	(a) / (b)
1	2	0.5000
2	3	0.6667
3	5	0.6000
5	8	0.6250
8	13	0.6154
13	21	0.6190
21	34	0.6176
34	55	0.6182
55	89	0.6180
89	144	0.6181
144	233	0.6180

In the context of Venus, the relationship between its sidereal and synodic periods can be expressed through the Fibonacci sequence. Five synodic periods (2919.6 days) are nearly equal to eight sidereal periods (2921.9 days). Calculating these precisely:

- Five synodic periods of Venus: $5 \times 583.9214 = 2919.6$ days.
- Eight sidereal periods of the Sun: $8 \times 365.2425 = 2921.9$ days.

The precision of these two computations is the basis for 8 as the number of Venus' minor years in astrological literature.

Venus's orbital dynamics also exhibit their own aesthetic appeal. Successive conjunctions of the Sun and Venus in the zodiac occur approximately 72 degrees apart, forming a pentagram over eight years—a shape often artistically represented as five petals of a flower.

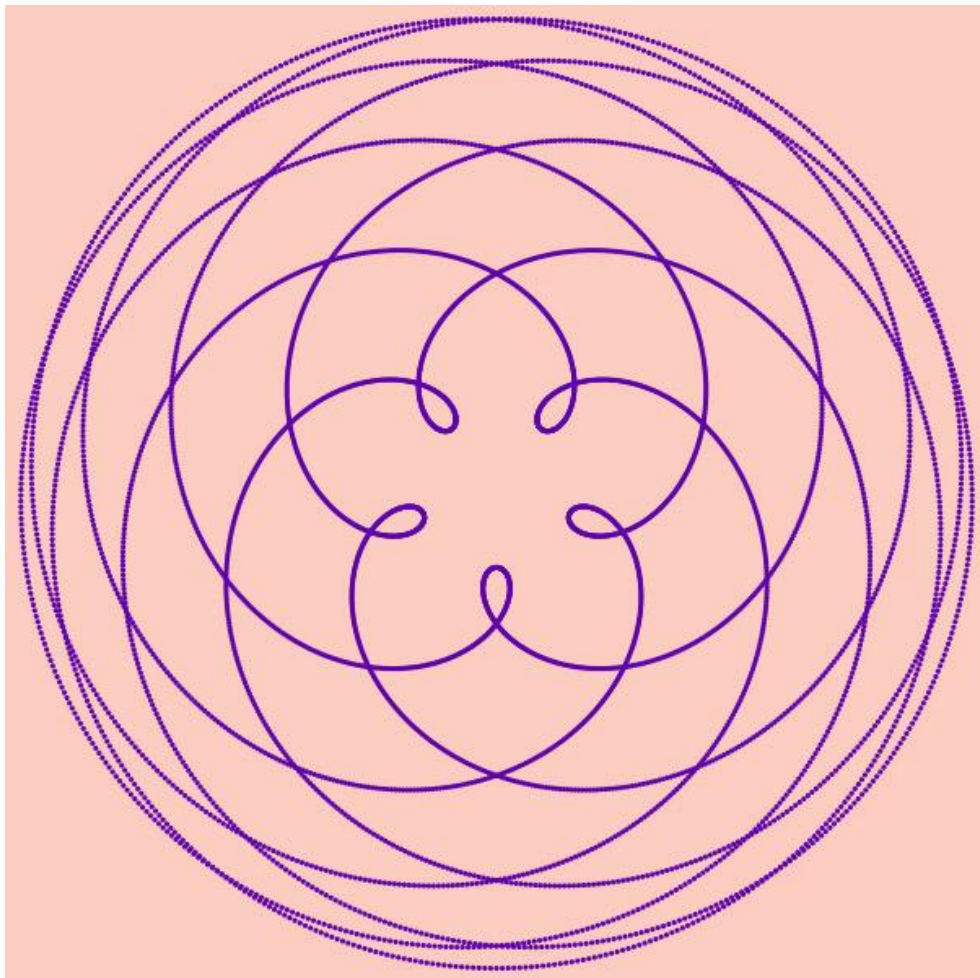


Figure 5. Orbital Pattern of Venus

Objects that incorporate the golden ratio add Venus' gift of beauty via her orbital constants. Renaissance artists, such as Albrecht Dürer and later commentators like Giovanni Battista Gallucci [included in this literature review], emphasized these proportions in their rules for human figure rendering. Leonardo da Vinci's Vitruvian Man is a canonical example, demonstrating the golden ratio through the vertical distance from the soles of the feet to the navel divided by the total height of the body. Apart from Dürer, more recent authors on the golden ratio include Mario Livio²⁵, H. E. Huntley²⁶, and Scott Olsen²⁷.

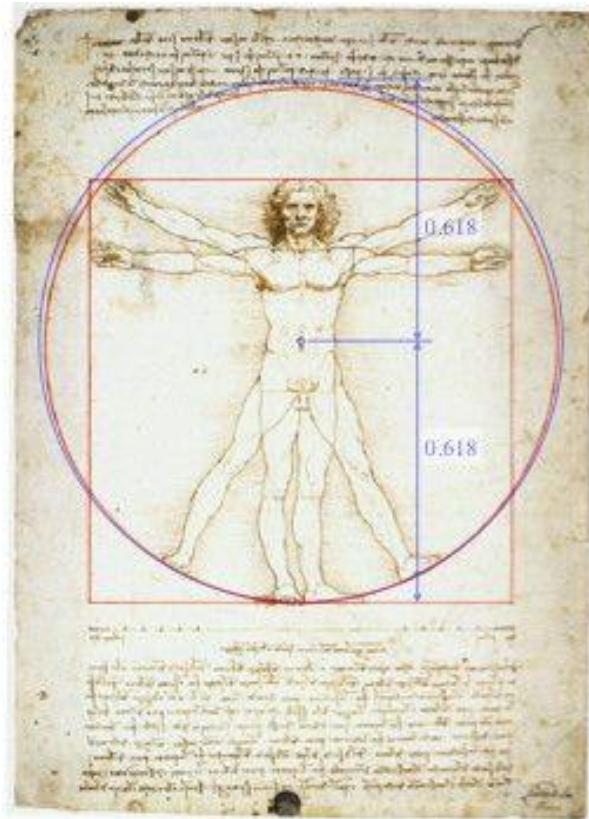


Figure 6. Overlay of Golden Ratio on Leonardo da Vinci's Vitruvian Man.

The allure of the golden ratio extends beyond architecture and art, captivating a wide audience including mathematicians and stock market analysts. Financial analysts such as Robert Prechter²⁸, Bryce Gilmore²⁹, Robert Miner³⁰, and Carolyn Boroden³¹ apply the golden ratio to price and time retracements, highlighting its pervasive influence across disciplines.

²⁵ Mario Livio, *The Golden Ratio: The Story of Phi, the World's Most Astonishing Number* (New York: Broadway Books, 2002).

²⁶ H.E. Huntley, *The Divine Proportion: A Study in Mathematical Beauty* (New York: Dover Publications, 1970).

²⁷ Scott Olsen, *The Golden Section: Nature's Greatest Secret* (New York: Walker & Company, 2006).

²⁸ Robert Prechter, *Elliott Wave Principle: Key to Market Behavior* (Gainesville, GA: New Classics Library, 2005).

²⁹ Bryce Gilmore, *Geometry of Markets* (Australia: B.M. Gilmore, 1998).

³⁰ Robert Miner, *Dynamic Trading* (Dynamic Traders Group, 1997).

³¹ Carolyn Boroden, *Fibonacci Trading: How to Master the Time and Price Advantage* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2008).

VIII. Rectification

A final application of physiognomy is found in rectification of unknown birth times for natal horoscopes. Rectification is based on the predictive ability of horoscopes to identify future unknown events in the life of the native. Rectification reverse engineers a native's biographical chronology to arrive at the birth time consistent with the timing of those events. For rectification to live up to its purported objective, techniques used to delineate and predict a natal horoscope must be reliable, a tall order given fundamental differences on delineation and prediction techniques found among contemporary astrologers.

Applied to physiognomy, rectification links physical descriptors to a rising sign through the building blocks of astrological physiognomy: sign-based, decan-based, and planet-based rules. As inputs to rectification, physical descriptors suffer more from confirmation bias than do discrete events which populate a biographical chronology such as the date of marriage. As astrologers, we have our work cut out for us. So says James Wilson in his *Dictionary of Astrology* (1819):

I am certain that no human intellect, however acute, can form a correct judgment of any one's appearance from so many conflicting testimonies.

My Search for a Reliable Physiognomy Model: from Zoller to Galen and Back Again

At this point in this physiognomy paper, I shift from literature review mode to prescriptive mode where I share my findings on a successful physiognomy model which I currently use in my practice. In retracing my steps to develop a physiognomy model, the two most important choices I made were to (1) recognize the importance of decans and (2) to identify which decan system to use.

Decans. Robert Zoller, in his *Diploma Course in Medieval Predictive Astrology*, found low reliability for Bonatti's method which relied on the victor of the Ascendant degree, modified by solar phase according to Ptolemy's rules. Instead, he presented a Parāśara Dreskana decan model³². In making this decision to work with Zoller's decan-based model, I steered away from astrological authors who focused primarily on sign-based and planet-based rules to the exclusion of decan-based rules.

Zoller's Parāśara Dreskana decan model classified each decan by sign modality which he linked to three body types and three body shapes. For body type, Zoller used the terms 'vital', 'motive', and 'mental' which were introduced by American phrenologists in the 19th century. The underlying logic of this system is based on representation of all three sign modalities in each individual zodiac sign using the Parāśara Dreskana decan model. It is not possible to make these assignments with Chaldean decans.

Table 10. Linkages between Sign Modality, Body Type, and Body Shape³³

Sign Modality	Body Type	Body Shape
Cardinal	Vital	Circle
Fixed	Motive	Rectangle
Mutable	Mental	Triangle

³² Zoller states his conclusions were based on training with physiognomist Ann Koernig in New York City in 1980 who in turn trained with the palmist William Benham and the physiognomist/palmist Holmes Whittier Merton (both included in this literature review).

³³ Robert Zoller, *Diploma Course in Medieval Astrology*, New Library Publishing, 2003, Lesson 25.

As to decans more generally, let me state the obvious. Astrology texts often use the terms ‘decan’ and ‘face’ interchangeably. If that is the case, and if there is any utility of decans in astrology, then it appears that physiognomy of the **face** should be their primary application. Starting from first principles, let’s review the etymology of the term “decan.” ChatGPT reports:

In ancient Greek astrology, the term "decan" (δέκανος) refers to one of the thirty-six segments of the zodiac, each spanning ten degrees. The Greeks used the terms "dekanos" (plural: dekanoi) and "prosopon" (πρόσωπον) to describe these segments. The word "prosopon" translates to "face" or "countenance," metaphorically representing the outward appearance or characteristics associated with each decan.

The term "prosopon" originated from Greek theater, where it referred to the masks actors wore to represent different characters, symbolizing their outward appearance or persona. This usage extended to astrology, where each decan's "face" indicated its distinct influence or characteristics within the zodiac sign. ChatGPT sources: [Wikipedia: Prosopon; OrthodoxWiki: Hypostasis; The Astrology Dictionary: Decans].

Three-fold vs four-fold temperament models. For those with a background in temperament theory based on categories with four subdivisions, the existence of a three-fold temperament model in the western tradition may be new³⁴. But three-fold temperament systems are not new. In fact, existence of both three-fold and four-fold typologies can be traced back to Galen who is responsible for the more well-known four-fold temperament model. Galen based his medical model on what he called the “theory of naturals” of which there are seven. They are:

Table 11. Galen’s Seven Naturals.³⁵

	Natural	#	Description
1	Elements	4	Fire, Air, Water, Earth
2	Temperaments	9	Equable: balanced Non-equable: hot, cold, wet, dry, hot+dry, hot+wet, cold+dry, cold+wet
3	Humours	4	Blood, Phlegm, Yellow bile, Black bile
4	Organs	4	Brain, Heart, Liver, Testicles
5	Forces	3	Natural (liver), Vital (heart), Psychic (brain)
6	Actions	2	Single (attraction, retention, digestion, propulsion) Compound (two or more forces)
7	Spirits	3	Natural (liver), Vital (heart), Psychic (brain)

Rows 1-3 list elements, temperaments, and humours which are the basis of the four-fold temperament system used by western medical astrologers. Row 5 “forces” and row 7 “spirits” form the basis of a three-fold temperament system which is also found in the physiognomy literature.

³⁴ Unlike the Ayurveda system of traditional medicine which is based on a three-fold subdivision of temperaments or ‘doshas.’ While there is a good case to be made that the kapha, pitta, and vata doshas correspond to the vital, motive, and mental temperaments introduced by 19th century American phrenologists, this linkage is beyond the scope of this paper.

³⁵ Hunayn Ibn Ishaq. *Questions on Medicine for Scholars*. Translated into English, with a preface and historical note, by Paul Ghalioungui, M.D., from a critical edition by Galal M. Moussa, Ph.D. of the Ninth Century Arabic text, “Al Masa’il fi al-Tibb lil Muta’allimin,” Chapter 1, pp. 1-5.

As a review, let's first rearrange the first three rows of Table 11 to link Galen's naturals to the four classical temperaments familiar to most astrology students:

Table 11. Building blocks of a four-fold Temperament System

Element	Primitive Qualities	Humours	Temperaments
Fire	Hot + Dry	Yellow bile	Choleric
Earth	Cold + Dry	Black Bile	Melancholic
Air	Hot + Wet	Blood	Sanguine
Water	Cold + Wet	Phlegm	Phlegmatic

Now how do we link Galen's three-fold typology of 'forces' and 'spirits' to the three-fold temperament system of (vital, motive, mental) used by Robert Zoller? A deeper dive into Galen's seven naturals reveals that the three natural, vital, and psychic spirits are servants to the three forces given by the same names.

Table 12. Galen's Naturals: Linkage between Spirits and Forces

Spirits	Organ	Forces
Natural	Liver	Natural 1. served forces – generative, growth-promoting, nutritive 2. servant forces – attractive, retentive, digestive, propulsive
Vital	Heart	Vital 1. active forces – dilation and contraction of the heart 2. acted upon forces – anger, contempt, and competition for victory, leadership, fame, and emotions
Psychic	Brain	Psychic 1. forces that mediate behavior – imagination, thinking, memory 2. forces that move by volition – muscular movement 3. sensory forces – vision, hearing, smell, taste, and touch

Now let's compare Galen's three-fold typology with the vital, motive, and mental temperament system first discovered by Orson Fowler in 1838 and published in 1840.³⁶

Table 13. Fowler's Three-Fold Temperament Model Descriptions

Temperament	Forces
Vital	The vital temperament, or the nutritive apparatus. This embraces those organs employed in manufacturing vitality, and in creating and sustaining animal life; viz., the digestive apparatus, the heart, lungs, blood, viscera, &., including all the internal organs. This corresponds in part to the sanguine and lymphatic temperaments.
Motive	This includes the bones and muscles which constitute the framework of the system and corresponds with the bilious temperament.
Mental	This embraces the brain and nervous system, which are the instruments employed in the production and exercise of thought and feeling and is similar to the nervous temperament.

³⁶ Orson Fowler, *Fowler's Practical Phrenology*, 1840, pp. 11-12.

While the correspondences are not 1:1 (with the heart a notable exception), it is reasonable to link Galen and Fowler's models in the following manner:

Table 14. Correspondences between Three-Fold Temperament Models of Galen and Fowler

Galen's Spirits and Forces	Fowler Temperaments
Natural	Vital
Vital	Motive
Psychic	Mental

As this literature review demonstrates, Orson Fowler's 1838 discovery is not a short-lived idiosyncratic method like metoposcopy or moleoscopy of 17th century England which gained no traction in the physiognomic tradition. Instead, the three-fold temperament system traced a persistent thread among 19th and 20th century authors. Highlights:

Table 15. Survey of three-fold physiognomy models

Year	Author	Comments
1840	Orson Fowler	Based on his observations in 1838, introduced the vital, motive, and mental temperament model. Partly due to a reaction against negative descriptions of the phlegmatic temperament which did not accord with his experience.
1865	Samuel Wells	Fowler's son-in-law, Wells assigned shapes of the face to the vital, motive, and mental temperaments. The respective shapes are round, oblong, and pyriform/triangular.
1896	Holmes W. Merton	Operated as a physiognomist and palmist after the Fowler phrenology dynasty died out. Made adjustments to the Fowler vital, motive, and mental temperament model.
1903/1904	Alan Leo	Included Fowler's vital, motive, and mental vocabulary in sign-based physiognomy rules.
1933	Howard Cornell	Redefined temperament in his Encyclopedia of Medical Astrology. "Fundamental temperaments" = four-fold temperament system "Constitutional/Conditional temperament" = three-fold system "Natural/bodily temperament" = based on rising decan.
1940	William Sheldon	Developed a three-fold typology for shapes of the human body which he linked to psychological characteristics. Three somatotypes are endomorphic, mesomorphic, and ectomorphic.
1954	Léon Vannier	Proposed a three-fold typology based on body types which correspond to classes of homoeopathic remedies. Three constitutions are the phosphoric, carbonic, and fluoric.
1991	John Willner	Proposed a three-fold typology of the shape of the face based on cardinal, fixed, and mutable rising signs. The respective shapes are the ovate, square/rectangular, and triangular/elongated.
1992	Joel Friedlander	Found similarities between Enneagram's three "centers of intelligence" and William Sheldon's somatotypes. Linked intellectual, emotional, and physical centers to Sheldon's ectomorph, endomorph, and mesomorph body types.

A further rearrangement of models listed in table 15 yields the following correspondences.

Table 16. Interdisciplinary linkages between three-fold physiognomy models

Galen's Spirits and Forces	Galen's Organs	Fowler	Wells	Sheldon	Vannier	Willner	Friedlander
Natural	Liver	Vital	Round	Endomorph	Phosphoric	Ovate	Emotional
Vital	Heart	Motive	Oblong	Mesomorph	Carbonic	Rectangle	Physical
Psychic	Brain	Mental	Pyriiform	Ectomorph	Fluoric	Triangle	Intellectual

As adapted by astrologers Robert Zoller, Howard Cornell, and John Willner; these three-fold typologies were assigned to cardinal, fixed, and mutable signs according to the three-fold typology of sign modality.

Integration of sign-based, decan-based, and planet-based physiognomy rules. To restate an earlier observation, because I recognized the importance of decans in a physiognomy model, I veered away from authors who omitted decans in favor of purely sign-based and planet-based physiognomy rules. In part because those authors failed to provide systematic instructions for integrating multiple physiognomy significators. Ptolemy is typical by essentially saying “just mix it up.”

So it is with the rest, and it is fitting that we should observe and combine all these things and make a conjecture as to the character which results from the mixture, with regard both to the form and to the temperament of the body³⁷.

For me personally, these guidelines are insufficient. I think that Zoller felt the same way which may be one reason why he gravitated to a decan-based physiognomy model.

Apart from the *Yavanajātaka* and the *Brihat Jataka* in the Indian astrological tradition, Sahl bin Bishr is the first astrologer to specifically mention decans in context of a physiognomy model. His instructions are somewhat disorganized and in my opinion spends a disproportionate amount of time discussing how planetary aspects modify color of a person. Yet Sahl is quoted directly by at least one author on his use of decans in a physiognomy model. Ibn Ezra quotes Sahl's rule that the ruler of the rising decan predicts facial appearance when it aspects the Ascendant. Ibn Ezra states “he tried it many times.”³⁸

The most systematic guidelines for integrating physiognomy significators can be found in texts by Abu Bakr and Ibn abī al-Rijāl (Haly Abenragel). Haly Abenragel's text is nearly a perfect copy from Abu Bakr with a few minor additions. What exactly does Haly say? Haly's model favors identifying a single planet as the native's physiognomy significator. He prefers a planet near the Ascendant degree with essential dignity, the closer to the degree the better, but is quick to mix indications of this planet with the decan ruler and planets which aspect the decan ruler. More importantly, when the Ascendant is untenanted, he prefers to use the ruler of the rising decan as the primary physiognomy significator as long as it makes an aspect to the Ascendant degree. Failing that configuration, he defers to a planet making an aspect to the Ascendant degree as long as said planet maintains some essential dignity in the Ascendant degree. For Haly's complete checklist, see Haly's entry in this literature review.

³⁷ Ptolemy. *Tetrabiblos*. Translated by Robbins, p. 317.

³⁸ Avraham Ibn Ezra. *The Book of Nativities and Revolutions*. Trans by Meira B. Epstein. Edited by Robert Hand. Arhat Media. 2008.

Recommended Physiognomy Model (as of 13-Jun-2024, subject to change)

1. Reread *Considerations Before Judgment*. This model is only applicable for those aged 25-45.
2. Consider three observational targets: overall shape of the face, facial features including hairstyle, and the physical body. As most of my research has focused on the face, keep that limitation in mind.
3. That said, preliminary findings suggest planets placed in the Ascendant sign appear primarily linked to the shape of the physical body, rather than the face. This finding departs from planet-based rules which defer to a planet closely conjunct the Ascendant degree as the principal physiognomy significator, especially if it has dignity in the degree of the Ascendant. In practice, for planets placed in the Ascendant sign, I have found it difficult to discern whether planet-based or sign-based rules are the best method to determine the influence on physiognomy. Unless the planet in the Ascendant sign is a luminary, *when planet-based rules do work well*, I would not be so dogmatic on the use of planet-based rules for planets placed in the Ascendant sign.
4. Draw up a significator list of the following items: For the Ascendant and rising decan, compile the respective sign, sign ruler, and occupants; this makes 6 significator categories. Note for occupants of the rising decan, I refer to the *sign* of the rising decan, not the relevant *sign subdivision* of the Ascendant. Example: Ascendant degree is 17AR12 making Leo the rising decan. I am ***not*** referring to planets positioned in the *Leo rising decan* from 10AR00 – 19AR59; instead, I am referring to planets positioned in the *sign of Leo* which is the 5th whole sign house.
5. Since the Ascendant sign is identical to the 1st rising decan of that sign, horoscopes with the first 10 degrees rising will be simpler to judge because the rising sign and rising decan are the same.
6. Unless the significator is an occupant, focus on the sign placement of the planet, not the planet itself; e.g., use sign-based rules not planet-based rules.
7. Ignore the aspect between the significator and the Ascendant degree. My research shows that physiognomy significators work well even in cases when they are inconjunct the Ascendant degree. This differs from aphorisms identified by this literature review.
8. If the significator is retrograde, consider the opposite sign when implementing sign-based rules.
9. On occasion, a planet makes a close aspect to the Ascendant degree but is not included in one of the 6 significator categories identified in step 4. In practice this is a rare condition and difficult to test statistically. Unless this planet is placed in the 7th house opposed to the Ascendant sign, I would give little weight in making a physiognomy assessment for planets which are not identified in step 4.
10. Do not ignore the obvious. Sometimes despite all the aphorisms for planetary rulers, sometimes the rising sign or the rising decan itself is the physiognomy significator, without recourse to any ruler.
11. If the South Node is placed in the Ascendant sign, this model may fail. In that case consider turning the chart flipping the DSC and the ASC degrees.

Table 17. Flowchart for Making a Physiognomy Assessment (as of 13-Jun-2024, subject to change)

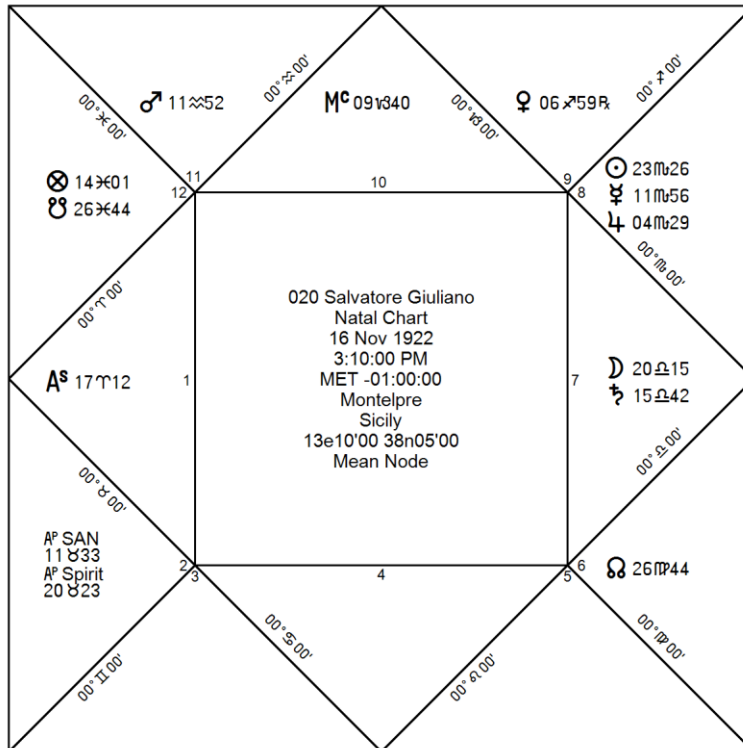
First step: Before addressing planets and rulers, do not neglect the rising sign and the rising decan directly, even if they have no occupants or none of their rulers are configured with the Ascendant degree.

	Ascendant		Dekan	Physiognomy Assessment is based on these signifiers
If	☉ or ☽	and	empty	Sign placement of the luminary in the Ascendant Planet-based rules for the luminary in the Ascendant
if	2 or more Planets	and	empty	If the stellia <i>includes</i> the ruler of the Ascendant OR ruler of the rising decan OR a luminary, then use the sign of the Ascendant. If the stellia <i>does not include</i> the ruler of the Ascendant NOR the ruler of the rising decan NOR a luminary, then mix the signs of the Ascendant sign, the Ascendant sign ruler, and the rising decan ruler. For the planet closest to the Ascendant degree, consider planet-based rules as a secondary modifier to physiognomy.
if	2 or more Planets	and	2 or more Planets	This is the most difficult case to judge. In most of these cases the sign placement of either stellia is most likely the physiognomy signifier especially if the stellia includes a luminary; still, I would mix the sign placement of the ruler of the rising decan if that planet is not a component of either stellia. For the planet closest to the Ascendant degree, consider planet-based rules as a secondary modifier to physiognomy.
If	empty	and	empty	Sign placement of the ruler of the rising decan Sign placement of the ruler of the Ascendant
if	empty	and	☉ or ☽	Sign placement of the luminary placed in the rising decan
If	empty	and	2 or more Planets	If the stellia <i>includes</i> the ruler of the rising decan OR a luminary, then use the sign of the rising decan. If the stellia <i>does not include</i> the ruler of the rising decan NOR a luminary, then mix the indications of the sign of the rising decan and its ruler.

**Example Physiognomy Judgment:
Excerpt from “Rising Decan Physiognomy Model: Evidence from 432 Timed Horoscopes”**

20. Salvatore Giuliano

Ascendant sign: Aries
Ascendant decan: Leo
Ascendant decan ruler: Sun/Scorpio



Italian bandit chief.

Ascendant				Decan		
Degree	Sign	Ruler	Occupants	Sign	Ruler	Occupants
17AR12	♈	♂♂		♏	♂♂	
		√			√	
Face presents a mix of Scorpio and Aquarius traits. A rectangular shape, dark eyebrows which contrast with the skin complexion of the forehead , and a penetrating gaze of the eyes are all Scorpio traits, consistent with ruler of the rising decan Sun placed in Scorpio, co-present with Jupiter and Mercury. The rectangular-shaped forehead like a bull dozer's blade is an Aquarius trait, consistent with rising sign ruler Mars placed in Aquarius. Mars/Aquarius receives the Scorpio stellia at the inferior square aspect which links both Aquarius and Scorpio as physiognomy signifiers.						
https://www.astro.com/astro-databank/Giuliano,_Salvatore						
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:G%C4%B0UL%C4%B0ANO.jpg						
Antonio-albanesi, CC BY-SA 4.0 via Wikimedia Commons						

IX. Phrenology Redux: Crank science or ?

For those approaching phrenology for the first time, it is a subject to be eschewed because of the false correlation between bumps on the skull and character. True enough but the subject invites further scrutiny for the following reasons:

Shape of the face and aggression. Phrenologists linked wide faces to violence based on an outsized organ of 'destructiveness' just above the ears which yielded wide faces. Modern scientific research based on quantifiable facial width-to-height ratios (fWHR) confirms that wider faces yield more aggression, consistent with original phrenology observations. Within the astrological physiognomy literature, Dorotheus' 1st century observation that Mars-signified thieves are 'fat-cheeked in the face' makes a nod to these findings.

Beyond bumpology: how phrenologists actually worked. Orson Fowler's 1855 phrenology manual lists a 20-point checklist for the physiognomist to consider before reading 'bumps on the head.' These include the three-fold vital, mental, and motive temperament model discussed in the prior section on rectification. This raises the issue of what portion of their conclusions were based on pure phrenology.



Figure 7. Phrenology busts created by the Fowler Family Phrenology Dynasty.

Recommended Secondary References

Courtney E. Thompson. *An Organ of Murder. Crime, Violence, and Phrenology in Nineteenth Century America*. Rutgers University Press, 2021.

Madeline B. Stein. *Heads & Headlines: The Phrenological Fowlers*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1971.

John van Wyhe. *The History of Phrenology on the Web*.
Available online: <http://www.historyofphrenology.org.uk/>
Accessed 7-Jun-2024

Shape of the Face and Aggression

A phrenologist standing over a seated client - with both hands feeling the scalp in an effort to identify skull anomalies - looms large in the mental imagery of phrenology as junk science. Yet there are a few takeaways from this field worthy of further study. For those brand new to phrenology, I recommend the three secondary references in the above box. An hour browsing John van Wyhe's free online phrenology website is the most time efficient method. For those seeking more, Courtney E. Thompson's 2021 book is recommended since it lays the groundwork with invention of the field by Franz Joseph Gall and its promotion by George Combe and Johann Spurzheim. Madeline B. Stein's book tracks subsequent popularization of phrenology in America by the Fowler Family from the 1830s to 1911, the last publication year of the *Phrenological Journal*.

In the first phase of phrenology, we learn from Thompson the disproportionate attention devoted to criminal profiling based on prison visits and skull collections from executed inmates. Not surprisingly, the organ of 'destructiveness' located just above the ears, was also subject to disproportionate attention compared to the other 26 organs of personality. An outsized 'organ of destructiveness' meant that anatomically skulls were wider than skulls without an abnormal skull protrusion just above the ears. Similar analysis was conducted for the other 26 organs of personality in order to generate a personality profile according to phrenological principles. While there is no question that the tenets of phrenology were fully exploded by 19th century research of Marie-Jean-Pierre Flourens and Paul Broca, scientific historians generally accord phrenology its rightful place as an early theory of brain localization.

And about that organ of destructiveness. Fast forward to 2008 when Justin Carré and colleagues published a seminal paper which linked male hockey players with a larger facial width-to-height ratio (fWHR) to aggressive behavior based on the number of penalty minutes per game obtained over a season.³⁹ Recent research has focused on linking higher levels of testosterone to larger fWHR but these tests are mixed in their findings.⁴⁰ These 21st century findings are similar to those of 19th century

³⁹ Carré, J. M., & McCormick, C. M. (2008). In your face: facial metrics predict aggressive behavior in the laboratory and in varsity and professional hockey players. *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences*, 275(1651), 2651-2656. doi:10.1098/rspb.2008.0873

⁴⁰ See the 2016 paper by Carolyn R. Hodges-Simeon, et. al., with subsequent commentary and response to commentary. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4831733/>

phrenologists. The fWHR ratio is computed by dividing the distance between the left and right zygomatic bones (cheekbones) by the distance between the upper lip and brow. The organ of destructiveness is located immediately above the ear. I say findings are 'similar' because structurally the zygomatic bones are slightly lower on the face relative to the area above the ears. Yet I suspect that either measurement zone would yield similar findings. Perhaps our 1st century astrologer Dorotheus describes it best as "fat-cheeked." As a reminder, here is Dorotheus' physical description of a Mars-signified thief:

*If the indicator of the characteristics of the thieves is Mars, then this thief will be red in his color, reddish in his hair, lank-haired, sharp in his vision, **fat-cheeked in his face**, having gaiety, a master of joking, capricious, turning himself from one condition to another condition, sharp in his glance; he rushes to injure men and to obliterate their things.⁴¹*

A final comment on Dorotheus. Use of planet-based and sign-based physiognomy rules to identify criminals in the application of horary astrology mirrors the interest of non-astrological physiognomy authors in criminal profiling including the first wave of phrenologists: Cesar Lombroso, and Francis Galton. Interest in 'others' quickly focuses on criminals and other undesirables because once those individuals are identified and monitored or incarcerated, society can carry on with its business with minimal externalities. This, at least, was the view of criminologists and ultimately the eugenic movement led by Francis Galton.

Beyond bumpology: how phrenologists actually worked.

Orson Squire Fowler was responsible for the popularization of phrenology in America which reached its peak social influence in the 1840s. Spurred to a phrenology career by Johann Spurzheim during his 1832 Boston tour, Orson quickly involved his brother Lorenzo and other family members. Launched amidst the birth of the abolition and other reform movements⁴², the Fowler maxim of 'reform through self-knowledge' found a ready market in 19th Century America. Self-knowledge was achievable through phrenology; reform was possible through proper application of one's faculties which included the application of phrenology to choosing a profession, wife, and other matters. One could also purchase any of the dozens of self-improvement titles from the catalog of publisher Fowler & Wells. The importance of Fowler & Wells to 19th century American life can hardly be understated. During its heyday in the decade prior to the Civil War, the firm branched out from its phrenology readings and publications to include titles on vegetarianism, hydropathy (water-cures), mesmerism, early childhood development, and sex education. Following the Civil War, the firm published the 1st volume of Susan B. Anthony's *History of Woman Suffrage* in 1881. Fowler & Wells was a highly successful publishing house located on lower Broadway in Manhattan's most prestigious business district.

But what was an actual phrenology reading like? A review of phrenology books from 1837 to 1865 demonstrates slight changes in techniques as the bulk of readings shifted from Orson to his brother Lorenzo and later to his son-in-law Samuel Wells after Lorenzo moved to England. Published during the peak of phrenology's popularity, the following chapter headings from the 1855 version of *The Illustrated Self-Instructor in Phrenology and Physiology* are representative of how phrenology readings were structured. It includes a checklist of twenty items to be considered by the phrenologist prior to examining

⁴¹ Dorotheus of Sidon, *Carmen Astrologicum*, V.35.88.

⁴² In *America is Born: Introducing the Regulus USA National Horoscope*, I link the start of the abolition movement to a pair of Moon-Ascendant primary directions: 1-Feb-1829 and 18-May-1831. See p. 154 of the 2nd edition.

bumps on the head. It includes assessment of the three-fold temperament system (motive, vital, and mental) as presented in the previous rectification section.

Section Headings for Section I, Physiological Conditions as Affecting and Indicating Character⁴³

1. Value of Self-Knowledge
2. Structure Corresponds with Character
3. Shape Corresponds with Character
4. Resemblance between Human and Animal Physiognomy and Character
5. Beautiful, Homely, and other forms
6. Homogeneousness, or Oneness of Structure
7. The Broad, or Vital Structure
8. The Muscular, or Powerful Temperament
9. The Long, or Active Form
10. The Sharp and Angular, or Mental Organization
11. Combinations of Temperament
12. The Laugh Corresponds with the Character
13. The Walk as Indicating Character
14. The Mode of Shaking Hands
15. The Mouth and Eyes Peculiarly Expressive of Character
16. Intonations as Expressive of Character
17. Hair, Skin, Etc., as Indicating Character
18. Physiognomy
19. Redness and Paleness of Face
20. Health and Disease as Affecting Mentality

The fact that phrenology readings went well beyond examination of bumps on the head is a relatively unknown facet of how phrenology readings actually occurred. It also raises questions on how many psychological cues garnered from these twenty items ultimately formed the phrenological conclusions. We do know that Greek and Arab physiognomic traditions recognized that “certain physiognomic indicators (colours, hair, voice, and functionality of the parts) may provide direct, unmediated evidence of the temperament.”⁴⁴ These items are listed as conditions #12-17 in Fowler’s checklist.

⁴³ Orson Squire Fowler and Lorenzo Niles Fowler, *The Illustrated Self-instructor in Phrenology and Physiology*, Fowler and Wells, 1853, Section 1, pp. 1-34.

⁴⁴ Ghersetti, p. 291 in Swain.

X. Recent Academic Research on Physiognomy

In the 2010 version of this working paper, I separated sources on pure physiognomy from sources on astrological physiognomy. In the current 2024 version I present a single list in rough chronological order so readers can more closely observe potential interdisciplinary links. As a general rule, there is little to no overlap in aphorism style between pure physiognomy and astrological physiognomy. For instance, ps.-Aristotle's *Physiognomonics* tells us that "soft hair indicates cowardice, and coarse hair courage" yet this type of statement does not appear directly in astrological physiognomy. Instead, aphorisms for Mars-ruled signs of Aries and Scorpio usually state hair is either plentiful or thick. There is no mention of coarse hair in these aphorisms suggesting the independence of astrology from the pure physiognomy tradition.

Yet there are two notable overlaps between these literature threads. The first I have already presented – three-fold temperament systems which link Galen's theory of the naturals to the rediscovery and renaming of this system by Orson Fowler in 1838. And how astrological authors Howard Cornell, John Willner, and Robert Zoller tied this three-fold temperament system to applications in astrological physiognomy via the three-fold division of sign modality.

A second overlap in the Latin West where authors Pietro D'Abano and Michel Scot include astrological physiognomy rules in manuals primarily devoted to pure physiognomy. These attempts to link the two traditions were not long-lasting but they deserve mention.

Finally, the study of pure physiognomy is important to understand because of the influence of Johann Caspar Lavater in the early modern period which led to ratio stereotypes including the "Jewish face" used by Nazis as one method of racial profiling to target Holocaust victims. This aspect of physiognomy remains so repugnant that many are loath to study physiognomy whatsoever. Yet as the literature review demonstrates, there do exist other modern applications of Lavater's physiognomy rules for purposes of self-discovery as part of a psychological self-help protocol not dissimilar to the goals of contemporary psychological astrology. This is the approach taken by Robert Whiteside who in 1957 founded a school of 'personology' based on facial features detailed by Lavater and other physiognomists.

Recommended Academic Texts

(1) Lisa Devriese (ed.), *The Body as a Mirror of the Soul: Physiognomy from Antiquity to the Renaissance*, Leuven University Press, 2021.

Collection of conference papers from a November 2016 workshop at the University of Leuven. Variety of papers with two major themes: (1) transmission of the ps.-Aristotle's *Physiognomonics* across subsequent generations of physiognomy texts and (2) the social status enjoyed by physiognomy from Hellenistic to Early Modern periods.

(2) Simon Swain (ed.), *Seeing the Face, Seeing the Soul: Polemon's Physiognomy from Classical Antiquity to Medieval Islam*, with contributions by George Boys-Stones, Jas Elsner, Antonella Ghersetti, Robert Hoyland, Ian Repath, and Simon Swain, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

The four major extant treatises from the Hellenistic era are conveniently collected in a single volume in English translation. Texts are accompanied by separate chapters on the philosophical basis of physiognomy and its reception within Hellenistic and Arabic cultures. With texts by Adamantius and the anonymous Latinus variants on Polemon's work, the authors primarily direct their attention to Polemon's

Physiognomy. Polemon emerges as a member of the Roman upper class who used physiognomy as a way to maintain his family's rank, status, and wealth. He did so by using character judgments on the basis of physical appearance as rhetorical weapons against enemies. Other applications included the household where physiognomy was used for purposes ranging from choosing an appropriate wife to weeding out problematic slaves prior to purchase. Polemon's *Physiognomy* is written as a collection of rules appended by his own empirical observations. The text is devoid of any philosophical underpinnings regarding connections between the soul and the physical body.

The earlier ps.-Aristotle treatise is given further development by Ghersetti in Chapter 6. The text's brief reference to temperature ("other external traits which depend on the varying proportions of bodily heat and cold", p. 649) appears the point of departure for developing the humoral basis of physiognomy by Galen, Hunayn bin Ishaq, and others.

(3) Antonella Ghersetti, "The Semiotic Paradigm: Physiognomy and Medicine in Islamic Culture." Chapter 6. in Simon Swain (ed.), *Seeing the Face, Seeing the Soul: Polemon's Physiognomy from Classical Antiquity to Medieval Islam*, with contributions by George Boys-Stones, Jas Elsner, Antonella Ghersetti, Robert Hoyland, Ian Repath, and Simon Swain, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Included among Greek, Persian, and Indian works collected and translated into Arabic under the Abbasid Caliphate was the subject of physiognomy. The importance of Polemon to later works on physiognomy is revealed when we learn that Arabic authors accorded Polemon with the epithet 'master of physiognomy.' The earliest confirmed reference to Polemon appears in 872 CE which places Polemon's transmission in the midst of the translation movement beginning with the Abbasid Caliphate in 750 CE.

As head of the House of Wisdom, Hunayn ibn Ishaq occupied a central role in the development of Arabic physiognomy. Hunayn translated much of Galen as well as the ps.-Aristotle *Physiognomonics*. In his own *Questions on Medicine*, Hunayn invented Arabic language for Galen's physiological terms, a tradition adhered to by all subsequent Arab writers. Ghersetti's survey identifies works by Rhazes (Abū Bakr Muhammad ibn Zakarīyā Rāzī) and Fakhr al-Din al-Razi as two subsequent canonical works on Arabic physiognomy. Ghersetti's thesis is physiognomy was largely absorbed by medicine as a discipline, despite periodic attempts to link physiognomy to astrology.

(4) Martin Porter. *Windows of the Soul: Physiognomy in European Culture 1470-1780*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005. Porter proposes that texts by Scott, Magnus, Abano, and Savonarola are canonical to the physiognomic tradition among Christians in Early Modern Europe.

Porter's study of European physiognomy texts begins with the first printed edition of Pietro D'Abano's 1295 physiognomy text and concludes in 1780 following Lavater's text by a few years. Of interest to astrologers are examples from library holdings which support the oft-cited claims of the close association of astrology and physiognomy. One highlight from the Medici Library: on May 10, 1547, a copied physiognomy manuscript was bound with other astrology books (including Al Al-Qabīṣī) before being chained to the bench labeled 'Latin Philosophy' (Porter, 36). This anecdote suggests, at least in the early modern period, how the existence of physiognomy as a separate discipline may have displaced the need for separate models of astrological physiognomy.

XI. Catalog of Physiognomy Texts

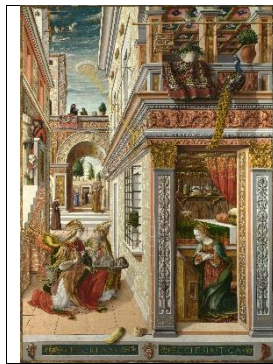
A = astrological physiognomy; P = pure physiognomy

Date	Author	Title	A	P
3 rd BCE	ps.-Aristotle	Physiognomonics		X
3 rd BCE – 1 st CE	Anonymous	Cuneiform Tablets BM 56606, BM 76829	X	X
1 st BCE	Anonymous	Dead Sea Scrolls	X	X
1 st CE	Antiochus	Reconstructed Text	X	X
1 st	Manilius	Astronomica	X	X
1 st	Dorotheus	Carmen Astrologicum	X	X
2 nd	Polemon	Physiognomy		X
2 nd	Valens	The Anthology	X	X
2 nd	Ptolemy	Tetrabiblos	X	X
2 nd	Galen	Mixtures (De Temperamentis)		
2 nd -3 rd	Sphujidhvaja	Yavanajātaka	X	X
3 rd	Hippolytus	Refutation of all Heresies	X	X
3 rd -8 th	Anonymous Mandaean	The Book of the Zodiac (Sfar Malwašia)	X	X
4 th	Maternus	Mathesis	X	X
4 th	Paul	Introduction to Astrology	X	X
5 th	Hephaistio	Apotelesmatics, Books I-III	X	X
?	Balchus	Astrological book of “Balchus”	X	X
6 th	Rhetorius	An Explanation and Interpretation of All Astrology	X	X
6 th	Varāhamihira	Brihat Jataka	X	X
9 th -10 th	Rhazes	The Book of Medicine dedicated to Maṣṣūr		X
9 th	Sahl bin Bishr	Multiple works	X	X
9 th	Abu Bakr	On Nativities	X	X
9 th	Al-Kindi	The Forty Chapters of al-Kindi	X	X
10 th	Al-Qabīṣī	The Introduction to Astrology	X	X
10 th -11 th	Ibn abī al-Rijāl	Complete Book on the Judgment of the Stars	X	X
10 th -11 th	Al-Biruni	The Book of Instruction in the Elements of the Art of Astrology	X	X
10 th	Kūsyār Ibn Labbān	Introduction to Astrology	X	X
12 th	Fakhruddin Razi	Kitāb al-firāsa		X
12 th	ps.-Aristotle	Secretum Secretorum		X
12 th	Ibn Ezra	Beginning of Wisdom Book of Nativities and Revolutions	X	X
13 th	Michael Scot	Liber particularis, Liber physonomie		X
13 th	Anonymous	De Physiognomonia Libellus	X	X
13 th	Guido Bonatti	Book of Astronomy	X	X
13 th	Albertus Magnus	De animalibus		X
13 th	Pietro d’Abano	Compilatio Physionomiae	X	X
~13 th	I-Dimashqī	Kitāb Jalīl fī ‘ilm al-firāsah	X	X
15 th	Rolandus Scriptoris	Reductorium Phisonomie	X	X
15 th	Savonarola	Speculum phisionomie		X
16 th	Pomponio Gaurico	On Sculpture	X	X
16 th	John Indagine	Palmistry, Physiognomy, and Natural Astrology	X	X
16 th	Antonio Montulmo	On the Judgment of Nativities	X	X
16 th	Luca Gaurico	Treatise on Judicial Astrology	X	

Date	Author	Title	A	P
16 th	Johannes Schoener	Three Books on the Judgments of Nativities	X	X
16 th	Girolamo Cardano	On the Judgments of Nativities, Of the Seven Wandering Stars	X	X
16 th	Giovanni Paolo Gallucci	Commentary on Durer's 'Four Books on Human Proportion'		X
17 th	Giambattista della Porta	Della celeste fisionomia	X	X
17 th	William Lilly	Christian Astrology	X	X
17 th	Richard Saunders	Physiognomie and chiromancie	X	X
17 th	Johann Sigismund Elsholtz	Anthropometria	X	X
17 th	Nicholas Culpeper	Astrological Judgement of Diseases from the Decumbiture of the Sick	X	X
17 th	William Salmon	Polygraphice, Works of Aristotle	X	X
18 th	Johann Caspar Lavater	Physiognomische Fragmente zur Beforderung der Menschenkenntnis und Menschenliebe		X
18 th	Ebenezer Sibly	A New and Complete Illustration of the Celestial Science of Astrology	X	X
19 th	Franz Gall	Anatomy and Physiology of the Nervous System in General, and of the Brain in Particular...		X
19 th	John Varley	A Treatise on Zodiacal Physiognomy	X	X
19 th	Fowler Family	Phrenology Proved, Illustrated, and Applied (1836) Fowler's Practical Phrenology (1840) New Physiognomy (1865)		X
19 th	W. J. Simmonite	The Celestial Philosopher	X	X
19 th	Cesare Lombroso	Criminal Man		X
19 th	Francis Galton	Anthropometry, Composite Portraiture research		X
19 th	Henry Frith	How to Read Character in Features, Forms & Faces. A Guide to the General Outlines of Physiognomy	X	X
19 th	Homes W. Merton	Descriptive Mentality from the Head, Face and Hand		X
19 th	Luke Broughton	The Elements of Astrology	X	X
20 th	William Benham	The Laws of Scientific Hand Reading.	X	X
20 th	Alan Leo	How to Judge a Nativity	X	X
20 th	Howard L. Cornell	Encyclopedia of Medical Astrology	X	X
20 th	Norbert Glas	Reading the Face: Understanding a Person's Character through Physiognomy		X
20 th	David Anrias	Man and the Zodiac	X	X
20 th	William Sheldon	The Varieties of Human Physique: An Introduction to Constitutional Psychology		X
20 th	Gloria Barrett	Astrological Physiognomy: a Key to the Ascending Sign and Decanate	X	X
20 th	Léon Vannier	Typology in Homoeopathy	X	X
20 th	Robert Whiteside Naomi Tickle	This is Personology You Can Read a Face Like a Book: How Reading Faces Helps You Succeed in Business and Relationships		X
20 th	M. Duvdevan	Astrofaces Project	X	X
20 th	John Willner	The Rising Sign Problem	X	X
20 th	Joel Friedlander	Body Types: The Enneagram of Essence Types	X	X
20 th	Judith Hill	The Astrological Body Types: Fact, Form, and Expression	X	X
21 st	Martin Gruendl	Beauty Check: Characteristics of Beautiful Faces		X

Date	Author	Title	A	P
21 st	Dean, Mather, Nias, and Smit	Understanding Astrology. A critical review of a thousand empirical studies 1900-2020	X	X

c. 300 BCE. ps.-Aristotle



Ps.-Aristotle. *Physiognomonics*

The earliest critical edition of this text was made by Foerster in the 1890s. Simon Swain offers an English translation based on current scholarship in *Seeing the Face, Seeing the Soul*, Oxford, 2007, Appendix.

[Internet Archive offers an audio recording of a translation by Thomas Loveday and Edward Forster \(free\).](#)

The earliest surviving text on physiognomy is divided into two parts, believed to have been written by two separate authors, most likely pupils of Aristotle. The attribution to Aristotle, however false, was a successful marketing ploy given extensive citations by physiognomy authors in the Latin West 1000 years later. A substantial body of academic research exists on the theories embodied in the text and its reception by scholars in subsequent generations.

Linkage between the physical body and mental characteristics (psychology) of individuals is clearly stated by each of the two authors. Beyond theory, the following excerpts give an idea of what type of physical/character features were subject to physiognomic theory.

Chap 2	<p>A brilliant complexion...</p> <p>Soft hair indicates cowardice, and coarse hair courage...</p> <p>When the flesh is hard and constitutionally firm, it indicates insensibility...</p> <p>Lethargic movements are a sign of a soft character...</p> <p>As to the voice, when deep and full it is a sign of courage...</p>
Chap 3	<p>Signs of a courageous man...signs of a cowardly man...signs of a talented man...signs of an insensible man...signs of a shameless man...signs of an orderly man...signs of a cheerful man...signs of a sad man...signs of a deviant...signs of a bitter man...signs of a fierce-tempered man...signs of a mild man...signs of a dissembler...signs of a petty-minded man...</p> <p>Men fond of gambling have...men fond of abuse have...merciful men are...hearty eaters are...signs of a lascivious man...somnolent men...loquacious men...men with a good memory...</p>
Chap 6	<p>A large and shapely foot...ankles sinewy and well-articulated...knock-knees...thighs bony and sinewy...buttocks pointed and bony...a slim waist...a loose build round about the belly...a well-sized and sturdy back...strong flanks...a large well-articulated chest...suppleness of the collarbone...a thick neck...lips thin and pendulous at their points of junction...a nose thick at the tip...the face, when fleshy...as to the eyes, when the lower lids are pendulous and baggy...a small forehead means stupidity...a large head means quickness and a small head insensibility...men with small ears...too black a hue marks the coward...a fiery colour on the chest signifies irascibility...</p>

(dating unknown but likely 3 BCE – 1 CE). a. Cuneiform tablet BM* 56605



Wee, John Z. Discovery of the Zodiac Man in Cuneiform. *Journal of Cuneiform Studies*. **67**, 217-233 (2015). [Available free online from Academia](#)

John Wee recently published a re-interpretation of tablet BM 56605 which includes a list of zodiac signs with corresponding body parts in what may be the earliest known example of astrological melothesia found to date. While in theory this tablet could be dated to the Late Babylonian era (3rd or 2nd century BCE); one cannot rule out its creation during the time of Manilius (1st century CE). Wee provides a helpful table of 'Body Vocabulary' which lists a cross-text comparison of 21 different authors including Manilius, Valens, Dorotheus, Hephaistio, Julius Firmicus, Porphyry, Paul, and Rhetorius familiar to contemporary Hellenistic astrologers.

*BM stands for British Museum which is the largest depository of cuneiform tablets.

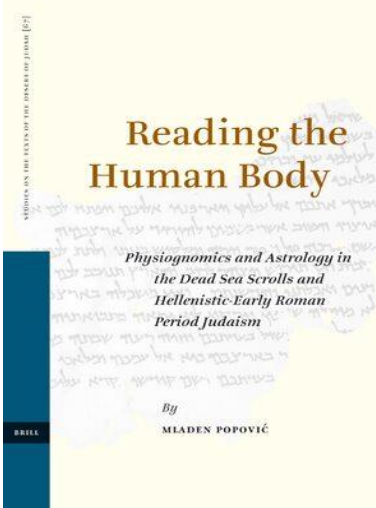
(dating unknown but likely 3 BCE – 1 CE). b. Cuneiform tablet BM 76829

Steele, J. An alternative interpretation of BM 76829: astrological schemes for length of life and parts of the body. *Arch. Hist. Exact Sci.* **76**, 1–14 (2022).

[Available for paid fee or free institutional library access vis Springer](#)

Steele identifies four zodiac sign – physical body correspondences on the reverse side of a fragment. A table comparing melothesia references from BM 76829 to BM 56605 is presented. Steele speculates this list was a memory aid/cheat sheet for a practicing astrologer.

1st Century BCE. Anonymous author

	<p>Mladen Popović. <i>Reading the Human Body: Physiognomics and Astrology in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Hellenistic-Early Roman Period Judaism</i>, Leiden: Brill, 2007.</p> <p>Available from Brill</p>
---	--

4QZodiacal Physiognomy & 4QPhysiognomy ar

Popović dates two Dead Sea Scrolls named 4QZodiacal Physiognomy and 4QPhysiognomy ar to 30 BCE-20CE and 50-25BCE respectively. Subjected to a comprehensive study as part of a 2006 doctoral dissertation (University of Groningen), the first Dead Sea Scroll fragment includes one of the earliest dated sets of sign-based physiognomy rules. 'Fragment' is the operative word for these sources. Just a few scraps of text remain from the originals. Prior scholarship suggests that as many as 108 rules existed, nine for each zodiacal sign.

The structure of these fragments differs from other lists of zodiac-physiognomy rules by order of presentation. Usually, the zodiac sign is presented first followed by a list of physical descriptors. Here the order is reversed. Popović suggests this format means 4QZodiacal Physiognomy was used as a rectification tool, e.g., to determine the rising sign given a physical description of the body.

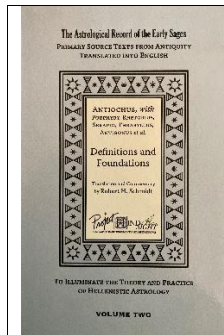
Popović concludes these texts are Hellenistic in origin, not Babylonian. The texts maintain their original Hellenistic spirit and are not modified by any Jewish faith traditions by the author.

Academic reviews:

[Review by Joanna Komorowska, Bryn Mawr Classical Review](#)

[Review by Meir Bar-ilan, Dead Sea Discoveries, Vol 21, Issue 1, 2014](#)

1st Cent. Antiochus of Athens



The Astrological Record of the Early Sages, Vol. 2, Definitions and Foundations, Translated by Robert H. Schmidt, Project Hindsight, Cumberland, MD.: The Golden Hind Press, 2009, p. 117-118.

Out-of-print

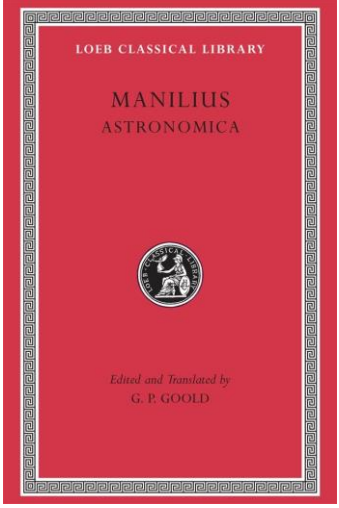
Antiochus of Athens is believed to have written a book of definitions of astrological concepts during the 1st Century. The original work is lost but is considered a source for Porphyry of Tyre's Introduction to Ptolemy's Tetrabiblos published in the last 3rd century CE.

This is the earliest complete set of melothesia assignments in a single text.

Zodiac Sign	Body Part
Aries	The head
Taurus	The tendon and the neck
Gemini	The shoulders and upper arms
Cancer	The breast and ribs
Leo	The midriff and the stomach and the belly
Virgo	The abdomen and flanks
Libra	The kidneys and buttocks
Scorpio	The genitals and the hidden and generative places
Sagittarius	The hips (but according to some, also the glands and the bends of the elbow)
Capricorn	The loins and haunches
Aquarius	The legs and ankles
Pisces	The feet

Planet	Organ
Saturn	The Phlegmatic fluid and the windpipe and the loosening of the bowels
Jupiter	The liver and its condition and the cords under the stomach
Mars	Blood and kidneys and the spermatic ducts
Venus	Lungs and gall bladder
Mercury	The sense of hearing and windpipe and tongue
Sun	Heart and the arrangement that is suited to life-breath (that is, the motion of the life-breath) and the sense of sight (the right eye in the case of a man and the left in the case of a woman)
Moon	The entire body in general, but more particularly spleen and membranes and marrow and sight (the left eye in men and the right eye in women)

1st Cent. Manilius.

	<p>Manilius. <i>Astronomica</i>. Translated by G. P. Goold. Loeb Classical Library No. 469, Harvard University Press, 1977.</p> <p>Available from Amazon</p> <p>An earlier 20th century translation made by A. E. Housman was published in five sequential volumes. Volumes 2-5 are available free of charge from the Internet Archive.</p> <p>Vol 2: https://archive.org/details/astronomiconrece02maniuoft/mode/2up Vol 3: https://archive.org/details/astronomiconrece03maniuoft/mode/2up Vol 4: https://archive.org/details/astronomiconrece04maniuoft/mode/2up Vol 5: https://archive.org/details/astronomiconrece05maniuoft</p>
---	---

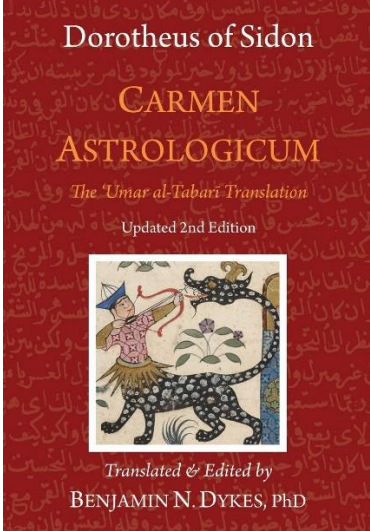
Manilius includes two lists of zodiac sign correspondences to parts of the body. They are found in Book II (453-465) and in Book IV (704-709). There are no rules for determining the shape of the body based on astrology.

Recommended Secondary Source

Clark, Charles (1982) "The Zodiac Man in Medieval Medical Astrology," *Quidditas*: Vol. 3, Article 3. Available online: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/rmmra/vol3/iss1/3>

In a 1979 University of Colorado PhD thesis, Charles Clark traced the history of the 'Zodiac Man' from the period immediately following Manilius to the Medieval period. The above citation is a journal article based on the thesis. I have not reviewed the original PhD thesis.

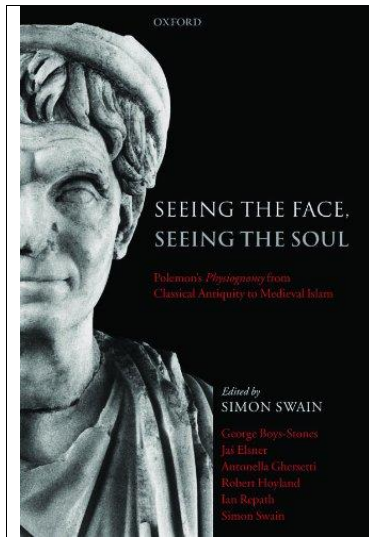
~1st Cent. Dorotheus

 <p>Dorotheus of Sidon CARMEN ASTROLOGICUM The 'Umar al-Tabari Translation Updated 2nd Edition Translated & Edited by BENJAMIN N. DYKES, PhD</p>	<p>Dorotheus of Sidon; 'Umar al-Tabari. <i>Carmen Astrologicum</i>, trans. and ed. By Benjamin Dykes. Cazimi Press, 2017.</p> <p>Available from Amazon</p>
--	--

Presented as the method for determining the physical appearance of a thief within horary astrology, Dorotheus lists both planet-based and sign-based rules as well as a method for combining them in judgments. As such he is the first author who presents a systematic method of combining both types of rules.

Book/Chapter	Page	Comments
Chapter V.36 Paragraphs 82-87	293-294	Planet-based rules.
Chapter V.36 Paragraphs 90-103	295-296	Sign-based rules.
Chapter V.36 Paragraphs 77-81 Paragraphs 90-92	293 295	<p>Procedures to identify the appearance of the thief.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planets in the 7th house, if empty consider • Planets in the 9th house, if empty consider • Planets in the 12th house, if empty consider • Planets connecting with the Moon [co-present?], if none consider • Planets the Moon separates from and applies toward. • Once choosing the planetary significator, consider mixing the significations of the planet with indications of the sign where the planet is placed.

2nd Cent. Polemon of Laodicea (90-144 CE).



Seeing the Face, Seeing the Soul: Polemon's Physiognomy from Classical Antiquity to Medieval Islam. Edited by Simon Swain. Oxford 2007.

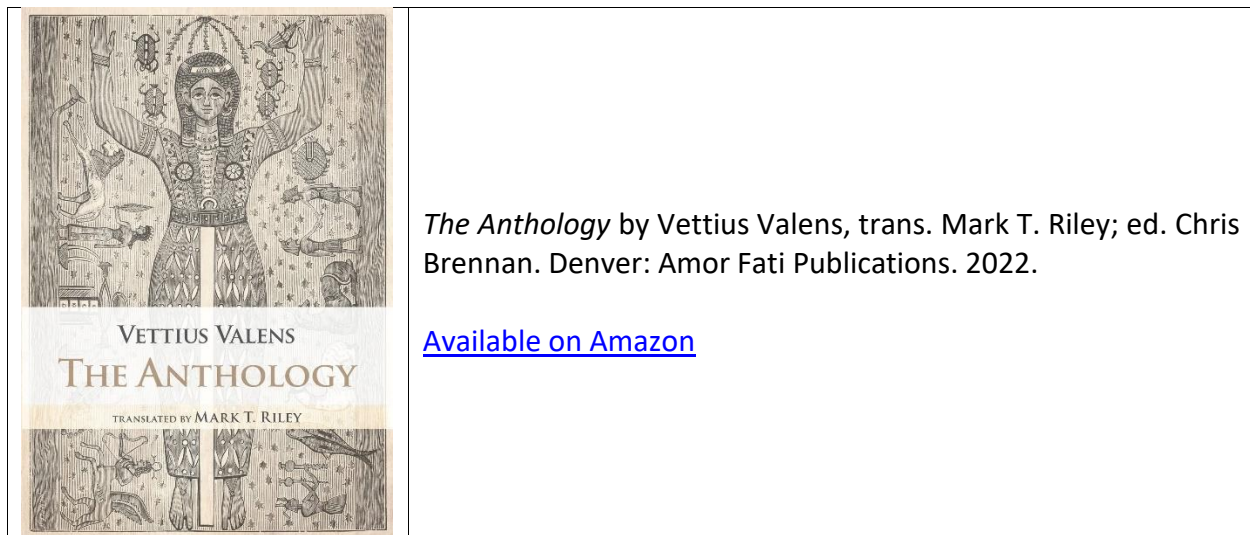
[Available from Amazon](#)

Polemon was a prominent Sophist and civic leader in the town of Smyrna (modern Turkey). He was held in esteem by several Roman Emperors including the Emperor Hadrian. Polemon's original treatise on physiognomy was lost but can be reconstructed from surviving commentaries by Adamantius the Sophist (mid-3rd century to end 4th century CE) and the Anonymous Latinus (c. 4th century CE). In addition, Polemon's text was included in the Greek to Arabic translation movement during the 8th and 9th centuries. As a measure of his reputation, Arabic authors mentioned Polemon by name as an expert in physiognomy.

The four variants of Polemon's Physiognomy are now conveniently collected in a single volume in English translation, together with the ps.-Aristotle *Physiognomonics* (included in this literature review). Texts are accompanied by separate chapters on the philosophical basis of physiognomy and its reception within Greco-Roman and Arabic cultures.

Polemon emerges as a member of the Roman upper class who used physiognomy as a way to maintain his family's rank, status, and wealth. He did so by using character judgments on the basis of physical appearance as rhetorical weapons against enemies. Other applications included the household where physiognomy was used for purposes ranging from choosing an appropriate wife to weeding out problematic slaves prior to purchase. Polemon's Physiognomy is written as a collection of rules appended by his own empirical observations. The text is devoid of any philosophical underpinnings regarding connections between the soul and the physical body.

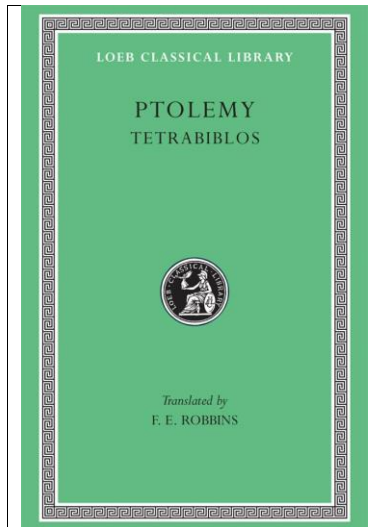
2nd Cent. Valens



Book/Chapter	Page	Comments
Book 1.1	3	Sun. Of parts of the body, the Sun rules the head; of the sense organs, it rules the right eye; of the trunk, it rules the heart; of the spiritual (i.e., the perceptive) faculties, the nerves.
Book 1.1	3	Moon. The Moon rules the parts of the body as follows: the left eye, the stomach, the breasts, the breath, the spleen, the dura mater, the marrow (as a result it causes dropsy/moist syndromes).
Book 1.1	3-4	Saturn. Of the limbs of the body, it rules the legs, the knees, the tendons, the lymph, the phlegm, the bladder, the kidneys, and the internal, hidden organs.
Book 1.1	4	Jupiter. Of the external body parts it rules the thighs and the feet. (Consequently in the games Jupiter governs the race.) Of the internal parts it rules the sperm, the uterus, the liver, the parts of the right side.
Book 1.1	4-5	Mars. Of the body parts, Mars rules the head, the seat, the genitals; of the internal parts, it rules the blood, the sperm ducts, the bile, the elimination of excrement, the parts in the rear, the back, and the underside.
Book 1.1	5	Venus. Of the parts of the body, it rules the neck, the face, the lips, the sense of smell, the front parts from the feet to the head, the parts of intercourse; of the inner parts it rules the lungs.
Book 1.1	6	Mercury. Of the parts of the body, it rules the hands, the shoulders, the fingers, the joints, the belly, the sense of hearing, the arteries, the intestines, the tongue.

In Book 1, Chapter 1, Valens lists descriptors for each planet which include melothesia assignments. While these are presented as planet-based rules, sign-based rules are implicit. As an example, consider Mars. Mars rules two signs: Aries and Scorpio. Aries is assigned to the head and Scorpio is assigned to the genitals. In Valen's descriptor lists, he includes the head and the genitals in his descriptor list for Mars.

2nd Cent. Ptolemy



Claudius Ptolemy. *Tetrabiblos*, trans. F. E. Robbins, Loeb Classical Library, Vol. 1, Harvard University Press, 1940.

[Available on Amazon](#)

There are multiple translations of *Tetrabiblos* available including a popular one by J. M. Tyler Ashmand. Current assessment of these translations favors the Robbins version.

Citation: See Book III, Chapter 11, 'Of Bodily Form and Temperament,' pps. 307-317.

Ptolemy differs from other Hellenistic authors by modifying planet-based rules by solar phase, limiting sign-based rules to judging the shape of the body, and adding the Sun's season as an additional model input. Ptolemy judges both physiognomy and temperament jointly with one set of rules.

Building Blocks

Ascendant sign; Planets placed in the Ascendant; Ascendant ruler; Moon; Moon's ruler; fixed stars rising. Ptolemy indicates rulers of the Ascendant and the Moon have more power than the Ascendant sign and the Moon's sign themselves.

After assessing these significators, Ptolemy presents a list of planet-based physiognomy rules which modify a planet's general features by its synodic position with the Sun.

Planet's Solar Phase	Effect
Under the Sunbeams	Without repute but able to bear hardship and oppression.
Heliacal rising to 1 st station	Large, tall, hairy
1 st station	Powerful and muscular.
Retrograde	Not well-proportioned.
2 nd station	Rather weak.
2 nd station to helical setting	Small, short, less hair.
Under the sunbeams	Without repute but able to bear hardship and oppression.

Next Ptolemy introduces the seasonal impact on physiognomy by considering the Sun's placement during the four seasons of the year:

Season	Sun's Sign	Effect on Physiognomy And Temperament
Spring	♈ ♉ ♊	Well-favoured in complexion, stature, robustness, and eyes, and exceeding in the moist and warm.
Summer	♊ ♋ ♌	Moderately good complexion and moderate height, robust, with large eyes and thick and curly hair, exceeding in the warm and dry.
Fall	♏ ♐ ♑	Sallow, spare, slender, sickly, with moderately curling hair and good eyes, exceeding in the dry and cold.
Winter	♑ ♒ ♓	Dark complexion, moderate height, straight hair, with little hair on their bodies, somewhat graceful, and exceeding in the cold and moist.

Ptolemy concludes with these observations for individual signs.

Sign	Effect on Physiognomy
♊ ♋ ♏ ♑ (1 st half)	Harmonious of movement and well-proportioned. The “human” signs.
♋ ♌ ♐ ♑	Large in size.
♒ ♓ ♔	Small in size.
♈ ♉ ♊	Upper and fore parts more robust and the lower and hind parts weaker.
♋ ♌ ♏	Fore parts cause slenderness and hind parts robustness.
♌ ♍ ♎	Well-proportioned and graceful.
♏ ♐ ♑	Awkwardness and disproportion.

Rules for Judgment: Like Dorotheus, Ptolemy is quite vague on rules for synthesizing his rules.

So it is with the rest, and it is fitting that we should observe and combine all these things and make a conjecture as to the character which results from the mixture, with regard both to the form and to the temperament of the body. Robbins. p. 317.

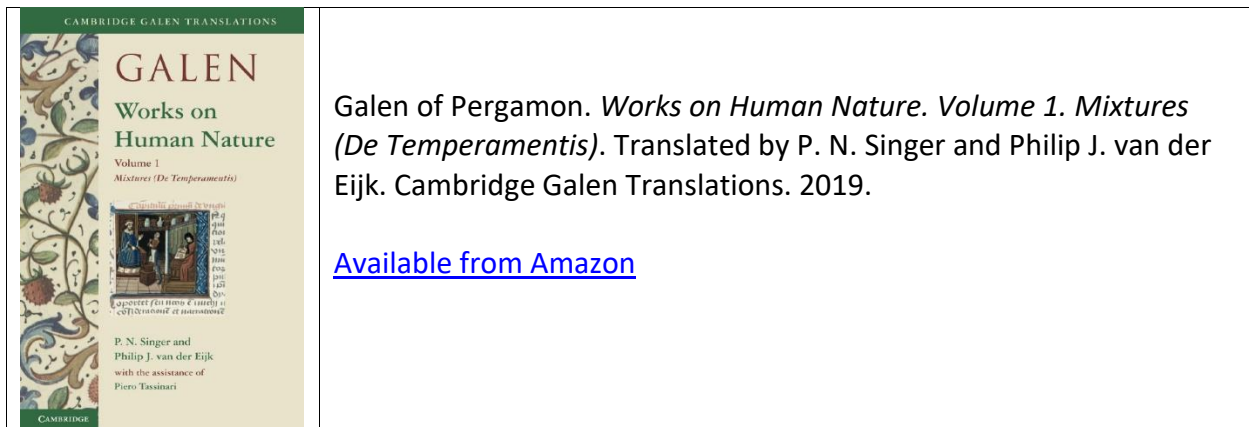
Recommended Secondary Source

Bernard Eccles. ‘Astrological physiognomy from Ptolemy to the present day’, Culture and Cosmos Vol. 7 no 2, Autumn/Winter 2003, pp. 15-36.

Documents the influence of Ptolemy’s planet-based rules on subsequent generations of astrological writers.

Available online: <https://www.skyscript.co.uk/physiognomy.html>

c. 169-176. Galen of Pergamon (129 – c. 200 CE)



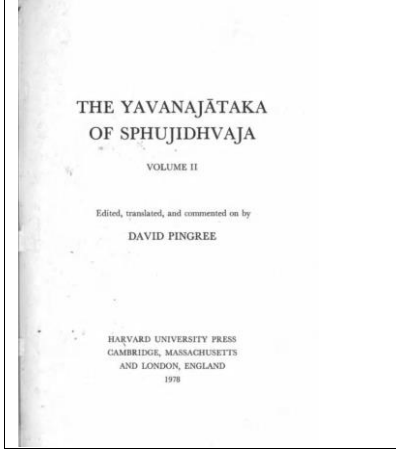
While Hippocrates (460 – 730 BCE) introduced the theory of the four humors it was the 2nd century Greek physician Galen of Pergamon who made substantial contributions of application of humoral theory to medicine. Galen's contributions can be summarized as follows (ChatGPT)

1. **Elaboration of Humoral Theory:** Galen provided detailed descriptions of the qualities, functions, and interactions of the four humors, expanding upon Hippocrates' initial observations. He classified various diseases and temperaments based on humoral imbalances, laying the groundwork for diagnosing and treating ailments according to humoral principles.
2. **Systematization of Humoral Pathology:** Galen developed a comprehensive understanding of humoral pathology, explaining how imbalances in the humors resulted in specific symptoms and disease manifestations. He proposed methods for restoring humoral equilibrium through dietary regulation, lifestyle modifications, and therapeutic interventions.
3. **Influence on Medieval Medicine:** Galen's works became foundational texts in medieval European medicine, shaping medical education and practice for centuries. His theories on the humours formed the basis of medical understanding during the Middle Ages, influencing approaches to diagnosis, treatment, and patient care.

For physiognomy, Arab authors including Abū Bakr Muhammad ibn Zakarīyā Rāzī and Fakhr al-Din al-Razi used humoral theory as an explanatory mechanism behind physical appearance.

For astrology, authors beginning with Sphujidhvaja, Rhetorius, and Varāhamihira incorporated temperament descriptions derived from humoral theory in planet-based and sign-based physiognomy rules.

2nd – 3rd Cent. Sphujidhvaja (early centuries CE)

	<p><i>The Yavanajātaka of Sphujidhvaja</i>, Vol 2. Edited and translated by David Pingree. Harvard University Press. 1978.</p> <p>Available online</p> <p>Volume 1 is in Sanskrit; Volume 2 is in English. References below refer to pagination in Volume 2.</p>
---	--

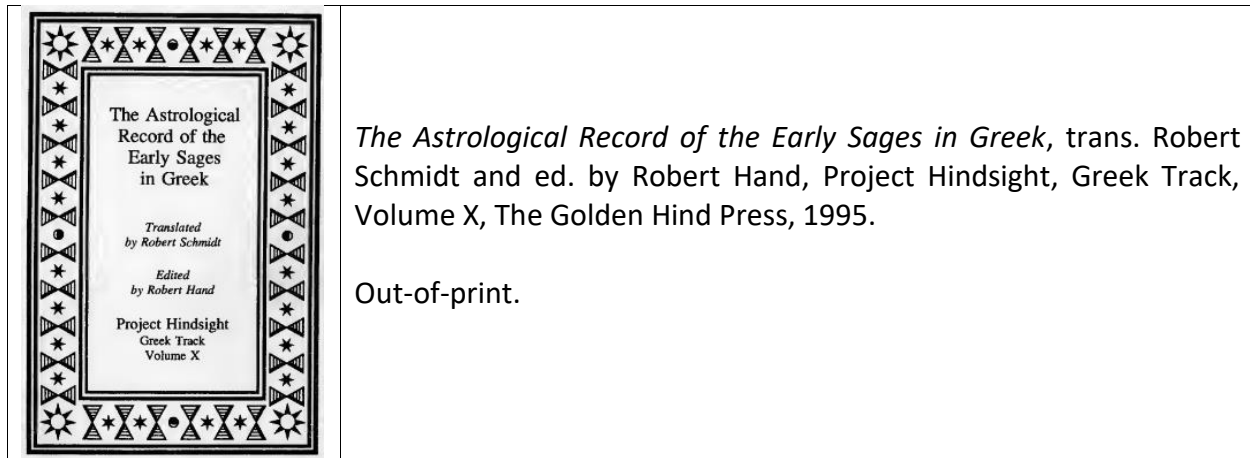
The Yavanajātaka is one of the earliest surviving Sanskrit works which reference Hellenistic astrology. While Pingree’s English translation was the first, it is not definitive based on recent scholarship. My inclusion of Pingree’s translation by no means endorses Pingree’s translation; my intent is to cite a widely known source whose sections on physiognomy will most likely stand up to further scrutiny as I am only interested in major topics and themes.

Among all astrological texts surveyed in this literature review, the Yavanajātaka offers the most comprehensive list of planet, sign, and sign subdivision-based physiognomy rules. In fact, there are so many rules it may not be possible to test their efficacy in total as there appear to be several hundred possible combinations. Decan-based rules in Chapters 3 and 29 are based on the Parāśara Dreskana model, not the more commonly used Chaldean model.

Chapter, Section	Page	Topic
Chap 1, 14-25	p. 1	Melothesia rules
Chap 1, 123-136	p. 10	Planet-based rules, includes colors.
Chap 3, 1-37	p. 15	Decan-based rules
Chap 3, 39-42	p. 18	Integration of decan-based and navamsa-based rules
Chapters 12-18	p. 36	Planet-based rules for each planet in all 12 zodiac signs; primarily character descriptions but some physiognomy observations.
Chap 19	p. 53	Sign-based rules
Chap 20, 1-7	p. 59	Planets in rising sign
Chap 29	p. 73	Decan-based rules; Pingree translates as ‘Drekkana’
Chap 30	p. 76	Saptamsa-based rules (7 th parts)
Chap 31	p. 85	Navamsa-based rules (9 th parts)

Sign-based rules in Chapter 19 include temperament descriptions for each sign (as Ascendant). Inclusion of temperament rules **MAY** indicate this text follows publication of Galen’s *On Temperaments*, c. 169-176 CE. Publication date of 2nd-3rd Cent CE above is my speculation.

~222 and 235. Hippolytus



HOROI Project

creating English translations of Greek astrological texts

Hippolytus of Rome. Refutation of All Heresies, Chapters 15-26.
Translated by Levente László. The Horoi Project.

<https://www.patreon.com/horoiproject/posts?filters%5Btag%5D=Hippolytus+of+Rome>

First published in 1995 attributed to ps.-Pythagoras by Project Hindsight, more recent scholarship by Levente László assigns the original version of this text to “Refutation of All Heresies” by Hippolytus of Rome, probably written between 222 and 235 CE. László explains the history of the text and its versions in his Introduction (see link below).

Schmidt translation

Citation: Section 7, pp. 29-36. Planet-based rules, pp. 30-32. Sign-based rules, pp. 32-36.

László translation

Citations: Post 1 includes an introduction; the 12 zodiac signs are divided into Posts 1-3.

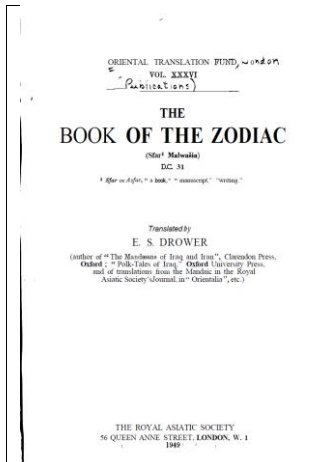
<https://www.patreon.com/posts/hippolytus-and-1-85243955>

<https://www.patreon.com/posts/hippolytus-and-2-85733745>

<https://www.patreon.com/posts/hippolytus-and-3-87179088>

As of March 2024, László has not yet translated the planet-based rules.

c. 3rd – 8th Cent. Anonymous Mandaean author.

	<p>Anonymous. <i>The Book of the Zodiac (Sfar Malwašia)</i>. Translated by E. S. Drower. London: The Royal Asiatic Society, 1949.</p> <p>Available online (free)</p>
---	--

The Mandeans, sometimes referred to as Sabians, are an ethnoreligious group which most likely formed during the 1st-2nd centuries AD. For much of their history until the 2nd Gulf War, they populated the marshy area between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in modern day Iraq. During the mid-20th century, the scholar Ethel May Stefana Drower (who published under the name “E. S. Drower” and also referred to as Lady Drower) championed Mandaean cultural preservation including translation of their astrological text *Sfar Malwašia*. Dating is difficult, not the least because the text is a collection of loose sheets, not bound in a single manuscript.

Organized by sign and sex, Books 1 & 2 outline sign- and decan-based physiognomy rules for men and women; Book 3 outlines planet-based physiognomy rules. Discussion of character and career is mixed with physical descriptions. Use of Chaldean decans is one of the few examples in this literature review which makes specific judgments on physical appearance based on the rising Chaldean decan.

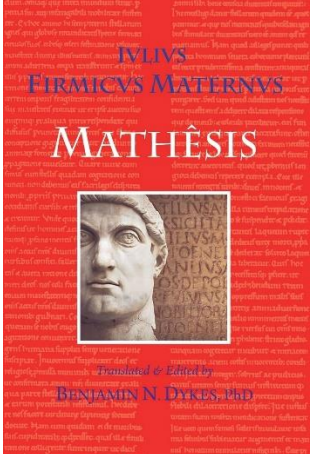
Recommended Secondary Source

Maire M. Masco. *The Mandeans: Gnostic Astrology as an Artifact of Cultural Transmission*. Tacoma, WA: Fluke Press, 2012.

Reviews history of the Mandeans, discusses the *Sfar Malwašia* in the context of transmission of astrology between cultures, and summarizes the astrological text.

[Available from Amazon](#)


Mid-4th Cent. Julius Firmicus Maternus

	<p>Julius Firmicus Maternus. Mathesis. Trans. Benjamin Dykes. Cazimi Press, 2023.</p> <p>Available on Amazon.</p>
---	---

Maternus provides limited guidance on physiognomy on account of missing chapters from his original book. From what does survive, fleeting references to physiognomy are incorporated into larger delineation sections which mix character, medical conditions, and career.

Book/Chapter	Page	Comments
Chapter II.7b	114	The natures of the stars. This is a missing section which would normally include planet-based physiognomy rules.
Chapter II.10	117	On the moral qualities & nature of the signs. Only sections on Aries and Pisces survive; this would normally include sign-based physiognomy rules. The entry for Pisces includes ‘blemished’ as one physical characteristic.
Chapter II.24	139	A description of the body. Simple melothesia listing which assigns the twelve zodiac signs to body parts in one sentence.
Chapter IV.19	292/303	On the Lord of the Nativity. A version of planet-based physiognomy rules not based on planets in the rising sign but on the overall horoscope ruler. Numbers refer to sentences in this section. Saturn, 17; Jupiter, 28; Mars, 33; Venus, 43; Mercury, 62; Sun, 72; Moon, 83.
Chapter IV.22	310/311	On the empty & full places. Maternus states that if a decan is ‘full’ of divine power the body will be strong; if in a decan ‘empty’ of divine power the body will be small.
Chapter V.2	337/343	The Hour-marker in the bounds. Character and professional descriptions are specific enough to infer physiognomy features in an indirect manner.
Chap VIII.6-17	564/581	Signs and their parans, listed by sign. Like the Hour-marker in the bounds above, physiognomy can be inferred in an indirect manner.
Chap VIII.18-30	581/617	Signs by individual portions, listed by sign. Like the Hour-marker in the bounds above, physiognomy can be inferred indirectly.

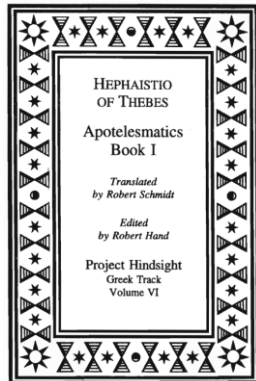
378. Paul of Alexandria

 <p>Paul of Alexandria Introduction to Astrology</p> <p>Translated from the Greek by James Herschel Holden, M.A. Fellow of the American Federation of Astrologers</p>	<p>Paul of Alexandria. Introduction to Astrology. Trans. James Herschel Holden, ed. Kris Brandt Riske. American Federation of Astrologers. 2012.</p> <p>Available on Amazon</p>
--	---

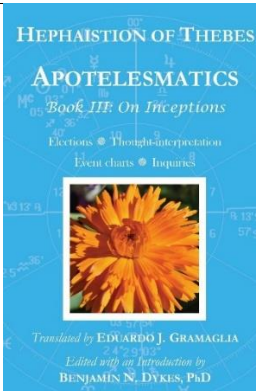
Physiognomy references in this text are limited to sign-based melothesia rules.

Citation: Chapter 2. The Twelve Signs, pp. 2-7. Melothesia assignments are included in each sign's description and recapped for all twelve signs on p. 7.

~415. Hephaistio

	<p>Hephasistio of Thebes, Apotelesmatics, Book I. trans. Robert Schmidt and ed. Robert Hand, Project Hindsight, Greek Track, Volume VI, The Golden Hind Press, 1994. Out of print.</p> <p>Hephasistio of Thebes, Apotelesmatics, Book II. Translated and annotated by Robert Schmidt, Project Hindsight, Greek Track, Volume XV, The Golden Hind Press, 1998. Out of print.</p>
---	---

Book/Chapter	Page	Contents
I:1	3-25	Concerning the Name and the Power of the Twelfth-parts. Presents <u>decan-based physiognomy rules</u> Aries (3-5); Taurus (6-7); Gemini (7-9); Cancer (9-11); Leo (11-12); Virgo (12-14); Libra (14-16); Scorpio (16-18); Sagittarius (18-20); Capricorn (20-21); Aquarius (21-23); Pisces (23-25). No decan system is specified. While there is some similarity to the Parāśara Dreskana model, not all decans are a match. I rate this decan system unknown.
II:2	12-13	Concerning the Degree Marking the Hour. Presents <u>sign-based physiognomy rules</u> .

	<p>Hephaistion of Thebes, Apotelesmatics: Book III: On Inceptions, trans. Eduardo J. Gramaglia, ed. Benjamin N. Dykes, Cazimi Press, Minneapolis, MN, 2013. Available from Amazon</p>
---	---

Book/Chapter	Page	Contents
III:45	125-128	On the Appearance of the Thief. Presents complete set of planet-based and sign-based physiognomy rules (1-9). How to integrate conflicting testimonies, includes discussion of solar phase and essential dignity (10-19).

?? before July 24, 1388, CE. “Balchus”

HOROI Project

creating English translations of Greek astrological texts

The Astrological Book of “Balchus” – Chapter 26,
Translated by Levente László. The Horoi Project.

<https://www.patreon.com/horoiproject/posts?filters%5Btag%5D=Balchus>

What is termed The Astrological Book of “Balchus” is a Byzantine anthology of 148 chapters collated from multiple Hellenistic astrologers assembled and completed by the copyist Mytilene on July 24, 1388. As has been shown by David Pingree, no such person “Balchus” exists.

Citation: Chapter 26, On fugitives.

<https://www.patreon.com/posts/astrological-of-80014662>

Of interest is a set of sign-based rules presented to identify fugitives in the context of horary astrology. For horary charts cast for finding the fugitive, the angles signify the following:

Ascendant: the fugitive and the time of finding him

Midheaven: the cause of his escape

Descendant: fate of the fugitive

IC: in what region the fugitive flees or where he is about to travel.

Accordingly, the sign-based rules to identify the fugitive are based on rising sign which, as listed above, identifies the fugitive directly.

Other horary texts often assign the thief to the 7th house.

Citation: Chapter 32: On the significations of the supervisor and the administrator.

<https://www.patreon.com/posts/astrological-of-81021948>

Lists planet-based rules for physiognomy for planets placed directly in the Ascendant sign.

HOROI Project

creating English translations of Greek astrological texts

Translated by Levente László. The Horoi Project.

<https://www.patreon.com/horoiproject/posts?filters%5Btag%5D=Teucer+of+Babylon>
<https://www.patreon.com/horoiproject/posts?filters%5Btag%5D=Rhetorius+of+Egypt>

In the last year, László has taken up sections of Rhetorius including those attributed to Teucer of Babylon presented in Appendices I and II of James Holden's 2009 translation of Rhetorius published by the AFA. László makes comments in his introduction (see first link below) that the Teucer attribution may not be correct. In this paper, I will attribute these texts to Rhetorius.

Citation: Rhetorius the Egyptian. An Explanation and Interpretation of All Astrology.

Sign-based rules. Each section also includes a description of image-based decans and the list of Chaldean decans.

Chapter	Weblink
Intro, Ὦ	https://www.patreon.com/posts/explanation-and-88962843
♄ II ♄	https://www.patreon.com/posts/explanation-and-90955581
♂ II ♀	https://www.patreon.com/posts/explanation-and-94256205
♂ ♂ ♀	https://www.patreon.com/posts/explanation-and-96962653
♂ ♂	https://www.patreon.com/posts/explanation-and-97954203

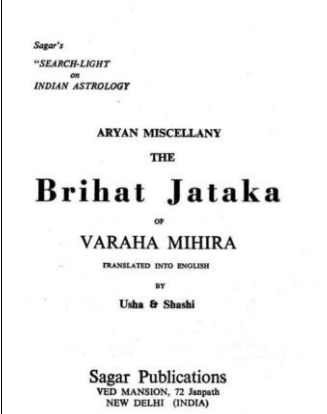
Planet-based rules

Planet	Weblink
♄ ♄	https://www.patreon.com/posts/explanation-and-99526560
♂ ♂ ♀	https://www.patreon.com/posts/explanation-and-101307487
♄ ♀	https://www.patreon.com/posts/explanation-and-102903936

These planet-based rules do characterize each planet by an elemental mix:

Saturn: cold and dry; Jupiter: windy and generative; Mars: fiery, scorching, and dry; Sun: hot and dry; Venus: well-balanced and wet; Mercury: sometimes wet and sometimes dry; Moon: wet and cold.

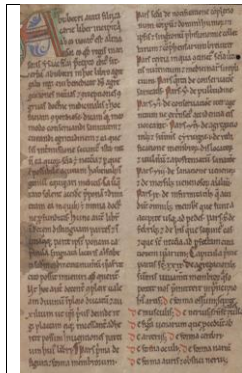
6th Cent. Varāhamihira (c. 505 – c. 587 CE)

	<p>Varāhamihira. Brihat Jataka. Exact publishing date unknown.</p> <p>Available from Internet Archive (free)</p> <p>Page numbers (below) are to the above linked text (text itself, not pagination for the pdf).</p>
---	--

Chapter-Section	Page	Contents
I-4	2-3	Melothesia assignments: signs to part of body (not organs)
II-4,5	18	Color assignments to planets.
II-8	19	Sun/Moon physiognomy rules.
II-9	19-20	Mars/Mercury physiognomy rules.
II-10	20	Jupiter/Venus physiognomy rules.
II-11	20	Saturn physiognomy rules
V-23,24	59-60	More refined melothesia assignments based on decans.
XVIII-after 20	206-211	Sign-based physiognomy rules
XXVII	176-188	Decan-based physiognomy rules (image-based system)

Both planet-based (pps 19-20) and sign-based (pps 206-211) physiognomy rules include temperament descriptions.

9th-10th Cent. Abū Bakr Muhammad ibn Zakarīyā Rāzī (c. 864/865 – 925/935 CE).
c. 12th Cent. Fakhr al-Din al-Razi (c. 1149/1150 – 1209 CE).



Liber Almansoris or Ad Almansorem (Kitāb al-Manṣūrī) (The Book of Medicine dedicated to Manṣūr).

[Latin edition available from University of Cambridge \(free\)](#)

Translated from Arabic to Latin c. 1175-1180 by Gerard of Cremona.

At present (writing in 2024), Antonella Ghersetti and Robert Hoyland are the two leading academic researchers of physiognomy during the Islamic Golden Age.

After Hunayn ibn Ishaq translated the ps.-Aristotle physiognomy text listed at the beginning of this literature review, Ghersetti states the two most important physiognomy texts during the Islamic Golden Age were penned by Rhazes (Abū Bakr Muhammad ibn Zakarīyā Rāzī) and Fakhraddin Razi (Fakhr al-Din al-Razi). The Rhazes text (see above link) was dedicated to his patron Abū Ṣāliḥ al-Manṣūr, the Samanid governor of Ray and translated into Latin c. 1175-1180 by Gerard of Cremona. A French translation of the second text Kitāb al-firāsa by Fakhruddin Razi was made by Yusef Mourad (Paris, 1939).

I have not reviewed either text. According to Ghersetti, Rhazes helped ‘medicalize’ physiognomy by linking physical appearance (results) to humoral and temperament theory (its cause). Astrology was not the focus of either text. The text by Fakhr al-Din al-Razi is similar in spirit.

Recommended Secondary Sources

Anna Akasoy. “Arabic Physiognomy as a link between Astrology and Medicine,” in *Astro-Medicine: Astrology and Medicine, East and West*, SISMEL – Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2008.

Antonella Ghersetti. “The Semiotic Paradigm: Physiognomy and Medicine in Islamic Culture,” in *Seeing the Face, Seeing the Soul*, ed Simon Swain, Oxford, 2007, pp. 281-308.

_____. “A Science for Kings and Masters: Firāsa at the Crossroad between Natural Sciences and Power Relationships in Arabic Sources,” in *The Occult Sciences in Pre-modern Islamic Cultures*, Edited by Nader El-Bizri and Eva Orthmann, Ergon Verlag Wurzburg in Kommission, Beirut 2018.

Medieval Arab Astrological Texts which omit physiognomy rules

a. Zādānfarrūkh aka al-Andarzaghār or “the Advisor” (no firm dates, may have lived after Muslim overthrow of Sassanians, or after 651 CE).

Persian Nativities, Vol. I. Māshā ‘allāh & Abū ‘Alī, trans. and ed. Benjamin Dykes, Minneapolis, MN.: Cazimi Press, 2009. *Book of Aristotle*, pp. 1-226. Originally thought a work of Māshā ‘allāh, Dykes now concludes the *Book Aristotle* was penned by al-Andarzaghār in his introductory comments to *The Astrology of Sahl B. Bishr Vol I*.

b. Māshā‘allāh (c. 740 – c. 815 AD)

Works of Sahl and Māshā ‘allāh, trans. Benjamin Dykes, Golden Valley, MN.: Cazimi Press, 2008. *On Nativities*, pp. 391-416.

While Al-Qabisi’s later Introduction to Astrology lists Māshā‘allāh as the source of a brief set of planet-based physiognomy rules, they are not present in Māshā‘allāh’s text *On Nativities* which jumps from the discussion of longevity directly to manners, omitting any discussion of physiognomy which Ptolemy and other authors usually sandwich between these two topics. Giambattista della Porta does include references to Māshā‘allāh’s physiognomy rules; together with Al-Qabisi it may be possible to reconstruct Māshā‘allāh’s physiognomy observations.

c. ‘Umar al-Tabarī (died c. 815 AD)

Persian Nativities, Vol. II. ‘Umar al-Tabarī & Abū Bakr. trans. and ed. Benjamin Dykes, Minneapolis, MN.: Cazimi Press, 2009. *On the Judgements of Nativities*, 227-349.

d. Abū ‘Alī al-Khayyat. (ca. 770 – ca. 835 AD)

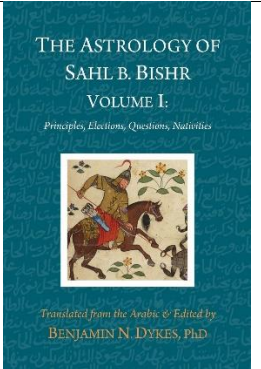
Persian Nativities, Vol. I. Māshā ‘allāh & Abū ‘Alī, trans. and ed. Benjamin Dykes, Minneapolis, MN.: Cazimi Press, 2009. *On the Judgements of Nativities*, 227-349.

e. Abū Ma’shar (c. 787 – c. 886)

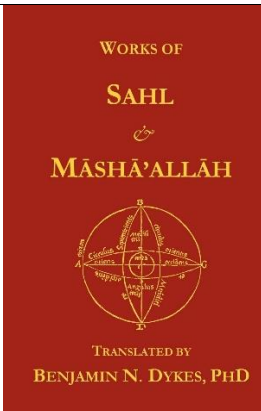
Abū Ma’shar. *The Great Introduction to the Science of the Judgments of the Stars*. trans. and ed. Benjamin Dykes, Minneapolis, MN.: Cazimi Press, 2020.

While Abū Ma’shar lists no physiognomy rules which predict the shape and appearance of a person based on the horoscope, three topics are worth mentioning. In Chapter IV.2.31-50 he does list color attributes of each planet based on humoral theory. Chapters V.15 and V.16 list Chaldean and Indian decans respectively with Abū Ma’shar stating his preference for Chaldean decans. Chapter VI.1 (p. 313-342) catalogs appearances of each rising decan based on three different sources. The first set based on star parans is based on Rhetorius. The second source is transcribed by Sahl’s *On Questions* Chapter 7.22. Ptolemy is cited as the third source.

c. 811-825 CE, years most active. Sahl bin Bishr

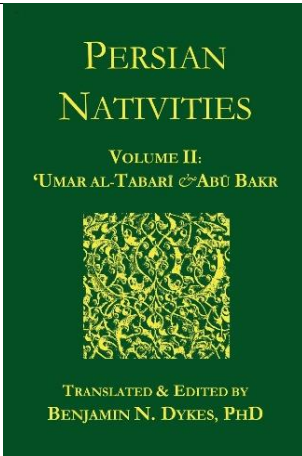
	<p>The Astrology of Sahl B. Bishr, translated and edited by Benjamin Dykes, Golden Valley, MN.: Cazimi Press, 2019</p> <p>Available on Amazon</p>
---	---

Chapter	Page	On Nativities
Chap 1.3, 1	257	Links rising sign at birth to appearance. (also 1.30, 1)
Chap 1.33, 1-20	350	On the knowledge of the native's image & his color.
Chap 1.33, 2	350	Physiognomy model: consider the Ascendant degrees, the lord of the face (as a possible reading by Dykes), planets aspecting the lord of the face, and planets aspecting the Ascendant degree.
Chap 1.33, 11	351	Refers readers to the Book of Natures for images of planets (book either lost or not yet found).
Chap 1.33, 21-41	352	Drawing on Ptolemy, presents planet-based physiognomy rules.
Chap 1.34	357	Physiognomy model based on planet activity during pregnancy; provides rules for whether the native resembles the father, mother, or other members of the father or mother's family.

	<p>Works of Sahl and Māshā 'allāh, trans. Benjamin Dykes, Golden Valley, MN.: Cazimi Press, 2008. On Questions, pp. 67-186.</p> <p>Available on Amazon</p>
---	--

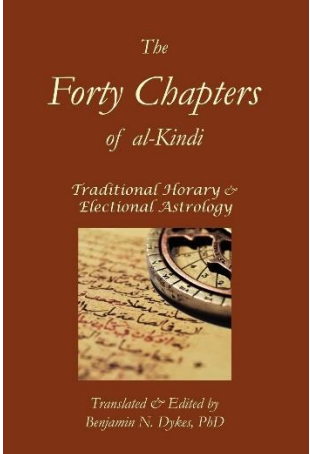
In On Questions, Chapter 7.22, Sahl employs decan-based rules for judging physiognomy of criminals. These are “image-based” decans and identical to the second of three sets of decans collected by Abū Ma'shar attributed to Indian astrologers.

9th Cent. Abu Bakr

	<p>Persian Nativities, Vol. II., trans. and ed. Benjamin Dykes, Minneapolis, MN.: Cazimi Press, 2009. On Nativities.</p> <p>Available on Amazon</p>
---	---

Chapter	Page	On Nativities
Chap 1.9	107	<p>On the native's face Addresses criticism that physiognomy developed by the fair-skinned is not applicable to inhabitants of Arab lands.</p> <p>Physiognomy model: how to identify signifiers for the native's face.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If any planet placed in the Ascendant has dignity in the Ascendant degree by sign, exaltation, triplicity, or bound, that planet is the primary signifier of the face. • If multiple planets are placed in the Ascendant, judge the face by the Lord of the rising decan, mixing it with the planet the Lord of the rising decan commits its own strength. • If the Ascendant is untenanted, choose the Lord of the rising decan provided that planet aspects the Ascendant. • If the Lord of the rising decan is cadent from the Ascendant, choose a planet with a closer aspect to the Ascendant, favoring one who has dignity by sign, exaltation, triplicity, or bound in the position of the Ascendant degree. • Integrate colors and shapes of the planets with colors and shapes of the signs and bounds where they are placed to reach a judgment of the color of the face and body. • Additional rules given for beauty are based on benefic and malefic planets, signs, and chart sect.
Chap 1.10.1	109	<p>On the colors of the planets. List of planet-based physiognomy rules with added commentary on color.</p>
Chap 1.10.2	111	<p>On the colors of the signs. List of sign-based physiognomy rules with added commentary on color.</p>
Chap 1.11	112	<p>On the one to whom the boy will be likened: namely to the father or mother, paternal uncle or maternal uncle. Links the rising decan or its ruler to the 4th house cusp, the Sun, and the Moon in order to test genetic similarities in appearance.</p>

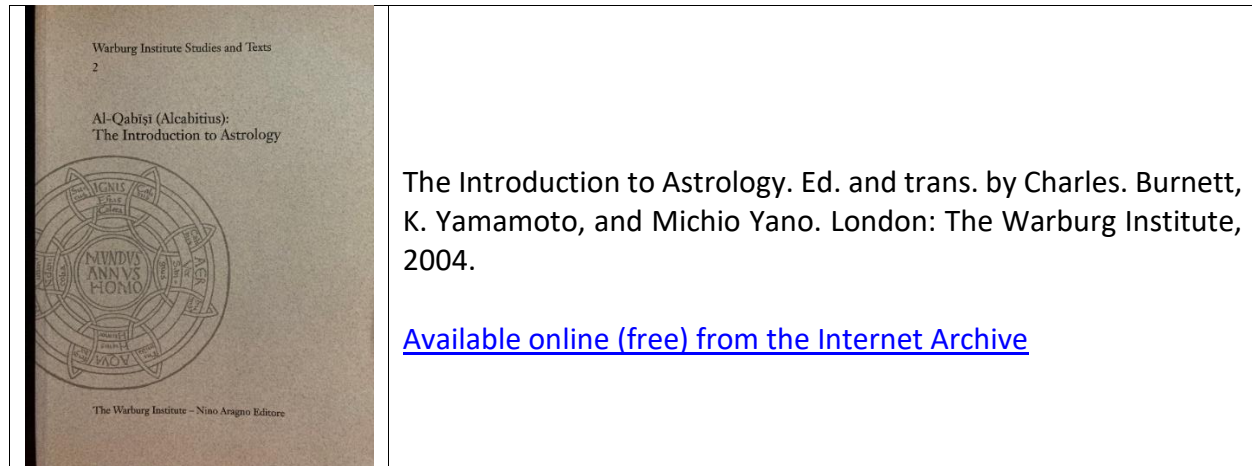
9th Cent. al-Kindi (c. 801 – c. 873 CE)

	<p>The Forty Chapters of al-Kindi, trans. and ed. Benjamin Dykes, Minneapolis, MN.: Cazimi Press, 2011.</p> <p>Available on Amazon</p>
---	--

al-Kindi presents physiognomy rules in the context of horary astrology in order to identify the appearance of a thief.

Chapter	Page	On Nativities
6.2	107	<p>The physical appearance of the thief: Saturn as an example.</p> <p>Using Saturn as an example, gives description of Saturn in the style of Ptolemy, then refines Saturn's appearance based on placement in all twelve signs. Description of Saturn in Aries adds sign-based rules for Aries; likewise for the balance of the 11 signs.</p>
6.3	110	<p>The Moon showing marks & blemishes.</p> <p>When the Moon is bonified, the Moon's sign shows the location of a beauty mark. When the Moon is maltreated, the Moon's sign shows the location of a blemish or a deformity. Standard melothesia assignments apply.</p>
6.4	111	<p>Other planets as signifiers of the thief.</p> <p>al-Kindi states that if another planet besides Saturn signifies the thief, then one should use planet-based physiognomy rules for the respective planet. al-Kindi does assign a color to each of these planets. This reflects the inclusion of color in physiognomy rules by Abū Ma'shar and Abu Bakr.</p>

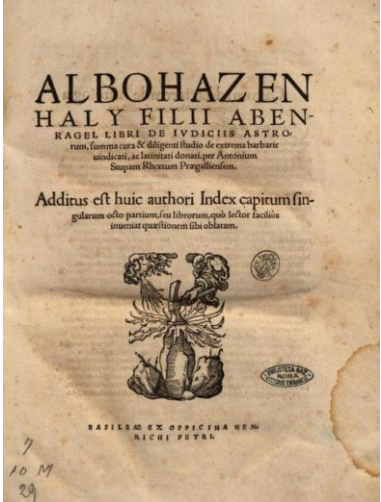
10th Cent. Al-Qabīṣī (d. 967).



Chapter	Page	On Nativities
2.5	65	Saturn's assignment to the limbs.
2.6	65	Saturn's appearance citing Māshā 'allāh.
2.7	65	Saturn's appearance citing Dorotheus.
2.10	67	Jupiter's assignment to the limbs.
2.11	67	Jupiter's appearance citing Māshā 'allāh
2.12	69	Jupiter's appearance citing Dorotheus
2.15	71	Mars' assignment to the limbs
2.16	71	Mars' appearance citing Māshā 'allāh
2.17	71	Mars' appearance citing Dorotheus
2.20	73	Sun: "Of the forms of people some said that it indicates the form of the face of a person, and the right eye of men properly, but the left eye of woman.
2.21	73	Sun's assignment to the limbs
2.23	73	Sun's appearance citing Māshā 'allāh
2.24	75	Sun's appearance citing Dorotheus
2.27,2.28	77	Venus' assignment to the limbs
2.29	77	Venus' appearance citing Māshā 'allāh
2.30	77	Venus' appearance citing Dorotheus
2.33	79	Mercury's assignment of the limbs
2.35	81	Mercury's appearance citing Māshā 'allāh
2.38	83	Moon's assignment to the limbs
2.39	83	Moon's appearance citing Māshā 'allāh

Al-Qabīṣī quotes planet-based rules of Māshā'allāh and Dorotheus but makes no indication of how to choose the appropriate planet for judging physiognomy. Also, as no planet-based physiognomy rules are included in Māshā'allāh 's *On Nativities*, it is not clear which Māshā 'allāh text Al-Qabīṣī is referring to.

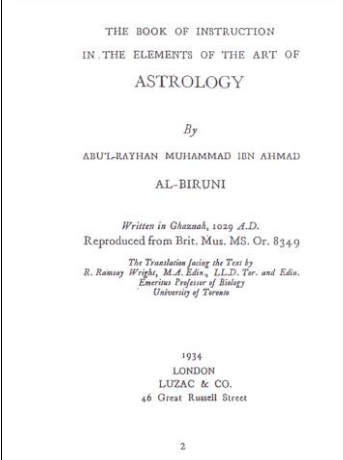
c. 10th-11th Cent. Ibn abī al-Rijāl (Haly Abenragel) (died after 1037)

	<p>Complete Book on the Judgment of the Stars Kitāb al-bāri' fi ahkām an-nujūm</p> <p>Translated to Old Castilian (El libro conplido en los iudizios de las estrellas) for Alfonso X in 1254.</p> <p>Translated to Latin (De iudiciis astrorum) and published in multiple editions from 1485 to 1571.</p> <p>Available Free Online from Internet Archive (1551 Latin edition)</p> <p>Available Free Online from Library of Congress (1523 Latin edition, Venice)</p>
---	---

Book	
I.3	Presents delineation of Chaldean decans based on character traits and professional activities. No reference to physiognomy. (pages 3-5 of Latin text).
IV.9	<p>How to judge physiognomy, weighing testimonies of planet-based and sign-based physiognomy rules.</p> <p>If the Ascendant has a single planet which has dignity in the Ascendant degree of sign, exaltation, bound, or triplicity, then use this planet as the physiognomy significator.</p> <p>If the Ascendant has multiple planets, choose the planet which is either closer to the Ascendant degree or the planet which has the greatest number of dignities in the Ascendant. Mix the indications of this planet with the ruler of the face, and the planet to which the ruler of the face gives its force.</p> <p>If the Ascendant has a planet which does not rule the Ascendant degree by any essential dignity, use this planet as the physiognomy significator.</p> <p>If the Ascendant is untenanted, use the ruler of the face as the physiognomy significator as long as it makes an aspect to the Ascendant.</p> <p>If the Ascendant is untenanted and the ruler of the face is inconjunct, then choose a planet which is in aspect and close to the Ascendant with some essential dignity in the Ascendant degree as the physiognomy significator.</p> <p>Judge the form and face of the native from the planets; the body, from the planet's sign placement.</p> <p>Planet-based physiognomy rules Sign-based physiognomy rules</p>

With the benefit of ChatGPT I have made a translation of relevant sections on physiognomy from Book 4 Chapter 9. Haly's physiognomy rules are almost identical to those of Abu Bakr. His planet- and sign-based rules are slightly different.

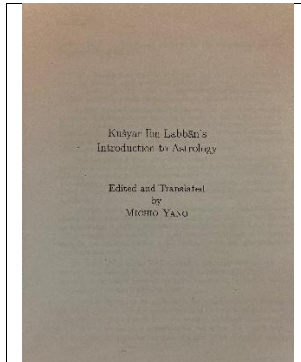
c. 10th-11th Cent. Al-Biruni (973 – 1049)

 <p>THE BOOK OF INSTRUCTION IN THE ELEMENTS OF THE ART OF ASTROLOGY</p> <p><i>By</i> ABUL-RATHAN MUHAMMAD IBN AHMAD AL-BIRUNI</p> <p><i>Written in Ghaznah, 1029 A.D. Reproduced from Brit. Mus. MS. Or. 8349</i></p> <p><i>The Translation facing the Text by R. Ramsay Wright, M.A. Esq., F.R.S. For. and Educ. Emeritus Professor of Biology University of Toronto</i></p> <p>1934 LONDON LUZAC & CO. 46 Great Russell Street</p> <p>2</p>	<p>Al-Biruni. The Book of Instruction in the Elements of the Art of Astrology. Trans. by R. Ramsay Wright. London, 1934.</p> <p>Available online hosted by Skyscript (free)</p>
--	---

Chapter	Page Original text	Page Skyscript Upload	On Nativities
361	218	11	Sign-based physiognomy rules for the face and body.
401	240	33	Planet-based rules for color.
423- 425	248	41	Planet-based rules for melothesia: for the head (only) and the entire body.
428	249	42	Planet-based rules for the face and body.

As a collector and compiler of astrological rules, al-Biruni's sign-based and planet-based physiognomy rules are fairly complete, yet he gives no indication on how to combine these sets of rules for a final delineation.

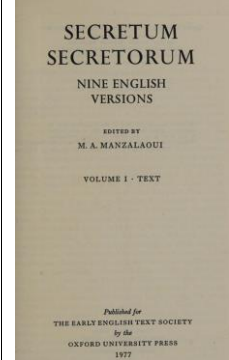
c. 990. Kūsyār Ibn Labbān

	<p>Kūsyār Ibn Labbān's <i>Introduction to Astrology</i>, ed. And trans. by Michio Yano. Tokyo University. 1997</p> <p>Note: this book is out-of-print and extremely difficult to find.</p>
---	--

Chapter	Page	On Nativities
III.5.1	171	Gives rules for determining the ruling planet for physiognomy delineation. “These are known from the ruler of the ascendant, the ruler of the Moon’s place, and the planet which is the most powerful and abundant in shares in its place. The one of these three which is the most powerful and the most abundant in shares is the most suitable for the management of these matters.”
III.5.2	171	Saturn’s appearance
III.5.3	171	Jupiter’s appearance
III.5.4	171	Mars’ appearance
III.5.5	171	Venus’ appearance
III.5.6	171	Mercury’s appearance
III.5.7	172	Influence of luminaries
III.5.8	172	Influence of solar phase

Kūsyār Ibn Labbān follows Ptolemy’s planet-based physiognomy rules with one addition. In the opening section of III.5.1, he gives rules for identifying the planetary physiognomy significator from three possible choices (stated above). It is not clear to me what the third candidate is “the planet which is the most powerful and abundant in shares in its place.” This sounds like a compound al-mubtazz of the Ascendant ruler and Moon’s ruler’s positions; however, it may be the al-mubtazz of the Ascendant degree.

~1120 CE, ~1232 CE. ps.-Aristotle.

	<p>Pseudo-Aristotle</p> <p><i>Secretum Secretorum</i></p> <p>Available from the Internet Archive (free)</p>
---	---

One of the most widely circulated books during the High Middle Ages was the *Secretum Secretorum*, allegedly wrote as a self-help/advice book by Aristotle for Alexander the Great during Alexander's military campaign in Persia. The work's tantalizing title "The Secret of Secrets" was undoubtedly a clever marketing ploy and helped increase its reception. Current scholarship dates the original work to the 10th century by an Arab author. In the Latin West it was first translated by John of Seville ~1120 CE and in the following century by Philip of Tripoli for Bishop Guy of Tripoli ~1232 CE.

The work is divided into ten books. Book II On the Position and Character of a King includes a brief apology for astrology, a handful of astrological medical rules, and a section on physiognomy. There are no linkages made between astrology and physiognomy. While the *Secretum Secretorum* was not a major text on physiognomy, its widespread circulation helped maintain some interest in physiognomy during the Middle Ages.

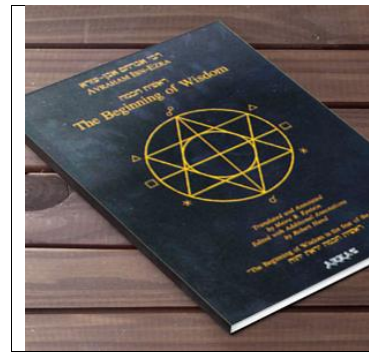
As Steven Williams points out, despite this work's high circulation, there is little evidence that the discipline of physiognomy experienced growth as a technical discipline, unlike the fields of astronomy, magnetism, statics, medicine, or optics. Williams states the lack of data gathering, the lack of quantification (what exactly is a 'large' ear and how would one measure that), and the lack of hypothesis testing meant there was no progress in the field of physiognomy which left it at the periphery of academic interest.

Recommended Secondary Sources

Steven J. Williams. *The Secret of Secrets. The Scholarly Career of a Pseudo-Aristotelian Text in the Latin Middle Ages*. University of Michigan. 2003.

Steven J. Williams. "Some Observations on the Scholarly Reception of Physiognomy in the Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Century: Success, and the Limits of Success." in *The Body as a Mirror of the Soul. Physiognomy from Antiquity to the Renaissance*, ed. Lisa Devriese. Leuven University Press. 2021.

1158. Ibn Ezra (1092 - 1167)



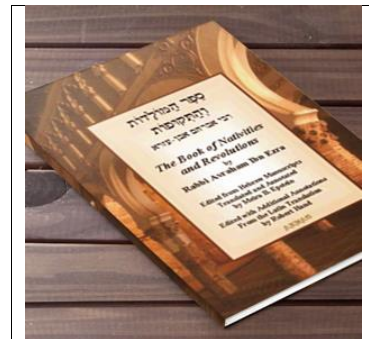
Avraham Ibn Ezra. *The Beginning of Wisdom*. Trans by Meira B. Epstein. Edited by Robert Hand. Arhat Media. 1998.

[Available from Arhat Media](#)

[Available from Amazon](#)

[More recent critical edition by Shlomo Sela](#)

Chapter	Page	
2	14-77	Decan descriptions (three sets) following Abu Mashar. Sign-based physiognomy rules. Decan descriptions, additional set, which appear based on the Hindu decans. Sign-based melothesia assignments. Lists both Chaldean and Hindu decan versions for each sign.
4	91-105	Planet-based physiognomy rules. Further differentiation of bodily appearance by solar phase. Melothesia: Lists body parts which are ruled by each planet.



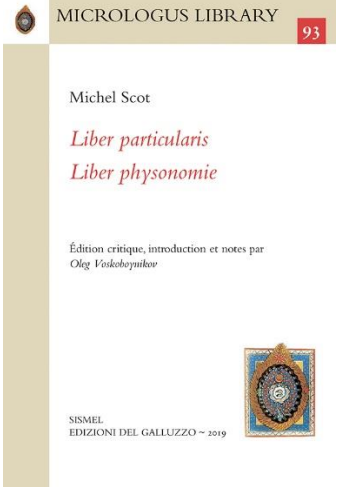
Avraham Ibn Ezra. *The Book of Nativities and Revolutions*. Trans by Meira B. Epstein. Edited by Robert Hand. Arhat Media. 2008.

[Available from Arhat Media](#)

Section: The First House. Chapter: Physical Appearance, pps 14-15.

- Beauty given by Ascendant, Ascendant ruler, or Moon placed in human signs.
- Prefers sign-based over planet-based rules given he refers the reader back to sign-based rules made in Book of Wisdom for physiognomy judgments.
- Quotes Sahl's rule that the ruler of the rising decan predicts facial appearance when it aspects the Ascendant. Ibn Ezra states "he tried it many times."
- Weight based on latitude of the Ruler of the Chart.
- Height based on Ascendant in signs of long/short ascension. Signs of long ascension give height relative to parents; short ascension, shortness. For signs of long ascension the effect is accentuated when the first decan rises.

c. ~1228 – 1232. Michael Scot (c. 1175-1232? CE).

 <p>MICROLOGUS LIBRARY 93</p> <p>Michel Scot</p> <p><i>Liber particularis</i> <i>Liber physonomie</i></p> <p>Édition critique, introduction et notes par Oleg Voskogoynikov</p> <p>SISMEL EDIZIONI DEL GALLUZZO ~ 2019</p>	<p>Michel Scot</p> <p>Liber particularis, Liber physonomie</p> <p>Critical edition with introduction and notes by Oleg Voskogoynikov, 2019.</p> <p>Avail from the publisher Sismel (Italy)</p>
---	--

Attached to the court of Frederick II at Palermo after 1220. A mathematician, translator, astrologer, and magician, Scot was familiar with many Arabic medical treatises including Rhazes. Scot published *Liber introductorius*, a large encyclopedic work in three parts. It is a large work, over 550,000 words, which is three times the size of Ptolemy's *Almagest*. The three parts are:

1. *Liber Quatuor Distinctionum* "The Book of the Four Distinctions"; astrology and astronomy
2. *Liber Particularis* "The Singular Book"; cosmology
3. *Liber physonomie* "The Book of Physiognomy"; physiognomy

In 2019, Oleg Voskogoynikov published a critical edition of Books 2 and 3 which collectively comprise roughly ¼ of the entire three-part work. Book 3 deals exclusively with physiognomy and was frequently published apart from Books 1 and 2.

Michael Porter tentatively ranks Scot's *Liber of physonomie* as one of four canonical physiognomy texts for the medieval Christian tradition, also referred to as the Latin West historical period (Porter, 69-71). Porter considers Scot notable for the author's (1) invention of new physiognomy aphorisms, (2) linkage of physiognomy, heredity, and conception via astrology, and (3) the first physiognomy text to introduce the sense of smell. As for the astrology references, they are drawn from natal astrology texts which discuss the influence of planets of the growing fetus during pregnancy. Porter suggests this physiognomy text was made with the intention of aiding Frederick finding a second wife which may account for the ordering of its contents which begins with ways to identify women capable of childbirth in very explicit terms. Some of these descriptions were so explicit that ChatGPT's Latin to English translation triggered content warnings which stated potential violation of its terms of service.

I have not yet reviewed Book 2.

c. 13th Cent. Anonymous

AUCTORIS INCERTI DE PHYSIOGNOMONIA LIBELLUS

1. *Introduction.* — Although there may have been an early printing of the short treatise which we present here, we have not succeeded in tracing any definite record of it among the incunabula, and apparently it has not been edited in modern times.

Four of the manuscripts shroudly name Aristotle as the author, a fifth speaks of Avicenna ('Avicenna'), and Wilhelm Schum, in cataloguing a sixth (E), ascribed the work to Averroes for a reason that is not quite clear. Valentin Rose, writing in 1864, assumed without explanation that this was 'the physiognomy of Avicenna, already corrupted by superstition' (cf. note 2). We shall explain in due course why we regard these attributions with sympathy but, even more, with scepticism. The belief of Richard Forster, that the writer was a Christian, would at least be consistent with the poem phrases 'in nomine Christi' (ch. 1), 'disponente Deo' (2), and 'Iovante Deo' (11), though these could have been inserted by a Christian translator or compiler using Arabic sources.

(1) The *Gesamtausgabe der Wiegendrucke*, II, p. 608 (No. 2389), shows that the Pseudo-Aristotelian *Physiognomonica* printed with a 'Lapideus' at Strassburg in 1473 (see F. B. Goss, *Incunabula in American Libraries*, New York, 1904, p. 55, No. A-999) is not the same as our text because it has a different initial.

(2) In Padre Avicenna's description of M, the Madrid manuscript (see below, under 'The Manuscripts and their Affiliations') we read 'conf. Avicenna physiognomica' ed. V. Rose, *op. cit.*, I, 175, and this appears in Tronchetti-Rosen, *Facialis* (1927, 1928) as 'Avicenna or Aristotle' ed. V. Rose, *op. cit.*, I, 175. This might give the impression that the well-known German savant edited the text in the last century, and when we examine the references we find that he merely described it, in a footnote on the introduction to his edition of Egidius Corbolicus, *De physiognomica*, as 'lib. 1. — Barth. Alengonensis breviter continens Physiognomica Avicennae', and quotes a few brief extracts from it, using the Erfurt manuscript (E).

(3) *Scriptores Physiognomiae Graeci et Latini* (Lipsiae, 1903), I, p. CXXXVIII, note 1 (cf. p. XXV). This important work is cited below as *Scr. Phys.*

Anonymous. *De Physiognomonia Libellus*.

Critical edition (Latin) published in 1974:

Roger A. Pack. "Auctoris Incerti De Physiognomonia Libellus," *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et litteraire de Moyen Age*, Vol. 41 (1974), pp. 113-138.

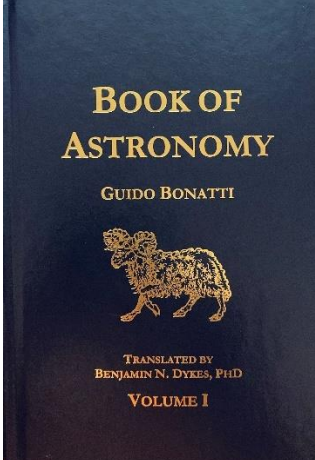
[Available online from JSTOR](#)

Pack speculates this pseudonymous text was published in the 13th century and may or may not have an Arabic text as its source. This text has been falsely attributed to Aristotle, Avicenna (Ibn Sina), and Averroes; academic researchers cannot confidently identify its source. I have created a ChatGPT English translation based on Pack's Latin critical edition.

The text is a relatively short work of 3,085 words in 26 paragraphs. The style is concise, clear, and is one of the few texts which succinctly link elements, humours, temperaments, and physiognomy. The three shapes of the head and face introduced in paragraphs 13 and 24 anticipate similar classifications proposed by the Fowler phrenologists in 19th century America.

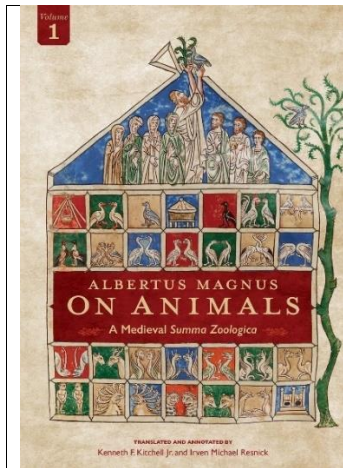
Paragraph	
2	Philosophy. Links elements, four humors, and four temperaments.
4-10	Planet-based rules. Lists physical features and character descriptions for each of the 7 planets. For Saturn and Jupiter, temperaments are explicitly assigned; for the balance of planets, temperament can be inferred based on colors which reference prior paragraph 2.
13	Shapes of the head. Character descriptions for heads which are round, oblong, and square; further classified by color.
15	Hair.
16	Shape of forehead.
17	Eyebrows.
18a	Large eyes. Further classified by color.
18b	Small eyes. Further classified by color.
19	Nose.
20	Mouth.
21	Teeth.
22	Chin.
23	Ears.
24	Shape of the face. Further classified for faces which are round, square, long, triangular, pale, and red.
25	Neck.
26	Throat.

c. 1276. Guido Bonatti (c. 1210-1290)

	<p>Guido Bonatti. Book of Astronomy (c. 1276) trans. Benjamin Dykes, Minneapolis, Minn.: The Cazimi Press, 2007.</p> <p>Original two volume hard copy edition is out of print. A subsequent re-release divided into 7 paperback books is available from Amazon.</p>
---	---

Treatise	Chap	Pages	
3	1-7	149-186	Planet-based rules. Towards the end of each Planet section, Bonatti references physiognomy descriptions by other authors including Māshā'allāh, Dorotheus, and ad-Dawla. Saturn, pp. 154-155; Jupiter, p. 158; Mars, p. 163; Sun, pp. 167-168; Venus, pp. 172-173; Mercury, p. 178; Moon, p. 183.
3	12	193-194	Sign-based rules. States both planets and signs have an effect on physiognomy. And that one cannot rely on planetary significators alone to judge physiognomy.
9	3:1	1151-1152	Form and Shape of the Body. Bonatti states that the parents and ancestors up to 7 prior generations are a consideration for judgment prior to astrological physiognomy. His specific physiognomy rules are fuzzy: At the start of the passage, he said to look at the Ascendant, the Ascendant ruler, and consider the al-mubtazz (of both those positions?). At the conclusion of the chapter, Bonatti says to consider the al-mubtazz "in the hour of the nativity" and the al-mubtazz of the Ascendant and take the stronger of the two as the physiognomy signifier (Dykes interpretation). As there is no definition of the al-mubtazz "in the hour of the nativity" this procedure is unworkable.
9	3:3	1154-1158	Planet-based rules. Predominantly in the style of Ptolemy, Bonatti includes physical descriptions based on single planets and planet pairs beginning with Saturn.
9	3:4	1158-1159	Using the Sun's standard four season model, states that placement of planet physiognomy signifiers are modified by the Sun's seasonal model, e.g., suppose the Moon is place in either Aries, Taurus, or Gemini (Sun's spring season). This placement will add heat and moisture to the Moon and improve the form of the body.
9	3:5	1160-1161	Recaps Ptolemy's other physiognomy rules, including sign-based rules for size and shape of the body.
9	3:6-11	1161-1172	Resumes and planet-based physiognomy rules beginning with Jupiter.

c. 1260s-1270s. Albertus Magnus (c. before 1200 to 1280).



Albertus Magnus. *De animalibus*. Translated and Annotated by Kenneth F. Kitchell Jr. and Irven Michael Resnick. Ohio State University Press. 2020.

[Available from Amazon](#)

Albertus Magnus, or Albert the Great, was one of the most significant medieval philosophers within the Christian Church. Within astrology, he is best known for *Speculum Astronomiae*, c. 1260s-1270s, written during the time astrology was attacked by Bishop of Paris Stephen Tempier who on 10-Dec-1270 issued a list of thirteen condemned propositions with two aimed at astrology. In *Speculum Astronomiae*, Albertus Magnus defends judicial astrology as a method for Christians to better align themselves with the divine by using astrology to learn of God's will. He carves out a place for free will with similar logic encapsulated in the oft-quoted phrase "the stars incline, but no not compel." He believed that stars only impacted the corporeal body, and since the soul was non-corporeal, the stars could not control the soul. He also stated that by the time God's will was transmitted through the planetary spheres to earth's surface, a measure of dilution and corruption meant that astrological prediction could never always be accurate.

For purposes of this literature review *De animalibus* is one of many works which represents Albertus Magnus' absorption and systemization of the complete cannon of Aristotle. In this work, Magnus differs from other physiognomy texts by interspersing physiognomy of humans with physiognomy of animals. There is no attempt to link astrology with physiognomy.

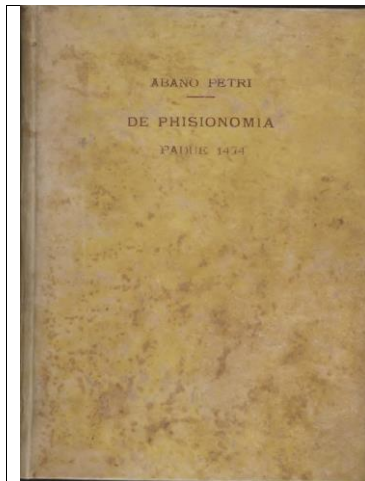
Recommended Secondary Source

Scott E. Hendrix. *How Albert the Great's Speculum Astronomiae was Interpreted and Used by Four Centuries of Readers*. Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Melen Press. 2010.

Recent scholarship which moves beyond the debate on Magnus' authorship of the text to consider the role of astrology in Magnus' life and work, and this book in particular.

[Available from academic publisher Mellen Press](#)

c. 1295 CE. Pietro d'Abano (c. 1250 – c. 1316).



Pietro d'Abano. *Compilatio Physionomiae*. c. 1295.
This edition was published in Padua, Italy, 1474.

[Available online from the Library of Congress \(free\) \[Latin\]](#)

A new Latin critical edition is under preparation.

Details: <https://data.snf.ch/grants/grant/214757>

Like Albert the Great, Pietro d'Abano trafficked the academic corridor between universities in Paris and Padua, settling in the latter. His intellectual scope was wide and included philosophy, astrology, and medicine. Within the field of astrology, he did translate works of Abraham Ibn Ezra and was recognized as a successful practicing astrologer by Regiomontanus.

What d'Abano did and did not do takes a bit to uncover. For instance, he was tried twice by the Inquisition and died before the second trial was completed. Wikipedia, quoting Francis Barrett (*The magus: being a complete system of occult philosophy*, S. Weiser, 2000), states the Inquisition sentenced Pietro to death because he attributed the workings of the natural world to celestial bodies and not angels and demons. And while d'Abano did have a reputation as a magician, Matthews (see PhD Dissertation cited below) makes clear that d'Abano did NOT author the spell book known as the *Heptameron* contrary to claims by Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa and Gabriel Naudé.

In any case, *Compilatio Physionomiae* is a relatively short work of about 100 pages which is primarily a compilation of physiognomy rules drawn from earlier authors including the four earliest cited physiognomy tracts from the Hellenistic era cited in this literature review, Rhazes, and the *Secretum Secretorum*. Compared to Michel Scot's treatise which has little astrology references, d'Abano provides a complete set of planet-based and sign-based physiognomy rules.

Recommended Secondary Source

Sarah Kathryn Matthews. *Matter over mind: Pietro d'Abano (d. 1316) and the science of physiognomy*. PhD Dissertation. University of Iowa. 2015.

[Available online \(free\) from University of Iowa](#)

~13th Cent. Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Abī Ṭālib al-Dimashqī (c.1256/1257 – 1327 CE)



Kitāb Jalīl fī 'ilm al-firāsah

[1400 Arabic Edition available from Internet Archive \(free\)](#)

[1846 Arabic Edition available from Library of Congress \(free\)](#)

[National Library of Medicine biographical sketch](#)

Only Arabic author to include astrology in a physiognomy text. I have not reviewed this text.

Recommended Secondary Sources

Johannes Thomann. Ibn Abi Talib al-Dimashqī's Works on Physiognomy and His Greek, Indian, and OldTurkic/Mongol Sources. 2022.

[Available from University of Zurich Open Depository and Archive](#)

c. 1435. Rolandus Scriptoris or Roland of Lisbon (15th Century)



'The Body as a
Mirror of the Soul
Physiognomy from Antiquity
to the Renaissance




Joseph Ziegler and Luis Campos Ribeiro. "Astral Physiognomy in the Fifteenth Century: The Case of the Illuminated Opening Folio of Rolandus Scriptoris' Reductorium Phisonomie". In *The Body as a Mirror of the Soul. Physiognomy from Antiquity to the Renaissance*, ed. Lisa DeVries. Leuven University Press, 2021.

[Available online from Amazon](#)

This work is a commentary on Peter of Abano's *Liber compilationis phisonomie* c. 1295 (cited in this literature review) written by Rolandus Scriptoris, a Portuguese physician and astrologer for his patron John of Lancaster, Duke of Bedford. The work summarizes physiognomy rules as well as their theoretical underpinnings from medicine, philosophy, and astrology. Ziegler and Ribeiro state the artist of the illuminated opening folio (most likely from the presentation copy for Roland's patron) includes at least one sign-based or planet-based astrological physiognomy rule for each of male figures in depicted in the folio.



1442. Michael Savonarola (1384 – 1464).

	<p>G. Zuccolin (ed.), Michele Savonarola, <i>Speculum phisionomie</i> (1442). A critical edition (<i>Corpus Philosophorum Medii Aevi – Texts and studies</i>), Florence: Edizioni del Galluzzo – SISMEI</p> <p>[forthcoming].</p>
---	---

Sought to correlate the four temperaments and four elements with physiognomy in a more thorough manner. Savonarola attempted to determine correspondences between temperaments and specific physiognomic signatures and offered a physiological explanation of the particular physical feature before giving its psychological meaning.

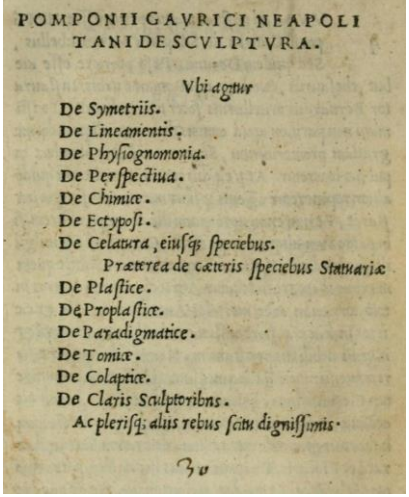
Scholar Gabriella Zuccolin is currently preparing a critical edition of this work. I will defer additional comments until the critical edition is published.

Recommended Secondary Source

Zuccolin, Gabriella (2012). *The Speculum phisionomie* by Michele Savonarola. In: *Universality of Reason. Plurality of Philosophies*, 16-22 September 2007, Palermo, Italy.

[Available online from The Open University](#)

1504. Pomponio Gaurico (1481/1482 – 1528)

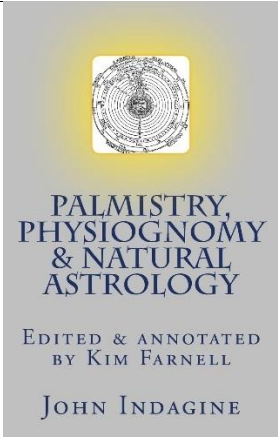
 <p>POMPONII GAURICI NEAPOLITANI DE SCULPTURA.</p> <p>Vbi agitur</p> <p>De Symetris. De Lineamentis. De Physiognomonia. De Perspectiva. De Chimia. De Ectypis. De Celatura, eiusq; speciebus. Præterea de cæteris speciebus Statuariae. De Plastica. De Proplastica. De Paradigmatica. De Tomia. De Colapica. De Clavis Sculptoribus. Ac plerisq; aliis rebus scitu dignissimis.</p> <p>3 v</p>	<p>Pomponius Gauricus of Naples on Sculpture: where it deals with symmetries, outlines, physiognomy, perspective, chemistry, ectypal sculpture, engraving and its types, moreover other types of statuary, modeling, preliminary modeling, paradigmatic (ideal) sculpture, cutting, carving, famous sculptors, and many other things most worthy of knowing. Pomponius Gauricus of Naples Eclogues.</p> <p>Available from Internet Archive (Latin) (Free)</p>
--	---

The brother of the more well-known astrologer Luca Gauricus, Pomponius was primarily a sculptor. His 1504 book covers the intersection between theory and practice of sculpture and physiognomy. Astrological references are included.

I have not reviewed this text.

It remains untranslated to English. Its current form is Latin with many Greek quotations.

1522. John Indagine (born circa 1467)

	<p>John Indagine. Palmistry, Physiognomy, and Natural Astrology. Edited and annotated by Kim Farnell. 2015.</p> <p>Available from Amazon</p>
---	--

Page Farnell's text	On Nativities
103	Brief Introduction upon the faces of the signs, what effect the Sun works in every house or mansion.
105-111	Aries to Pisces

Originally published in Latin in 1522 as *Introductiones Apotelesmaticae* and reprinted here by Kim Farnell using the 1651 English edition of Fabian Withers, Indagine's *Introduction* was a popular text used by palmists for many years. Indagine's section on physiognomy is less well known and is the focus here.

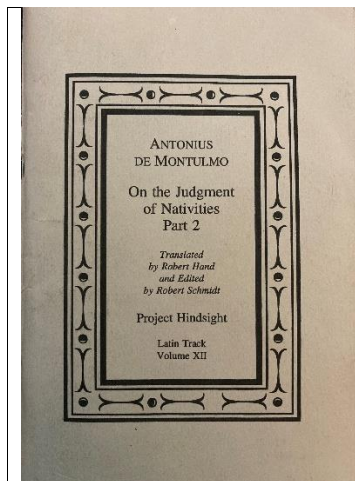
Indagine's physiognomy model is based on the Sun's placement in each of the 36 decans. Without exception, delineations for the Sun's placement in the first decan are similar to sign-based rules by other physiognomy authors. For example, The Sun in the first decan of Pisces:

Causes a soft body, white big breast, comely beard, fair forehead, clear skin, large and fair eyes, full of flesh and honest. (p. 111)

This is similar to sign-based rules for Pisces. At the very least we can conclude that Indagine does not use Chaldean decans because the first decan of Pisces is assigned to Saturn in that system and the above stated delineation is both Jupiterian and Piscean in nature.

But does he use the Parāśara Dreskana decans instead? Maybe but my first reading of his delineations is not definitive. Unfortunately, the only planetary reference he makes for the 2nd or 3rd decans is mention of Saturn occupying the 3rd decan of Taurus. This is the correct assignment for the Chaldean system, but it is also the correct assignment for the Hindu system since the 3rd decan of Taurus is assigned to Capricorn (Saturn-ruled). So he doesn't tell us.

1540. Antonio de Montulmo. (1497-1550).



[Available from Internet Archive \(Latin\) \(Free\)](#)

English translation:

Antonius de Montulmo. *On the Judgment of Nativities. Part 2.*
Trans. by Robert Hand and ed. by Robert Schmidt. Berkeley
Springs, WV: Golden Hind Press, 1995.

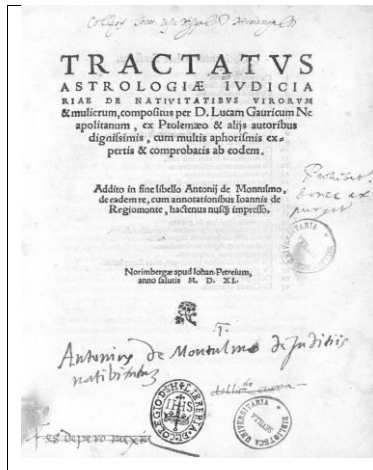
Out-of-print.

Chap	Pages	Description
8	22-26	Concerning the Form of the Body and Complexion. Discusses considerations before judgment: parents and ancestors, climate, province, cities, foods, occupations, habits.
8	26-28	Again Concerning the Form and Complexion. Lists all significators which should be considered: Ascendant sign, Al-mubtazz of the Ascendant sign, Moon's sign and planets in configuration with the Moon, planets in degree of the Ascendant, especially if they have dignity, fixed stars conjunct the Ascendant degree or the Ascendant, secondary modifications of significators given by whether the figure is diurnal or nocturnal, the season of the year, whether significators fall in luminous, smokey, or dark degrees; and the rising decan ruler citing Haly.
8	29	Judging the Tallness or the Shortness of the Body. Height is judged by the rising sign and the principal planetary signifier's nature and sign placement. Use signs of long/short ascension, planet's placement in its epicycle (e.g., more remote, taller), and other sign-based rules as inputs (e.g., tall signs are Leo, Virgo, and Sagittarius; short signs are Pisces, Cancer, and Capricorn).
8	30	The Discerning of Stoutness and Thinness, or the Greatness of the Body. Judged by latitude, epicycle position, and solar phase.
8	31-34	Concerning the Forms of the Signs. Standard sign-based physiognomy rules.
8	34-41	Concerning the Forms of the Planets. Standard planet-based physiognomy rules. Quotes Haly, Ptolemy, Dorotheus, and Māshā'allāh.

Regiomontanus' annotation on Montulmo's Chapter 8:

In this chapter 8 concerning the form of the native this matter is judged with difficulty because of the many kinds of causes which come together, namely, because of the parents, because of the clime, because of the province, because of the places of the birth, likewise food, drink, and customs etc., The master considers the lucid, dark, and smokey degrees, for these increase and diminish. Haly judges by the face of the Ascendant. Likewise, the Ascendant signifies the body and the Almuten of the Ascendant principally signifies the face. In tallness or shortness of stature consider the position of the signifier in the farther or nearer distance of its eccentric, etc., Likewise signs of long ascensions give tall stature and those of short ascension a short stature. Likewise, a direct signifier signifies a lean man, a retrograde signifier, a fat native. Similarly, the first station signifies strong bodies, the second station weak ones. When the signifier is occulted, it signifies a body disposed to the receiving of all manner of misfortunes.

1540. Luca Gaurico (1476-1558)



A Treatise on Judicial Astrology on the nativities of men and women, composed by D. Luca Gaurico of Naples, from Ptolemy and other most worthy authors, with many aphorisms tested and verified by the same. At the end, a booklet by Antonio de Montulmo on the same subject, with annotations by Johann de Regiomontanus, until now never printed. Nuremberg, by Johann Petreius, in the year of salvation 1540.

[Available from the Internet Archive \(Latin\) \(Free\)](#)

I have made a ChatGPT Latin-to-English translation of the relevant physiognomy chapters:

Chap	Description
5	Sign-based rules for judging body type, drawing on Ptolemy.
23	Continues with sign-based rules for judging body type, adds the influence of season on body type, and concludes with a few specific horoscope examples which are only loosely related to physiognomy.
24	Provides planet-based physiognomy rules.

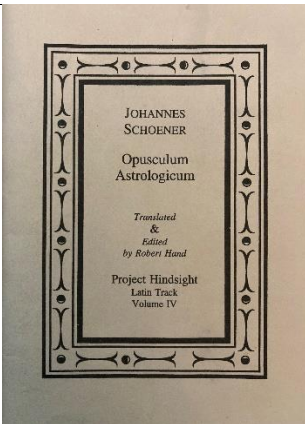
1545. Johannes Schoener (1477-1547)



Three Books On the Judgments of Nativities: Book I. (1545) trans. by Robert Hand. Reston, Va.: Arhat Publications. 2001.

[Available from Arhat Media](#)

Chap	Pages	Description
5	79	Concerning the Form, Figure and Constitution of the Body. Physiognomy significator list: Ascendant, Ascendant ruler, 1 st house occupants, Moon, Moon's ruler, fixed stars in paran with the Ascendant degree. Repeats Ptolemy's planet-based rules, impact of solar phase, seasonal factors, whether signs are of human form, and specific planet lists for size, height, front/back distinctions, and elegant/disharmonious distinctions.
5	81	The Teachings and Aphorisms of Others.
5	82	Concerning the Forms of the Twelve Signs.
5	83	Concerning the Forms of the Seven Planets.
5	86	Examining the Tallness, Smallness, or Shortness of the Body.
5	87	Distinguishing Stoutness and Thinness, and the Quantity of the Body.
5	88	To Whom is the native made more alike, namely, to the Father or the Mother? Schoener assesses whether the native resembles his mother or father by comparing the Ascendant's decan ruler to the ruler of the 4 th , Sun, and Moon (Hindu decans used). He also compares the Lot of Stability (or Lot of Eros using Bonatti's formula) with significators for the father and mother as a gauge of either parent's genetic influence.

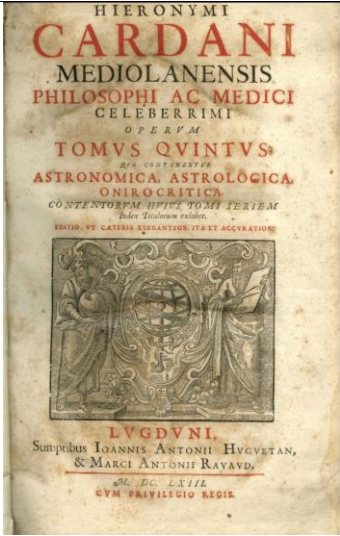


Opusculum Astrologicum, trans and ed. by Robert Hand, Project Hindsight, Latin Track, Vol IV, Berkeley Springs, Wv.: Golden Hind Press, 1996. For listing of Parāśara Dreskana, see Canon XXXVII, pp. 54-55

Out-of-print.

In a table which summarizes decans, masculine & feminine degrees, and dark/ smokey/lucid/void degrees, Schoener presents the Parāśara Dreskana decan model, not the Chaldean decans.

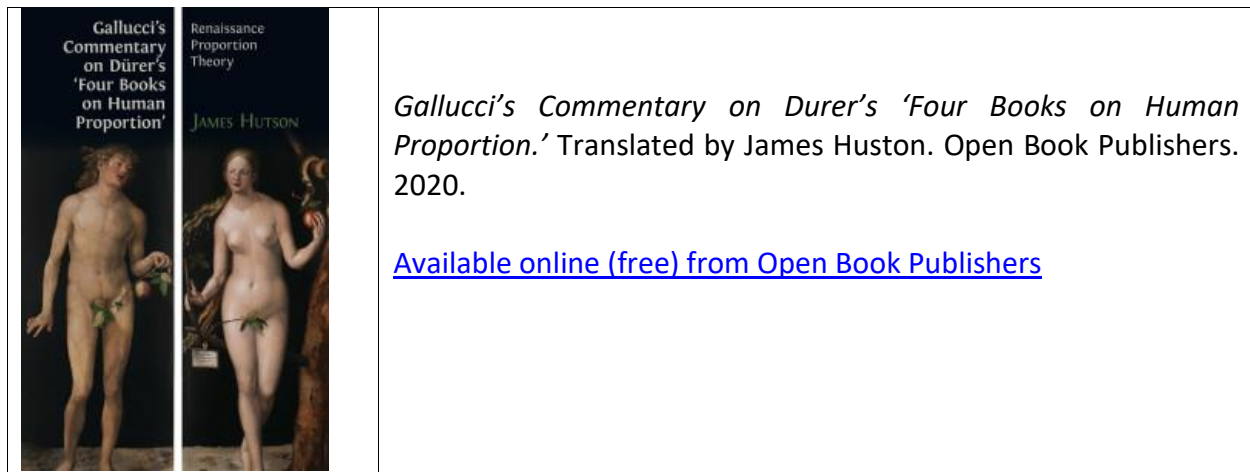
1547. Girolamo Cardano

	<p>"De Iudiciis Geniturarum" (On the Judgments of Nativities)</p> <p>Originally published in 1547, Cardano's book on Nativities was reprinted in 1663 as part of Volume 5 of Cardano's complete works titled Opera Omnia. I am not certain of original publication date of Cardano's "On the Wandering Stars" also included in Opera Omnia but it mostly likely dates to the time when Judgments of Nativities was published.</p> <p>Available from Internet Archive (online) (free)</p>
---	--

Chap	Pages	Description
5	369-432	De feptemerraticis ftellis. (On the Seven Wandering Stars). Includes planet-based physiognomy rules.
6	433-457	De Iudiciis Geniturarum (On the Judgments of Nativities).

Have not yet reviewed this text.

1591. Giovanni Paolo Gallucci



Albrecht Durer published *Four Books on Human Proportion* in 1528. The translator, academician, and pedagogue Giovanni Paolo Gallucci republished Durer's work in 1591 with two additional chapters: a biography of Durer and his own commentary on the text. In 2020, James Huston translated Gallucci's commentary.

From an interdisciplinary perspective, physiognomy overlaps with renaissance art theory by translating physiognomic character traits to depictions of 'stock' characters in artistic works. As examples, Gallucci's commentary includes instructions to artists for creating figures of a flatterer, a cruel and inhuman man, a fraud, a libidinous man, and many others.

With respect to astrology, the aesthetics of beauty are linked to the planet Venus via the numerical constants 0.618, 1.618, and their permutations. Commonly referred to as the golden mean or the golden section, these constants are fodder for numerous mathematical curiosities including that 0.618 is the limit of successive numerical pairs of the Fibonacci series.

Venus' sidereal orbit 224.701 days / solar year 365.2422 days = $0.6152 \sim 0.618$ = golden mean. The least common multiple of these two constants are 13 sidereal orbits = 8 years.

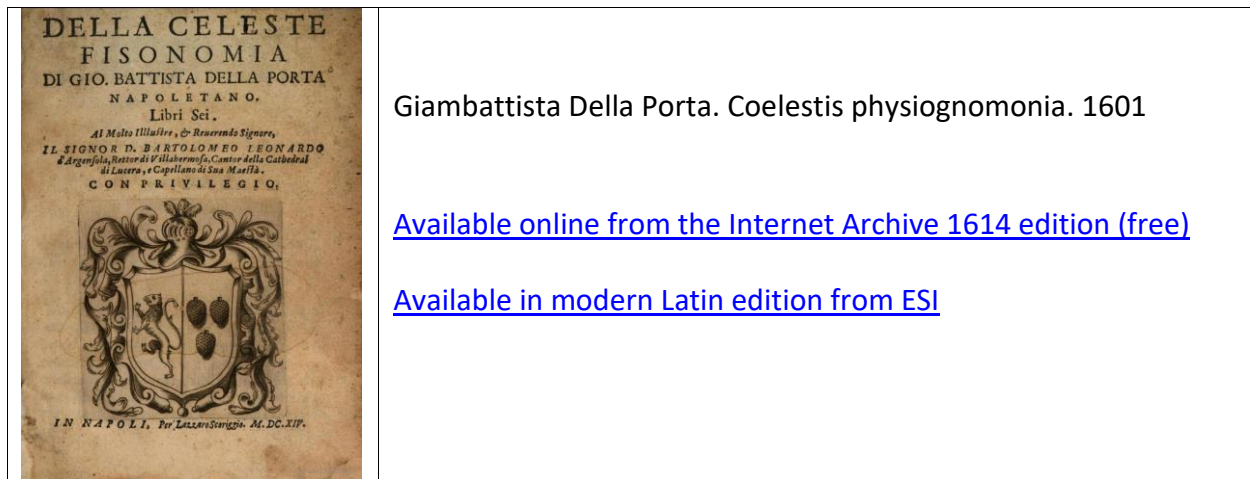
It should not be surprising that notions of Renaissance beauty can be linked to the numbers 0.618, 1.618 and their permutations which are mathematical signatures of Venus.

Recommended Secondary Reference

Robert Lawlor. *Sacred Geometry: Philosophy and Practice*. Thames and Hudson. 1982.

[Available from Amazon](#)

1601. Giambattista della Porta (1535 – 1615).



Giambattista Della Porta. Coelestis physiognomonia. 1601

[Available online from the Internet Archive 1614 edition \(free\)](#)

[Available in modern Latin edition from ESI](#)

Giambattista della Porta was a prominent Renaissance polymath who's well-known text *De humana physiognomonia* (1586) influenced subsequent generations of physiognomy authors including Lavater. The text includes numerous illustrations which include side-by-side comparisons of animal and human heads; drawing the conclusion that animal behavioral traits apply to humans with similarly shaped heads.

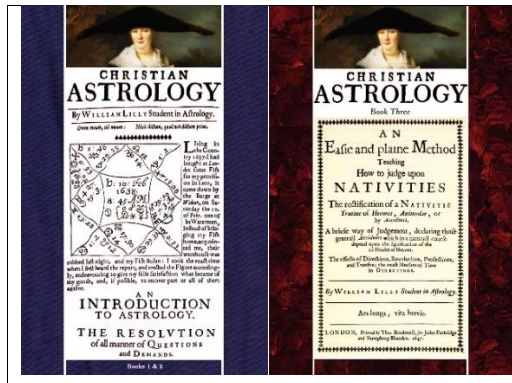
Sample illustrations from De humana physiognomonia

But Porta wrote two other physiognomy tracts. *Phytognomonica* (1588) deals with the physiognomy of plants. *Coelestis physiognomonia* (1601) deals specifically with astrological physiognomy. The text is of interest because Porta summarizes astrological aphorisms made by the following astrological authors: Maternus, Haly, Ptolemy, Bonatti, Leopold, Dorotheus, Messahala, Manilius, Abdile, Alchabitius, Cardan, and Hyginus. As such, it presents a literature review of astrological physiognomy as it stood at the start of the 17th century.

Nevertheless, Porta's disagreed with the premise that astrology had anything to do with physiognomy, preferring the four primitive qualities, four humors, and four temperaments as the cause of external physiognomy features. This is a similar approach taken by Arabic authors who linked physiognomy with humoral theory instead of astrology.

Note: this is a substantial work on astrological physiognomy, with a word count of 53,185. To my knowledge it is the longest and most detailed of any standalone book on this topic. Interesting that della Porta omits discussion of decans in physiognomy.

1647. William Lilly (1602 – 1681)



William Lilly. *Christian Astrology, Books I-III*. Edited by David R. Roell. Astrology Classics, 2005.

[Books 1-2 available on Amazon](#)

[Book 3 available on Amazon](#)

Chapter	Page	Description
Book I: VIII-XV	57-86	Planet-based physiology rules.
Book I: XVIb	93-99	Sign-based physiognomy rules.
Book III: CVI	532-534	Of the Complexion or Temperament of the Body.
Book III: CX	546-547	Of the Stature, Form, or shape of the Body.
Book III: CXI	547-549	Nature of the Signs; Colour of the Face and Hair.
Book III: CXII	549-550	Of the grossness or leanness of Bodies.

Drawing largely on Ptolemy, Lilly introduces his physiognomy model in Book III: CX, pp. 546-547. He lists seven key building blocks but does not give a method of integrating them. They are:

(1) Ascendant sign, (2) Ruler Ascendant sign, (3) Planet(s) in the Ascendant, (4) Planet(s) aspecting the Ascendant, (5) Luminaries, (6) Sun's Season, (7) Fixed Stars in the Ascendant (or near the Ascendant degree).

In Chapters CXI and CXII, color of face and hair, height, and weight are considered.

Summary of Height guidelines

Planet-based rules. Choose the planet which most closely aspects the Ascendant ruler (or the stronger of several if many aspect). If oriental, a greater height; if occidental, lesser height. Average height varies by planet.

Sign-based rules. Moderate stature, but more long: ♈, ♉, ♊, ♋; more tall: ♌, ♍, ♎; short: ♏, ♐, ♑; indifferent: ♒; moderate: ♓.

Summary of Weight guidelines

Sign-based rules based on where the planetary significator is placed (e.g., first part or latter part of a given sign). Significators are the Ascendant sign itself as well as the Ascendant Al-mubtazz.

♈, ♉, ♌: first part, grossness; latter part, leanness

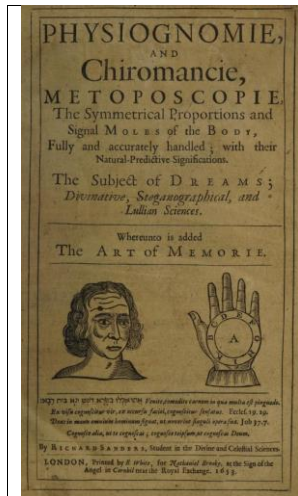
♊, ♋: first part, leanness; latter part, grossness

♌, ♍: first part, mediocrity, rather lean; latter part, tending more to grossness

♎: first part, lean; latter part, grossness

♏, ♐, ♑, ♒: moderate proportion; latter part of ♒ (only), leanness

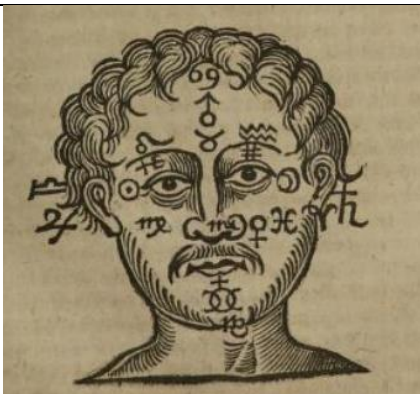
1653. Richard Saunders (1613-1692)



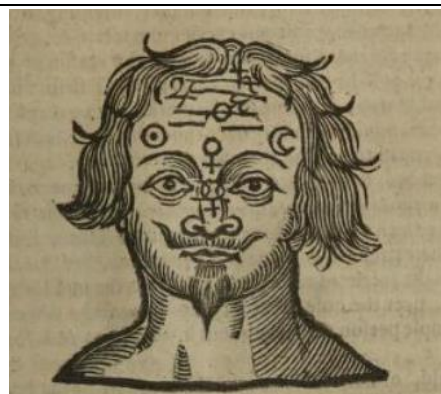
Richard Saunders. *Physiognomie and chiromancie, metoposcopie, the symmetrical proportions and signal moles of the body, fully and accurately handled; with their natural-predictive-significations. The subject of dreams; divinative steganographical, and Lullian sciences. Whereunto is added the art of memorie*. London: Printed by R. White, for Nathaniel Brooke. 1653.

[Available online from the Internet Archive \(free\)](#)

Chapter	Page	Description
II:1	143	Physiognomy defined.
II:2	145	Physiognomy abridged. Assigns areas of the face to both planets and signs (see left figure below)
II:3	147	Beginning with the standard sign-based melothesia assignments, further subdivides body using the decans. Links planet/sign combinations of victors with marks in corresponding regions of the body based on decan-subdivisions.
II:4	151	Combines the victor of the horoscope with temperament theory to develop physiognomy rules.
II:5	154	Application of physiognomy to phlebotomy (veins).
II:6	156	Application of physiognomy to geomancy (lines drawn in the dirt).
II:7	158	Shape of the head
II:8	160	Application of physiognomy to metoposcopy (lines in the forehead – see right figure below).
II:9	164	Assigns celestial spirits and intelligences to the forehead based on planetary correspondences.
II:10	166	Links colors to humoral theory.
II:11-15	168	Physiognomy judgements based on hair, beard, chin, eyebrows, neck, eyebrows, eyelids, neck, eyes, nose, mouth, ears, and face in general.
II:16	177	Links four temperaments, four humors, and four biblical angelic figures.

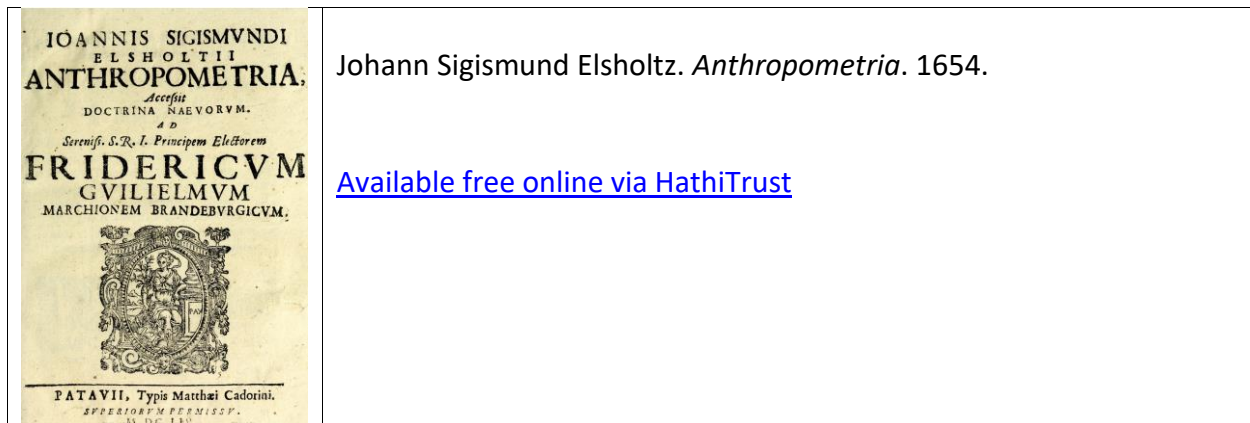


(Left). Planet and sign regions of the face.

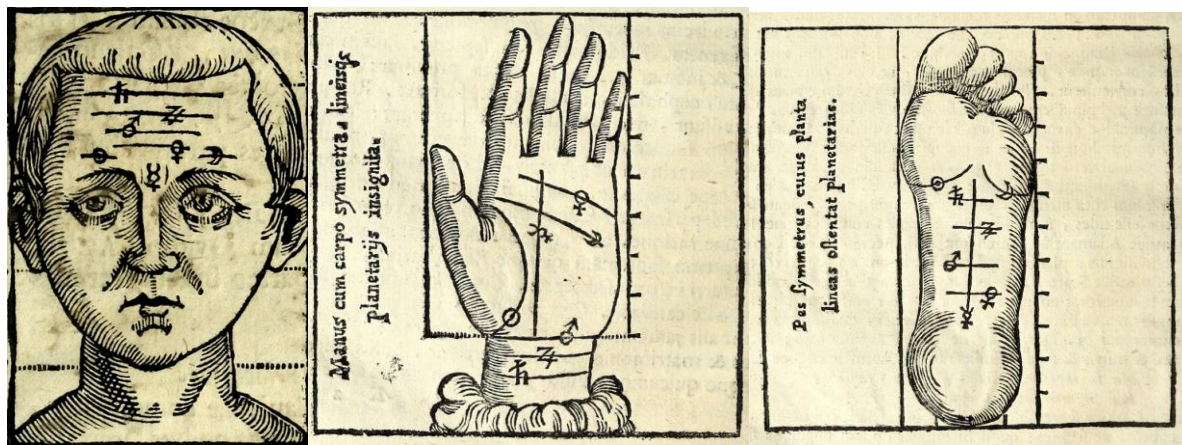


(Right). Planet regions of the forehead.

1654. Johann Sigismund Elsholtz (1623 - 1668)



Elsholtz published his PhD thesis *Antropometria* in 1654, a year after he graduated from the University of Padua. Written for artists, astrologers, medical and physiognomy students, the thesis examined the perceived relationship between proportions of the body and disease. The work is in Latin, and I have not reviewed its contents. The three following plates assign planets to the face, palm, and foot. They suggest a sufficient amount of astrological content to make this work worthy of further investigation. Elsholtz can also be studied in context of later biometric studies conducted by Francis Galton (also in this literature review).



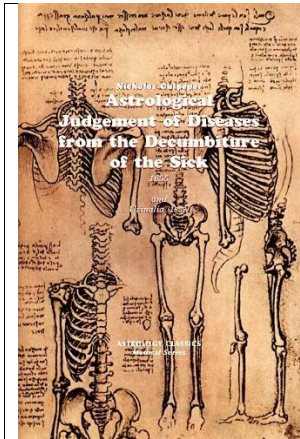
Excerpts from *Anthropometria*: head, p. 63; hand, 68; foot, 88.

Recommended Secondary Source

Angelo Albrizio, "Biometry and Anthropometry: from Galton to Constitutional Medicine," *Journal of Anthropological Sciences*, Vol. 85 (2007), pp. 101-123.

[Available online \(free\)](#)

1655. Nicholas Culpeper (1616-1654)



Nicholas Culpeper. *Astrological Judgement of Diseases from the Decumbiture of the Sick*. 1655. Reprinted by Astrological Classics, 2005.

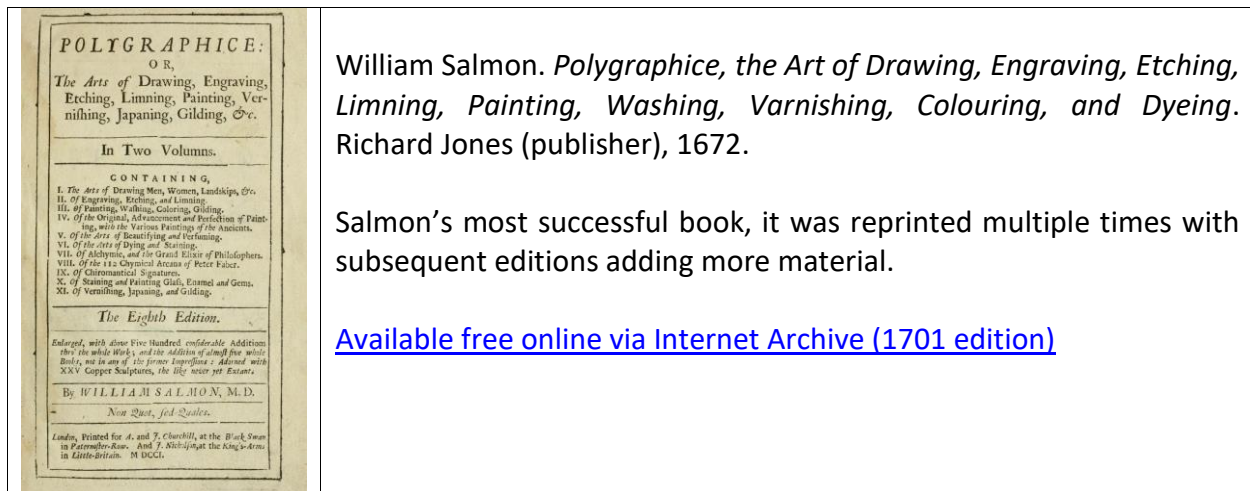
[Available from Amazon](#)

Section	Page	Description
Part III	83-86	Planet-based melothesia assignments
Part IV	86-89	Sign-based melothesia assignments
n.a.	158	How to identify temperament by physical appearance
	159	Choleric melancholy man
	159	Melancholy choleric man
	160	Melancholy man
	161	Melancholy sanguine man
	161	Sanguine melancholick man
	161	Sanguine man
	162	Sanguine Phlegmatick man
	163	Phlegmatique sanguine man
	163	Phlegmatique man
	163	Phlegmatique choleric man
	164	Choleric phlegmatique man

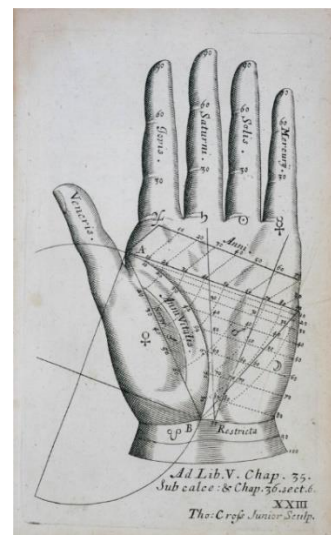
In addition to standard planet- and sign-based melothesia assignments, Culpeper provides guidelines for assessing temperament by physical appearance. Sample inputs include height, weight, color, hair and beard type, and skin texture. He links physical appearance to temperament via humoral theory in the same manner that Arab physiognomists did (Rhazes and Fakhruddin Razi) as well as Giambattista della Porta.

1692. William Salmon (1644 – 1713)

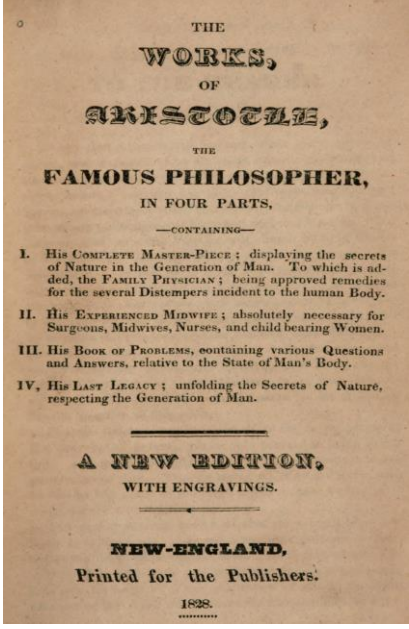
Note: in the 2010 version of this working paper, I stated that Salmon proposed a sign-based physiognomy model based on a six-fold sign subdivision. I cited *Medicina Practica*, with the *Claris Alcymiae*, (3 vols. London, 1692) as the source and said that W. D. Simmonite reprinted those rules in *The Arcana of Astrology* (1890). In my 2024 review, I cannot find Salmon's sign-based rules in *Medicina Practica*, but did find two other notable physiognomy contributions in two separate published books. It should be kept in mind that Salmon was a prolific publisher, often reprinting others' work without attribution; accordingly, we should keep at arms' length the exact source of these physiognomy observations.



In Chapter 9, pp. 656-729, Salmon presents an A-Z textbook on palm reading ("Of Chiromantical Signatures"). He opens the chapter by presenting descriptions of each of the seven planets, including physiognomy rules which are similar to planet-based astrological physiognomy rules. His assignments of planets to areas of the hands are shown in plates XXII and XXIII.



1692. William Salmon (1644 – 1713) - Continued


	<p>William Salmon. <i>The works of Aristotle, the famous philosopher: in four parts, containing: I. His complete master-piece, II His experienced midwife, III His Book of Problems, and IV. His Last Legacy.</i> New England. 1828.</p> <p>Note this reprint edition is the same year that John Varley published <i>Zodiacal Physiognomy</i></p> <p>Hathi Trust catalog entry</p> <p>Project Gutenberg free online edition</p> <p>This eBook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this eBook or online at www.gutenberg.org. If you are not located in the United States, you will have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.</p>
---	---

“The Secrets of Nature Relating to Physiognomy” marks the closing pages of this work.

Chapter 1 includes the assignment of zodiac signs to parts of the face (see below).

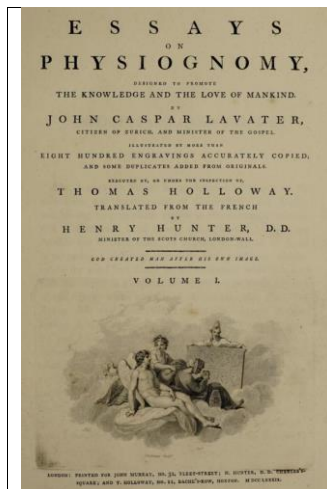
Chapter 4 presents a brief summary of palmistry (much abridged compared to *Polygraphice*).

Chapter 6 includes standard sign-based melothesia assignments.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">♏ Upper part of Forehead♌ Right Eyebrow♊ Right Eye♎ Right Ear♉ Left Eyebrow♋ Left Ear♏ Middle of Forehead♓ Chin♉ Nose♎ Right Cheek♏ Left Cheek
---	--

[Further reference to online books by William Salmon](#)

1775. Johann Caspar Lavater (1741-1801).



Johann Caspar Lavater. *Physiognomische Fragmente zur Beforderung der Menschenkenntnis und Menschenliebe*, 1775/1778.

English Translation published by John Murray, London, 1789

[Internet Archive Vol 1](#)

[Internet Archive Vol 2 Part 1](#)

[Internet Archive Vol 2 Part 2](#)

[Internet Archive Vol 3 Part 1](#)

[Internet Archive Vol 3 Part 2](#)

English Translation of The Pocket Lavater or the Science of Physiognomy, 1804. [Gutenberg eBook edition](#)

Lavater is an influential author who reinvigorated the post-Renaissance interest in physiognomy with publication of his physiognomy text in the years 1775/1778. He was a clever marketer, soliciting subscriptions from the rich in exchange for their facial portraits to be included in his book. His multi-volume book set was published with elaborate bindings in order to attract wealthy book collectors. Lavater's timing was favorable as the influx of migrants to Germany as well as the flux of Germans moving around the country created a modern urban climate where many strangers abounded. This provided a fertile climate for the revival of physiognomy which residents could use as a tool to judge character of newcomers. For a time, physiognomy was a genuine national craze in Germany. Its popularity led to multiple translations (French, English) which spread physiognomy across Europe.

Lavater offered no new principles, data, or method other than his own empirical observations which were widely criticized by the scientific community as anecdotal. Even Goethe, who initially helped Lavater with his early publications, turned against Lavater after how he witnessed the sloppiness of Lavater's drawings. Goethe also rejected Lavater's "condescending tolerance that sees itself in possession of the truth and others on a false path" (Safranski, 239).

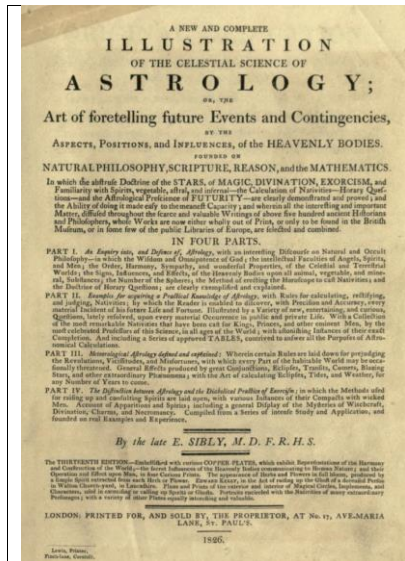
As Lavater's drawing of a 'Jewish face' can be linked to Nazi antisemitic propaganda a century later, Lavater's foray into physiognomy is judged harshly today.

Recommended Secondary Sources. [Note: Recent scholarship on Lavater is a cottage industry. I suspect dozens, if not hundreds of articles can be found on Lavater if one looks far enough].

The Faces of physiognomy : interdisciplinary approaches to Johann Caspar Lavater. Edited by Ellis Shookman. Columbia, SC : Camden House, 1993.

Rudiger Safranski. *Goethe: Life as a Work of Art.* Translated by David Dollenmayer. New York: Liverwright Publishing, 2013. For relations with Lavater, see pps. 143-145, 235-241.

1784. Ebenezer Sibly (1751 – 1799)



Ebenezer Sibly. *A New and Complete Illustration of the Celestial Science of Astrology*, London, Vols. 1-2, 1784; Vol. 3, 1787, Vol. 4, 1788. Reprinted in various editions through 1826. Page numbers below correspond to the 1826 edition.

[Available free online via Internet Archive](#)

Page	Description
100-106	Sign-based rules. Includes impact of planets placed in the rising sign.
107-128	Planet-based rules. States these rules apply when either the planet rules the Ascendant sign or whether the planet is the principal ruler of the nativity.
373-389	Planet-based rules with each planet cycled through all 12 zodiac signs.
434-435	<p>“Form and Temperature of the body.” Note: I suspect that ‘temperature’ means ‘temperament’ given Sibly emphasizes not just the four primitive elements assigned to the Sun’s season (hot, wet, cold, dry), but placement of the Moon and other planetary signifiers in zodiac signs classified by the Sun’s seasons.</p> <p>In this section, Sibly presents his signifier list for judging the physical body.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ascendant and its rulers • Planets placed in the Ascendant • Planets in configuration with the Moon • Fixed stars in paran with Ascendant degree • Luminaries if configured with above identified planets • Sun’s quarterly seasonal model applied to the Ascendant degree, the Moon, and other signifiers previously identified. • Signifiers in human signs grant symmetry and proportion; in non-human signs, disproportion and deformity.

Sibly includes a complete set of planet-based physiognomy rules for each of the seven planets placed in each of the twelve signs, rare among astrological authors. He also extends the impact of the Sun’s season on temperament to the Ascendant, Moon, and other planetary signifiers.

1808. Franz Joseph Gall (1758-1828)

1818. Johann Spurzheim (1776-1832)

1819. George Combe (1788-1858)

In the history of medicine, the turn of the 19th century is remembered for advances in neuroscience. Gall was the first to propose that specific functions (e.g., language) were localized to specific areas of the brain. Gall combined his thesis of localized brain function with his own observations and made analogies between the external shape of the skull and mental/moral aptitudes of the respective individual. Named **cranioscopy** in 1800, Gall identified 24 ‘organs’ of the brain ranging from ‘veneration’ to ‘murder’ in his system. Each organ was associated with a specific external section of the skull. The system relied on the belief that the shape of the section of the skull which corresponded to one of Gall’s defined ‘organs’ influenced the respective intellectual or moral faculty which Gall assigned to that organ. His conclusions were based on a sample of 120 skulls, quite small. Gall’s thesis of localized brain function was later confirmed by Paul Broca in 1861 who determined from the autopsy of a brain-damaged man that speech production originated in the left inferior frontal lobe. While Broca proved Gall’s model wrong, Gall is nevertheless considered a bonified scientist for his time who developed a new model for brain function until it was later overturned.

Between 1800 and 1812 Johann Spurzheim worked as Gall’s assistant. More of a promoter, Spurzheim was influential in the transmission of what he renamed **phrenology** to Britain and the United States. Spurzheim’s first and only tour of America in 1832 was highly successful despite his sudden death from typhoid fever after a stay of only two months.

George Combe was an Edinburgh physician who was at the center of the intellectual debate on the ability of heredity to transmit mental qualities determined by the size, form, and constitution of the brain. His book *The Constitution of Man* (1828) was widely discussed in the decades prior to Darwin’s *Origin of Species* (1859).

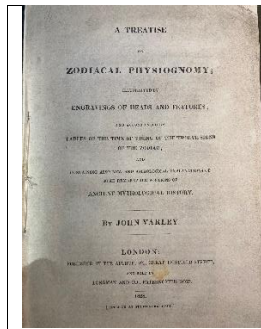
Recommended Secondary Sources

Courtney E. Thompson. *An Organ of Murder. Crime, Violence, and Phrenology in Nineteenth Century America*. Rutgers University Press, 2021. Summarizes the history of phrenology (Gall, Spurzheim, and Combe) before popularization by the Fowlers. Uncovers linkages between phrenology and criminology via skull collections of executed criminals.

Stanley Finger and Paul Eling. *Franz Joseph Gall: Naturalist of the Mind, Visionary of the Brain*, Oxford University Press, 2019. Recent work which considers the career of Franz Gall’s scientific career within the context of contemporary scientific knowledge of Gall’s era.

[Minna Scherlinder Morse. Facing a Bumpy History: The much-maligned theory of phrenology gets a tip of the hat from modern neuroscience. Smithsonian Magazine, October 1997.](#)

1828. John Varley (1778-1842)



A Treatise on Zodiacal Physiognomy, illustrated by engravings of heads and features, and accompanied by tables of the time of rising of the twelve signs of the zodiac; and containing also new and astrological explanations of some remarkable portions of ancient mythological history. London. 1828.

Rare out-of-print book.

John Varley was a watercolorist and astrologer who published *Zodiacal Physiognomy* in 1828, a year after his friend William Blake's death in 1827. Varley met Blake in 1818 and in the course of their friendship hosted Blake for late-night sessions whereby Varley prompted Blake to sketch images of deceased personages viewed by Blake's own eyes after he conjured the respective spirit. It is possible that Varley's involvement in these sessions (Blake's "Visionary Heads") triggered his own interest in the intersection between human physiognomy and horoscopic astrology. Varley claims to have coined the name *Zodiacal Physiognomy* and published this volume, the first of four planned works, in 1828. Only the first was published.

The goal of *Zodiacal Physiognomy* is to present a manual for birth time rectification when the computed Ascendant degree is in early or in late degrees of sign; e.g., at the cusp of two signs with either sign a plausible rising sign based on observational error. A full 30 pages of the manuscript's 60 pages are tables of rising sign degrees computed for every hour of the day, for every fourth day of a calendar year. Varley instructs readers to use these tables, with necessary interpolations, to compute the degree of their rising sign; then as a second step to use physiognomy to confirm the computed rising sign.

Varley's text is chatty and uneven in parts, demonstrates knowledge of working astrology, and is peppered with horoscope examples of contemporary famous people. This volume includes zodiacal physiognomy descriptions for Aries, Taurus, and Gemini rising signs. Unique to Varley's observations is (1) the interaction between the rising sign and its opposite sign placement, (2) similarities between rising signs of the same element (e.g., fire signs – Aries, Leo, Sagittarius), and (3) influence of fixed stars on physiognomy with two examples for Gemini rising conjunct Capella and Bellatrix.

Recommended Secondary Sources

Adrian Bury. John Varley of the "Old Society" Leigh-on-Sea: F. Lewis, Publishers, Limited.

[Martin Butlin, "Blake, Linnell and Varley and a Treatise on Zodiacal Physiognomy," in Burning Bright: Essays in Honour of David Bindman. UCL Press.](#)

[Golgonooza, "Zodiacal Physiognomy: William Blake's friendship with astrologer John Varley," 2021.](#)

1836. The Fowler Family American Phrenological Dynasty

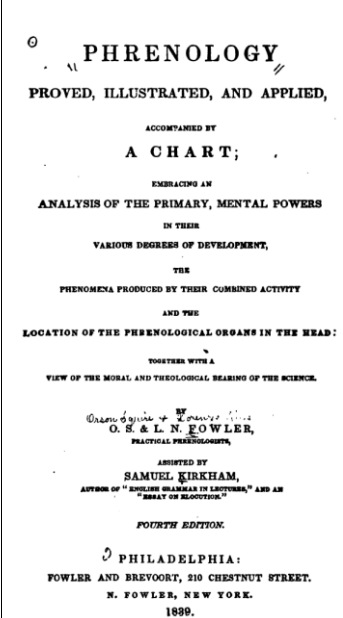
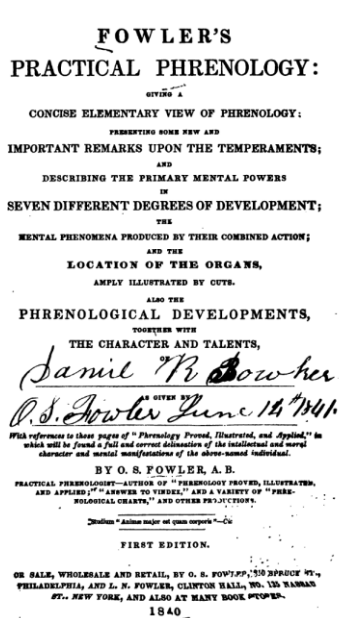
Orson Squire Fowler (1809-1887)

Lorenzo Niles Fowler (1811-1896)

Samuel R. Wells (1820-1875)

Charlotte Fowler Wells (1814-1901)

Jessie Allen Fowler (1856-1932)

		<p>O.S. and L.N. Fowler. <i>Phrenology Proved, Illustrated, and Applied</i>. 1836.</p> <p>Internet Archive (Free)</p> <p>O.S. Fowler. <i>Fowler's Practical Phrenology: Giving a concise elementary view of phrenology; presenting some new and important remarks upon the temperaments</i>. 1840.</p> <p>Internet Archive (Free)</p>
--	--	---

In the wake of Gall, Spurzheim, and Combe, Orson Fowler popularized phrenology in America beginning in the 1830s. He quickly added his brother Lorenzo and sister Charlotte to the family business. Later, Charlotte's husband Samuel Wells was also a significant business partner. The Fowler publishing operation was a major business empire, occupying prime Manhattan real estate during its heyday, slowly moving uptown over the decades as the popularity of phrenology declined.

Technically phrenology, focusing purely on the head, is a subset of physiognomy. Orson Fowler's introduction of a three-fold temperament system in Fowler's *Practical Phrenology* (1840) merits special attention. Almost a century later, the Fowler's three-fold temperament system ("vital, motive, mental") was included in Howard Cornell's *Medical Encyclopedia* (1933) and more recently in Robert Zoller's *Diploma Course in Medieval Predictive Astrology* (2001).

In 1865, Samuel Well's *New Physiognomy* advances Orson Fowler's three-fold temperament model by assigning shapes of the head to temperaments ("oblong, round, pyriform"). These shapes will prove similar to John Anrias' zodiacal facial shape model (1991). See next page for examples. See also the 13th century text *De Physiognomonia Libellus* for similar head shapes.

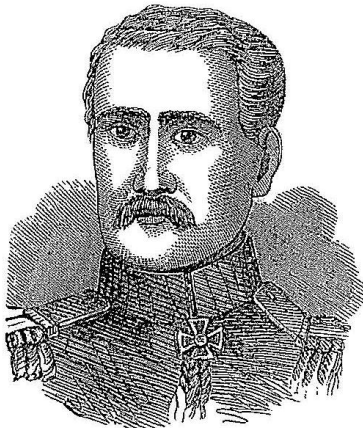


Fig. 128.—MENSCHIKOFF.

From Wells (1865), *General Forms*, Chapter VI.

Fig. 128. Alexander Menshikov (motive/oblong)

Fig. 129. Jean Paul (vital/round)

Fig. 180. Louis XVIII of France (vital/round)

Fig. 182. Elisabeth Rachel Felix (mental/pyriform)

Fig. 183. Horace Vernet (mental/pyriform)



Fig. 129.—JEAN PAUL RICHTER.



Fig. 180.—LOUIS XVIII.

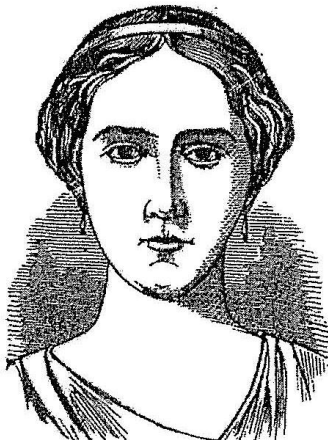


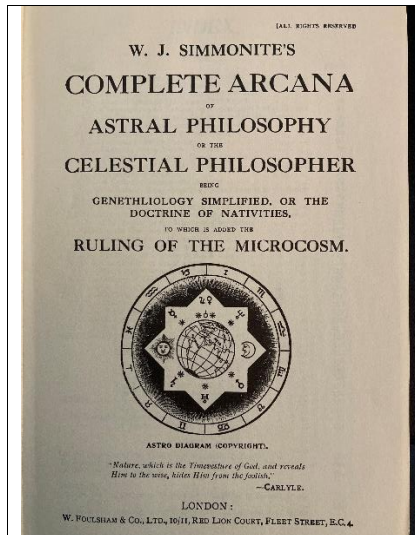
Fig. 182.—RACHEL.



Fig. 183.—HORACE VERNET.

Examples of facial shapes for motive, vital, and mental temperaments.
 Samuel Wells. *New Physiognomy or Signs of Character*. 1865. Chapter VI, pps. 116-126.

1847. W.J. Simmonite (ca. 1800 – ca. 1862)



W. J. Simmonite. *The Celestial Philosopher*. 2d ed. London: Simpkin, Marshall, 1847.

Reprinted in 1890 by W. Foulsham & Co., Ltd. London as *W. J. Simmonite's Complete Arcana of Astral Philosophy or the Celestial Philosopher*.

Reprinted in 1974 by Newcastle Publishing, Hollywood, CA.

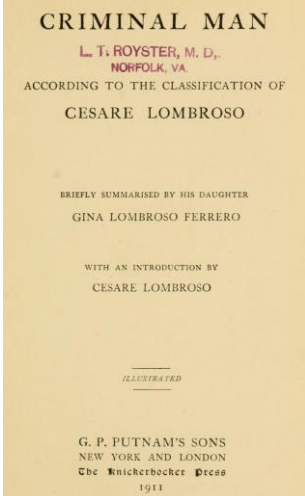
[Available online from the Internet Archive \(free\)](#)

Page numbers below are from the 1974 reprint of the 1890 edition.

Chapter	Page	Description
3	28-39	Sign subdivision-based physiognomy rules. In a unique contribution to astrological physiognomy rules, Simmonite divides each 30 degrees of a sign into a six-fold subdivision of five degrees each. These descriptions include fixed stars and their impact on appearance.
5	53-55	Planet-based physiognomy rules. Presented in the style of Ptolemy with modifications for each planet based on solar phase (oriental/occidental).
17	91	<p>Of the form and temperament of the planet. Presents complete physiognomy model.</p> <p>“Consider the face ascending, and its FACE chiefly, for that will generally describe the native; also notice the planets in the ascendant, and all those which throw an aspect to the cusp of the 1st, or its ruler, and make a judicious mixture.</p> <p>Pay particular care to the Moon, how she is aspected – the parallels of declination will have an effect when within 5 degrees, especially if the swiftest planet is applying. For from the faces ascending the planets thereon, and the Moon, the conformation of the body is inferred.</p> <p>Mark all planets in aspect to that which has dominion over the 1st, and all those which are aspecting the ruler of the 1st or the Moon; but if no planet be in the 1st, nor aspect its ruler, then judge wholly by the face ascending.</p> <p>If the ruler of the Ascendant be (retrograde), or in detriment or in fall, then consider him but very slightly. If two or more planets aspect the cusp of 1st, they must all be considered according to the sign in which they are posited, but the ruler of the 1st takes presidency (precedence) with the face rising.”</p>
17	91-	Planet-based physiognomy rules cycling each planet through all 12 zodiac signs.

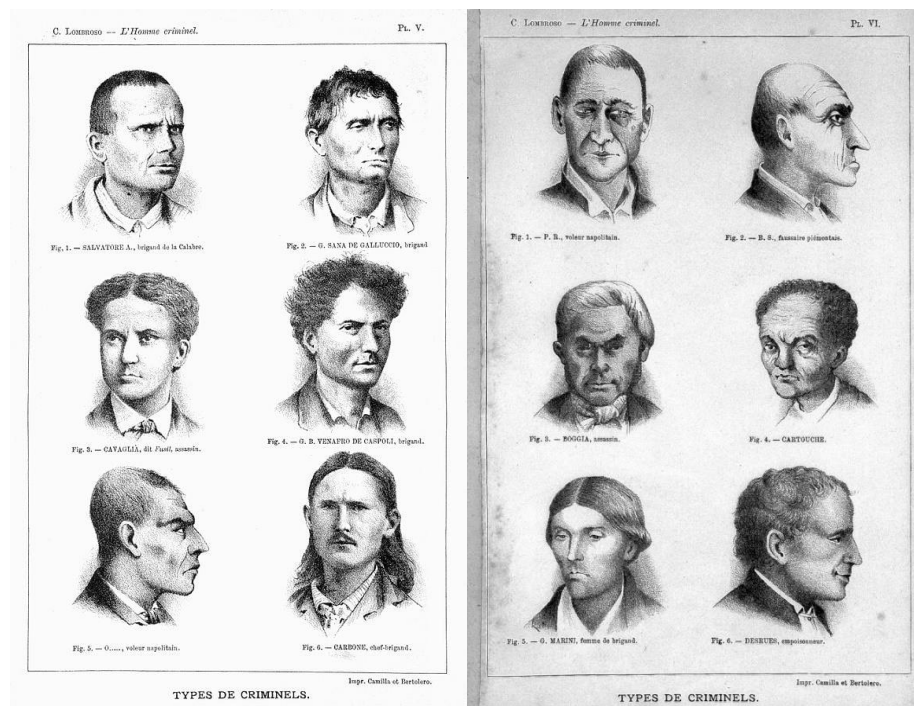
In the 2010 edition of this working paper, I stated that Simmonite’s six-fold subdivision physiognomy rules were derived from William Salmon. In this update, lacking documentation for my 2010 comments, I leave out the sources for Simmonite’s six-fold subdivision rules.

1876. Cesare Lombroso (1835-1909)

	<p>Gina Lombroso Ferrero and Cesare Lombroso. <i>Criminal Man</i>. G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1911.</p> <p>Originally published in 1876 (Italian), this is an abridged English version published by his daughter Gina two years following her father's death. During his lifetime <i>Criminal Man</i> was republished several times with a large amount of new material added to each edition.</p> <p>Available from the Internet Archive (Free)</p>
---	--

[Contemporary Summary of Lombroso's Criminal Studies \(Internet Archive\)](#)

Born to the same generation as Francis Galton (see next), Lombroso's interest in criminality mirrored his generational cohort. Like Galton, Lombroso categorized mental and physical traits of criminals. Also, like Galton, Lombroso's differential measurements for criminals compared to the rest of the population were shown to be statistically insignificant. This speaks to the difficulty of judging criminality, an essential character trait, by physical appearance.



1878. Francis Galton (1822-1911)

A cousin of Charles Darwin, Francis Galton was one of the most accomplished gentlemen scientists of the Victorian era with contributions made to fields of weather prediction, classification of psychological and physical traits, statistics (a field he created), fingerprinting (a science he created), and eugenics (a term he coined). He is also responsible for the phrase “nature versus nurture” whose relevance remains for contemporary astrology.

In response to his cousin’s book *The Origin of Species*, Galton became obsessed with heredity with an initial focus on “Great Men” of history. This led to an interest in genetics and a similar interest in criminals positioned at the other end of the social order. Galton introduces the term “Anthropometry”, the scientific study of measurements and proportions of the human body, as a way to categorize individuals. [Comment: the term actually originates with Elsholtz 1623-1668]. Once categorized, humans could engage in selective breeding in order to produce more Great Men and fewer criminals under the banner of eugenics.

As part of Anthropometry, Galton created a technique called "composite portraiture," where multiple photographs of individuals were combined into a single composite image. This technique aimed to reveal underlying characteristics or typical features of a particular group by blending individual traits. Among Galton’s objectives was to identify criminals by facial appearance, a long-standing issue of interest in physiognomy since the time of Aristotle. Experiments conducted over a period of years failed to prove any common traits among criminals and other categories Galton investigated. Galton’s acknowledgement of a negative finding is significant. It suggests astrological judgments for physical appearance be separated from character judgments, an approach Ptolemy agreed with.

[Index to Galton's complete works](#) See entries for Anthropometry (1873-1906) and Composite Portraiture (1878-1900).

[Online entry for Composite Portraiture](#)

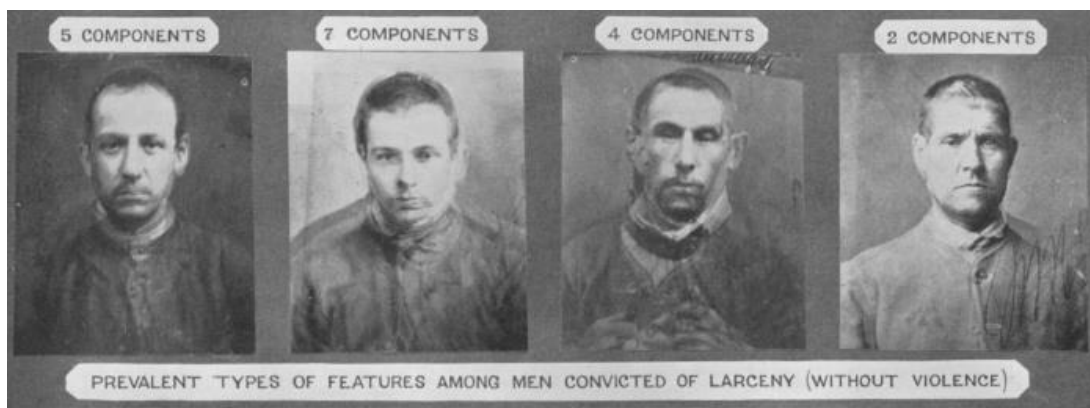


Photo credit: <http://galton.org/> (see Composite Portraiture section)

1891. Henry Frith (1840 – 1917)

	Henry Frith. <i>How to Read Character in Features, Forms, & Faces. A Guide to the General Outlines of Physiognomy.</i> London: Ward, Lock, Bowden, & Co., 1891.
--	---

Frith was a prolific publisher during Victorian England with over 200 titles to his name. His book on physiognomy comprises the genre of “Instructional non-fiction” whose titles included *Chiromancy: or the science of palmistry* and *How to read Character in Handwriting*. Towards the end of this work, Frith includes the following planet assignments to regions of the face. These can be compared to assignments by Elsholtz and Salmon. There appears to be little overlap.

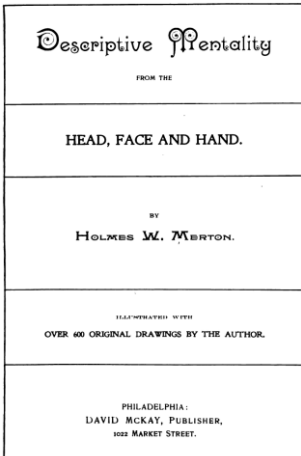
“The planets are said to have certain dwelling-places in the face: spots consecrated, as it were, to them. A small volume might be written concerning the various types of people who are under the influence of the moon, sun, and stars. The stars have always played a prominent part in our history. We have lucky and unlucky stars: we read of the stars assisting us; and we (vulgarly) invoke our “stars.” Of the planets, the following are particularly placed in the human head and face:-

Jupiter holds the right ear,
Saturn the left ear.
The Sun is placed in the right eye.
The Moon is located in the left eye.
Venus is reposing in the left nostril.
Mars in the right nostril.
Mercury reigns paramount in the mouth and chin – for eloquence and falsehood are the attributes of this deity.

Venus is sometimes seated on the forehead, between the eyes. The reason why she and Mars are located in the nose is because love and anger both dilate the nostrils.

The Moon, again, is placed by some on the forehead, on the organ of curiosity, the motive power of research, the light of intelligence.”

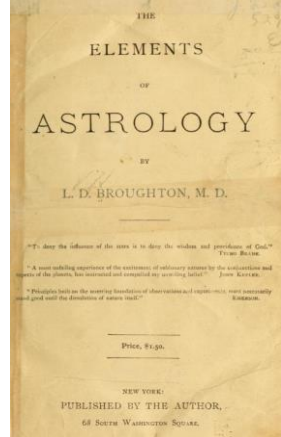
1896. Holmes W. Merton (1860-1948)

	<p>Holmes W. Merton. Descriptive Mentality from the Head, Face and Hand. Philadelphia: David McKay, Publisher, New York: G. P. Putnam, 1896 (and reprinted several times).</p> <p>Available online from the Internet Archive (free)</p>
---	---

Active in New York City in the years 1900-1940, Merton was a leading physiognomist and palmist whose peers included William Benham. One of Holmes Merton's students was Ann Koernig who in turn tutored the medieval astrologer Robert Zoller (author's teacher).

Merton's adapted the mental, vital, and motive types originally introduced by the Fowler Phrenological dynasty into his own system which includes his own version of the original 'organs' of the brain mapped onto the skull via phrenology doctrine. Merton was also a palmist.

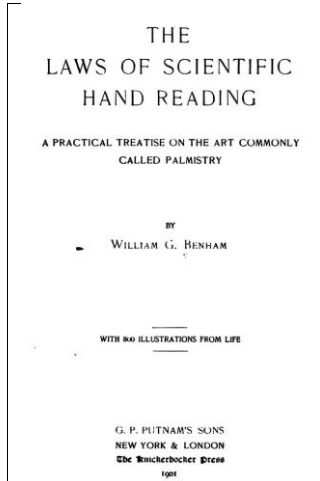
1898. Luke Broughton (1828-1899)

	<p>Luke Broughton. <i>The Elements of Astrology</i>, New York, privately published by Ray Broughton, 2nd revised edition, 1906.</p> <p>Available online from the Internet Archive (free)</p>
---	---

Page	Description
79	<p>The personal description of a man or woman determined by the planets.</p> <p>Brief description of the importance of “the sign on the eastern horizon and the planet having the most influence in the sign rising at the time of birth” as physiognomy signifiers.</p> <p>Mentions a few examples of Ptolemy’s sign-based rules for the shape of the body; e.g., signs which are “tall”, “stout,” or “slender.”</p> <p>States the importance of physiognomy on confirming the correct rising sign. This implies the usefulness of physiognomy in rectification.</p>
97-98	<p>Sign-based physiognomy rules.</p>
99-104	<p>Planet-based physiognomy rules.</p> <p>Introduces rules for Herschel (Uranus).</p> <p>In addition to stating the average appearance for a given planet, Broughton gives modifications based on whether the planet is dignified or ill-dignified.</p>
105-121	<p>Planet-based rules with each planet cycled through all 12 zodiac signs.</p> <p>Appears to follow Sibley but does start with Herschel (Uranus).</p>

Broughton’s application of physiognomy rules can be judged by natal horoscope interpretation of famous individuals (US Presidents, politicians, and military leaders) in his *Monthly Planetary Reader and Astrological Journal* (1860-1869). Notable examples include horoscopes of Abraham Lincoln (Sagittarius rising) and William McKinley (Scorpio rising).

1901. William Benham (late 19th - early 20th century)

	<p>William G. Benham. <i>The Laws of Scientific Hand Reading: a practical treatise on the art commonly called palmistry</i>, New York: G. P. Putnam, 1901.</p> <p>Available online from the Internet Archive (free)</p>
---	---

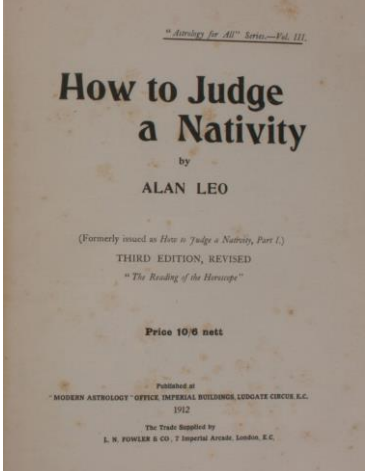
Page	Description
201-202	Jupiter type.
222-223	Saturn type.
242-243	Apollonian type. (Sun)
257-259	Mercurian type. [Comment: better fit to Mercury-ruled Virgo than Mercury-ruled Gemini].
284-287	Martian type.
305-312	Lunarian type.
328-330	Venusian type.

Operating at the turn of the 20th century, William Benham (along with Cheiro⁴⁵) dominated the field of palmistry. Benham follows the style found in William Salmon's *Polygraphice* whereby a description of each planet is given, in the same manner introductory astrology textbooks do, prior to discussing the region of the hand assigned to the respective planet.

One of William Benham's students was Ann Koernig who in turn tutored Robert Zoller (author's teacher).

⁴⁵ Cheiro is the pseudonym for William John Warner (b. 1-Nov-1866, d. 8-Oct-1936), an Irish astrologer, clairvoyant, palmist, and numerologist who was very popular in occult circles of the early 20th century.

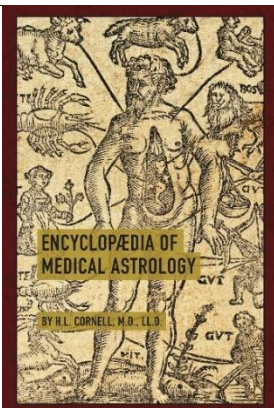
1903. William Frederick Allan, a. k. a. Alan Leo (1860 – 1917)

	<p>Alan Leo. <i>How to Judge a Nativity</i>, London, 1903-1904.</p> <p>Reprinted many times. Cover at left published 1912 and distributed by L. N. Fowler & Co. (of the Fowler phrenological family).</p> <p>Available from Amazon</p>
---	--

Page	Description
86-88	Sign-based physiognomy rules. Includes vital, motive, and mental vocabulary based on Orson Fowler's three-fold temperament system.
88	<p>Rules for Describing the Personal Appearance - Physiognomy model. (see Simmonite)</p> <p>"Note carefully the degree of the ascending sign and modify the whole sign by the decanate rising. Remember that persons who are tall are born in the first decanate of the sign rising, those of average or medium height in the middle of the sign, and those who are short or below the average in the last degrees.</p> <p>Note the planet or planets rising in or near the ascendant; the nearer they are to the cusp, the greater will be their modification of the rising sign's influence.</p> <p>Note the aspects of planets to the ascendant, for they colour or influence the rising sign.</p> <p>When several are rising in the ascendant make no attempt to give an accurate description, as it cannot be determined owing to the impossibility of combining all the varied influences."</p>
91	<p>Description of Personal Appearance – Physiognomy model.</p> <p>Similar to material presented earlier on p. 88 but more extensive.</p> <p>Emphasizes sign occupied by the ruling planet of the Ascendant.</p> <p>Emphasizes both luminaries and states when Leo or Cancer rises, the appearance is primarily influenced by the Sun or Moon's sign, as stated in the prior rule. This suggests the effect of the Sun or Moon's sign placement on appearance is greater than for the five other planets even when the other five rule the rising sign.</p>
112-128	Planet-based physiognomy rules cycling each planet through all 12 zodiac signs.

While Alan Leo is known for reintroducing the Parāśara Dreskana decans to western astrology, his delineations for the decans are entirely psychological with no physical characteristics listed.

1933. Howard L. Cornell (1872-1939)



Howard Cornell. *Encyclopedia of Medical Astrology*, 1933.

Reprinted by Astrology Classics, 2005.

Reprinted by Echo Point Books & Media, 2017.

[Available from Amazon](#)

[Available from the Internet Archive \(free\)](#)

Cornell began compiling data for his *Encyclopedia of Medical Astrology* in 1918 and fifteen years later produced a tome of 958 pages, single spaced, small font. This book ranks as a major milestone in medical astrology as practiced in the United States in the early 20th century. He includes the vital-motive-mental temperaments developed by the Fowler & Wells publishing house. Important is Cornell's recognition that the Fowler-Wells temperament system does not supplant the four classical temperaments. The entries below provide cross-references to many related physiognomy topics including "body", "complexion", "face", "hair", and "stature".

Page	Description												
26-27	Appearance. States physical appearance is judged by the 1 st house, the rising sign, the rising decan, and the sign occupied by the ruler of the rising sign. Entry continues with a recap of Lilly's method.												
150	Decanates. Presents the Parāśara Dreskana decans, no mention of Chaldean decans. Makes the following assignments of decans to the Fowler/Wells temperament system:												
	<table><tr><th>Sign Modality</th><th>Fowler/Wells Temperament</th><th>Shape of Face</th></tr><tr><td>Fixed</td><td>Vital</td><td>Widest about the cheeks, and with an oval or round face</td></tr><tr><td>Mutable</td><td>Motive</td><td>Head and face flatter at the sides, and the square-shaped head.</td></tr><tr><td>Cardinal</td><td>Mental</td><td>Shaped like a pear, and the head narrows down to the chin, and is wide at the temples</td></tr></table>	Sign Modality	Fowler/Wells Temperament	Shape of Face	Fixed	Vital	Widest about the cheeks, and with an oval or round face	Mutable	Motive	Head and face flatter at the sides, and the square-shaped head.	Cardinal	Mental	Shaped like a pear, and the head narrows down to the chin, and is wide at the temples
	Sign Modality	Fowler/Wells Temperament	Shape of Face										
	Fixed	Vital	Widest about the cheeks, and with an oval or round face										
	Mutable	Motive	Head and face flatter at the sides, and the square-shaped head.										
Cardinal	Mental	Shaped like a pear, and the head narrows down to the chin, and is wide at the temples											
When the first decan rises, the sign and decan are identical, and a single temperament prevails. When the second or third decan rises, appearance is judged by mixing the temperaments of the rising sign and the rising decan.													
Additional factors: planets rising, position/sign of Ascendant ruler, position/sign of Moon.													
States height may be determined by the Moon's Nodes.													
854	Temperament. Introduces new terminology. (1) Four fundamental temperaments defined by planets placed in signs judged by the sign's element. (2) The constitutional or conditional temperament is defined by planets judged by the sign's modality. (3) The natural or bodily temperament is defined by the rising decan.												

1935. Norbert Glas (1897-1986)

Book Cover image unavailable because of copyright restrictions.	Norbert Glas. <i>Reading the Face: Understanding a Person's Character through Physiognomy</i> . Temple Lodge, 2008. Reprint of original 1935 edition. Available from Amazon
---	--

A disciple of Rudolf Steiner, Norbert Glass developed his own system of physiognomy based on his personal observations of people made while traveling on the tram to school as a youth. The work was originally published in 1935, and immediately prior to a planned second edition a few years later, the owner of the publishing company Weidman & Co. lost his life during the chaos of the Anschluss in 1938. Thereafter the book faded from view. The first English translation appeared in in 2008 and was reprinted in 2014 by Temple Lodge who specializes in the works of Rudolf Steiner.

In *Reading the Face*, Glas divides the head into three horizontal sections to which he assigns to Steiner's soul-based vocabulary.

Face	Division	Steiner Typology	Function
Upper	Forehead reaching to the hairline the temples.	Nerves and sense system	Thinking
Middle	Nose, cheeks, eyes.	Rhythmic system	Feeling
Lower	Lips, mouth, chin, and lower jaw	Metabolic-limb system	Willing

Unique to Glas is the melothesia assignment of planets to the outer ear (see Chapters 2-3)

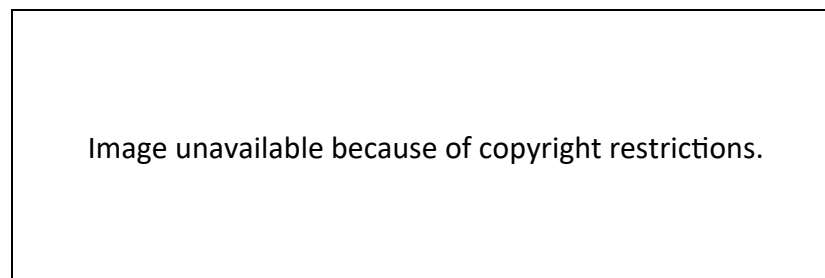
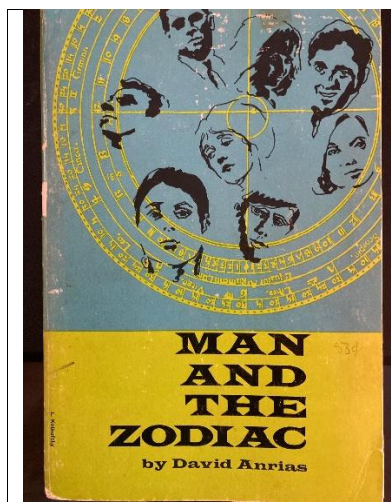


Figure 53, Chapter 3, p. 55.

1938. David Anrias (c. early 20th century)



David Anrias. *Man and the Zodiac*. George Routledge & Sons, 1938.

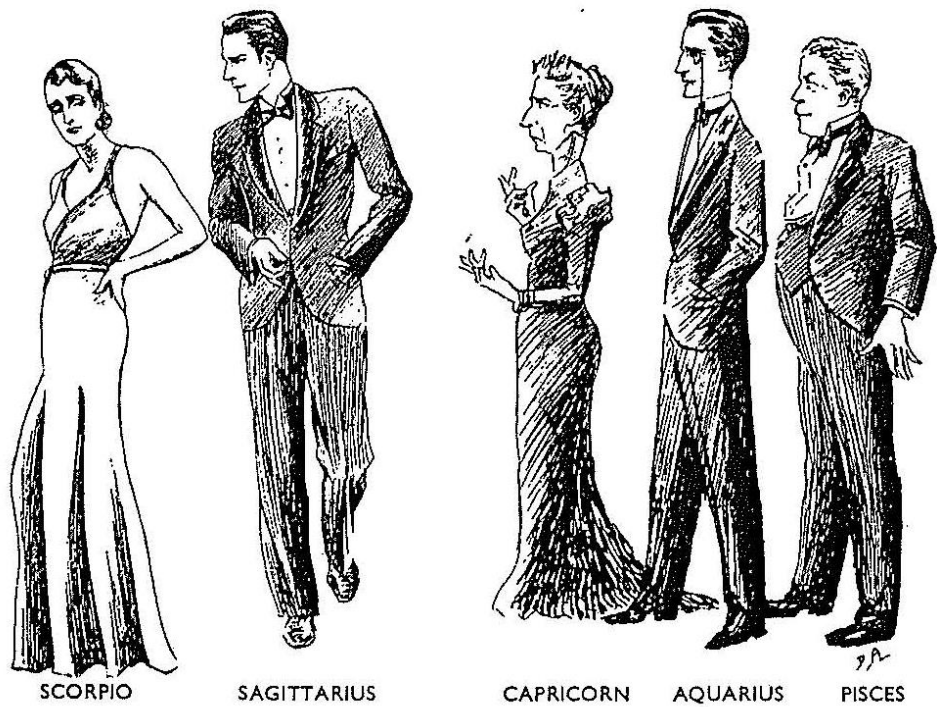
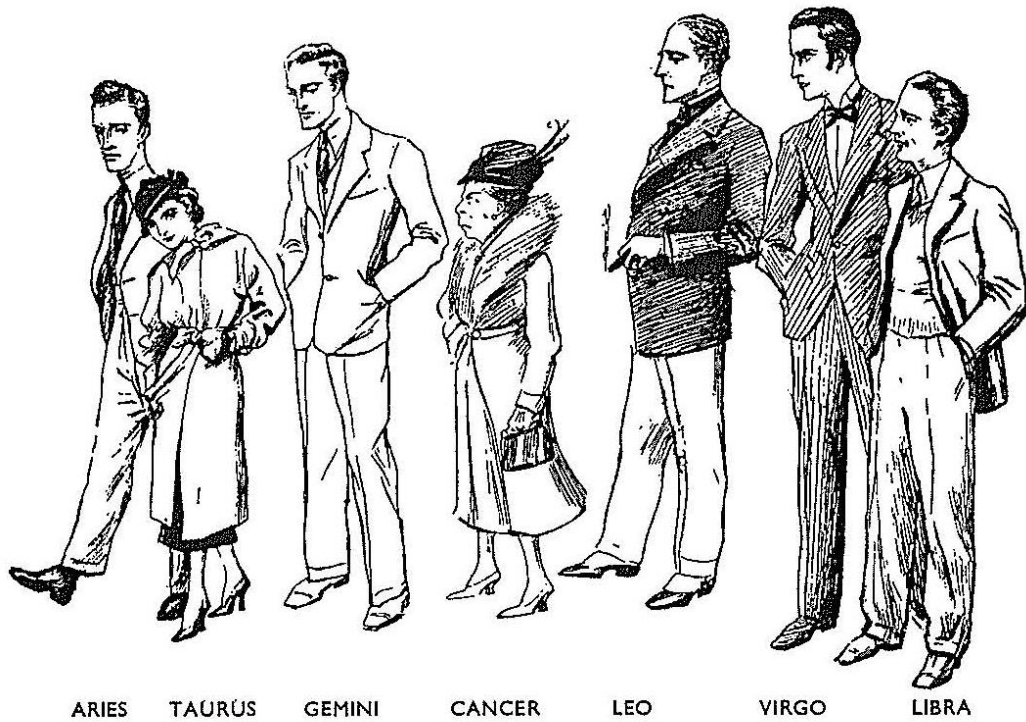
Reprinted by Samuel Weiser Inc, New York (1970) photo at left.

Reprinted by Astrology Classics (2010). This reprint by the late David Roell was made on my personal recommendation as Anrias is the only astrological author who has published drawings of physical appearance for all 36 decans using the Parāśara Dreskana system of decanates.

[Available from Amazon](#)

Page	Description
Frontispiece	Sign-based physiognomy rules – full body portraits of the 12 zodiac signs, 1930s fashion. See next page for frontispiece.
64-113	Chapter 8. The Twelve Rising Signs and their Decanate Influences. “Although there are other influences such as the Sun, Moon and ruler of the ascendant which also affect the rising sign, the close study of an artist of the various Zodiacal types for over twenty-five years has led me to the conclusion that the decanate influences are the more powerful.....The Sun, Moon and ruler of the ascendant undoubtedly affect the appearance if in the midheaven or throwing aspects to the rising degree. Similarly rising planets modify the appearance of the rising sign...”

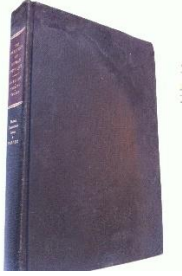
David Anrias is the pseudonym for Brian Ross who served with the British forces in World War I. Post-war, Ross joined the Theosophical Society, studied in India, and was an acolyte of Jiddu Krishnamurti. Anrias’ astrological studies occur following the death of Alan Leo in 1917. With Alan Leo’s decan delineations entirely psychological, Anrias’ approach based on physiognomy complements Leo’s psychological descriptions of the Parāśara Dreskana decans.



THE TWELVE SIGNS OF THE ZODIAC

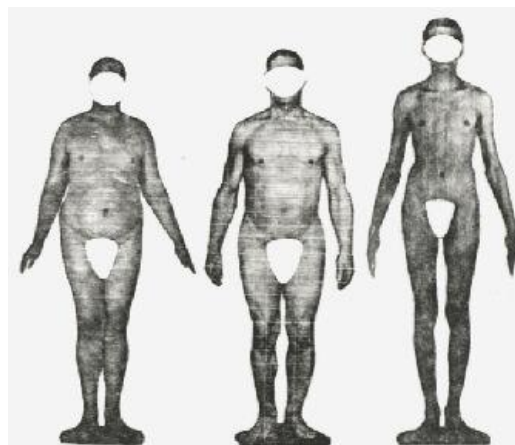
David Anrias. *Man and the Zodiac*, 1938, Frontispiece.

1940. William Sheldon (1898-1977)

	<p>William H. Sheldon. <i>The Varieties of Human Physique: An Introduction to Constitutional Psychology</i>. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1940.</p> <p>Available used from Amazon, out of print, rare</p>
---	---

The American psychologist William Sheldon developed a three-fold system of body types based on thousands of photographs made of nude male Ivy League students taken as a routine part during the matriculation process. Here is Sheldon's classification scheme⁴⁶:

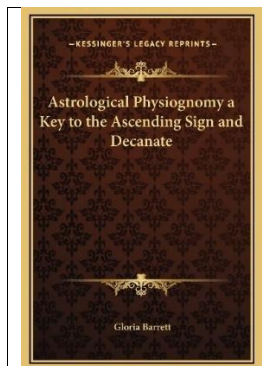
Somatotype/Shape	Bodily System Emphasized	Temperament	Psychological Characteristics
Endomorphic/ Plumpness	Digestive system, especially the stomach	Viscerotonia	Tolerant Love of comfort and luxury Extravert
Mesomorphic/ Muscularity	Muscular and Circulatory system	Somatotonia	Courageous Energetic Active Dynamic Assertive Aggressive Risk Taker
Ectomorphic/ Slightness	Nervous system and Brain	Cerebrotonia	Artistic Sensitive Apprehensive Introvert



Classification of Physical Body Types
Endomorph, Mesomorph, and Ectomorph (from left to right)

⁴⁶ Similar to the system of Ernst Kretschmer (1888-1964), German psychiatrist.

1941. Gloria Barrett (1884-1972)



Gloria Barrett. *Astrological Physiognomy: a Key to the Ascending Sign and Decanate*. Chicago: Aries Press. 1941.

Reprint by Kessinger Publishing 2010.

[Available from Amazon](#)

Astrological Physiognomy is an extensive manual of descriptions for both planet-based and sign-based physiognomy rules. Barrett's scope is larger than many other astrology texts. She includes guidelines for assessing the body in general, body carriage, body movements, head, forehead, neck, eyes, nose, hair, skin, and the hands.

Barrett states planet-based sign rules were created from horoscopes with planets in signs of rulership in the angles. Sign-based rules were based on three types of horoscopes: (1) rising sign, (2) stellia of planets including a luminary in the rising sign, and (3) stellia of planets in the rising sign (no luminary). (see p. 20).

Barrett lists ten considerations for judgment for determining what she labels the 'type strength' which is the dominant zodiac sign (e.g., sign-based rules). They are (1) rising sign, (2) MC sign, (3) Sun's sign, (4) Moon's sign, (5) any sign with 3 or more planets, (6) planets near the ASC or DSC, (7) planets near the MC or IC, (8) planets essentially dignified, (9) planets in "own" houses, and (10) planets strongly placed, having a large number of aspects. (see pp. 21-22). This list is summarized later in the text (pp. 137-139), and it appears Barrett asks the reader to perform a victor-style quantitative scoring system to choose the dominant type strength. No example computation is provided.

Like John Varley (1828), she considers the impact of opposite signs on physiognomy. "In each sign is seen some similarity to the sign opposite." (see Chapter XXVI pp. 111-116).

Despite inclusion of 'Decanate' in the title of the book, Barrett's comments on usage of decans in physiognomy total only a few sentences. Instead of specifying which decan system to use (e.g., Chaldean or Parāśara Dreskana), she instead proposes a new decan model (p. 108):

1 st Decanate	2 nd Decanate	3 rd Decanate
Large, Plain, Thick, Rough	Medium, Middling/Plain, Compact	Small, Artistic, Slender, Fine

She also assigns decans to the face/head, dividing the face/head into three horizontal sections. From low to high the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd decans express their influence (p. 143-144).

1941. Gloria Barrett (1884-1972) – continued

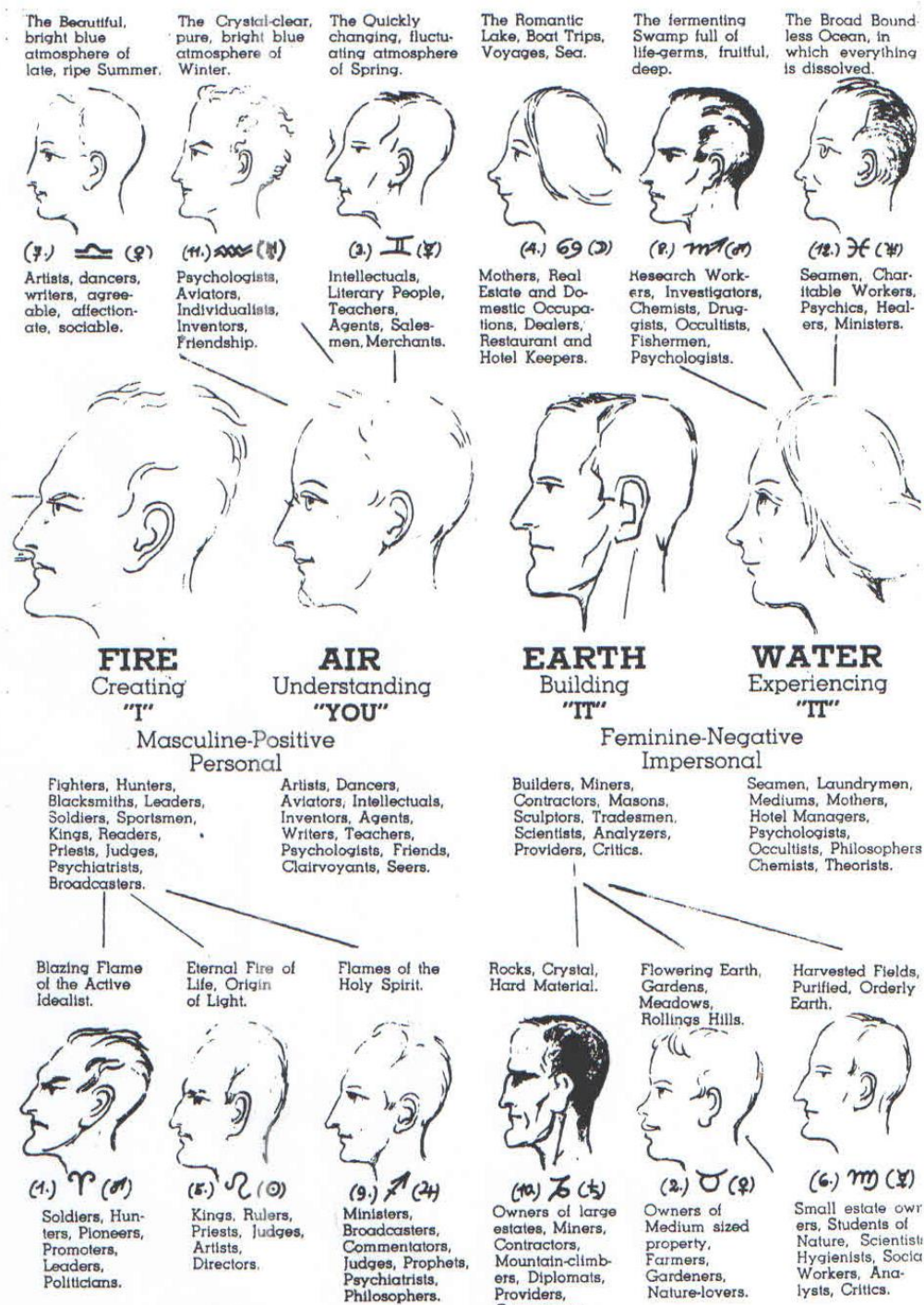
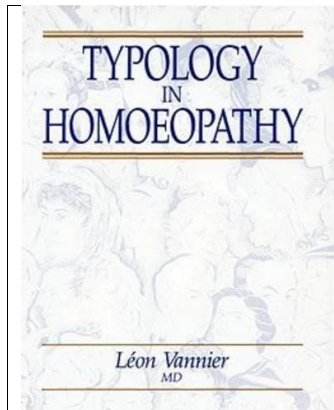


PLATE 22 ■ Astrological Physiognomy By Gloria Barrett.
Copyright 1941 By The Aries Press—Chicago, Ill.

Sign-based physiognomy rules.
Gloria Barrett. *Astrological Physiognomy* (1941)

1954. Léon Vannier (1880-1963)



Vannier, Léon. *Typology in Homoeopathy*. Beaconsfield, Bucks, England: Beaconsfield Publishers Ltd., 1992.

[Available from Amazon](#)

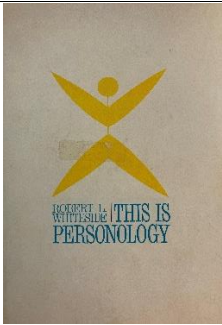
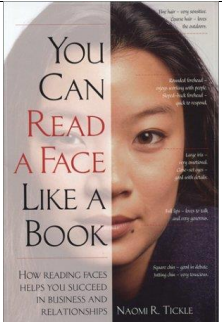
A leading figure in early 20th century French homoeopathy, Vannier wrote his 1954 textbook following 35 years of observations. Though no horoscopes are presented nor is any explicit mention of astrology included, Vannier's classification of body types according to planetary mythology represents a set of planet-based physiognomy rules based on empirical observation. The text is illustrated by well-known portraits, sculptures, and the author's own drawings.

Vannier's interests are primarily medical. In addition to describing common medical problems which correspond to the seven planetary types, Vannier also presents corresponding homoeopathic remedies. Based on his medical practice, Vannier also presents a separate three-fold classification of body types based on the three most common remedies required for each. They are the Carbonic, Phosphoric, and Fluoric Constitutions. Vannier's tripartite Constitutional division bears strong similarity to the original Galenic tripartite model of spirits/forces, later replicated by Fowler/Wells and Sheldon. I suggest these correspondences:

Galen's Spirits and Forces	Galen's Organs	Fowler/Wells Temperaments	Sheldon's Somototypes	Vannier's Constitutions
Natural	Liver	Vital	Endomorph	Phosphoric
Vital	Heart	Motive	Mesomorph	Carbonic
Psychic	Brain	Mental	Ectomorph	Fluoric

Application to Astrology. Of interest is Vannier's addition of Terra to an otherwise standard list of seven planetary body types. Upon closer inspection it is clear that Vannier's addition is necessary because his typology for Venus applies only to Venus-ruled Libra. Terra corresponds to Venus-ruled Taurus. Implicit in the necessity for two typologies for a single planet is the dominance of sign-based over planet-based physiognomy rules – otherwise Vannier would only need one set of rules for Venus. Vannier's solution may also be symptomatic of the debate over whether Venus is cold and wet or warm and wet. Perhaps in Libra Venus is warm and wet; in Taurus, cold and wet.

1962. Robert Whiteside, Naomi R. Tickle

	<p>Robert I. Whiteside. <i>This is Personology</i>. The Interstate Personology College Press. San Francisco, CA. 1962.</p> <p>Out-of-print.</p>
	<p>Naomi Tickle. <i>You Can Read a Face Like a Book: How Reading Faces Helps You Succeed in Business and Relationships</i>. Daniels Publishing, 2003.</p> <p>Available from Amazon</p>

Personology is a term used by Robert Whiteside to define a modern school of face reading based on historical physiognomy of Lavater and others. Whiteside and his associates were actively publishing, training, and giving personal readings from the 1960s to about the time of the 2020 pandemic when practitioner Naomi Tickle retired. The focus of Personology is human development made possible by applying results of personology readings to career choices, marriage, and awareness of other personality traits useful for self-understanding.

According to online sources, the modern roots of personology began with lawyer and jurist Edward Vincent Jones who noted correlations between physical appearance and guilt/innocence of defendants as well as jury voting patterns in the courtroom. Jones developed his records during 1920-1940. Soon after he met Robert Whiteside who applied statistics to Jones' findings in surveys conducted in 1950 and 1951-1955. Whiteside concluded that "A total of 68 personality traits corresponded with specific degrees of measure in the body's form and structure". Thereafter, Whiteside founded the Interstate College of Personology in 1957 to promote and apply the findings of Personology. Over 15,000 people received personology readings in subsequent decades. Naomi Tickle was the most recent personology consultant, beginning to publish her own books in 1995, and whose latest book (2003) remains available online.

Sources:

Bill Whiteside, "People Reading: Mapping Human Behavior", 2000-2002.

Available online (Accessed 13-May-2024): <http://www.ireadfaces.com/ovrrview7.htm#HISTORY>

Robert Todd Carroll, "Personality" entry in the Skeptics Dictionary, 2013.

Available online (Accessed 13-May-2024): <https://skeptdic.com/personology.html>

1998-2019. M. Duvdevan. Astrofaces Project

<http://www.astrofaces.com/astrofaces/index.html>

Accessed online 14-May-2024

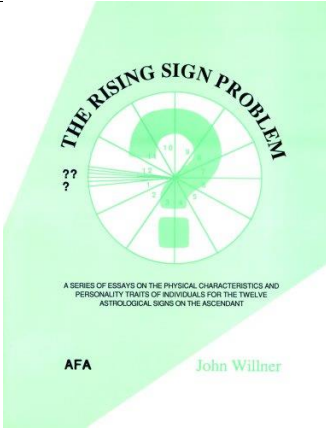
Astrofaces is an open research project launched on the web in 1998 by M. Duvdevan. The last set of photos were uploaded in 2019. The project contains a sample of 5,306 photographs submitted by volunteers.

The objective of Astrofaces is to test the hypothesis that individuals who have the same Sun, Moon, and Ascendant sign combination will have a similar facial appearance.

Multiple examples of pairwise comparisons do show similarities in appearance but attempts at statistical controls with Facial Recognition Software made in 2011 were not successful in confirming linkages. Difficulties of using facial recognition software include the requirement that photographs of the face be taken from the same angle to aid in comparison, a requirement which in practice is difficult to meet.

The website features an online research function whereby one can select Sun and Moon combinations and review photos with those choices sorted by Ascendant sign. For each of the $12 \times 12 \times 12 = 1,728$ combinations, the sample size is relatively small, between 3 and 12 examples for each of the 1,728 combinations. To access this feature, click on the 'Sun Moon Rows' menu option and choose glyphs for the Sun and Moon for the sample to be generated.

1991. John Willner (1925-2004)



John Willner. *The Rising Sign Problem: A Series of Essays on the Physical Characteristics and Personality Traits of Individuals for the Twelve Astrological Signs on the Ascendant*. American Federation of Astrologers, 1991.

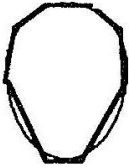


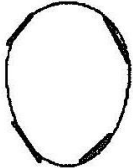
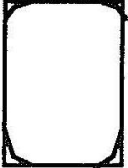

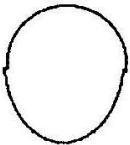
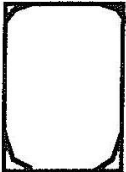
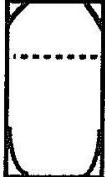
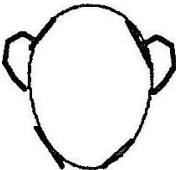
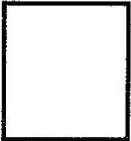
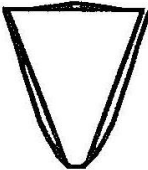
[Available from Amazon](#)

Page	Sign	Examples
8	Aries	David Souter, Laurence Olivier, Helen Reddy
19	Taurus	Isaac Stern, Romy Schneider, Albert Einstein
32	Gemini	Lucille Ball, Julia Child, Jerry Lewis
43	Cancer	Liv Ullman, Neil Simon, Norman Schwarzkopf
55	Leo	Mikhail Gorbachev, Yoko Ono, Ernest Hemingway
67	Virgo	Jacques Cousteau, Mohandas Ghandi, Shirley Maclain
79	Libra	Johnny Carson, Jesse Jackson, Sally Field
92	Scorpio	Chris Evert, Alan Greenspan, Sam Nunn
105	Sagittarius	Leontyne Price, Peggy Fleming, Willie Mays
117	Capricorn	Dwight Eisenhower, Margot Fonteyn, Alexander Solzhenitsyn
129	Aquarius	Karl Marx, Lady Bird Johnson, Lawrence Welk
141	Pisces	Zubin Mehta, Liza Minelli, Ringo Starr
153	Planets in rising sign	Influence on physical body and psychology

Willner is little known today, most likely because in order to fit his physiognomy model to horoscope examples using only the rising sign, he created an idiosyncratic rectification software program which generated birth times as much as 3-4 hours earlier than stated birth times based on the psychic Edgar Cayce's finding that souls often incarnated several hours before birth. This is not an approach I can support; yet Willner's observations on the shape of the face based on zodiac signs I have found extremely accurate. I differ from Willner by applying his model to the sign placement of the ruler of the rising decan, rather than the rising sign itself.

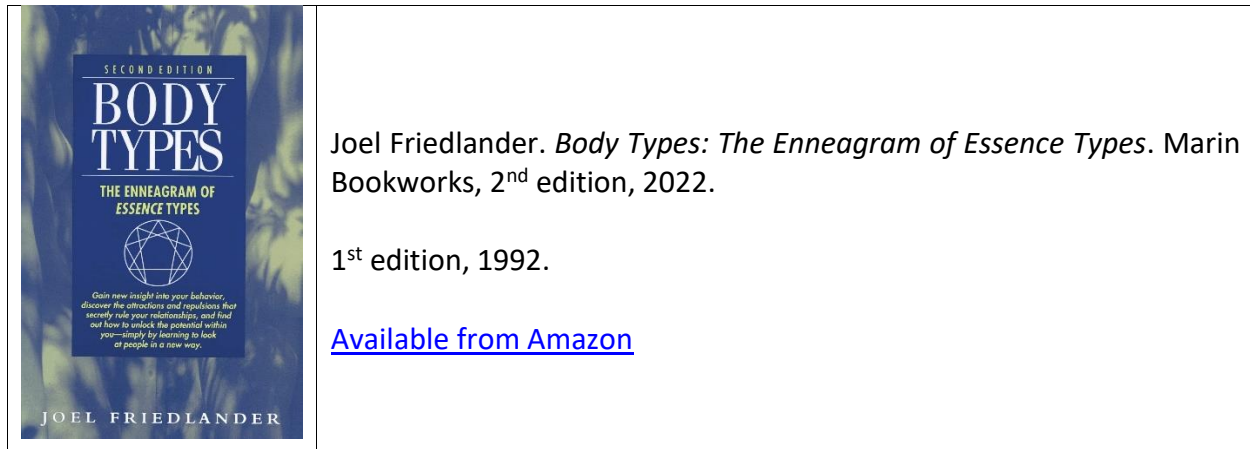
Willner's model for the shape of the face is based on sign modality of the rising sign. He makes no refinement for the rising decan.

Sign	Shape of Face
Cardinal	Ovate
Fixed	Square/Rectangular
Mutable	Triangle/Elongated

Bony Ovate	Soft Rectangular	Elongated
		
♄	♅	♆
Small Ovate	Rectangular	Triangular
		
♇	♈	♉
Compressed Ovate	Rectangular	Elongated
		
♊	♋	♌
Ovate	Square	Fluid Triangular
		
♍	♎	♏

Classification of Shape of the Face based on Sign Modality
 John Willner. *The Rising Sign Problem*, pp. 6-7

1992. Joel Friedlander (1948-2021)



Joel Friedlander. *Body Types: The Enneagram of Essence Types*. Marin Bookworks, 2nd edition, 2022.

1st edition, 1992.

[Available from Amazon](#)

Friedlander overlays a planet-based physiognomy model on the Enneagram system.

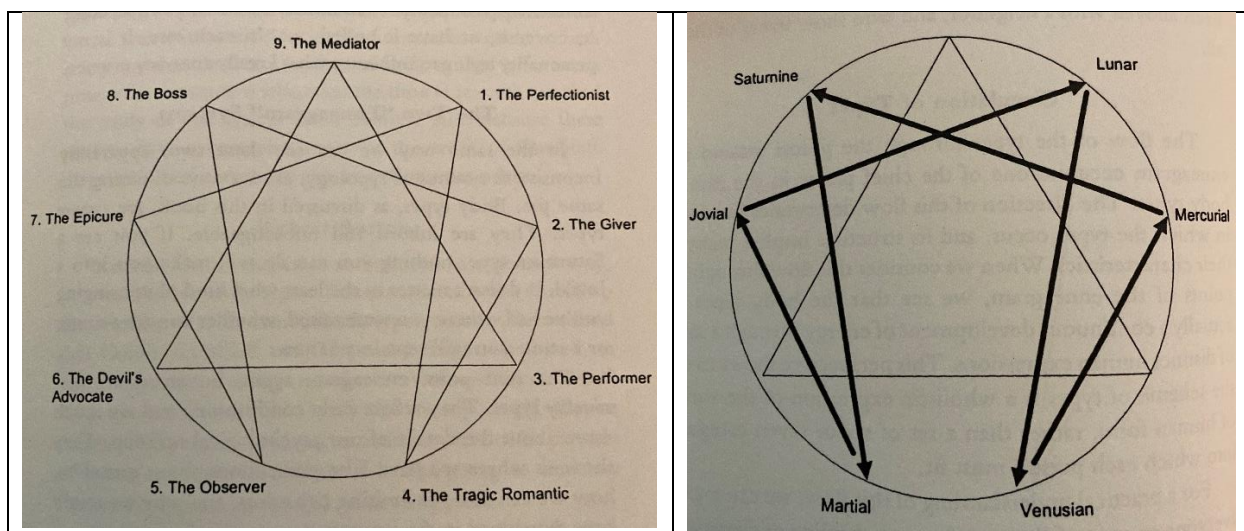
The Enneagram of Personality is a nine-fold division of personality types. The nine types are subdivided into three triads or “centers of intelligence” as defined by Enneagram founder G. I. Gurdjieff. They are the intellectual center, the emotional center, and the instinctual center. Friedlander links these three types to William Sheldon’s body type model. They can also be linked to Aristotle’s soul model.

Triad	Personality	Center of Intelligence	Sheldon’s Somatotype	Aristotle Soul Model	Astrological Significator
5 6 7	The Observer The Devil’s Advocate The Epicure	Intellectual	Ectomorph	Human	Mercury
2 3 4	The Giver The Performer The Tragic Romantic	Emotional	Endomorph	Animal	Moon
8 9 1	The Boss The Mediator The Perfectionist	Physical	Mesomorph	Plant	Ascendant

Omitting the Sun, the remaining six planets are assigned to six of the nine Enneagram points, leaving three of the Enneagram points unassigned. Friedlander reprints William Benham’s planetary type descriptions verbatim (see William Benham in this literature review).

By moving from point to point on the Enneagram diagram, Friedlander identifies 6 additional two-planet blended body types, in addition to the six primary body types based on individual planets.

See diagrams on the next page.

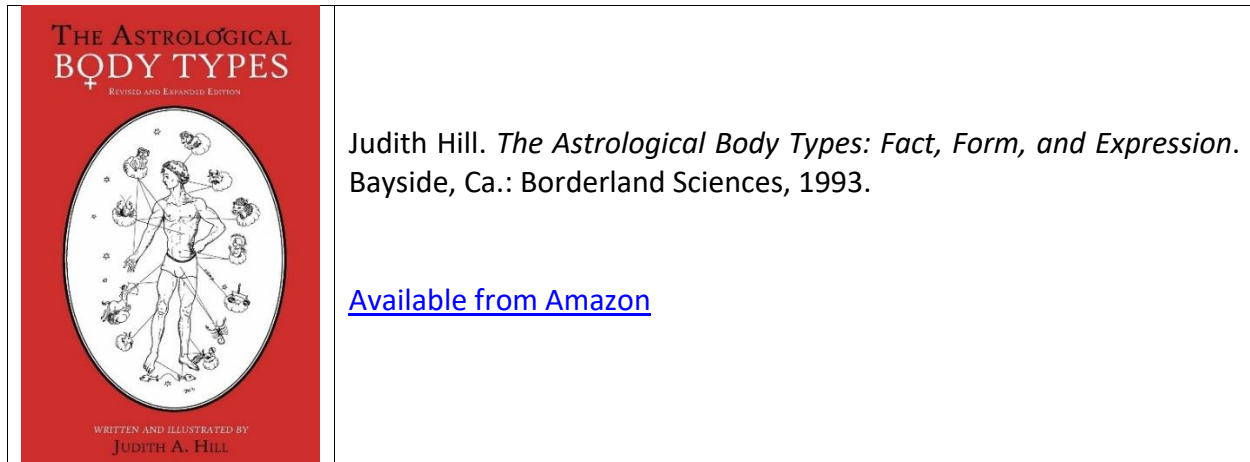


To sequence Friedlander's planetary types begin with Point #1 which is Lunar.

Following the arrows on the figure at right, create a two-planet blended body type with the two planets at the start and end of the arrow. Following the arrows, repeat until point #1 is reached.

Enneagram Points	Body Type	Examples
1	Lunar	Meg Tilly, Woody Allen, Harry Truman, Andy Warhol, Emily Dickinson, Truman Capote, Tom Wolfe
1=>4	Lunar-Venusian	Aphrodite, Woodrow Wilson, Queen Elizabeth II, Helena Bonham-Carter, Jimmy Carter, Kevin MacReynolds
4	Venusian	Willard Scott, Jackie Gleason, Marilyn Monroe, Roseanne Arnold
4=>2	Venusian-Mercury	Elizabeth Taylor, Bob Costas, Debra Winger, Eddie Murphy, Al Pacino, Elvis Presley, Dustin Hoffman, Michael Dukakis
2	Mercury	Richard Nixon, Pierce Brosnan, Iago, Sammy Davis Jr, Fred Astaire
2=>8	Mercury-Saturn	Jeff Goldblum, Christian Laettner, Daniel Day-Lewis, Mercedes Ruehl, Frank Sesno, Cher
8	Saturn	George Bush, James Stewart, Eleanor Roosevelt, Uncle Sam, Nolan Ryan, Sam Shephard, Vanessa Redgrave, Margaret Thatcher, Abraham Lincoln, Al Gore
8=>5	Saturn-Mars	John Wayne, Prince Charles, Queen Elizabeth I, Burt Lancaster, Marilyn Quayle, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Gary Hart, Robert Redford
5	Mars	James Cagney, John F. Kennedy, Vincent Van Gogh, Richard Burton, Sissy Spacek, Sean Penn, Katharine Hepburn, Paul Newman, Nick Nolte, Ross Perot
5=>7	Mars-Jovial	Bette Midler, Barbara Bush, Pablo Picasso, Janis Joplin, Teddy Roosevelt, George Gurdjieff, Spencer Tracy
7	Jovial	Walt Whitman, Burl Ives, Beverly Sills, H. Norman Schwarzkopf, Santa Claus, Orson Welles, Pablo Casals, Falstaff
7=>1	Jovial-Lunar	Queen Victoria, Wallace Shawn, Mikhail Gorbachev, Bernie Siegal, Alfred Hitchcock, Diane Ladd, Maurice Nicoll, Joanne Woodward
No point	Solar	Judy Garland, Prince, Madonna, Rudolph Nureyev, Liza Minelli, Michael Jackson, Iman

1993. Judith Hill (living)



Hill's *Astrological Body Types* includes both planet-based and sign-based physiognomy rules illustrated copiously with the author's own drawings. The book includes many of the author's own findings based on over 6000 natal readings conducted over a twenty-year period which are not found in any other source, astrological or non-astrological. Identification of multiple body types for a single planet/sign may be indicative of the influence of decans, but Hill does not ascribe the importance to decans maintained by other authors.

	Building Blocks, pp. 35-36
1	The Moon's sign (especially in females)
2	The Ascendant sign (the Ascendant or rising sign)
3	The sign tenanted by the planetary "ruler" of the Ascending sign
4	The Sun sign. Beware of sign cusps.
5	The opposite sign to the Sun sign. This can be more obvious than the Sun sign for persons born close to sunset or midnight.
6	The planets nearest the Ascending degree (either side of the Ascendant). Planets conjunct the Ascendant take precedence over the sign on the Ascendant.
7	Any planet closely conjunct the planetary ruler of the Ascendant, Sun or Moon.
8	Any sign possessing two or more 'personal' planets, i.e., Mercury, Venus, Mars.
9	Any sign possessing a stellia of five or more planets.
10	Stationary planets. Consider any planetary "stations" occurring within one day from birth for Mercury, Venus and Mars and one to three days for slow planets.
11	Dominant Element: Fire, Earth, Air, Water. Look for at least two important indicators such as Sun, Moon, Ascendant, or ruler of Ascendant posited in one element.
12	Dominant Mode. Rare. Must be an overt dominance.

	Rules for Judgment, p. 33
	Indicates first four building blocks contribute 25-75% of physical appearance. Hill states "There exists no reliable method for determining exactly which of Significators 1-4 will predominately reflect in the physical appearance."
	Final eight building blocks are of secondary importance.

2001. Dr. Martin Gruendl

Beauty Check: Characteristics of Beautiful Faces (2001).

http://www.uni-regensburg.de/Fakultaeten/philo_Fakultät/II/Psychologie/Psychologie/II/beautycheck/english/index.htm

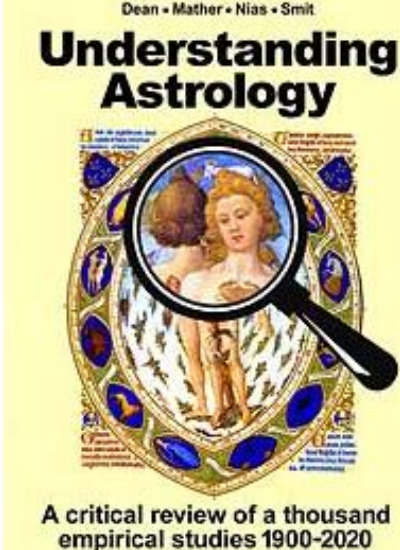
Accessed in 2010. As of 2024 this is a dead link.

Designed to capture specific physical characteristics of ‘beautiful faces,’ Gruendl and students from the University of Regensburg surveyed a group of participants on the attractiveness of a sample of photographs taken of 64 female and 32 male faces ages 17-29 years. The results were categorized and morphed into a set of ‘sexy’ and ‘unsexy’ faces for each sex by facial recognition software. Characteristics of ‘sexy’ faces are presented in this table:

Characteristic features of the female “sexy face” in comparison to the “unsexy face”.	Characteristics of the male “Sexy face” in the comparison to the “unsexy face”:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Suntanned skin• Narrower facial shape• Less fat• Fuller lips• Slightly bigger distance of eyes• Darker, narrower eyebrows• More, longer and darker lashes• Higher cheek bones• Narrower nose• No eye rings• ☐ Thinner lids	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Browner skin• Narrower facial shape• Less fat• Fuller and more symmetrical lips• Darker eyebrows• More and darker lashes• Upper half of the face broader in relation to the lower• Higher cheek bones• Prominent lower jaw• More prominent chin• No receding brows• Thinner lids• No wrinkles between nose and corner of the mouth

Application to astrology. While Beauty Check did not use the golden mean (0.618) when classifying faces, it is possible the wideness of “unsexy faces” violates the golden mean proportion. A separate result – a prominent lower jaw in the face of “sexy men” but not “sexy women” – appears relevant for fixed signs in Willner’ astrological sign model whose square/rectangular shape is framed by a prominent lower jaw. Fixed signs with their associated prominent lower jaws are ‘handsome’ for men but not for women.

2022. Dean, Mather, Nias, and Smit (living).

	<p>Geoffrey Dean, Rudolf Smit, Cygnea van der Hooning, and Wout Heukelom. <i>Understanding Astrology. A critical review of a thousand empirical studies 1900-2020.</i> AinO Publications Amsterdam. 2022</p> <p>Hardcover available from the Publisher</p> <p>Free PDF Downloads from the Publisher</p>
---	---

This 948 page book has a lengthy lineage dating back to the Dutch Society for the Scientific Study of Astrology formed in 1977. It is the most recent and revised edition of a prior version published in 2016 under the name *Tests of Astrology*.

They find no successful models of astrological physiognomy.

Edith Wangemann. First reviewed in their early work *Recent Advances* (1977:407-409), Wangemann proposed a model based on planetary aspects in 45-degree multiples to Koch house cusps. Facial features studied included the forehead, eyes, cheeks, and jaw. Planetary impact was consistent with traditional delineations for masculine/feminine as well as a jovial appearance for Jupiter and a serious look with prominent bones for Saturn. Aspects made by the Sun/Moon to the ASC degree yielded a round shape; Jupiter and Uranus a long shape; Saturn a square shape; Pluto a broad shape. Dean et al criticize this study for a lack of controlled tests or factor analysis.

Dean et. Al., cite James Wilson writing in his *Dictionary of Astrology* (1819) who states, “I am certain no human intellect, however acute, can form a correct judgment of any one’s appearance from so many conflicting testimonies.”

Reproduced sketches based on planetary types from Barrett (1941) [see entry in this lit review] and Jagot (c1920). Dean et. Al., then presents a grid of 42 photos culled from www.astrofaces.com which correspond to horoscopes with Jupiter or Saturn alone placed within five degrees of the Ascendant. They find no obvious correspondence to Jupiter’s large and oval shape and Saturn’s thin and stern face proposed by models from Barrett and Jagot.