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### Reading the human body

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## INTRODUCTION

Your face, my thane, is as a book, where men may read strange matters.  
William Shakespeare, *Macbeth* 1.5.62-63

If, at some time, from a triplicity there are two zodiacal signs above the earth to which we assume the horoscope applies, then we also pay attention to the shape of the man, which one of the zodiacal signs he resembles more [...].  
Hephaestion of Thebes, *Apotelesmatica* 2.2.27

This study deals with two manuscripts from the Dead Sea Scrolls whose contents are physiognomic and physiognomic-astrological. These manuscripts contain material that was unknown to have existed in this form in Hellenistic-Early Roman period Judaism (ca. third century BCE-first century CE) before the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls near Qumran.<sup>1</sup> The two manuscripts are fragmentary, the style of both texts is succinct, and some of the terminology is enigmatic. Despite these difficulties, the manuscripts contain enough to understand some of the arcane things these texts reveal to their intended reader.

The two texts considered here are the Hebrew manuscript 4Q186 (hereafter named *4QZodiacal Physiognomy*) and the Aramaic manuscript 4Q561 (hereafter named *4QPhysiognomy ar*).<sup>2</sup> The intention of this study is the reconstruction and understanding of what remains of these texts; what sort of texts they represent, what their sense is, and which functions they may have had and in what contexts. The approach is comparative, understanding these two texts in relation to other physiognomic and astrological writings, mainly from Babylonian and Greco-Roman traditions. The ancient Jewish manuscripts from Qumran share certain features with texts from these other traditions, but, not surprisingly, they also exhibit some peculiar and distinct features of their own.

<sup>1</sup> The Dead Sea Scrolls are a collection of over 900 reconstructed manuscripts. These were found between 1947-1956 in eleven caves in the immediate vicinity of the ancient settlement of Qumran near the northwestern shore of the Dead Sea. Most scholars attribute the texts to a religious Jewish sect that occupied the Qumran settlement during the first century BCE-first century CE. Besides some typical sectarian writings, many texts from this collection were not composed by the sect itself. The most obvious examples are the books from the Hebrew Bible. The sect shared these writings with other Jews. The collection is, therefore, not only relevant for understanding an ancient Jewish sect, it also sheds new light on different aspects of Hellenistic-Early Roman period Judaism in general. See e.g. F. Mébarki and É. Puech (eds.), *Les Manuscrits de la mer Morte* (Rodez: Rouergue, 2002); F. García Martínez and E. Tigchelaar (eds.), *Fragmenten uit de woestijn: De Dode-Zeerollen opnieuw bekeken* (Zoetermeer: Meinema, 2003); J.C. VanderKam and P.W. Flint, *The Meaning of the Dead Sea Scrolls: Their Significance for Understanding the Bible, Judaism, Jesus, and Christianity* (London: T&T Clark, 2005).

<sup>2</sup> The number 4 stands for Cave 4; Q stands for Qumran. The fragments found from the cave were collected, joined, numbered, and photographed at The Palestine Archaeological Museum (PAM). In addition to this formal notation, the reconstructed texts were given modern names. For an explanation of the names used for 4Q186 and 4Q561, see Chapter One.

## PHYSIOGNOMICS: THINGS SIGNIFIED BY THE HUMAN BODY

In Shakespeare's tragedy *Macbeth*, Duncan, ignorant of his impending doom, says "there's no art to find the mind's construction in the face." Lady Macbeth, however, proves him wrong and accurately tells her husband, when he is brooding, that his face "is as a book, where men may read strange matters."<sup>3</sup>

Judging by appearances is an everyday practice used in social communication and interaction between human beings. People observe each other's appearances and expressions in order to guess one another's thoughts and feelings. People may also try to go beyond these temporary states of mind; many form an opinion of what kind of person someone else is on the basis of how such an individual looks, dresses, behaves, talks, and moves. These outward features are taken as indicative signs of an individual's personality and character.<sup>4</sup> Although preconceptions undoubtedly play a role, this is hardly applying in a conscious way a fixed set of rules for judging the physical traits of someone else as indications of his or her personality. It is precisely this conscious reflection on the body as signifier and what is signified by it that characterizes the art of physiognomics in a more formal sense.

The textual evidence for physiognomic interests extends from the early second millennium BCE until modern times, and includes divination, literature, medicine, art, and philosophy. On the one hand, there is a level of continuity in the transmission of physiognomic lore and there are many similarities between physiognomic writings from different cultures and ages. On the other hand, the actual expression, application, and justification of physiognomic knowledge varies, due to different cultural, political, philosophical, religious, and social settings.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> William Shakespeare, *Macbeth* 1.4.11-12, 1.5.62-63. Lady Macbeth's ability to read the face of her husband is known by the term metoposcopy. This is considered a branch of physiognomics, which flourished greatly during the modern period. Cf. A.G. Clarke, "Metoposcopy: An Art to Find the Mind's Construction in the Forehead," in *Astrology, Science, and Society: Historical Essays* (ed. P. Curry; Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell, 1987), 171-95; K.J.H. Bergland, "Reading Character in the Face: Lavater, Socrates, and Physiognomy," *Word and Image* 9 (1993): 252-69.

<sup>4</sup> See e.g. R. Foerster, *Die Physiognomik der Griechen* (Kiel: Schmidt & Klaunig, 1884), 6; R. Hassin and Y. Trope, "Facing Faces: Studies on the Cognitive Aspects of Physiognomy," *JPSP* 78 (2000): 837-52.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. S. Vogt, *Aristoteles: Opuscula VI: Physiognomonica* (Aristoteles, Werke in deutscher Übersetzung 18.6; Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1999), 39-41. See also M. Blankenburg, "Physiognomik, Physiognomie," *HWP* 7 (1989), 955-63; R. Campe and M. Schneider (eds.), *Geschichten der Physiognomik: Text, Bild, Wissen* (RWRL 36; Freiburg im Bressgau: Rombach, 1996); L. Rodler, *Il corpo specchio dell'anima: Teoria e storia della fisiognomica* (Milan: Bruno Mondadori, 2000).

For example, at the modern end of the spectrum there is the Swiss theologian Johann Kaspar Lavater (1741-1801), who caused a popular revival of physiognomics in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries through the publication of his *Physiognomische Fragmente zur Beförderung der Menschenkenntniß und Menschenliebe* in four volumes (1775-78). He defined physiognomics as “die Fertigkeit durch das Aeüßerliche eines Menschen sein Inneres zu erkennen.”<sup>6</sup> In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries physiognomics went hand in hand with newly developing disciplines such as phrenology and craniometry. The most reliable basis for physiognomic study, according to Lavater, was the use of silhouettes, because “the decisive clues to character are found in the outline of the skull, not in the transitory play of facial features, with their countless shadings and blurry details, their constant interplay of dissimulation and disclosure.”<sup>7</sup>

The scientific context of physiognomics in Greco-Roman antiquity was different. Skulls were not measured; the outline of the skull was not deemed as significant as in Lavater’s days.<sup>8</sup> Instead, Greco-Roman physiognomics should be understood against another (physiological) background. The second-century CE physician Galen stated that “the faculties of the soul depend on the mixtures of the body.”<sup>9</sup> Over the course of several centuries, physicians and philosophers (such as Hippocrates, Aristotle, and Galen) developed a theory of the human body according to which four fluids constituted the form and shape of the human body. Each of these fluids was ascribed two of four elementary qualities.<sup>10</sup> The appearance of the human body was the result of the specific mixture (κράσις, *temperamentum*) of these fluids and their qualities. At the same time, this mixture also affected people’s characters and souls. Thus, the second-century CE Skeptic Sextus

<sup>6</sup> J.C. Lavater, *Physiognomische Fragmente zur Beförderung der Menschenkenntniß und Menschenliebe: Erster Versuch* (Leipzig und Winterthur: M.G. Weidmanns Erben und Reich, und Heinrich Steiner und Compagnie, 1775), 13. For general studies on Lavater, see e.g. E. Shookman (ed.), *The Faces of Physiognomy: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Johann Caspar Lavater* (Columbia, South Carolina: Camden House, 1993); K. Pestalozzi and H. Weigelt (eds.), *Das Antlitz Gottes im Antlitz des Menschen: Zugänge zu Johann Kaspar Lavater* (AGP 31; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1994).

<sup>7</sup> C. Siegrist, “‘Letters of the Divine Alphabet’ – Lavater’s Concept of Physiognomy,” in *The Faces of Physiognomy*, 25-39, at 34.

<sup>8</sup> The physician Soranus of Ephesus (first century-second century CE) gives advice to the midwife on how to shape the skull of the newborn into good proportions so that it may become neither too lengthy nor pointed. See Soranus, *Gynecology* 2.33. Cf. D.B. Martin, *The Corinthian Body* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 26-27.

<sup>9</sup> Galen, *Quod animi mores corporis temperamenta sequantur* 7 = K. IV 767. Translation from P.N. Singer, *Galen: Selected Works* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 150.

<sup>10</sup> Blood was hot and moist, phlegm cold and moist, yellow bile warm and dry, and black bile cold and dry.

Empiricus could say that “the general form of the soul is the body, as is shown by the science of physiognomics.”<sup>11</sup>

These two examples demonstrate that the basic notion of physiognomics according to which the human soul and character can be known by observing the appearance of the body has remained the same over time. However, they also reveal the different views of the human body that constitute the context in which physiognomic knowledge is expressed.

The term physiognomics derives from the Greek word *φυσιογνωμονία*, which means judging a man’s character from his bodily features.<sup>12</sup> This, however, only partly covers what people may believe to be signified by the human body. According to Babylonian tradition, the shape and appearance of the body reveal signs communicated by the gods about people’s fates that have been ordained by these same gods. Consequently, there can be differences between physiognomic traditions as to what things may be signified by the body.

Another example is a remark by the late antique astrologer Hephaestion of Thebes, which provides evidence for the existence of the notion that astrological matters could be learned through physiognomic inquiry. If one cannot ascertain which of two zodiacal signs at a given time above the horizon represents someone’s horoscope sign (= the ascendant), it is possible, says Hephaestion, to determine it by looking at the shape of the person’s body and see which of the two zodiacal signs he resembles more. This observation by Hephaestion is important for this study. It sheds new light on *4QZodiacal Physiognomy*, one of the most intriguing texts from Qumran, which combines physiognomic and astrological learning.

#### PHYSIOGNOMIC LEARNING AND PHYSIOGNOMIC CONSCIOUSNESS IN THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS AND SECOND TEMPLE PERIOD JUDAISM

A number of texts from the Dead Sea Scrolls have in common that they give descriptions and characterizations of the human body. These descriptions do not display a mere interest in human anatomy or in the body per se. Rather, they impart knowledge of how to read strange matters from the human body; the interest is in what the body can reveal about people. The

<sup>11</sup> Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* 1.85.

<sup>12</sup> Its earliest occurrences are from the fourth century BCE with Demosthenes and Aristotle. The occurrence of the term in the Hippocratic corpus is probably due to medieval copyists who inserted the two captions in *Epidemics* 2.5 (*φυσιογνωμονία*), and *Epidemics* 2.6 (*φυσιογνωμονικόν*). See S. Vogt, *Physiognomonica*, 37 n. 3.

Although etymologically “physiognomonics” would be more correct, “physiognomics” is used in this study because it is the more familiar term in English. Cf. T.S. Barton, *Power and Knowledge: Astrology, Physiognomics, and Medicine under the Roman Empire* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1994), 95 n. 1.

human body is a signifier, full of signs that, taken together, show the competent reader certain things (the signified) concerning individual types of people whose bodies are scrutinized and described.

There are at least four texts from the Dead Sea Scrolls that demonstrate a physiognomic interest, but the texts differ from each other regarding the ways in which this interest is expressed. In addition to the two texts *4QZodiacal Physiognomy* and *4QPhysiognomy ar*, there are two literary texts: parts of a physical description of a figure called the “elect of God” in *4QBirth of Noah<sup>a</sup> ar* (4Q534) and of Sarai in the *Genesis Apocryphon* (1QapGen ar 20:2-8).<sup>13</sup> Apart from these texts from the Dead Sea Scrolls, there are other writings from the Second Temple period that have passages showing physiognomic interest, such as, for example, the *Wisdom of Ben Sira*, *1 Enoch*, and the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*.<sup>14</sup>

In contrast with *4QZodiacal Physiognomy* and *4QPhysiognomy ar*, these other texts have what is perhaps best described by the words “physiognomic consciousness.” This terminology was introduced by Elizabeth Evans to characterize those genres of Greco-Roman writings, such as epic, history and biography, drama, and satire, that do not deal with physiognomics on a theoretical or technical level, but make a more general use of physiognomic notions, and to distinguish these literary forms from the theoretical and formal Greco-Roman physiognomic treatises and catalogues.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, two more texts, *4QBarkhi Nafshi<sup>a, c</sup>* (4Q434 and 4Q436) and *4QWiles of the Wicked Woman* (4Q184), have some passages with a possibly physiognomic meaning.

<sup>14</sup> For New Testament and early Christian texts, see e.g. A.J. Malherbe, “A Physical Description of Paul,” in *Paul and the Popular Philosophers* (A.J. Malherbe; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989), 170-75 (originally published in *HTR* 79 [1986]: 170-75); J. Massyngbaerde Ford, “The Physical Features of the Antichrist,” *JSP* (1996): 23-41; J. Bollók, “The Description of Paul in the Acta Pauli,” in *The Apocryphal Acts of Paul and Thecla* (ed. J.N. Bremmer; SAAA 2; Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1996), 1-15; J.N. Bremmer, “Magic, Martyrdom and Women’s Liberation in the Acts of Paul and Thecla,” in *Apocryphal Acts of Paul and Thecla*, 36-59, at 38-39; B.J. Malina and J.H. Neyrey, *Portraits of Paul: An Archaeology of Ancient Personality* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox, 1996), 100-52; G. Frank, *The Memory of the Eyes: Pilgrims to Living Saints in Christian Late Antiquity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 134-70; M.C. Parsons, “‘Short in Stature’: Luke’s Physical Description of Zachaeus,” *NTS* 47 (2001): 50-57; J.A. Harril, “Invective against Paul (2 Cor 10:10), the Physiognomics of the Ancient Slave Body, and the Greco-Roman Rhetoric of Manhood,” in *Antiquity and Humanity: Essays on Ancient Religion and Philosophy Presented to Hans Dieter Betz on His 70th Birthday* (eds. A. Yarbro Collins and M.M. Mitchell; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 191-213.

<sup>15</sup> E.C. Evans, *Physiognomics in the Ancient World* (TAPS 59/5; Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1969), 5-6. Suetonius (ca. 70-after 126), for example, was familiar with physiognomic principles, which he used in his *Lives of the Caesars*. Descriptions of the shape and appearance of an emperor’s body were meant to convey his character and moral personality. The context is the literary form of a biography, not a technical treatise on physiognomics, or a long catalogue of physiognomic characters. See e.g. E.C. Evans, “Roman Descriptions of Personal Appearance in History and Biography,” *HSCP* 46 (1935): 43-84; E.C. Evans, “Literary Portraiture in Ancient Epic: A Study of the Descriptions of Physical Appearance in Classical Epic,” *HSCP* 58-59 (1948): 189-217; E.C. Evans, “A Stoic Aspect of

The characterization “physiognomic consciousness” seems appropriate and useful for distinguishing between, on the one hand, *4QZodiacal Physiognomy* and *4QPhysiognomy ar*, which can be characterized as physiognomic writings on a more formal, technical level, and, on the other hand, texts that show in certain passages a more general physiognomic interest.

This study is limited to reconstructing and understanding what remains of *4QZodiacal Physiognomy* and *4QPhysiognomy ar*.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, of these two manuscripts, *4QZodiacal Physiognomy* will receive the most attention since the remaining fragments preserve more text and raise more questions.

#### *4QZODIACAL PHYSIOGNOMY AND 4QPHYSIOGNOMY AR: PHYSIOGNOMIC-ASTROLOGICAL AND PHYSIOGNOMIC LISTS*

The extant text of the Hebrew manuscript *4QZodiacal Physiognomy* lists several entries that are made up of various elements. Most clearly, the entries contain descriptions of the human body from head to toe that belong to different types of people. Following these descriptions, the text provides enigmatic data about a person’s spirit having certain numbers in the “house of light” and the “house of darkness,” as well as astrological information in terms of a section of the person’s zodiacal sign at the time of his birth.

The Aramaic manuscript *4QPhysiognomy ar* is even more fragmentary than *4QZodiacal Physiognomy*. Like that text, it lists in different entries the physical descriptions of several types of people from head to toe. *4QPhysiognomy ar* also provides some evidence for predictions that presumably follow on from these descriptions. Unlike *4QZodiacal Physiognomy*, however, the remaining fragments of this text do not contain any references to zodiacal signs. This, of course, does not mean that these references could not have been there in the original, complete text. But it is significant that the remaining fragments do not provide any evidence that in this text the purpose of physiognomic inquiry was to reveal the division of people’s spirits between the “house of light” and the “house of darkness.”

The two texts are similar in structure and style. Both represent lists or catalogues with different entries that are structured according to descriptions of the human body. The style of these texts is terse and succinct. These two characteristics set them apart from the other texts amongst the Dead Sea Scrolls and Second Temple period writings that demonstrate physiognomic

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Senecan Drama: Portraiture,” *TAPA* 81 (1950): 169-84; J. Couissin, “Suétone physiognomiste dans les *Vies des XII Césars*,” *REL* 31 (1953): 234-56; Evans, *Physiognomics*, 46-58; J.W. Drijvers, “‘Hij was een uitzonderlijke schoonheid...’: Keizerlijke lichamen in beeld en geschrift,” in *Machtige lichamen: Het vingertje van Luns en andere politieke wapens* (eds. C. Santing, H. te Velde and M. Wilke; Amsterdam: Wereldbibliotheek, 2005), 191-207.

<sup>16</sup> For a brief discussion of texts showing physiognomic consciousness, see Appendix II.

interest. Representing the intriguing remains of physiognomic-astrological and physiognomic lists or catalogues, the manuscripts of *4QZodiacal Physiognomy* and *4QPhysiognomy* are the earliest Jewish texts of their kind known to date. Their relevance, however, extends further than that.

The text of *4QZodiacal Physiognomy* is important evidence for the history of physiognomic and astrological learning in antiquity in general because it combines physiognomic and astrological learning in the form of a list that was structured according to physiognomic criteria. Like the observation by Hephaestion, this Jewish text testifies to the existence of the belief that the human body could signify astrological matters, whereas in every other example known to us of ancient lists that combine astrology and physiognomics the signifying relationship is reversed.

The manuscript of *4QZodiacal Physiognomy* is not only remarkable for its content, but also for its manner of writing. It immediately catches the reader's attention due to the way it is written. Contrary to the regular direction of writing in Hebrew, which is right to left, the text is written from left to right. In addition, characters from different scripts have been used. In addition to the regular, so-called square script, the writer or copyist used ancient Hebrew, Greek, and cryptic letters. These two features – inverted and mixed writing – make this text exceptional. There are no other known examples of Jewish texts written entirely in reversed order and in mixed scripts.

As already said, these two lists from Qumran provide the earliest Jewish evidence for technical physiognomic learning, predating medieval physiognomic manuscripts by a thousand years.<sup>17</sup> Some scholars have suggested that the physiognomic learning from the Qumran sect was passed on into the hands of those Jewish circles eventually responsible for the medieval physiognomic tradition, the groups perhaps even being historically related to each other.<sup>18</sup> However, the terminological overlap between the texts is

<sup>17</sup> For medieval Jewish physiognomic and astrological-physiognomic texts, see G. Scholem, "ספר אסף: קובץ מאמרי (Physiognomy and Chiromancy)," in *הכרת פנים וסדרי שרשושין* (eds. M.D. Cassuto, J. Klausner and J. Gutmann; Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1953), 459-95; G. Scholem, "Ein Fragment zur Physiognomik und Chiromantik aus der spätantiken jüdischen Esoterik," in *Liber Amicorum: Studies in Honour of Professor Dr. C.J. Bleeker* (SHR 17, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1969), 175-93; I. Gruenwald, "קטעים חדשים מספרות" (Further Jewish Physiognomic and Chiromantic Fragments)," *Tarbiz* 40 (1970-1971): 301-19; P. Schäfer, *Geniza Fragmente zur Hekhalot-Literatur* (TSAJ 6; Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1984), 135-39; P. Schäfer, "Ein neues Fragment zur Metoposkopie und Chiromantik," in *Hekhalot-Studien* (P. Schäfer; TSAJ 19; Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1988), 84-95 (originally published in *FJB* 13 [1985]: 61-82); P.S. Alexander, "Incantations and Books of Magic," in *Emil Schürer: The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.-A.D. 135)* (vol. 3.1; eds. G. Vermes, F. Millar and M. Goodman; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1986), 333-79, at 366-69.

<sup>18</sup> Gruenwald, "Jewish Physiognomic," 304-6; I. Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism* (AGJU 14; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1980), 218-24; L.H. Schiffman, *Reclaiming the Dead*



not, as is claimed, technical in any way, but applies to physiognomic descriptions that are too general to be conclusive for a direct connection. Instead, it might be worthwhile to consider these medieval Jewish physiognomic traditions against the background of late antique and early medieval culture in the Near East as a continuation of ancient Babylonian and Greco-Roman traditions, similar to Aramaic astrological-physiognomic traditions in the Mandaean *Book of the Zodiac*.<sup>19</sup>

#### TWO NON-SECTARIAN COMPOSITIONS, ONE POSSIBLY SECTARIAN COPY

Qumran scholars distinguish between sectarian and non-sectarian writings amongst the Dead Sea Scrolls.<sup>20</sup> It is argued that sectarian texts should be discernable by a distinctive terminology that is linked with a particular set of ideas.<sup>21</sup> The criteria for this distinction as well as the precise understanding of what is meant by the term “sectarian text,” however, are not entirely clear. There are four possible levels of understanding this term.<sup>22</sup>

Firstly, a “sectarian text” is one used by members of the community. This implies that the mere presence of a text at Qumran is enough to conclude that it was used and read there. This is the broadest definition because

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*Sea Scrolls: The History of Judaism, the Background of Christianity, the Lost Library of Qumran* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1994), 362-64; J.R. Davila, “4QMess ar [4Q534] and Merkavah Mysticism,” *DSD* 5 (1998): 367-81; J.R. Davila, “The Dead Sea Scrolls and Merkavah Mysticism,” in *The Dead Sea Scrolls in their Historical Context* (eds. T.H. Lim et al.; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000), 249-64, at 253-55, 263-64; M.D. Swartz, “The Dead Sea Scrolls and Later Jewish Magic and Mysticism,” *DSD* 8 (2001): 182-93, at 192-93.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Chapter Two nn. 23, 205.

<sup>20</sup> See e.g. D. Dimant, “Qumran Sectarian Literature,” in *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period: Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran Sectarian Writings, Philo, Josephus* (ed. M.E. Stone; CRINT 2.2; Assen: Van Gorcum and Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 483-550, at 487; C.A. Newsom, “‘Sectually Explicit’ Literature from Qumran,” in *The Hebrew Bible and its Interpreters* (eds. W.H. Propp, B. Halpern and D.N. Freedman; BJSUCSD 1; Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 167-87; E.G. Chazon, “Is *Divrei ha-me’orot* a Sectarian Prayer?,” in *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Forty Years of Research* (eds. D. Dimant and U. Rappaport; STDJ 10; Leiden: E.J. Brill and Jerusalem: Magnes, 1992), 3-17; D. Dimant, “The Qumran Manuscripts: Contents and Significance,” in *Time to Prepare the Way in the Wilderness: Papers on the Qumran Scrolls by Fellows of the Institute for Advanced Studies of the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 1989-1990* (eds. D. Dimant and L.H. Schiffman; STDJ 16; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995), 23-58; A. Lange, *Weisheit und Prädestination: Weisheitliche Urordnung und Prädestination in den Textfunden von Qumran* (STDJ 18; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995), 6-20; J.M. Jokiranta, “‘Sectarianism’ of the Qumran ‘Sect’: Sociological Notes,” *RevQ* 78/20 (2001): 223-39; J. Jokiranta, *Identity on a Continuum: Constructing and Expressing Sectarian Social Identity in Qumran Serakhim and Persharim* (Diss. Helsinki, 2005), 65-73.

<sup>21</sup> Dimant, “Qumran Sectarian Literature,” 487; Dimant, “Qumran Manuscripts,” 27-29.

<sup>22</sup> For the following, see Newsom, “‘Sectually Explicit,’” 172-79; Jokiranta, “‘Sectarianism,’” 236-38. It is also possible to distinguish another level between the first and second ones, namely texts that were copied at Qumran (or that display the specific characteristics of the so-called Qumran scribal practices), see below.

it encompasses all the texts found at Qumran. Secondly, a “sectarian text” is one authored by people from the sect. This definition already restricts the number of writings that can be characterized as sectarian, the biblical manuscripts being the prime example not fitting this category. It cannot, however, help to deal with the possibility that texts were indeed composed by members of the community, but cannot be identified as such because they lack the combination of a distinctive terminology with a particular set of ideas. Content and style should not be conflated with authorship. In such a case we have no way of knowing whether a text was authored within the community.<sup>23</sup> Thirdly, a “sectarian text” is one containing a distinctive set of ideas that concern the unique structures and history of the group and that are expressed by means of a self-consciously polemical rhetoric referring to the separation from a larger community. Fourthly, a “sectarian text” is one that shows clear evidence of a sectarian stance, which consists of a self-understanding as uniquely legitimate and of a negative tension with the sociocultural environment.

Returning to *4QZodiacal Physiognomy* and *4QPhysiognomy ar*, it seems that there is nothing particularly sectarian about these texts in any of the three latter senses. Like the majority of Aramaic texts from Qumran, *4QPhysiognomy ar* can be regarded a non-sectarian composition. It could have been read and used by the community, but was most probably not composed by it.<sup>24</sup> With regard to the Hebrew text *4QZodiacal Physiognomy* the matter is less clear.<sup>25</sup> Many scholars assume it to be a sectarian composition due to the text’s alleged light and darkness dualism, which they regard as typical of the Qumran sect worldview. The words “house of light” and “house of darkness,” however, are not dualistic in the context of the astrological framework of *4QZodiacal Physiognomy*.<sup>26</sup> There is, therefore, no evidence suggesting that the text was authored within the community.

According to the first definition of a Qumran “sectarian text” above, it is possible to understand *4QZodiacal Physiognomy* and *4QPhysiognomy ar* as

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Dimant, “Qumran Manuscripts,” 28 n. 14.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. S. Segert, “Die Sprachenfrage in der Qumrängemeinschaft,” in *Qumran-Probleme: Vorträge des Leipziger Symposions über Qumran-Probleme vom 9. bis 14. Oktober 1961* (ed. H. Bardtke; DAWBSSA 42; Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1963), 315-39; Dimant, “Qumran Manuscripts,” 34-35, 55; J.A. Fitzmyer, “Aramaic,” in *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (eds. L.H. Schiffman and J.C. VanderKam; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 48-51, at 50.

<sup>25</sup> For example, Dimant, “Qumran Sectarian Literature,” 531, considers it a sectarian text. However, Dimant, “Qumran Manuscripts,” 34, 51, classifies it as a text that does not use Qumran community terminology, but D. Dimant, “Dualism at Qumran: New Perspectives,” in *Caves of Enlightenment: Proceedings of the American Schools of Oriental Research Dead Sea Scrolls Jubilee Symposium (1947-1997)* (ed. J.H. Charlesworth; North Richland Hills, Texas: Bibal, 1998), 55-73, at 62-64, regards it again as part of the community’s literature.

<sup>26</sup> See Chapters Three and Four.

sectarian texts in the sense that they were found in one of the caves near Qumran. By their mere presence, they were part of the, presumably deliberately gathered, collection of manuscripts of the Qumran community, which may imply that they were used and read by (some) sectarian members.<sup>27</sup>

In addition to the four levels of distinction for a “sectarian text,” the aspect of manuscript copying may provide further information. One should allow for the possibility that many, if not most, of the Dead Sea Scrolls manuscripts were not copied at Qumran but elsewhere in Judea or Palestine.<sup>28</sup> It is also possible that many manuscripts were not even copied by members of the community. If one assumes, however, that the cryptic A script was a sectarian writing system,<sup>29</sup> then the possible use of one Cryptic A *yod* in בביה (“in the house”) in 4Q186 1 ii 7 may be evidence that *4QZodiacal Physiognomy* was copied within the Qumran community, but this is not certain.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Contrary to some interpretations of the Qumran settlement that treat it separately from the caves with the scrolls, I agree with Roland de Vaux’s assessment that scroll caves and settlement belong together. See M. Popović, “De archeologie van Qumran,” in *Fragmenten uit de woestijn*, 48-77. The intricate connection between caves and settlement is now corroborated by INAA of pottery at both locations. See J. Gunneweg and M. Balla, “Neutron Activation Analysis: Scroll Jars and Common Wares,” in *Khirbet Qumrân et ‘Ain Feshkha II: Études d’anthropologie, de physique et de chimie. Studies of Anthropology, Physics and Chemistry* (eds. J.-B. Humbert and J. Gunneweg; NTOA.SA 3; Fribourg: Academic Press Fribourg and Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2003), 3-53.

<sup>28</sup> E. Tov, *Scribal Practices and Approaches Reflected in the Texts Found in the Judean Desert* (STDJ 54; Leiden: Brill, 2004), 5.

<sup>29</sup> In his different articles on the Cryptic A script, Stephen Pfann has emphasized that this script was written for the internal purposes of the community and he has ascribed the use of this script to the *Maskil*. See S.J. Pfann and M. Kister, “4QcryptA Words of the Maskil to All Sons of Dawn,” in *Qumran Cave 4.XV: Sapiential Texts, Part 1* (eds. T. Elgvin et al.; DJD 20; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 1-30; S. Pfann, “4Qpap cryptA Midrash Sefer Moshe,” in *Qumran Cave 4.XXV: Halakhic Texts* (eds. J. Baumgarten et al.; DJD 35; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), 1-24; S.J. Pfann, “Introduction,” in *Qumran Cave 4.XXVI: Cryptic Texts and Miscellanea, Part 1* (eds. P. Alexander et al.; DJD 36; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), 515-46; S.J. Pfann, “The Writings in Esoteric Script from Qumran,” in *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Fifty Years After Their Discovery: Proceedings of the Jerusalem Congress, July 20-25, 1997* (eds. L.H. Schiffman, E. Tov and J.C. VanderKam; Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2000), 177-90. Cf. also Dimant, “Qumran Manuscripts,” 45 n. 55; Tov, *Scribal Practices*, 50, 204.

<sup>30</sup> The use of Cryptic A script in a manuscript is a problematic criterion for determining whether a text is a sectarian composition or even a copy (the moment this script turns up outside Qumran, it will be difficult to argue that it was a sectarian writing system). If it was a sectarian writing system, why is it that texts that are evidently sectarian, like the *Rule of the Community* or the *Pesharim*, are not written in this script, while texts that do not have a distinct terminology and a particular set of ideas, like some calendrical texts (4Q317 or 4Q324<sup>d</sup>) or sapiential texts (4Q298), are? Why are texts that are similar in content, like the calendrical or sapiential texts, written in both the square script and the Cryptic A script? The Cryptic A script is not a clear criterion for distinguishing between sectarian and non-sectarian writings. For example, on the one hand Devorah Dimant assumes that texts written in the cryptic script belong to the community, and she therefore includes the calendrical text 4Q317, but on the other hand she argues that none of the calendrical and chronological texts belong to the community compositions. See Dimant, “Qumran Manuscripts,” 34, 45, 51.

As non-sectarian compositions, this means that the origins of *4QZodiacal Physiognomy* and *4QPhysiognomy ar* lie outside the immediate context of the Qumran community. In addition to a sectarian context, one should, therefore, also allow for the possibility that these lists had a non-sectarian context. As is the case with the biblical writings and other non-sectarian texts, the community shared these texts with other Jews. *4QZodiacal Physiognomy* and *4QPhysiognomy ar* provide us with a valuable window on an intriguing aspect of Second Temple period Judaism in general. The important fact that these two technical physiognomic and physiognomic-astrological lists were found at Qumran is evidence that Jewish people in the Hellenistic-Early Roman period had knowledge of and access to physiognomic and astrological learning on more than a general level. These texts show that Jewish culture in Palestine participated in sophisticated disciplines of learning that were current in Babylonian and Greco-Roman cultures.

#### OUTLINE AND MAIN THESES OF THE PRESENT STUDY

This inquiry is not the first to try to reconstruct and understand different aspects of *4QZodiacal Physiognomy* and *4QPhysiognomy ar*, but it is the first attempt at a comprehensive treatment of both texts in comparison with similar writings from Babylonian and Greco-Roman cultures.

John Allegro published the extant fragments of *4QZodiacal Physiognomy* more than forty years ago, but he himself did not comment extensively on the text.<sup>31</sup> Allegro clearly could not make much of it, something he expresses vividly in a letter to his wife Joan, written several days after deciphering the inverted and mixed writing:

I worked this morning on my piece of the cryptic script, and after puzzling all morning decided that the script was the least cryptic thing about it. It doesn't make sense, and I think some bored Essene was amusing himself making life difficult for a later generation. [letter December 13, 1953]<sup>32</sup>

<sup>31</sup> J.M. Allegro, "Le travail d'édition des fragments manuscrits de Qumrân: Communication de J.M. Allegro," *RB* 63 (1956): 62-64, at 63-64; J. Allegro, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A Reappraisal* (2d ed.; Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1964), 127; J.M. Allegro, "An Astrological Cryptic Document from Qumran," *JSS* 9 (1964): 291-94; J.M. Allegro (ed. with the collaboration of A.A. Anderson), *Qumrân Cave 4.1 (4Q158-4Q186)* (DJD 5; Oxford: Clarendon, 1968), 88-91.

<sup>32</sup> J.A. Brown, *John Marco Allegro: The Maverick of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 2005), 30.

Although Allegro's edition was criticized,<sup>33</sup> many scholars accept his understanding of *4QZodiacal Physiognomy* as an astrological text dealing with the influence of the stars on the human body and spirit, which was related to the so-called *Two Spirits Treatise* in the sectarian *Rule of the Community* (1QS 3:13-4:26).

Scholars such as Roland Bergmeier, Francis Schmidt, and Matthias Albani focused on elucidating the astrological background of the text, while others such as Jacob Licht and Philip Alexander stressed its physiognomic nature.<sup>34</sup> These approaches have contributed many valuable insights to our understanding of *4QZodiacal Physiognomy*. However, instead of paying attention to just one approach and neglecting the other, this study will integrate them in order to do justice to both the physiognomic and astrological elements in the text and to further our understanding of its sense.

The manuscript of *4QZodiacal Physiognomy* has been known to Dead Sea Scrolls scholars for fifty years now. Allegro's rapid publication of it has contributed to the familiarity of scholars with this text, as is demonstrated by the many references to it in books and articles. The manuscript of *4QPhysiognomy ar* has also been known for nearly fifty years,<sup>35</sup> but until recently only part of the text had been published, and the final publication by Émile Puech in *DJD* 37 is still forthcoming.<sup>36</sup> Undoubtedly, this has

<sup>33</sup> Cf. J. Strugnell, "Notes en marge du volume V des 'Discoveries in the Judaean Desert of Jordan,'" *RevQ* 7/26 (1970): 163-276, at 274-76; M. Popović, "A Note on the Reading of עמוד השני and עמוד השני in 4Q186 2 i 7," *RevQ* 21/84 (2004): 635-41.

<sup>34</sup> J. Licht, "שוקיים סימן לבהירה" (Legs as Signs of Election), *Tarbiz* 35 (1965-1966): 18-26; R. Bergmeier, *Glaube als Gabe nach Johannes: Religions- und theologiegeschichtliche Studien zum prädestinarianischen Dualismus im vierten Evangelium* (BWANT 112; Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1980), 78-79; P.S. Alexander, "Physiognomy [sic!], Initiation, and Rank in the Qumran Community," in *Geschichte – Tradition – Reflexion: Festschrift für Martin Hengel zum 70. Geburtstag, Band I Judentum* (eds. H. Cancik, H. Lichtenberger, and P. Schäfer; Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1996), 385-94; F. Schmidt, "Astrologie juive ancienne: Essai d'interprétation de *4QCryptique* (4Q186)," *RevQ* 18/69 (1997): 125-41; M. Albani, "Horoscopes in the Qumran Scrolls," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls After Fifty Years: A Comprehensive Assessment* (eds. P.W. Flint and J.C. VanderKam; vol. 2; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1999), 279-330; M. Albani, "Horoscopes," in *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 370-73.

<sup>35</sup> In photograph PAM 43.598, taken June 1960, all fragments have been put together.

<sup>36</sup> The original editor of *4QPhysiognomy ar*, Jean Starcky, gave a translation of part of it. See J. Starcky, "Un texte messianique araméen de la grotte 4 de Qumrân," in *Mémorial du cinquantenaire 1914-1964, École des Langues Orientales Anciennes de l'Institut Catholique de Paris* (TICP 10; Paris: Bloud & Gay, 1964), 51-66, at 64-65. See Appendix I for references to other partial transcriptions and translations.

Prior to Puech's final edition, all of the fragments have recently been published. See M. Wise, "4Q561 (4QPhysiognomy/Horoscope ar)," in *Additional Genres and Unclassified Texts* (eds. D.W. Parry and E. Tov; DSSR 6; Leiden: Brill, 2005), 228-31; S. Holst and J. Høgenhaven, "Physiognomy and Eschatology: Some More Fragments of 4Q561," *JJS* 57 (2006): 26-43. Whereas Michael Wise considers all fragments in photograph PAM 43.598 part of one manuscript, Soren Holst and Jesper Høgenhaven follow, I think rightly, Starcky in seeing the three fragments in the upper half of the photograph as part of another manuscript and composition, termed *ar S* by Starcky.

impeded scholars taking full account of all the manuscript fragments, hindering the proper study of *4QPhysiognomy ar*. In the case of *4QZodiacal Physiognomy* I had the opportunity to study the fragments themselves at the Israel Antiquities Authority Dead Sea Scrolls Laboratory in Jerusalem, but as the fragments of *4QPhysiognomy ar* are not yet officially published in the *DJD* series I did not have access to these. My reading of the text is based on the available photographs,<sup>37</sup> as well as previous transcriptions. Nevertheless, my reading and understanding of *4QPhysiognomy ar* differ at some points from earlier publications.

In Chapter One, introducing *4QZodiacal Physiognomy* and *4QPhysiognomy ar*, I will argue that *4QZodiacal Physiognomy* represents the remains of a physiognomic-astrological list: the structure of the different elements in the entries of this list demonstrate that it is organized according to physiognomic descriptions from which some astrological data can be discerned, possibly in relation to magico-medicinal stones. Regarding *4QPhysiognomy ar* it will be argued that it represents the remains of a physiognomic list and that the text originally provided predictions for each physiognomic type, but that there is no evidence for references to zodiacal signs or other astrological notions. As for the relationship between the two manuscripts, I will argue that there is no evidence that suggests they contain the same literary composition; there is no reason to assume that the Hebrew is a translation of the Aramaic.

In Chapter Two, discussing various aspects of physiognomic writings and their backgrounds in Babylonian and Greco-Roman traditions, it will be argued from a comparative perspective that the Qumran lists cannot be directly linked to either a Babylonian or Greek *Vorlage*; despite some similarities in form, there are significant differences. As for the possibility of tracing a cultural influence from either Mesopotamia or the Greek world on the Jewish physiognomic tradition witnessed by *4QZodiacal Physiognomy* and *4QPhysiognomy ar*, I will argue that neither can be excluded as far as the physiognomic aspect is concerned. With regard to the combination of physiognomic and astrological aspects in *4QZodiacal Physiognomy*, comparison with other texts demonstrates that this text is familiar with the notion that the zodiacal signs have an effect on the appearance of the human body, but also that the relationship between the two elements is expressed differently: lists from Babylonian as well as Greco-Roman traditions that combine astrology with physiognomics are arranged according to astrological criteria, whereas *4QZodiacal Physiognomy* is organized according to physiognomic descriptions. Remarks from Greco-Roman (astrological) lit-

<sup>37</sup> T.H. Lim (ed. in consultation with P.S. Alexander), *The Dead Sea Scrolls Electronic Reference Library: Volume I* (Oxford: Oxford University Press and Leiden: Brill, 1997).

erature demonstrate that people believed it possible to reason the other way round: discerning from a person's physiognomy his ascendant zodiacal sign. It is this line of reasoning that informs the textual arrangement of the physiognomic and astrological aspects in *4QZodiacal Physiognomy*.

In Chapter Three I will investigate in detail the astrological framework behind *4QZodiacal Physiognomy*, reviewing previous hypotheses against the background of notions from Babylonian and Hellenistic astrology. I will support Albani's so-called ascendant interpretation as the most likely hypothesis, but also propose some modifications and elaborations. Most importantly, it will be argued that *4QZodiacal Physiognomy* can be situated within an astrological tradition that combines the notions of *dodecatemoria* and *melothesia*. When the text mentions a specific part of the zodiacal sign, saying in 4Q186 1 ii 9 that a person was born "in the foot of *Taurus*," it refers to that part of the zodiacal sign ascending above the eastern horizon (this is what "horoscope" literally meant in antiquity). According to the ascendant interpretation, the realization of the numbers in the "house of light" (area above the earth) and the "house of darkness" (area below the earth) is thus the result of the division of the zodiacal sign during its ascendancy over the eastern horizon. This division of the sign and the names given to its different parts, such as "foot of *Taurus*," is, I suggest, due to merging the astrological concepts of *dodecatemoria* and *melothesia*. The original text of *4QZodiacal Physiognomy* would have represented an elaborate catalogue that listed physiognomic typologies, which lead the intended reader to the various subdivisions between light and darkness of each of the twelve signs of the zodiac. In addition, I will argue that this astrological framework points to a Hellenistic background for *4QZodiacal Physiognomy*: the concern with the ascendant is typical of Hellenistic astrology and is lacking in Babylonian astrology.

In Chapter Four, focusing on what *4QZodiacal Physiognomy* means when it connects the numbers in the "house of light" and the "house of darkness" with the רוּחַ ("spirit") there is said to be for the type of person described, I will argue against the interpretations of רוּחַ as a reference to the space or room occupied by the zodiacal sign or as a reference to the human spirit. Within the latter interpretation many scholars have related *4QZodiacal Physiognomy* to the *Two Spirits Treatise*, arguing that the former text provides the arithmetic for the notion of two spirits of light and darkness fighting over human beings as attested by the latter text. However, this connection between the two texts is not feasible in light of a numerical discrepancy between the number of twelve zodiacal signs and the number of alleged divisions of the human spirit that are possible on the nine-point scale that is supposedly used in *4QZodiacal Physiognomy*. Instead, it will be argued that רוּחַ ("spirit") refers to the zodiacal spirit, because if the num-

bers listed in *4QZodiacal Physiognomy* are a result of the ascendant zodiacal sign, then the “spirit” should also be related to the zodiacal sign. The notion of zodiacal spirits will be demonstrated by adducing other texts, most notably the *Testament of Solomon*. Although the division between the “house of light” and the “house of darkness” is astrologically the result of the ascendant zodiacal sign’s position vis-à-vis the eastern horizon, I suggest that this was understood in *4QZodiacal Physiognomy* in terms of the zodiacal spirit being divided between light and darkness.

In Chapter Five, addressing the social and cultural background of the physiognomic and physiognomic-astrological lists from Qumran in terms of their status, function, and context, I will argue that these texts represent forms of ancient Jewish science, suggesting further that in the case of *4QZodiacal Physiognomy* a notion of cosmic sympathy may be behind the combination of different aspects of learning: physiognomics, astrology, stones of a possibly magico-medicinal nature. Taking account of the ways and possibilities for transmission of and education in physiognomic and astrological arts in Babylonian and Greco-Roman traditions, I will argue that the persons who were interested in such texts and the knowledge they contain were part of a well-educated body of people in ancient Jewish society; both priestly and secular scribes or scholars could have been responsible for the dissemination of these learned arts in Hellenistic-Early Roman period Palestine. It is also argued that familiarity with these learned forms of physiognomics and astrology came from outside Palestine; *4QPhysiognomy ar* possibly from the Babylonian cultural realm, although a Hellenistic origin cannot be excluded, and *4QZodiacal Physiognomy* most likely from the Hellenistic realm, possibly Greco-Egyptian. In relation to the scientific interests evinced by parts of *1 Enoch* and the lists of revealed things in apocalyptic texts, I will suggest, first, that the physiognomic and physiognomic-astrological lists from Qumran were possibly not framed by religious interests, acknowledging the danger of an anachronism here, and, second, that they show that during the Hellenistic-Early Roman period Jews in Palestine were interested in contemporary scientific learning, and not just in “outdated” forms of Mesopotamian astronomy as in the *Astronomical Book*. Although astrology attracted ambivalent attitudes, I will argue that *4QZodiacal Physiognomy* reflects an interest in astrological matters on the part of members of the Qumran community, as well as other Jews. The inverted and mixed writing of this manuscript signifies, I suggest, the high status that was accredited to its learning; the use of these writing techniques being a scribal means to limit accessibility to and availability of this expert knowledge to those who were suitable to understand it. Finally, realizing that these texts may simply have been read as pieces of speculative, scientific learning, I will also hypothesize on contexts and functions of practical



use. The predictions in *4QPhysiognomy ar* may have been used in a divinatory practice, while the information in *4QZodiacal Physiognomy*, concerning the nature of people's zodiacal spirits as divided between light and darkness, may have served a diagnostic function both in and outside the sectarian community of Qumran to indicate the harmful nature of these spirits. In general, the learning in the latter text may have been used in a magico-medical context, diagnosing which zodiacal spirit was troubling a person and which measures, such as apotropaic or magico-medical stones, should be used against it. In a sectarian context, it may have been used, as part of the Qumran community's fight against the evil spirits of Belial and the sons of darkness, to control the admission of potential candidates for community membership by keeping people with more dangerous and harmful zodiacal spirits outside the group.