The Hidden Body as Literary Strategy in *4QWiles of the Wicked Woman* (4Q184)

Laura Quick

University of Oxford, Oxford, UK

laura.quick@theology.ox.ac.uk

Abstract

The short sapiential poem known as *4QWiles of the Wicked Woman* (4Q184) describes the body of an unnamed female who ensnares the righteous into sin and ultimately death. This poetic description of a body has sometimes been compared to the *Wasf*, a type of poem which provides a thick description of the body, listing and describing body parts in a movement descending from head to toe. In this essay, I explore the description of the woman's body in 4Q184 in light of the genre of the *Wasf*. By playing with the characteristic structure of the *Wasf*, 4Q184 highlights certain aspects of the woman's body in order to say something specific about her role and activities. In so doing, I uncover an image of the woman which is more erotic than commentators have previously allowed.

Keywords

4Q184 – Proverbs – *Wasf* – Woman Strange – Woman Wisdom – the body

The dependence of the short sapiential poem known as *4QWiles of the Wicked Woman* (4Q184) upon scriptural precedents was already observed in the *editio princeps*, with John Allegro commenting that the terminology of the poem “is largely borrowed from the Old Testament.”¹ All commentators note the correspondences between 4Q184 and the Strange Woman described in the book of Proverbs.² As well as the Strange Woman, it is often claimed that 4Q184 employs

¹ Allegro, “The Wiles,” 53.

² Prov 2:16–19; 5:3–8, 20; 6:24–26, 19, 32; 7:5–27; 22:14; 23:27–28. On the Strange Woman in

language that constructs the woman as Woman Wisdom's anti-type, thus connecting the text to another female figuration from the book of Proverbs.³ Drawing upon the language of Proverbs, the poem describes an unnamed⁴ female who ensnares the righteous into sin and ultimately death. Early treatments of 4Q184 tended to interpret the female as a metaphor for historical realities, and accordingly were especially concerned to identify who or what this might have been.⁵ But the text makes no reference to any historical event or person, and more recently scholars have interpreted the woman as a cipher representing sin and evil more generally, embodied in female form.⁶ Correlated to the recent move to interpret the woman as a female embodiment of sin, a number of commentators have turned to focus upon the embodied aspects of the poem. According to Melissa Aubin, the woman's body "is inviting and decadent."⁷ Jacobus Naudé has focused upon how the woman uses her body to lure the innocent to the netherworld.⁸ Aspects of the woman's body are described in ll. 2–4, and according to David Bernat, this section of text makes use of the poetic device known as the *Wasf*, most famously found elsewhere in ancient Hebrew literature in the love poetry of the Song of Songs.⁹ In so doing, Bernat

Proverbs, see Camp, *Wise, Strange and Holy*, 340–44. Comparisons between the Strange Woman of Proverbs 1–9 and 4Q184 are numerous, but for a recent treatment see Tooman, "Aphorism and Admonition."

- 3 Prov 1:20–33; 3:13–18; 4:1–9; 7:1–5; 8:1–36; 9:1–6; 14:1; cf. Job 28:1–28; Wis 6:12–11:1; Sir 1:1–20; 4:11–19; 6:18–37; 14:20–15:10; 24:1–34; 51:13–30; Bar 3:9–4:4; 2 Esdr 13:54–55. On Woman Wisdom see Camp, *Wisdom and the Feminine*. Contrasting the woman of 4Q184 with Woman Wisdom are Collins, *Jewish Wisdom*, 114; Aubin, "She is the Beginning," 3; Goff, *Discerning Wisdom*, 105–6; Wright, "Wisdom and Women," 243; Wright and Edwards, "She Undid Him," 95.
- 4 Allegro ("The Wiles," 53) reconstructed the damaged first word of the poem as הוֹנָה, "the harlot," however the noun does not occur elsewhere in the extant portions of text.
- 5 Allegro ("The Wiles," 55) identified the woman as a cipher for Rome. Carmignac ("Poème allégorique") and Gazov-Ginsberg ("Double Meaning") thought she represented a rival group to the *yahad*. Maier ("Wiles," 976) identified her with the "man of lies" known from the Damascus Document. Burgmann ("The Wicked Woman") thought she was an allegory for Simon the Maccabee, while Geyser-Fouche ("Another Look") interpreted her as a metaphor for the city of Jerusalem. Following the suggestions of Baumgarten ("On the Nature") a number of scholars have suggested that the woman is some sort of demon, possibly Lilith. See Crawford, "Lady Wisdom"; Lange, "Die Weisheitstexte," 10; and Lesley, "Exegetical Wiles." Relatedly, Frölich ("Women as Strangers") argues that the woman should be understood as a witch.
- 6 See e.g. Moore, "Personification"; Naudé, "The Wiles"; Ilan, "Canonization"; Goff, *Discerning Wisdom*, 120–21; idem, "Hellish Females."
- 7 Aubin, "She is the Beginning," 1.
- 8 Naudé, "The Wiles."
- 9 Song 4:1–7; 5:11–16; 6:4–7; 7:2–10.

is able to claim another scriptural precedent for 4Q184, the use of the *Wasf* in a thick description of a body.¹⁰

Bernat's suggestion that 4Q184 be understood as a *Wasf* has received scant attention in subsequent literature, despite the recent move to focus on the embodied aspects of the poem. In the following, I explore the description of the woman's body in 4Q184 in light of the genre of the *Wasf*. But rather than a *Wasf* proper, I argue that the poem might better be understood as a *transformed Wasf*: instead of providing a top-to-toe description of a body in order to make a claim about its wholeness and perfection, 4Q184 highlights certain aspects of the woman's body in order to say something specific about her character and actions. In so doing, I uncover an image of the woman which is more erotic than commentators have previously allowed.¹¹ Nevertheless, this eroticism remains implicit rather than explicit, only observable through recognition of the interplay of the language and literary strategy employed by the poet. At the same time, building on the suggestions of Jacqueline Vayntrub for understanding the acrostic poem in praise of the Capable Wife from Prov 31:10–31,¹² I suggest that the use of the transformed *Wasf* as a literary strategy in 4Q184 has commonalities with the poetic technique employed in Prov 31:10–31, albeit with very different implications for characterization. Thus, I argue that as well as the Strange Woman and Woman Wisdom, another text from Proverbs providing a female figuration is helpful for interpreting 4Q184: the description of the Capable Wife, and in particular the literary strategy used to develop this character.

1 The Poetics of the Body in the Hebrew Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls

The *Wasf* describes a type of descriptive poem which takes its name from a genre of Arabic love poetry, but which commentators have also found helpful

10 Bernat, "Biblical *Wasf*," 346–47. Bernat's suggestion echoes statements made by Eibert Tigchelaar on the poetry of 4Q184, who has highlighted the use of categorizing discourse and extensive description in the poem—both of which are typical of the *Wasf*. See "The Poetry," 631.

11 A number of commentators have contrasted the eroticism in the depiction of the woman from 4Q184 with the Strange Woman of Proverbs, arguing that her portrayal is much less eroticized than in Proverbs. See e.g. Wright and Edwards, "She Undid Him," 95; Goff, *Discerning Wisdom*, 119–20; idem, "Hellish Females," 37. Tal Ilan argues that the Strange Woman of Proverbs was in fact crafted in response to 4Q184, in order to eroticize the less erotic figure. See "Canonization," 528–39.

12 Vayntrub, "Beauty, Wisdom."

to describe a phenomenon found in much earlier ancient Near Eastern literature.¹³ In a *Wasf*, body parts are listed and described in a movement descending from head to toe or, less commonly, toe to head. As noted, the best-known illustrations of the form occur in the Song of Songs, although examples can be found in a variety of texts from the Hebrew Bible.¹⁴ In the texts from the Dead Sea, we find an Aramaic example of the *Wasf* in the description of Sarai from the Genesis Apocryphon.¹⁵ Song 4:1–7 describes the body of the Beloved, moving from the woman's head downwards. In Song 5:10–16 a male body is described, moving from top to bottom and making use of stone and metal imagery reminiscent of descriptions of divine cult statues.¹⁶ Indeed, the *Wasf* may have developed from descriptions of cult statues in the ancient Near East.¹⁷ Following the description of the Beloved's body, Song 4:7 declares, "All of you is beautiful, my love, there is no blemish on you." In Song 5:16, the poem concludes "All of him is delightful." Thus, the *Wasf* provides detailed accounts of the subject's body in order to manifest its total physical perfection, from head to toe. And, as Jacqueline Vayntrub has argued, it does so by rhetorically privileging the idea of corporeal wholeness, an aesthetic value which is elsewhere characteristic of biblical conceptions of beauty: thus in Dan 1:14 we meet "youths *without blemish, of fine appearance*," while in 2 Sam 14:25, Absalom is "a *beautiful* man ... *without blemish* from the sole of his foot to the top of his head."¹⁸ In fact, in this latter description the characterisation of Absalom without blemish from toe to top can be understood as a merism for the *Wasf* itself.¹⁹ The

13 See Hermann, "Gedanken," 176–96.

14 Other full or partial lists of body parts can be found in Pss 115:5–7; 135:16–17; Prov 6:12–15, 17; Isa 30:27–28; 32:3–6; Dan 2:32–33; Ezek 1:5–13, 26–28. See Watson, *Classical Hebrew*, 353–55.

15 The dignitaries of Pharaoh describe Sarai's beauty, beginning with her hair and moving downwards. On 1QapGen 20:2–6 as a *Wasf*, see Goshen-Gottstein, "Philologische," 41–51; followed by Fitzmyer, *The Genesis Apocryphon*, 119–20.

16 See Dobbs-Allsopp and James, "The Ekphrastic Figure(s)."

17 Watson, *Classical Hebrew*, 353–56. For a survey of the Mesopotamian *Göttertypentexte*, which describe the appearance of cult statues in a movement descending from head to toe, see Pongratz-Leisten, "Imperial Allegories," 125–28.

18 Vayntrub, "Beauty, Wisdom." The importance of wholeness in biblical conceptions of the body was noted already by Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, esp. 51–52.

19 In the Akkadian text which describes the consecration of the Priest of Enlil, the candidate is required to be checked for blemishes "from the top of his head to the tips of his toes ... if his body is as pure as a golden stature ... he may enter the temple of Enlil." See Borger, "Die Weihe," 163–76. The association of the idiom "from head to toe" with the modifying description of a "pure golden statue" which, as we have seen, is likely to have been the origin of the *Wasf* itself, suggests that this merism was also functional in earlier ancient

Wasf is thus a rhetorical device which enables the poet to develop a statement or aesthetic judgement on beauty from top to toe according to the criteria of corporeal wholeness, the presence or absence of blemishes, and so to make a claim for the *total* physical perfection of the subject.

As noted, David Bernat has argued that 4Q184 may also be interpreted as a *Wasf*, but he thinks that it is a particular sort of *Wasf*, one found also in Prov 31:10–31. He calls this the “anti-*Wasf*,” the use of the *Wasf* form to polemicize against beauty rather than to praise it: thus Prov 31:30 concludes that “charm is deceitful and beauty is fleeting,” while the woman of 4Q184 can hardly be said to be attractive.²⁰ While it is certainly the case that Prov 31:10–31 develops a critique of established conceptions of beauty, it is very difficult to agree with Bernat that it does so by making use of the conventional structure of the *Wasf*. When compared to other examples of the *Wasf*, the poem describing the Capable Wife is strangely truncated. Rather than providing a list of the parts of the woman’s body moving from head to toe (or from toe to head), the poem instead focuses only on certain body parts, explicitly resisting a top-to-toe description: the poem highlights the woman’s hands, arms and palms. This has led Jacqueline Vayntrub to observe that rather than focussing on the *passive* beauty of the Capable Wife as would a *Wasf*, the poem instead highlights her *actions* through the focus on her hands. Thus, the Capable Wife “works with willing hands” (v. 13). She plants a vineyard “with the fruit of her hands” (v. 16). She “makes her arms strong” (v. 17).²¹ She “puts her hands to the distaff, and her palms hold

Near Eastern literature. Like the description of Absalom, the Akkadian text also highlights the requirement for corporeal flawlessness, to be without blemish.

20 Bernat, “Biblical *Wasf*,” 341–47.

21 This verse is sometimes read in light of the statement in the previous cola, that the woman “binds her loins with strength.” The “binding or girding of the loins” refers to tucking one’s tunic into a belt, usually in preparation for some physical activity (e.g., Exod 12:11; 1 Kgs 18:49; 2 Kgs 4:29). Accordingly, it is sometimes taken to have militaristic connotations, reflected in the suggestion of Michael Fox (*Proverbs* 10–31, 895) that “she makes her arms strong” be understood akin to rolling up one’s sleeves in order to be battle ready. Contra this interpretation, it is worth noting that the term זרוע probably included the shoulders as well as the forearms. See BDB, 1285. See also Low (“Implications”) who notes that a woman’s strength to bear children comes from her loins (Jer 30:6), which could be significant for understanding this reference to loin-girding in Proverbs, not as a militaristic act, but as something which can relate to strength more generally. As Low argues, the Capable Wife and her girded loins demonstrates “that masculine strength is not limited to men.” Thus, the stich does not relate to the woman’s physical preparedness for battle but rather to her psychic state: to be bound with strength implies mental potency. In this context, we must also note that the various Hebrew words for “strength” connote more than just a physical state. This is reflected in my translation of אִשֶּׁת חַיִל as “a capable wife”—חַיִל,

the spindle" (v. 19). She "opens her palm to the poor and reaches out her hands to the needy" (v. 20). The "fruit of her hands" must be given to her (v. 31). Vayntrub therefore interprets Prov 31:10–31 as a play on the very rhetorical device which demonstrates beauty, the *Wasf*, in order to develop a critique of innate beauty in favour of active deeds.²² The *Wasf* is transformed from a visually-driven, physically-framed and top-to-toe representation, to a more dynamic representation that narrows the physical field to the hands and arms. In so doing, Prov 31:10–31 shifts the poetic technique of the *Wasf* from representations of passivity (being-viewed) to those of activity (giving, putting, making, and ultimately reward-receiving). This shift can thus be understood as a literary strategy which we might call a *transformed Wasf*, focusing only upon certain aspects of the body in order to highlight the various associations and activities that come along with this.²³

If we return to 4Q184, just as was the case with the description of the Capable Wife, from a structural point of view the body there described can hardly be said to be typical of the *Wasf*. Rather than providing an exhaustive description of the woman's body, the poet seems instead to have highlighted and focussed upon certain body parts. Drawing on Vayntrub's interpretation of what I have called the "transformed *Wasf*" of Prov 31:10–31, we might understand the poet to have highlighted specific parts of the woman's body in order to say something particular about her characterization.²⁴ This suggests that we should take a closer look at the embodied aspects of the poem, and the various associations that come along with these body parts.

"strength," can encode strength of body, but also strength in wealth, character or practical competencies.

22 Vayntrub, "Beauty, Wisdom."

23 Indeed, hands are hardly said to be objects of beauty in the Hebrew Bible. According to David Penchansky ("Beauty, Power," 47–56), biblical texts primarily develop ideas of physical beauty and aesthetic attraction through references to the eyes, hair and skin. On the other hand, the *Wasf* in the Genesis Apocryphon describing Sarai's beauty lavishes particular praise on the beauty of her hands, palms and arms: "As for her arms, how beautiful, and her hands, how perfect. Rousing is every part of her han[d]. How shapely are her palms, how long and delicate are all the fingers of hands" (1QapGen 20:4–5). According to Vayntrub ("Beauty, Wisdom"), however, these references function in the same way as do the references to hands, palms and arms in Prov 31:10–31—they highlight Sarai's skill and agency. This is explicit in the conclusion of the poem itself, which states "And with all this beauty, *she possesses great wisdom*, and that which is of her hands is beautiful" (1QapGen 20:7–8; my italics).

24 This observation also recalls the Hellenistic science of physiognomy, which has been extensively unpacked at Qumran by Popović, *Reading the Human Body*.

2 The Body of the Woman of Wicked Wiles

The description of the woman's body occurs in the section of the text that portrays the woman herself (ll. 1–4).²⁵ We read in lines 2–3:

לבה יכין פחוז
 וכליותיה מק']²⁶
 בעול נגעלו
 ידיה תמכו שוח²⁷
 רגליה להרשיע ירדו
 וללכת באשמות]

Her heart weaves traps,
 and her kidneys [...]

- 25 Broadly speaking, the poem can be divided into three main sections. The first part of the poem, ll. 1–4, portrays the woman herself. In the second part, ll. 9–11, her sinful path is described. The third section, ll. 11–17, describe her sexually licentious activities. On the other hand, Eibert Tigchelaar has recently argued that the poem originally extended beyond 4Q184 1, since 4Q184 3 belongs to the same sheet. He also argues that 4Q184 1, 4Q525 15, and 5Q16 may all be copies of the same text. See Tigchelaar, “Lady Folly and Her House”; idem, “Constructing, Deconstructing and Reconstructing,” Other fragments were connected to the text already by Strugnell, “Notes,” 263–68. Accordingly, we should be cautious with regard to any structural analysis of the poem.
- 26 Strugnell thought that the lacuna at the end of l. 2 originally contained a reference to the woman's eyes, understanding the passage to read “[her eyes] are defiled with iniquity.” See Strugnell, “Notes,” 264; cf. Carmignac, “Poème allégorique,” 361; Martínez and Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, 377. On the basis of the reference to “hands” in the paralleled cola, some commentators have suggested reconstructing the term אצבע, “fingers.” See Gazov-Ginsberg, “Double Meaning,” 285; Aubin, “She is the Beginning,” 15–16. Similarly, Lesley (“Exegetical Wiles,” 134 n. 11) suggests the reading כפיה, “her palms.” On the basis of the movement of the description, which descends downwards, the reading “eyes” is to be rejected, since this would interrupt the downward movement. A reference to the woman's fingers or palms is certainly possible and would fit well with the context. In this case, the woman's fingers or palms function in the same way as do her hands, highlighting her agency and activity.
- 27 In the *editio princeps* of 4Q184, Allegro did not recognize the reference to hands, instead reading and translating this line: בעול נגעלי הוה תמכו שוח, “In perversion they seized the fouled (organs) of passion ...” (“The Wiles,” 53–4). Strugnell in contrast re-read Allegro's הוה as ידיה, “her hands” (“Notes,” 264), and this has been accepted by almost all subsequent commentators. In the original reconstruction, this part of the fragment was set off-centre. Proper placement leaves a space requiring an extra letter, including the dalet in ידיה. See Lesley, “Exegetical Wiles,” 113 n. 8. As I will go on to develop below, it is likely that these four body parts function as paired motifs, with hands and feet as a pair opposing the pairing of heart and kidneys, thus strengthening the reading ידיה.

are defiled with iniquity,
 Her **hands** take hold of the pit,
 her **feet** go down to do evil,
 and to walk in the guilt of [...].²⁸

As stated, this can hardly be said to provide an exhaustive head-to-toe catalogue of the various parts that make up a person's body. In fact, the first two body parts referenced are not really signifiers of the physical body at all. The Platonic dichotomy between body and spirit was alien to the scribes who wrote the Hebrew Bible and early Jewish literature.²⁹ Instead, the body was made up of both physical (bodily) components, as well as more abstract non-physical components (what in the western world we might conceive of as the "soul")—but both components were considered to be cooperative. There was no dualism of body and soul, but rather the "body," Hebrew **בשר** or **גויה**, encoded the entire entity of the person. Thus, emotions and ideas had a bodily origin. In this context, the heart was particularly important as the core of conscience and thought.³⁰ Understanding and receptivity derived from the ears;³¹ anger from the liver or nose.³² Joy was located in the kidneys, which could also index

28 A further reference to parts of the woman's body is made in l. 13 with the mention of the woman's eyes and eyelids. Since this occurs in the section of text that describes the woman's sexually licentious activities, it is structurally and thematically cut off from the "transformed *Washf*" of ll. 2–3. The reference is clearly dependent upon the idea of the eyes and especially the eyelids as a sign of seductive entrapment found in Prov 6:25 (cf. Sir 26:9). The continuation of the cola in Prov 6:26 goes on to warn against the activities of a prostitute, thus the poet here has drawn upon it in his characterization of the sexually licentious woman in 4Q184.

29 To be sure, this conception was not absent from later Jewish thought; from the second century BCE onwards, Platonic conceptions of the body do arise among Jewish intellectual circles. Philo of Alexandria provides the most famous example of this in his discussion of the call of Abraham in Gen 12:1–9, not as a literal command to leave his homeland in Mesopotamia but as a spiritual call to overcome his embodied existence (*Migr.*; cf. also Josephus *BJ*. 7.8.7).

30 The references are numerous: the Hebrew word for "heart," **לב** or **לֵב**, occurs nearly 1000 times in the Hebrew Bible, making it by far the most common anthropological term in Scripture. The book of Psalms provides a number of instructive instances in which the "heart" is associated with intellectual, emotional or moral activities: Pss 4:8; 5:10; 9:2; 10:6; 11, 13; 13:3; 6; 14:1; 15:2; 16:9; 34:19; 51:10, 19; 53:2; 77:5–6; 104:15; 147:3; etc. For a more thorough survey, see Fabry, "*lēb*."

31 Thus to "hear" something is to comprehend and accept it, hence the common Hebrew word-pair **שמע**, "to hear," and **לקח**, "to take, receive, accept" (Prov 4:10; Jer 7:28; 9:19; 17:23; 32:33; 35:13; Ezek 3:10; Zeph 3:2; Ps 6:10). This word-pair is also found in Akkadian and Aramaic texts, see Quick, "To Hear and to Accept."

32 For the association of the liver with negative emotions, see Job 16:11; Lam 2:11; and Ps 73:21.

right and wrong modes of behaviour.³³ More general terms with the semantic range of “innards” or “guts” were also used to index anger, distress or disgust.³⁴ Although the Hebrew word נפש encoded abstract conceptions of the self and hence is often translated as “soul,” in its earliest sense it most likely described a part of the throat,³⁵ and in certain biblical texts the meaning “neck” is clearly in sight.³⁶ Thus the body itself was understood to be a sentient object, the seat of personality. In this context, the reference to the woman’s “heart” and “kidneys” might better be understood to refer to her inner cognitive processes, thus “Her *mind* weaves traps, and her *conscience* ...”³⁷ While at first glance it appears that the poet has begun a list of body parts akin to the *Wasf*, our expectations are immediately subverted. Instead, with these first two terms the woman is rather *disembodied*—they do not describe her physical characteristics after all.

We are left, then, with the reference to her hands and feet. The poem thus shifts from descriptions of inner cognitive processes, with the heart and kidneys representing the feelings and intentions of the woman, to her hands and feet, the primary body parts used to activate and carry out those feelings and intentions. The set of four terms—heart/kidneys and hands/feet—therefore constitute a double pairing indicating both mind and body, intention and action. This is similar to the references to the hands and arms of the Capa-

These passages most likely gave rise to the Talmudic observation that “the liver causes anger” (b. *Ber.* 61). The Hebrew term נא has the primary meaning of “nostril” but is also used with the secondary (and in fact more frequent) meaning “anger.” Mark Smith explains this as a metonymy derived from the idea of “burning breath” issued from one’s nostrils during anger (e.g. Ps 18:9, “smoke went from his nostrils”). See “The Heart and Innards,” 432.

33 For the association of joy with the kidneys, see Prov 23:16. For the association of the kidneys with modes of behaviour, see Jer 11:20; 17:10; Pss 7:10; 11:2; 16:7; 26:2; 73:21. Accordingly, the NJPS translation of בליה, “kidneys,” in Ps 7:10 is “conscience.”

34 For example, מעה, “guts,” in Job 20:14 and Lam 2:11. Scholars have suggested emending קבודי, “my majesty, glory,” in MT Ps 16:9 to קבדי, “my liver,” with the resultant translation “*my liver rejoices.” This is consistent with the versions: the LXX of Ps 16:9 reads ἡ γλῶσσά μου, “my tongue,” and the Targum בשרי, “my flesh.” See Stensman, “*kābēd*,” 22. Certainly in Ugaritic texts, the liver can be associated with more positive emotions, e.g. “her liver shook with laughter” (*tjdd kbdh. bšhq*; KTU³ 1.3.2.25).

35 Seebass, “*nepeš*,” 498–99.

36 For example, the NET translation of Jonah 2:6, “water engulfed me up to my *neck* (נפש).” At the same time, in certain contexts נפש does seem to describe a principle of personal unity, distinct from the body. See Barr, *The Garden of Eden*, 42–43; cf. DiVito, “Old Testament Anthropology,” 217–38.

37 This recalls the translation of these lines offered in the *editio princeps* by Allegro: “Her heart’s perversion prepares wantonness, and her emotions ...” See “The Wiles,” 54 (my italics).

ble Wife of Prov 31:10–31, which also functioned to demonstrate her action and agency. Yet the actions of the Capable Wife benefited her family and the larger community, thus working with wool and flax, planting vineyards, spinning with spindles and distaffs, and helping the poor and needy. Their actions are the ultimate reason for which the woman is to be praised, thus “give her the fruit of her hands” (v. 31). The hands of the woman in 4Q184 are also engaged in action, but in this case the action is negative: they grasp at the pit, a synonym for Sheol or the underworld—the poet stresses that her actions are sinful and will ultimately lead to death. The actions of her hands thus function as an anti-type to the actions of the hands of the Capable Wife, stressing the sinful activities of the woman.

Finally, we are told that the woman’s feet “go down to do evil.” The scriptural foundation of this is at first glance obvious: the poet is drawing on Prov 5:5, where the feet of the Strange Woman “go down to death; her steps follow the path to Sheol.” But if we look at this reference in its larger context we find:

כי נפת תטפנה שפתי זרה
 וחלק משמן חכה
 ואחריתה מרה כלענה
 חדה כחרב פיות
 רגליה ירדות מות
 שאול צעדיה יתמכו

For the lips of a Strange Woman drip honey,
 and her speech is smoother than oil,
 but in the end she is bitter as wormwood,
 sharp as a two-edged sword.
 Her feet go down to death;
 her steps follow the path to Sheol.³⁸

The poet in this pericope starts with the lips of the Strange Woman in order to highlight her slippery speech before moving to her feet in order to highlight the outcome of heeding this speech: death. The spatial movement from mouth to feet is reminiscent of the *Wasf* merism. Here it functions in order to exploit space. As Karolien Vermeulen has demonstrated, body parts by definition have a spatial connotation, connected to the specific body part and the

³⁸ Prov 5:3–5.

space it occupies on human bodies.³⁹ The writer of the Proverb exploits the spatial dimension inherent to the *Wṣf* merism in order to depict a downward descent to Sheol which, in the ancient Jewish literary imagination, was located below the ground—beneath the feet.⁴⁰ To follow the woman and her slippery speech is thus to descend feet first to hell. But it is the heeding of her speech and the following of her ways that will lead to this—feet function here to depict the downward descent which is the outcome of this. The feet in 4Q184 function quite differently. They too are engaged in a descent downward, but they are also occupied with a further verbal action: להרשיע, a *hiphil* infinitive construct of רשע, “to do evil.” In Prov 1:16; 6:8 and Isa 59:7 feet “run to do evil,” but this is well within the semantic range of feet as the means of perambulation—it simply stresses that the person is hurrying to sin. What does it mean to *do* or *make* evil with one’s feet? In order to unpack this, we must consider the metaphorical implications that come along with references to feet in ancient Jewish literature and the wider ancient Near East.

3 From Hands to Feet: Feet in Ancient Jewish Literature

A range of associations can come along with references to the foot or feet in ancient Jewish and Near Eastern literature. As early as the Pyramid Texts, the Egyptian phrase *hr tb(w)t/tbty*, “under the sandals,” occurs with the meaning “to be subject to someone,” and by the Eighteenth Dynasty this idiom had become a standard formula applied to the pharaoh as protector of Egypt.⁴¹ This is also the case in Mesopotamian literature, thus in a Sumerian hymn sung by the goddess Inanna we find the phrase: “He has given me dominion ... he has placed the earth like a sandal on my foot.”⁴² This implication of the shod foot is also found in biblical literature, thus “Upon Edom I hurl my sandal” is used as an idiom to describe Yhwh’s territorial conquest in Ps 60:10. Similarly, David’s conquests are described by the expression that his enemies have been placed under the soles of his feet.⁴³ Accordingly, expressions of ownership can be denoted by the foot, as in Deut 11:6 where the earth opens up to consume “every living

39 Vermeulen, “Hands, Heads, and Feet,” 807–8.

40 Thus one *goes down* to Sheol (Gen 37:35; 42:38; Num 16:30, 33; 1 Kgs 2:6; Job 7:9; 17:16; 21:13; Pss 30:3; 55:15; Prov 1:12; 7:27; Isa 5:14; 38:18; Ezek 31:15–17; 32:27), which is located in the depths of the earth (Deut 32:22; 1 Sam 28:11–15; Ps 86:13; Isa 7:11; Ezek 31:14–16).

41 Stendebach, “*regel*,” 311.

42 Palmer, “Unshod,” 4.

43 1 Kgs 5:3. See also Josh 10:24, where the image of feet trampling upon the necks of enemies

thing that belonged to them," literally "every living thing that was under their feet."⁴⁴ This image of the foot as a symbol of sovereignty and subjugation also appears in 1QM 12:11; 19:3. Thus, the shod foot was a symbol of status and domination.⁴⁵

In the same way that the shod foot could communicate authority and mastery, the removal of footwear communicated loss, subservience and defeat.⁴⁶ Bare feet thus signal a loss of freedom in captivity;⁴⁷ it is of no surprise that the Judean captives depicted in the Lachish Relief are barefoot. Personal loss was communicated by the removal of sandals during mourning,⁴⁸ while the forceful removal of a person's sandals indicated a loss of status in the community.⁴⁹ In Isa 49:23, the vanquished lick the dust from the feet of the conqueror, and foot licking also implies subjugation and degradation in 1QM 12:15; 19:7. As the point of contact with the ground, feet are the point at which a person picks up and communicates uncleanness. This may explain the custom of removing sandals before stepping onto holy ground,⁵⁰ since sandals have come into contact with the unclean. Mourning is also a numinous activity, which may explain why footwear must be removed during this time. Similarly, priests ministered while barefoot.⁵¹ Indeed, Othmar Keel interprets the bells worn around the hem of the High Priest's vestments as an apotropaic device against feet as a zone of uncleanness.⁵² Relatedly, F.J. Stendebach argues that the proximity of the feet to the realm of the unclean is the reason why blood is applied to the right foot during the priestly ordination.⁵³ Thus, while the shod foot could be a positive symbol of dominion and power, the unshod foot symbolized the reverse of this, associated with domination, shame and even death.

is used to symbolize victory. This image in fact draws from iconographic depictions of subjugated enemies in ancient Near Eastern art, see Winter, "The Body of the Able Ruler."

44 In Ps 8:6 humanity is given dominion over everything which has been put "under their feet," which is to say, over the whole earth.

45 Thus, the sandals of the Israelites did not wear out during the wilderness wanderings as a sign of God's favour (Deut 29:4–5). Relatedly, Moses and Ezra describe Israel's invulnerability during this period by saying that their feet did not swell (Deut 8:4; Neh 9:21).

46 Palmer, "Unshod," 5.

47 Isa 20:2–4; 2 Chr 28:15.

48 2 Sam 15:30; Ezek 24:17, 23; Jer 2:24; Mic 1:8.

49 Deut 25:9–10.

50 Exod 3:5; Josh 5:15.

51 This has been alternatively interpreted by Palmer, who connects the priest's bare feet to notions of humility and servitude. See "Unshod," 15–16. Given the range of associations that came along with feet in the ancient world, both explanations are possible.

52 Ex 28:33–35; 39:25–26; Sir 45:9. See Keel, "Symbolik," 536.

53 Ex 29:20; Lev 8:23–24. See Stendebach, "*regel*," 316–17.

According to many different myths from around the world, the foot is a symbol of eroticism and sexuality,⁵⁴ and we also see this in ancient Jewish literature. As in the case with the distinction between the shod and unshod foot as a metaphor for both dominion and domination, there seems here to be a distinction between bare and clad feet. Thus, feet in sandals are utilized as a positive symbol of the erotic. In Song 7:1, the speaker declares “how beautiful are your feet (פַּעַם) in sandals.” In Ezek 16:10, sandals are seen as decorative items. But bare feet seem to push over into negative erotica. In Isa 3:16, the sound of the anklets of the Daughters of Zion is a symbol of their wanton behaviour.⁵⁵ The erotic connotations of feet are not surprising given the well-known euphemistic use of terms for the feet and lower body parts to stand in for genitalia in the Hebrew Bible and the wider ancient Near East.⁵⁶ In Classical Hebrew no term for the genitals existed and so euphemisms were employed instead.⁵⁷ The fact that רֶגֶל means both “feet” but also “legs” makes the euphemism more comprehensible, and in fact יֵרֶךְ, “thigh,” is employed with the meaning of genitalia for both men and women in the Hebrew Bible.⁵⁸ Accordingly, the interpreter must pay close attention to the use of רֶגֶל in ancient Jewish texts.

In Ruth 3:4, Naomi instructs Ruth to go to Boaz and “uncover the place of his feet,” using the word מַרְגְּלוֹת, “the place of the feet.”⁵⁹ Given the use of *double entendre* elsewhere in the description of Ruth and Boaz’s interaction,⁶⁰ a

54 Zwipp, “Die Bedeutung des Fußes.”

55 The translation is difficult as the verb תַּעֲכֹסְנָה is a *hapax legomenon*. It is usually explained as a *piel* denominative from עָכַס, used only twice in biblical literature: as an item of jewellery worn by the Daughters of Zion in Isa 3:18; and in Prov 7:22, where it refers to fetters or chains. Thus, the noun can refer to chains worn decoratively, and the related verbal form must mean something like “jingling,” referring to the shaking of a chain worn around the ankles.

56 The Akkadian word for “feet,” *šēpu(m)*, is attested as a euphemism for genitalia, see Leick, *Sex and Eroticism*, 266. For a comparison of the euphemistic use of words for “feet” and “legs” with the meaning “genitalia” shared between the Bible and ancient Near Eastern literature, see Paul, “The Shared Legacy.” In Greek, the word for “joint,” ἀρθρον, used in particular of the knees and ankles, is also used for male genitals. For ἀρθρον with the meaning “penis,” see Hdt. 3.87. 4.2; Arist., *Hist. an.* 504b23. In Theoc., *Id.* 11.70–71, Polyphemos complains of his throbbing “feet” because of his unrequited love for Galatea. See Henderson, *The Masculine Muse*, 129–30, 248.

57 On euphemisms in biblical literature, see Pope, “Euphemism,” 721–25.

58 Gen 24:2, 9; Num 5:22.

59 Cf. Dan 10:6.

60 According to Andy Warren-Rothlin (“Euphemism,” 865), “when the context very strongly suggests sexuality, even a clearly literal reference to feet must be understood as a deliberate double-entendre.” Certainly, Ruth’s actions are risqué. She visits a man alone, at night.

number of commentators have suggested that this should be understood as a reference to Boaz's penis.⁶¹ Certainly, "to cover the feet" is an idiom for urination. In 1 Sam 24:3, Saul leaves his men to "cover his feet" in the hidden recesses of a cave. This is more explicit in Judg 3:24, in which Ehud "covers his feet" in the locked "closet of the cool chamber." Indeed, in 2 Kgs 18:27 and the Qere of Isa 36:12, "water of the feet" is employed as a euphemism for urine. Accordingly, George Nichol interprets Deut 11:10 as an ironic allusion to the size of the Israelite territory in Egypt: it is so small that a man could irrigate all of the land by urinating.⁶² The description of Yhwh using the king of Assyria to shave the hair from Judah's "feet" is likely a reference to pubic hair.⁶³ The enigmatic "bridegroom of blood" scene between Zipporah and Moses in Ex 4:24–26 is also helpfully unpacked by interpreting רגל as a euphemism for "penis." Zipporah removes the foreskin of her son and touches Moses's "feet" with it, making him her "bridegroom of blood." If רגל here refers to Moses's penis, then by bloodying it she is recalling the blood of marital consummation—she makes him her "bridegroom of blood."⁶⁴ Foot washing in many cultures is a symbol of humility and respect,⁶⁵ and this is certainly how it is used in 1 Sam 25:41. However, it is also employed as a euphemism for sexual intercourse, thus David sends Uriah home to "wash your feet" when he wishes him to have sex with Bathsheba and thus pass off her adulterous pregnancy as resulting from intercourse with her husband. Uriah certainly interprets the request in this way, responding "Shall I then go to my house, to eat and to drink and to lie with my wife?"⁶⁶ This is also likely to be the implied meaning of foot washing in Gen 19:2 and Judg 19:21. King Asa's "foot" disease in 1 Kgs 15:23 may describe a venereal illness.⁶⁷ In 1QM 5:13 the form מרוגלת, usually taken to be a *pual* participle of רגל, is employed with

She lies down next to him and either uncovers a part of his body or undresses herself. The object of the verb גלה, "uncover," is unspecified in Ruth 3:4. In the other instances where גלה occurs in the *piel* stem, it is usually a female body that is uncovered (Lev 18:16–19; 20:11, 17–21; Deut 23:1; 27:20; Ezek 16:37; 22:10; 23:10, 18; Nah 3:5; Hos 2:12). Accordingly, Jeremy Schipper (*Ruth*, 143) interprets Naomi's speech as an instruction for Ruth to undress. This is certainly suggestive language. Indeed, we might suggest that the author has consciously chosen ambiguous language: the story is titillating but still safe since the more unsavoury aspects of the story are kept implicit.

61 Sasson, *Ruth*, 67; Tribble, "Ruth," 147.

62 Nichol, "Watering Egypt."

63 Isa 7:20. See Niditch, "My Brother," 99.

64 Glick, *Marked in Your Flesh*, 23.

65 Zwipp, "Die Bedeutung des Fußes."

66 2 Sam 11:8–11.

67 Schipper, "Deuteronomy 24:5."

the meaning “sword belt.” But if we interpret this instead as the nominal form “the place of the feet,” phallic connotations again become obvious.

As well as the penis, רגל can be used as a euphemism for female genitalia. In Deut 28:57, the afterbirth comes out from between a woman’s “feet.” This recalls the idiom used in Gen 46:26 to describe descendants, “those who come out of his thigh,” using the word ירך, “thigh”—which, as we have seen, could be used to describe both male and female genitalia. Ezek 16:25 condemns the woman who opens her “feet” to anyone who passes, with the implication that she is behaving promiscuously. It has been suggested that Jael’s feet and legs function euphemistically for genitals in the story of Jael and Sisera from Judges 4–5,⁶⁸ and certainly the story bears affinities to another ancient Jewish literary text in which seduction is used by a female character in order to kill an enemy of the Jews, the book of Judith. The context of seduction therefore implies a euphemistic interpretation. In Deut 28:56, a “tender and refined” woman is described as one who would not venture outside to put her foot on the ground, perhaps with implications of sexual continence as well as the more obvious interpretation of a physical and spatial limitation. Indeed, the image of the slipping foot as a metaphor for sin may well be taken to imply the reverse of this, sexual indiscretion.⁶⁹

4 “Feet” That Do Evil in 4QWiles of the Wicked Woman

In the above we have seen that Hebrew רגל, “foot,” can have a range of associations in ancient Jewish literature. It can imply power and dominion, as well as the reverse of this, loss, defeat and even death. It has erotic connotations and can be employed euphemistically to describe the genitalia of both men and women. What to make of the reference to the woman’s “feet” and their evil actions in 4Q184? Certainly, given the larger context of the description of her sexually licentious activities, an erotic implication seems highly plausible. But more than this, the reference here to “feet” is likely exploiting the euphemistic potential of the term to imply genitalia, thus to “do evil” with one’s “feet” implies sexual activity. As Scott Noegel has noted in his study of the use of the body in ancient Hebrew poetry, poetic lists of body parts very often occur with idiomatic use of these parts,⁷⁰ suggesting we take seriously the implications that רגל can connote. And if we return to the text of 4Q184, we can see

68 Vermeulen, “Hands, Heads, and Feet,” 803; Warren-Rothlin, “Euphemism,” 865.

69 Pss 38:16; 94:18.

70 Noegel, “Bodily Features.”

that the reference to the woman's "feet" is employed in the immediate context of other highly euphemistic language. In fact, יד or "hand" can also be used as a euphemism for genitalia.⁷¹ The continuation of the poem reads:

מוסדי חושך
רוב פשעים בכנפיה

...] the foundations of darkness,
the sins in her skirts are many.⁷²

The poet moves from a description of the woman's body to her clothes, thus we also read that "her clothes [...]. Her garments are the shades of twilight, and her adornments are touched with corruption."⁷³ However, the translation of כנפיה, here "her skirts," is difficult since Hebrew כנף has a double referent. The term can describe the edge of a person's garment, for example in 1Sam 24:5–7, when David cuts off the כנף of Saul's cloak; and in Ruth 3:9, when Ruth asks Boaz to spread his כנף over her.⁷⁴ However, in the dual form כנפ can be used to describe "wings," for example in Ps 57:2 and Ruth 2:12 where it is used to describe the "wings" of God in the context of a metaphor in which God provides shelter and protection. This is how Joseph Baumgarten interprets the term in 4Q184, according to his understanding that the poem is describing a winged, demonic being.⁷⁵ Against this interpretation, Matthew Goff notes that the woman is supposed to lure her victims by acting "wantonly" (see e.g. 4Q184 1 13), asking "how many men would this attract" if she was indeed a demon with wings?⁷⁶ But

71 See e.g. Isa 57:8, 10; Eccl 11:6; Song 5:4–5. See Ackroyd, "yād," 402–3; cf. Declor, "Two Special Meanings"; and Pope, *Song*, 517. The expression "[a place of the] hand outside the camp" is clearly a euphemism for "toilet" in Deut 23:13 and 11QT 46:13.

72 4Q184 1 4.

73 4Q184 1 4–5.

74 In Ezek 16:8, God throws his garments over the Israelites in order to declare that they are his property, while in the wider ancient Near East, to grasp at the hem of someone's garment was to petition to enter into their protection and control. See Greenstein, "To Grasp the Hem." Ruth is thus using a technical idiom in which she asks to enter into Boaz's protection. For other instances of כנף with the meaning "garment hem" see e.g., 1Sam 24:4, 5, 11; cf. Num 15:38; Deut 22:12; 23:1; 27:20; Isa 24:16; Jer 2:34; Ezek 5:3; 7:2; 16:8; Hag 2:12; Zech 8:23; Job 37:3; 38:13; Ahiqar 171; KAI 214:11.

75 Baumgarten, "On the Nature," 139; followed by Crawford, "Lady Wisdom"; Lange, "Die Weisheitstexte," 10; and Lesley, "Exegetical Wiles."

76 Goff, "Hellish Females," 34. Elsewhere, Goff ("A Seductive Demoness," 60) has argued that there is simply "not enough evidence" to support this interpretation of the woman as a winged demoness.

moreover, interpreting this as a reference to “wings” ignores the parallelism of the verse with its continuation, which goes on to describe her clothes, garments and adornments in various terms of darkness.⁷⁷ Perhaps in light of the sexual implications of the woman’s hands and feet, the interpretation of “skirt” is to be preferred given that this, too, can have euphemistic associations. In Deut 22:30; 27:20, sex with the wife of one’s father is described by the idiom “to uncover his father’s skirt.” In the Babylonian Talmud it is used euphemistically to describe a person’s “lap” in Shabbat 5a, and for female genitalia in Yevamot 4a, 49a.⁷⁸ It may even be the proximity of the garment hem to a person’s feet and everything that this implies which gave rise to the association in the first place. Certainly, the other Hebrew word for the hem of a garment, שול, is also used as a euphemism for genitalia.⁷⁹ This is highly suggestive language. The poet is heaping on ambiguous terminology, creating an erotic image that—like the woman’s body—is hidden at first glance, becoming obvious only through the interplay of the language and literary strategy utilized by the poet.

This provides an additional nuance to the typical interpretation of the woman of 4Q184. Matthew Goff, for example, argues that “sexuality is not described in 4Q184 as graphically as in Prov 1–9.”⁸⁰ Benjamin Wright and Suzanne Edwards note that sex remains implicit rather than explicit in the poem, in contrast to depictions of the Strange Woman from Proverbs.⁸¹ This analysis of the use of the transformed *Wasf* in 4Q184 is instructive in this regard. While not as explicitly erotic as the Strange Woman, the woman of 4Q184 must be understood as an implicitly erotic figure. The poet resists describing the body of the woman, giving the impression of beginning an exhaustive list but ultimately instead preferring to highlight and focus upon the sinful actions of her hands and feet. Her body is there and yet at the same time not there. Similarly, her clothes are “shadows of twilight,” while she dwells upon “beds of darkness.”⁸² In the midst of the city, “she covers herself.”⁸³ As William

77 Tigchelaar (“The Poetry,” 630) suggests this might be an example of Janus parallelism, with an intended ambiguity between skirts and wings.

78 Aubin, “She is the Beginning,” 17.

79 In Exod 28:33–34; 39:24–26, the term is used in reference to the priestly vestments. However, it has been suggested that the same term in Isaiah 6, where the שול of Yahweh fills up the temple, actually refers to Yahweh’s penis. See Eslinger, “The Infinite,” 145–73. In Jer 13:22, 26; Nah 3:5; Lam 1:9, the term may refer either to the hem of a woman’s garment or metaphorically to the lower part of the body, as a euphemism for the pubic region.

80 Goff, *Discerning Wisdom*, 110; cf. idem, “Hellish Females.”

81 Wright and Edwards, “She Undid Him,” 96–97.

82 4Q184 1 4–6.

83 4Q184 1 12. Because this verse stems from the section of text in which the woman’s sexually

Tooman has noted, her defining character trait is her slippery speech, and yet she is given no voice in the poem.⁸⁴ And the *Wasf* form is recalled only to be transformed, abandoned without going anywhere. But in fact, this act of disembodiment functions to implicitly develop the erotic aspects of the woman. The text excites and titillates, while remaining on the side of moral virtuosity by never explicitly revealing its true nature. The Strange Woman of Proverbs is aimed at teaching sexual ethics to young men.⁸⁵ Accordingly, the explicitly sexual language serves as a warning to those who might give in to erotic temptation. But this explicit language remains implicit in 4Q184. Similarly, Matthew Goff has noted that a key theme of the Strange Woman discourse—the discouragement of adultery—is undercut by 4Q184, which never specifies if the woman is married.⁸⁶ We might suggest that 4Q184 had a different intended audience than the Strange Woman of Proverbs: not *students* requiring an education in sexual mores, but their *teachers*. These readers of 4Q184 could enjoy the hidden description of this seductive and sexually licentious woman—without any question to their own moral characters.

In this essay, I have explored the description of the woman's body in 4Q184 in light of the genre of the *Wasf*. Drawing on the suggestions of Jacqueline Vayntrub for understanding the acrostic poem in praise of the Capable Wife in Prov. 31:10–31, I have proposed that the poet behind 4Q184 made use of a similar literary strategy that I have called the “transformed *Wasf*”—instead of providing a top-to-toe description of a body in order to make a claim about its wholeness and perfection, 4Q184 highlights certain aspects of the woman's body in order to say something specific about her role and character. In 4Q184, the actions of the woman's hands and feet are emphasized. By exploring the implications

licitious activities are described, Allegro (“The Wiles,” 52) translates הִיִּתְּפֵאל, a *hithpael* imperfect of הָלַץ, “to hide,” as “she *displays* herself.” Apparently Allegro thought it problematic that the woman engaged in sexually licentious behaviour while fully covered. But this recalls the actions of Tamar in Genesis 38, who covers herself with a veil in order to disguise herself as a prostitute. Indeed, while we tend to think of veiling as a symbol of chastity, in biblical texts veils add to the erotic allure of a person's beauty (Song 4:1; 6:7). Veils are listed along with other items of adornment in Isa 3:18–24, suggesting that they were considered to have an ornamental function. Note also that the woman of 4Q184 sets herself at the city gates, as did Tamar—and in general, the gates of the city were a place in which women practiced prostitution in the ancient Near East. See Stol, *Women*, 399. In Josh 2:15, the prostitute Rahab actually lives inside the city-walls.

84 Tooman, “Aphorism and Admonition,” 164; cf. Jones, “Wisdom's Pedagogy,” 76–77.

85 See e.g. Prov 12:4; 14:1; 18:13; 21:9; 22:14; 25:24; 27:15–16; 31:3.

86 Goff, “A Seductive Demoness,” 65.

and associations that came along with feet in ancient Jewish and Near Eastern literature, I have argued that the “feet” of the woman in 4Q184 should be interpreted euphemistically, as a reference to genitals, as well as associating the woman with erotica more generally. This uncovered an image of the woman which was more sexual than commentators had previously allowed. By subverting the *Wasf* form and so hiding the woman’s body, the poet could at the same time emphasize and develop the woman in erotic terms. The “hidden body” of the woman of wicked wives aids in her depiction and portrayal, in the same way that this literary strategy functions to develop the image of the Capable Wife in the book of Proverbs—albeit with very different implications for characterization.

Bibliography

- Ackroyd, Peter R. “*yād*.” *TDOT* 5 (1986): 402–3.
- Allegro, John M. “The Wives of the Wicked Woman’: A Sapiential Work from Qumran’s Fourth Cave.” *PEQ* (1964): 53–5.
- Aubin, Melissa. “‘She is the Beginning of All Ways of Perversity’: Femininity and Metaphor in 4Q184.” *Women in Judaism: A Multidisciplinary Journal* 2 (2001): 1–23.
- Barr, James. *The Garden of Eden and the Hope of Immortality*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993.
- Baumgarten, Joseph M. “On the Nature of the Seductress in ‘4Q184.’” *RevQ* 15 (1991): 133–43.
- Bernat, David. “Biblical *Wasf* Beyond Songs of Songs.” *JSOT* 28 (2004): 327–49.
- Borger, Riecke. “Die Weihe eines Enlil-Priesters.” *BiOr* 30 (1973): 163–76.
- Burgmann, Hans. “‘The Wicked Woman’: Der Makkabäer Simon.” *RevQ* 8 (1974): 323–59.
- Camp, Claudia V. *Wisdom and the Feminine in the Book of Proverbs*. Bible and Literature 11. Sheffield: Almond Press, 1985.
- Camp, Claudia V. *Wise, Strange and Holy: The Strange Woman and the Making of the Bible*. JSOTSup 320. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000.
- Carmignac, Jean. “Poème allégorique sur le secte rivale.” *RevQ* 19 (1965): 361–74.
- Collins, John J. *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age*. London: T&T Clark, 1997.
- Crawford, Sidnie White. “Lady Wisdom and Dame Folly at Qumran.” *DSD* 5 (1998): 355–66.
- Declor, M. “Two Special Meanings of the Word *yād* in Biblical Hebrew.” *JSS* 12 (1967): 230–40.
- DiVito, Robert A. “Old Testament Anthropology and the Construction of Personal Identity.” *CBQ* 61 (1998): 217–38.
- Dobbs-Allsopp, F.W. and Elaine T. James, “The Ekphrastic Figure(s) in Songs 5:10–16.” *JBL* 138 (2019): 297–323.

- Douglas, Mary. *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Pollution and Taboo*. New York: Routledge, 1966.
- Eslinger, Lyle. "The Infinite in a Finite Organical Perception (Isaiah vi 1–5)," *VT* 45 (1995): 145–73.
- Fabry, Hans Joseph. "lēb," *TDOT* 7 (2013): 412–34.
- Fitzmyer, Joseph A. *The Genesis Apocryphon of Qumran Cave 1*. Rome: Pontifical Institute Press, 1971.
- Fox, Michael V. *Proverbs 10–31: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. AB. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009.
- Fröhlich, Ida. "Women as Strangers in Ancient Judaism: The Harlot in 4Q184." Pages 139–59 in *The Stranger in Ancient and Mediaeval Jewish Tradition: Papers Read at the First Meeting of JBSCE, Piliscsabe*, 2009. Edited Géza G. Xeravits and Jan Dušek. DCLS 4. Berlin: de Gruyter, 2010.
- Gavov-Ginzberg, Anatole M. "Double Meaning in a Qumran Work ('The Wiles of the Wicked Woman')." *RevQ* 6 (1967): 279–85.
- Geyser-Fouche, Ananda. "Another Look at the Identity of the 'Wicked Woman' in 4Q184," *HTS Theologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 72 (2016): 1–9.
- Glick, Leonard B. *Marked in Your Flesh: Circumcision from Ancient Judea to Modern America*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Goff, Matthew J. *Discerning Wisdom: The Sapiential Literature of the Dead Sea Scrolls*. VTSup 116. Leiden: Brill, 2007.
- Goff, Matthew J. "Hellish Females: The Strange Woman of Septuagint Proverbs and 4QWiles of the Wicked Woman." *JSJ* 39 (2008): 20–45.
- Goff, Matthew J. "A Seductive Demoness at Qumran? Lilith, Female Demons and 4Q184." Pages 59–76 in *Das Böse, der Teufel und Dämonen—Evil, Devil, and Demons*. Edited by Jan Doehorn, Susanne Rudnig-Zelt and Benjamin Wold. WUNT 2.412. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016.
- Goshen-Gottstein, M.H. "Philologische Miszellen zu den Qumrantexten." *RevQ* 2 (1959–1960): 43–51.
- Greenstein, Edward L. "'To Grasp the Hem' in Ugaritic Literature." *VT* 32 (1982): 217–8.
- Henderson, Jeffrey. *The Masculine Muse: Obscene Language in Attic Comedy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991.
- Hermann, Wolfram. "Gedanken zue Geschichten des altorientalischen Beschreibungsliedes." *ZAW* 75 (1963): 176–96.
- Ilan, Tal. "Canonization and Gender in Qumran: 4Q179, 4Q184, 2Q218 and 11QPsalms^a." Pages 513–45 in *The Dead Sea Scrolls and Contemporary Culture: Proceedings of the International Conference Held at the Israel Museum, Jerusalem (July 6–8, 2008)*. Edited by Adolfo D. Roitman, Lawrence H. Schiffman and Shani Tzoref. STDJ 93. Leiden: Brill, 2011.

- Jones, Scott C. "Wisdom's Pedagogy: A Comparison of Proverbs VII and 4Q184." *VT* 53 (2003): 65–80.
- Keel, Othmar. "Symbolik des Fußes im Alten Testament und seiner Umwelt." *Orthopädische Praxis* 18 (1982): 530–38.
- Lange, Armin. "Die Weisheitstexte aus Qumran: Eine Einleitung." Pages 3–30 in *The Wisdom Texts from Qumran and the Development of Sapiential Thought*. Edited by Charlotte Hempel, Armin Lange and Hermann Lichtenberger. BETL 159. Leuven: Peeters, 2002.
- Leick, Gwendolyn. *Sex and Eroticism in Mesopotamian Literature*. London: Routledge, 2003.
- Lesley, Michael J. "Exegetical Wiles: 4Q184 as Scriptural Interpretation." Pages 107–42 in *The Scrolls and Biblical Tradition: Proceedings of the Seventh Meeting of the IQS in Helsinki*. Edited by George Brooke, Eibert J.C. Tigchelaar, and Molly Zahn. STDJ 103. Leiden: Brill, 2012.
- Low, Katherine. "Implications Surrounding Girding the Loins in Light of Gender, Body, and Power." *JSOT* 36 (2011): 3–30.
- Maier, Johann. "Wiles of the Wicked Woman." *Encyclopaedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls* 2 (2000): 976.
- Martínez, Florentino García and Eibert J.C. Tigchelaar. *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition*, Vol. 1: 1Q1–4Q273. Leiden: Brill, 1997.
- Moore, Rick D. "Personification of the Seduction of Evil: 'The Wiles of the Wicked Woman.'" *RevQ* 40 (1981): 505–19.
- Naudé, Jacobus A. "The Wiles of the Wicked Woman (4Q184), the Netherworld and the Body." *Journal for Semitics* 15 (2006): 372–84.
- Nichol, George G. "Watering Egypt (Deut. XI 10–11) Again." *VT* 38 (1988): 347–48.
- Niditch, Susan. *'My Brother Esau is a Hairy Man': Hair and Identity in Ancient Israel*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Noegel, Scott. "Bodily Features as Literary Devices in the Hebrew Bible." Pages 509–31 in *Studies in Bible and Exegesis Presented to Samuel Vargon*. Edited by Moshe Garsiel et al. Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 2011 [in Hebrew].
- Palmer, Christine. "Unshod on Holy Ground: Ancient Israel's 'Disinherited' Priesthood." Pages 1–17 in *Fashioning Jews: Clothing, Culture and Commerce*. Edited by Leonard J. Greenspoon. SJC 24. West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2013.
- Paul, Shalom M. "The Shared Legacy of Sexual Metaphors and Euphemisms in Mesopotamian and Biblical Literatures." Pages 489–98 in *Sex and Gender in the Ancient Near East*. Edited by Simo Parpola and R.M. Whiting. Helsinki: The Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 2002.
- Penchansky, David. "Beauty, Power, and Attraction: Aesthetics and the Hebrew Bible." Pages 47–65 in *Beauty and the Bible: Toward a Hermeneutics of Biblical Aesthetics*. Edited by Richard J. Bauckham and Jean-François Racine. Atlanta: SBL, 2013.

- Pongratz-Leisten, Beate. "Imperial Allegories: Divine Agency and Monstrous Bodies in Mesopotamia's Body Description Texts." Pages 119–41 in *The Materiality of Divine Agency*. Edited by Beate Pomgratz-Leisten and Karen Sonik. Berlin: de Gruyter, 2015.
- Pope, Marvin H. *Song of Songs: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. AB. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977.
- Pope, Marvin H. "Euphemism and Dysphemism in the Bible." *ABD* 1 (1992): 721–25.
- Popović, Mladen. *Reading the Human Body: Physiognomics and Astrology in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Hellenistic-Early Roman Period Judaism*. STDJ 67. Leiden: Brill, 2007.
- Quick, Laura. "'To Hear and to Accept': A Word Pair in the Tell Fakhariyah Bilingual Inscription." *JSS* 61 (2016): 413–29.
- Sasson, Jack M. *Ruth: A New Translation with a Philological Commentary and a Formalist-Folklorist Interpretation*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995.
- Schipper, Jeremy. "Deuteronomy 24:5 and King Asa's Foot Disease in 1 Kings 15:23b." *JBL* 128 (2009): 643–48.
- Schipper, Jeremy. *Ruth: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. AB 7D. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016.
- Seebass, H. "nepeš." *TDOT* 9 (1998): 498–99.
- Smith, Mark S. "The Heart and Innards in Israelite Emotional Expressions: Notes from Anthropology and Psychobiology." *JBL* 117 (1998): 427–36.
- Stendebach, F.J. "regel." *TDOT* 13 (2014): 309–24.
- Stensman, P. "kābēd." *TDOT* 7 (2013): 22.
- Stol, Marten. *Women in the Ancient Near East*. Berlin: de Gruyter, 2016.
- Strugnell, John. "Notes sur le no. 184 des 'Discoveries ...'" *RevQ* 7 (1971): 263–68.
- Tigchelaar, Eibert J.C. "Lady Folly and Her House in Three Qumran Manuscripts: On the Relation between 4Q525 14, 5Q16, and 4Q184 1." *RevQ* 23 (2008): 271–81.
- Tigchelaar, Eibert J.C. "Constructing, Deconstructing and Reconstructing Fragmentary Manuscripts: Illustrated by a Study of 4Q184 (Wiles of the Wicked Woman)." Pages 24–47 in *Rediscovering the Dead Sea Scrolls: An Assessment of Old and New Approaches and Methods*. Edited by Maxine L. Grossman. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010.
- Tigchelaar, Eibert J.C. "The Poetry of the 'Wiles of the Wicked Woman' (4Q184)." *RevQ* 25 (2012): 621–33.
- Tooman, William A. "Aphorism and Admonitions: The Reuse of Proverbs 7 in 4QWiles of the Wicked Woman (4Q184)." Pages 155–66 in *Reading Proverbs Intertextually*. Edited by Katharine J. Dell and Will Kynes. LHBOTS 629. London: T&T Clark, 2018.
- Trible, Phyllis. "Ruth in the Hebrew Bible." Page 147 in *Women in Scripture: A Dictionary of Named and Unnamed Women in the Hebrew Bible, the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books, and the New Testament*. Edited by Carol L. Meyers. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000.

- Vayntrub, Jacqueline. "Beauty, Wisdom, and Handiwork in Prov 31:10–31." *HTR* 113 (2020): 54–62.
- Vermeulen, Karolien. "Hands, Heads, and Feet: Body Parts as Poetic Device in Judges 4–5." *JBL* 136 (2017): 801–19.
- Warren-Rothlin, Andy. "Euphemism and Bible Translations." Pages 865–69 in *Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics*, Vol. 1: A–F. Edited by Geoffrey Khan. Leiden: Brill, 2013.
- Watson, Wilfred G.E. *Classical Hebrew Poetry: A Guide to Its Techniques*. London: T&T Clark, 2005.
- Winter, Irene J. "The Body of the Able Ruler: Toward an Understanding of the Statues of Gudea." Pages 573–83 in *Dumu-E₂-Dub-Ba-a: Studies in Honor of Åke W. Sjöberg*. Edited by Hermann Behrens, Darlene Loding and Martha T. Roth. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1989.
- Wright, Benjamin G. "Wisdom and Women at Qumran." *DSD* 11 (2004): 240–61.
- Wright, Benjamin G. and Suzanne M. Edwards. "'She Undid Him with the Beauty of Her Face' (Jdt. 16.6): Reading Women's Bodies in Early Jewish Literature." Pages 73–108 in *Early Jewish Literature in Religion and the Female Body in Ancient Judaism and Its Environments*. Edited by Géza G. Xeravits. DCLS 28. Berlin: de Gruyter, 2015.
- Zwipp, Hans. "Die Bedeutung des Fußes in der Sprache, in Symbolen und Mythen." *Zeitschrift für Orthopädie und Unfallchirurgie* 157 (2019): 59–74.