

## The Disjoined Body: The Body and the Self in Hebrew Rhetoric

David J.A. Clines  
University of Sheffield

Paper read at Society of Biblical Literature, International Meeting, Cape Town, 24-28 July, 2000. Posted on the Web, 8 December 2000. This slightly revised version was posted on 28 September 2001. Now published in *Biblical Interpretation* (ed. G.A. van der Heever and S.W. van Heerden; University of South Africa, Pretoria, 2001), pp. 148-57.

Job opens his famous protestation of innocence with the words:

I have laid a covenant upon my eyes; how then could I look upon a virgin? (31.1)

In imposing a covenant obligation on himself (tyrb trk) it is as if his self were the master and his eyes the servant. The preposition (l) indicates that it is not a covenant between equals, him and his eyes, but the kind of requirement a suzerain will make of a vassal. The 'I' is in control, but the body threatens disobedience to the self; it is a site of transgressive impulses that must be kept in check. There is no question here of a full-blown Cartesian disjunction between mind and body, but there is more than a glimmering of representation of the body as an agent that is independent of the self.

This is not the only place in this speech where he depends on such a distinction between the body and the self. He calls down punishments on himself

If my foot has hastened to deceit ...  
if my step has turned aside from the way ...  
if my heart has gone after my eyes ...  
if my heart has been enticed to a woman ...  
if my heart has been secretly enticed ...  
if my mouth has kissed my hand ... (Job 31.5, 7, 9, 27).

He accepts responsibility, of course, for what his body parts have done, but he himself, he in his self, is in this language somehow distanced from his body. All this is not just picturesque poetic language, although of course it is all metaphorical and rhetorical. It is the manifestation of a worldview, perhaps of a certain disjunction between the body and the self.

What I will do in this paper is (1) attempt to identify elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible similar language of disjunction, (2) enquire after what might be the norm in the Hebrew Bible for expressing the relationship between the body and the self, as a control for the rhetoric of disjunction, and (3) reflect on the significance of the rhetoric of disjunction.

### 1. The Language of Disjunction

Consider the following texts on the rhetoric of the body, focusing on one body part at a time:

a. *The foot*

Is. 58:13 If you turn back your foot from the sabbath, from doing your pleasure on my holy day, and call the sabbath a delight and the holy day of the LORD honourable; if you honour it, not going your own ways, or seeking your own pleasure, or talking idly;

Is. 59:7 Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood; their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity, desolation and destruction are in their highways.

Jer. 14:10 Thus says the LORD concerning this people: “They have loved to wander thus, they have not restrained their feet; therefore the LORD does not accept them, now he will remember their iniquity and punish their sins.”

Prov. 1:15 my son, do not walk in the way with them, hold back your foot from their paths

Prov. 1:16 for their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed blood.

Prov. 6:18 a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that make haste to run to evil.

If feet have to be restrained ([nm, Prov. 1.15; אC] Jer. 14.10) or turned back (bWV hiph., Isa. 58.13), if feet run toward evil ( WR, Prov. 1.16; Isa. 59.7) or make haste to run ( WR rhm, Prov. 6.18) to evil or haste ( rhm, Prov. 1.16; Isa. 59.7) to shed blood, the feet are being represented as independent agents, with a will of their own. And if the young man of Proverbs is warned that *he* should restrain *his foot* (Prov. 1.15), or if Israel is blamed that *it* has not restrained *its feet* (Jer. 14.10), the self and the body are evidently not being viewed as coherent but as to some extent disjoined. This language does not go so far as to suggest that the body and the self are in conflict, of that the body is culpable but the self is not—but the rhetoric nevertheless makes an explicit distinction between the two.

b. *The hand*

Eccl. 9:10 Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work or thought or knowledge or wisdom in Sheol, to which you are going.

Judg. 7:2 The LORD said to Gideon, “The people with you are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hand, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, ‘My own hand has delivered me.’”

Prov. 10:4 A slack hand causes poverty, but the hand of the diligent makes rich.

Prov. 21:25 The desire of the sluggard kills him for his hands refuse to labour.

If *one's hand* can deliver *one* (Judg. 7.2), the hand and the self cannot be exactly identical. If *your hand* finds something for *you* to do (Eccl. 9.10), or if your hands refuse to work (Prov. 21.25), they too have taken on a life of their own.

c. *The tongue*

Job 27:4 my lips will not speak falsehood, and my tongue will not utter deceit.

Job 33:2 Behold, I open my mouth; the tongue in my mouth speaks.

Psa. 34:14 (13) Keep (רXן) your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking deceit.

Psa. 50:19 You give your mouth free rein for evil, and your tongue frames deceit.

Psa. 52:6 (4) You love all words that devour, O deceitful tongue.

- Psa. 64:9 Because of their tongue he will bring them to ruin (רמב) וּמִבְּעַיִן יִשְׁכַּח; all who see them will wag their heads.
- Psa. 73:9 They set their mouths against the heavens, and their tongue struts through the earth.
- Psa. 109:2 For wicked and deceitful mouths are opened against me, speaking against me with lying tongues.
- Psa. 120:2 Deliver me, O LORD, from lying lips, from a deceitful tongue.
- Prov. 10:31 The mouth of the righteous brings forth wisdom, but the perverse tongue will be cut off.
- Prov. 18:21 Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits.
- Prov. 21:23 He who keeps (רמב) his mouth and his tongue keeps himself out of trouble.
- Prov. 25:15 With patience a ruler may be persuaded, and a soft tongue will break a bone.
- Is. 54:17 no weapon that is fashioned against you shall prosper, and you shall confute every tongue that rises against you in judgment.
- Jer. 9:4 (5) Every one deceives his neighbor, and no one speaks the truth; they have taught their tongue to speak lies; they commit iniquity and are too weary to repent.
- Zeph. 3:13 those who are left in Israel; they shall do no wrong and utter no lies, nor shall there be found in their mouth a deceitful tongue.

The tongue is in some of these texts little more than a trope for the self that is speaking, as when the tongue does not utter deceit (Job 27.4) or when the tongue speaks when the self speaks (Job 33.2). But when the tongue must be restrained (רמב, Ps. 34.14 [13]) or kept (רמב, Prov. 21.23), or when it can be taught (Jer. 9.5), it is represented as a agent independent of the self. When attributes like deceitfulness are applied to the tongue, which properly belong to the one speaking with the tongue, the tongue is being invested with characteristics of personhood (as in רמב וּמִבְּעַיִן, Ps. 109.2; תמרת וּמִבְּעַיִן, Zeph. 3.13). And when the tongue is addressed in an apostrophe ('O deceitful tongue', חמרת וּמִבְּעַיִן, Ps. 52:6 [4]), it has been thoroughly personified; it has become a self in its own right. It can strut through the earth (Ps. 73.9). It can arise in judgment (Isa. 54.17). It can break a bone (Prov. 25.15). Death and life are in its power (Prov. 18.21).

#### d. The heart

- Psa. 16:9 Therefore my heart (בל) is glad, and my soul (דלבו) rejoices; my body (רמב) also dwells secure.
- Prov. 14:30 A tranquil mind (בל) gives life to the flesh (דלבו), but passion makes the bones rot.
- Prov. 7:25 Let not your heart turn aside to her ways, do not stray into her paths.
- Jer. 17:9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately corrupt; who can understand it?
- Ezek. 28:2 "Son of man, say to the prince of Tyre, Thus says the Lord GOD: "Because your heart is proud, and you have said, 'I am a god, I sit in the seat of the gods, in the heart of the seas,' yet you are but a man, and no god, though you consider yourself as wise as a god —
- Is. 32:6 For the fool speaks folly, and his mind plots iniquity: to practice ungodliness, to utter error concerning the LORD, to leave the craving of the

- hungry unsatisfied, and to deprive the thirsty of drink.  
Eccl. 2:3 I searched with my mind how to cheer my body with wine — my mind still guiding me with wisdom — and how to lay hold on folly, till I might see what was good for the sons of men to do under heaven during the few days of their life.  
Neh. 5:7 I took counsel with myself, and I brought charges against the nobles and the officials. I said to them, “You are exacting interest, each from his brother.” And I held a great assembly against them,  
Eccl. 10:2 A wise man’s heart inclines him toward the right, but a fool’s heart toward the left

The outstanding text among this selection is Eccl. 2.3 ‘I searched with my mind (bl) how to cheer my body (rcb) with wine — my mind (bl) still guiding me with wisdom’. I would not suggest that we should see a fully-fledged mind/body dichotomy, but clearly the heart (bl) is here the thinking rational self, while the flesh or body (rcb) is the feeling and experiencing self. The heart is equally the originator and director of the life of the body in Prov. 14,20 ‘A tranquil mind (bl) gives life to the flesh (dwbk), but passion makes the bones rot’. When Nehemiah ‘took counsel with’ himself (yl [; yBl [m]), his ‘heart’ deliberated (° l m) concerning his self (yl [ ]) (Neh. 5.7), the heart being the rational self that makes decisions for the sake of the whole person. When the heart ‘turns aside’ (hfc, Prov. 7.25) or ‘inclines’ (just the preposition l, Eccl. 10.2) a person in one direction or another, it is an active agent. And, as with the tongue, when the heart has attributed to it pride (Ezek. 28.2) or deceitfulness (Jer. 17.2), it is represented as having personality.

e. *The bowels*

- Is. 16:11 Therefore my soul (µy[m]) moans like a lyre for Moab, and my heart (brq) for Kir-heres.  
Is. 63:15 Look down from heaven and see, from thy holy and glorious habitation. Where are thy zeal and thy might? The yearning of thy heart (µy[m]) and thy compassion are withheld from me.  
Jer. 4:19 My anguish (µy[m]), my anguish! I writhe in pain! Oh, the walls of my heart (bl)! My heart is beating wildly; I cannot keep silent; for I hear the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war.  
Jer. 31:20 Is Ephraim my dear son? Is he my darling child? For as often as I speak against him, I do remember him still. Therefore my heart (µy[m]) yearns for him; I will surely have mercy on him, says the LORD.  
Psa. 40:9 (8) I delight to do thy will, O my God; thy law is within my heart (µy[m]).  
Lam. 1:20 Behold, O LORD, for I am in distress, my soul (µy[m]) is in tumult, my heart (bl) is wrung within me, because I have been very rebellious.

What is striking about these texts is that in none of them is there any disjunction between the self and the body. We can conceal that the bowels, an internal organ that represents the experiences and, especially, the feelings, of the inner self, is (unlike the heart) always in harmony with the self.

f. *The eye*

- Psa. 18:27 For thou dost deliver a humble people; but the haughty eyes thou dost

bring down.

Prov. 6:17 haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,

Prov. 21:4 Haughty eyes and a proud heart, the lamp of the wicked, are sin.

Prov. 22:9 He who has a bountiful eye will be blessed, for he shares his bread with the poor.

Eccl. 1:8 All things are full of weariness; a man cannot utter it; the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.

Eccl. 2:10 And whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them; I kept my heart from no pleasure, for my heart found pleasure in all my toil, and this was my reward for all my toil.

Jer. 31:16 Thus says the LORD: “Keep your voice from weeping, and your eyes from tears; for your work shall be rewarded, says the LORD, and they shall come back from the land of the enemy.

Eccl. 2.10 is the most evident example of a disjunction between the body and the self: the eyes desire, and the self accedes to that desire: ‘And whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them’. I note that the disjunction is not always a matter of the body and the self being in tension with one another; here the body and the self are at one, but they are not one. The body proposes and the self disposes. Less dramatically, the prophetic injunction, ‘Keep your voice from weeping, and your eyes from tears’ (Jer. 31.16) suggests that the body can form an impulse that the self can subsequently restrain. As we have seen earlier, the attribution of pride (Ps. 18.27; Prov. 17;21.4) or bountifulness (Prov. 22.9) or satisfaction (Eccl. 1.8) to eyes, which are properly qualities of the self, are a further means of ascribing personhood to the body part.

What the above examples have in common are the following. In all cases the body part is not identical with the self. Sometimes it can be restrained by the self, sometimes the self is complicit in the actions of the body part. The body is the origin or impulse of actions, the self is the arbiter of actions.

## 2. The Language of Conjunction

All the examples mentioned above are exceptional. In this section I want to examine the norm, the usual rhetoric of the body.

I see four types of usage: (1) the body as object, (2) the body as instrument, (3) the body as the site of the self’s experience, (4) the body as the self.

### a. *The body as object*

The body or the body part is an object in the material world, and can be treated as such. These examples of the use of *foot* will be enough to illustrate:

Gen. 18:4 Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree

Gen. 49:33 When Jacob finished charging his sons, he drew up his feet into the bed, and breathed his last, and was gathered to his people.

Ex. 4:25 Then Zipporah took a flint and cut off her son’s foreskin, and touched Moses’ feet with it, and said, “Surely you are a bridegroom of blood to me!”

2 Sam. 4:12 And David commanded his young men, and they killed them, and cut off their hands and feet

2 Kgs 9:35 But when they went to bury her, they found no more of her than the

skull and the feet and the palms of her hands.<sup>1</sup>

Feet can be washed, lifted up, touched, cut off or dismembered. The body part is simply that. Whatever the effects of washing or cutting off a body part may be on the self, it is not those effects that are the concern of the language; the self is not in the frame.

b. *The body as instrument of the self*

A second category is of language where the self is itself the agent but the body or the body part is the instrument of the agent's act.

- Num. 35:21 or in enmity **struck him down with his hand**, so that he died,  
Deut. 11:10 For the land which you are entering to take possession of it is not like the land of Egypt, from which you have come, where you sowed your seed and **watered it with your feet**, like a garden of vegetables  
Ezek. 6:11 **Clap your hands** (lit. **with your hands**), and stamp your foot (lit. with your foot), and say, Alas! because of all the evil abominations of the house of Israel.  
Ezek. 40:4 Son of man, **look with your eyes**, and **hear with your ears**, and set your mind upon all that I shall show you  
Psa. 9:2(1) I will **give thanks** to the LORD **with my whole heart**.  
Judg. 7:5 So he brought the people down to the water; and the LORD said to Gideon, Every one that **laps the water with his tongue**, as a dog laps, you shall set by himself.

The murderer did the striking, using his hand; the Israelites did the watering, using their feet, the soldiers lapped the water, using their tongues. Now if the person does something by using the body, then the self and the body are distinguished. But they are not disjoined, for the body is the servant of the self; it does just what the self wants, it is the executor of the self's desire. The body and the self are in harmony.

c. *The body as the site of the self's experience*

The rhetoric here is of the self being affected or acting in respect of the body or in reference to some body part. The language is specifically about the person (*he, they*), in respect of a body part (typically *in, on, with, by*).

- 1 Kgs 15:23 But in his old age he was diseased **in his feet**.  
Is. 3:16 Because the daughters of Zion are haughty and walk with outstretched necks, glancing wantonly with their eyes, mincing along as they go, tinkling **with their feet** ...  
Deut. 2:28 You shall sell me food for money, that I may eat, and give me water for money, that I may drink; only let me pass through on foot (lit. **on my feet**).  
Gen. 19:16 But he lingered; so the men seized him and his wife and his two daughters **by the hand**.  
Psa. 3:7 Arise, O LORD! Deliver me, O my God! For thou dost smite all my enemies **on the cheek**, thou dost break the teeth of the wicked.

---

<sup>1</sup> I would not make too much of the language of the self in this text: I do not see a tension between the body and the self here, though if they could bury *her*, one might wonder whether the self is being totally identified with the body. But then one thinks of committed mind/body dualists who would unflinchingly use the language of the person in reference to a recent corpse ('She looks so peaceful').

It is the king who is diseased, the women of Jerusalem who tinkle, the Israelites who pass through, Lot's family who are seized, the enemies who are smitten. What is said is said of the persons themselves, i.e. of the self. It is the self that experiences. But the site of the experience is the body part: he is diseased in respect of his feet, they are smitten in respect of their cheek, they tinkle, they pass through, they are grasped by means of their feet or their hand.

d. *The body acting as the self*

Most interesting of all is the language where the body acts as the self:

Deut. 28:65 And among these nations you shall find no ease, and there shall be no rest for **the sole of your foot**; but the LORD will give you there a trembling heart, and failing eyes, and a languishing soul;

Psa. 8:6 Thou hast given him dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things **under his feet**.

Gen. 31:29 It is in my power (lit. **to my hand**) to do you harm; but the God of your father spoke to me last night, saying, 'Take heed that you speak to Jacob neither good nor bad.'

2 Sam. 3:12 And Abner sent messengers to David at Hebron, saying, "To whom does the land belong? Make your covenant with me, and behold, **my hand** shall be with you to bring over all Israel to you."

Is. 45:23 By myself I have sworn, from my mouth has gone forth in righteousness a word that shall not return: "To me every knee shall bow, **every tongue** shall swear.'

Prov. 27:9 Oil and perfume make **the heart** glad, but the soul (v<sup>pn</sup>) is torn by trouble.

If there is no rest for the sole of the foot, there is no rest for *the person*. If everything is under the feet of humans, it is subject to *them*. If it is 'to my hand' to do you harm, it is in *my* power. If Abner's hand is with David, his whole *self* is with him. If every tongue swears allegiance, every *human* with a tongue swears. If the heart is gladdened, the *self* is gladdened.

Unlike the cases where the self and the body are disjoined, in these cases the self and the body are in conjunction, the body manifesting the self seamlessly. The degree of unity of self and body can be judged by considering the following pairs of sentences, in which the first sentence uses a body part to say the same thing that the second sentence says with the language of the self.

1	a	Deut. 11:24 Every place on which <b>the sole of your FOOT treads</b> shall be yours; your territory shall be from the wilderness and Lebanon and from the River, the river Euphrates, to the western sea.
	b	Deut. 11:25 No man shall be able to stand against you; the LORD your God will lay the fear of you and the dread of you upon all the land that <b>you shall tread</b> , as he promised you.
2	a	Gen. 45:12 And now <b>your EYES see</b> , and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see, that it is my mouth that speaks to you.
	b	Gen. 45:13 You must tell my father of all my splendour in Egypt, and of all that <b>you have seen</b> .

3	a	1 Sam. 22:17 And the king said to the guard who stood about him, Turn and kill the priests of the LORD; because <b>their HAND also is with David.</b>
	b	1 Sam. 18:28 But when Saul saw and knew that <b>the LORD was with David ...</b>

4	a	Psa. 51:16 (14) Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation, and <b>my TONGUE will sing aloud</b> of thy deliverance.
	b	Psa. 145:7 They shall pour forth the fame of thy abundant goodness, and <b>shall sing aloud</b> of thy righteousness.

5	a	Psa. 16:9 Therefore <b>my HEART is glad</b> , and my soul rejoices; my body also dwells secure.
	b	Psa. 9:3 (2) <b>I will be glad</b> and exult in thee, I will sing praise to thy name, O Most High.

It is not quite right to say of such passages that the body and the self are in harmony, for they are not being represented as two things, and only two things (or more) can be in harmony. Nor is it right to speak of the self as being manifested in the body, for the self is not in view. It might be better to think of the self as being *distributed* throughout the body, so that when the body acts the self acts. When the eyes see or the tongue sings, the beholder or the hearer does not match the body to the self, but perceives the self at the moment of the perceiving the body.

This, I would say, is the normal language of the body and the self in Hebrew rhetoric; the language of disjunction is only to be understood in contrast with the norm.

### 3. The Significance of the Rhetoric of the Body

The rhetoric of the body is not just an interesting feature about how the Hebrew language is used. It is a signal of the Hebrew attitude to the body, of the folk psychology underlying the Hebrew Bible.<sup>2</sup> More correctly, perhaps, since speech acts are socially formative, it did not so much express the Hebrew worldview as construct it.

#### a. *The pervasiveness of body language*

Let us begin by noting that the language of the body is very pervasive in the Hebrew literature that we have. This situation is no doubt very different from our own cultural experience: the opening sentence of a reader on feminist theory of the body reads, 'the status of the body within the dominant Western intellectual tradition has largely been one of absence or dismissal'.<sup>3</sup> Such a statement could not possibly be made about the Hebrew Bible. Mary Douglas and Howard Eilberg-Schwartz have each in their own way recognized the preoccupation of the Hebrews with the body, Douglas stressing the body as a symbol of society, and Eilberg-Schwartz as the site of conflicting cultural

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, Scott M. Christensen and Dale R. Turner, *Folk Psychology and the Philosophy of Mind* (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1993).

<sup>3</sup> Margrit Shildrick with Janet Price, 'Openings on the Body: A Critical Introduction', in Janet Price and Margrit Shildrick (eds.), *Feminist Theory and the Body: A Reader* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), pp. 1-14 (1).



impulses.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, their interest is different from my present concern; it is in body purity, the body boundary, bodily uncleanness, rather than, as here, the everyday language of the body.

b. *The body as the embodiment of the self*

Apart from the relatively few examples I could put forward in this paper of the disjoined body, on the whole the Hebrew Bible attests a view of an embodied self. Bultmann's classical dictum about *sōma* in the New Testament is equally true for the body in the Hebrew Bible: 'Man does not have a *sōma*; he is *sōma*'.<sup>5</sup> Others have regarded a typical ancient view of the self as a 'continuum of substances' interacting with and upon one another. The way I have modelled it for myself is to regard the self as distributed across the body, so that wherever you encounter the body you encounter the self.

This vision of the self coheres interestingly with the recent work of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, in their *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and its Challenge to Western Thought*, where they are stressing how much what has been in the history of Western thought ascribed to the reason or the mind should better be understood as crucially shaped by the body.<sup>6</sup>

c. *The gendered body*

The body in the Hebrew Bible is of course a gendered body. Like everything else, it is a male construction. The Hebrew Bible does not of course theorize the body, but the evidence is that it does not work with a dimorphic view of the male and female body: the body is male, and the female body is hardly to be found.. In this respect, the Hebrew Bible coheres with the view convincingly put forward by Thomas Laqueur that the ancients (indeed most writers prior to the Enlightenment) thought essentially of one sex rather than two,<sup>7</sup> the biology of the female being no more than a variation on that of the male.

Today, a focus on the body is also often thought to be gendered. It is often remarked that the body in current writing is an especial interest of feminist projects, in which especially the materiality of the body has been foregrounded.<sup>8</sup>

d. *The body as the site of transgressive impulses*

In that Western tradition in which most of us have been formed, the body has been the site of transgressive impulses that have threatened the knowledge project. Mostly we lay the responsibility for that perspective on Descartes, but this paper has attempted to demonstrate its presence already in the unreflected rhetoric of the Hebrew Bible. We do not have anywhere in the Hebrew Bible a disjunction as severe as that of 'And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away' (Matt. 5.30). nor even quite as dramatic as that of James 3.6: 'The tongue is an unrighteous world among our members,

---

<sup>4</sup> Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966); Howard Eilberg-Schwartz, 'The Problem of the Body for the People of the Bill', in Timothy K. Beal and David M. Gunn (eds.), *Reading Bibles, Writing Bodies* (London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 34-55 (52).

<sup>5</sup> R. Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, I (London: SCM Press, 1952), p. 194).

<sup>6</sup> George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and its Challenge to Western Thought* (New York: Basic Books, 1999). For example, 'Reason is not disembodied, as the tradition has largely held, but arises from the nature of our brains, bodies, and bodily experiences' (p. 18).

<sup>7</sup> Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990).

<sup>8</sup> Shildrick and Price attribute the reviving interest in the body to the development of feminist theory ('Openings on the Body', p. 1).

staining the whole body, setting on fire the cycle of nature, and set on fire by hell’.

e. *The body in an honour/shame culture*

Honour/shame cultures in the ancient Mediterranean world are constituted by a ‘politics of reputation’, as David Cohen calls it,<sup>9</sup> in which status is accorded by the perception of a man in the public eye.<sup>10</sup> The eye is the organ of judgment, and the face is the object of judgment; it might not be the literal eye or the literal face, but it is according to appearances that judgments are made and honour is won or lost. Humans judge according to the outward appearance, Yahweh testifies in 1 Sam. 16.7 (lit. they look on the eyes). It cannot be an accident that ‘eye’ and ‘face’ account for more than a third of all references to parts of the body in the Hebrew Bible.

### Appendix: Body Parts in the Hebrew Bible

Head	var	627
Hair	r[c	35
Face	hnp	2155
Mouth	hpe	498
Tongue	ʿvvl	117
Lips	hpc	178
Nose	a	277
Eye	ʿyl	932
Eyelid/lashes	[p[	10
Eyebrow	ʿyl tbg	1
Forehead	j xm	13
Ear	ʿza	190
Neck	rawx	44
Voice	l wq	505
Shoulders	µkv	88
Arms	[rwz	94
Hands	dy	1644

Palms	k	197
Finger, toe	[bxa	34
Thumb, great toe	ʿhb	18
Waist, loins	µyntm	47
Heart	bl, bbl	862
Liver	dbk	18
Bowels	h[m	34
Womb	µj r	35
Penis	hkp v	1
Thighs	ʿry	34
Legs, thighs	qiv	23
Knees	ʿrb	27
Ankles	spa	1
Feet	l gr	263
Flesh	rcb	273
Breath	j wr	391
Life	vpi	757

Note that these are crude figures, and will include the body parts of animals. Common idioms such as *yny[l* ‘in the eyes of’ and *ynp[* ‘before’ have not been excluded, since, even if they are dead metaphors, they nevertheless employ the language of the body.

<sup>9</sup> David Cohen, *Law, Sexuality and Society: The Enforcement of Morals in Classical Athens* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Andrew Stewart, *Art, Desire, and the Body in Ancient Greece* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 14.