

THE HERMENEUTICS OF TORAH

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THE HERMENEUTICS OF TORAH

Proverbs 2, Deuteronomy, and the Composition of Proverbs 1–9

Bernd U. Schipper



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Preface

This book is a revised and expanded English edition of my 2012 study *Hermeneutik der Tora*. Whereas I wrote my 2012 book six years before the first part of my commentary on Proverbs was published (2018), this book follows two years after the publication of the English edition of my commentary.¹ This gave me the opportunity to adjust the argumentation from 2012. Especially the first and the two last chapters of this book benefited from my work on Proverbs in the past several years and in some cases present a rather different argument than the original German version. To some extent, some paragraphs of this book draw on articles published in recent years such as “Afterword: Wisdom and Torah,” “The Phenomenon of Textual Coherence,” “Teach Them Diligently to Your Son!,” and “Der Dekalog im Sprüchebuch.”² The work on this book also gave me the opportunity to reflect on previous studies in Egyptology. I am grateful to my teacher at the Institute for Egyptology at the University of Bonn, the late Ursula Rößler-Köhler, for drawing my attention, more than twenty years ago, to Egyptian wisdom literature.

1. *Sprüche (Proverbia). Teilband 1: Proverbien 1,1–15,33*, BKAT 17.1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2018); *Proverbs 1–15*, trans. Stephen Germany, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2019)

2. “Afterword: Wisdom and Torah—Insights and Perspectives,” in *Wisdom and Torah: The Reception of “Torah” in the Wisdom Literature of the Second Temple Period*, ed. Bernd U. Schipper and D. Andrew Teeter, JSJSup 163 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 307–20; “The Phenomenon of ‘Textual Coherence’ in Egyptian and Israelite Wisdom Literature,” in *Insights into Editing in the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East: What Does Documented Evidence Tell Us about the Transmission of Authoritative Texts?*, ed. Reinhard Müller and Juha Pakkala, CBET 84 (Leuven: Peeters, 2017), 99–126; “‘Teach Them Diligently to Your Son!’ The Book of Proverbs and Deuteronomy,” in *Reading Proverbs Intertextually*, ed. Katherine J. Dell and Will Kynes, LHBOTS 629 (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2019), 21–34; “Der Dekalog im Sprüchebuch,” in *Ein Freund des Wortes: Festschrift Udo Rüterswörden*, ed. Sebastian Grätz, Axel Graupner, and Jörg Lanckau (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2019), 268–300.

I am grateful to Thomas Römer, who supported the idea of publishing a revised English edition of the book in the distinguished *Ancient Israel and Its Literature* series. Furthermore, I wish to thank Peter Altmann for translating the manuscript into English and Isabell Hoppe and Yannik Ehmer for their help with proofreading the English text and their many suggestions and clarifications. Moritz Kulenkampff and Berenike Brandes assisted with the bibliography, and Nicole Tilford from SBL Press was an invaluable help in all formatting questions.

As already mentioned in the German edition, this study would not have been possible without the support of the German Research Council (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft). Within the context of the research project “Diskursive Weisheit,” the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft gave me the opportunity to develop my approach to the book of Proverbs. In this regard the present study can serve as a key to understanding my commentary. It is my strong opinion that the sapiential instruction of Prov 2 not only unlocks the perspective of the first part of the book of Proverbs (Prov 1–9), but also helps to decipher the masterful network of connections that shaped the final form of Proverbs as a book. All of this happened in relation to a discourse on wisdom and torah that was determined by Deuteronomy.

As with the German version, parts of the English edition were written in the library of the École Biblique et Archéologique Française in Jerusalem. I am grateful to my friends at the École for providing me with both an extraordinary working environment and an atmosphere of warm hospitality. And finally, I wish to thank the research council of the Humboldt-University of Berlin for providing me an additional sabbatical through the research program “Freiräume” in 2019. This “free space” gave me not only the opportunity to deepen my knowledge of Egyptian wisdom literature in its connection to the book of Proverbs, but also to finish this book.

The manuscript of this book was submitted to the publisher in February 2020. Because of the pandemic, the publication was not possible in 2020 as planned. I am grateful to Bob Buller for making the publication possible in 2021 and to Dr. Meike Röhrig for her help with the final corrections. I also wish to thank Carmen Bluhm, Julius Albrecht, Antonia Eckhardt, and Frederic Kaufmann for their help with the indices and in particular John Will Rice for checking some passages of the manuscript in terms of English style and language.

Berlin
1 September 2021

Abbreviations

ÄAT	Ägypten und Altes Testament
AB	Anchor (Yale) Bible
ABIG	Arbeiten zur Bibel und ihrer Geschichte
ABRL	Anchor (Yale) Bible Reference Library
ACCS	Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture
<i>AcT</i>	<i>Acta Theologica</i>
<i>AeL</i>	<i>Ägypten und Levante</i>
<i>AEL</i>	<i>Ancient Egyptian Literature</i> . Miriam Lichtheim. 3 vols. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971–1980.
<i>AfO</i>	<i>Archiv für Orientforschung</i>
ÄgAbh	Ägyptologische Abhandlungen
AHAW.PH	Abhandlungen der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissen- schaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse
AnBib	Analecta Biblica
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament
AOTC	Abingdon Old Testament Commentary
ATD	Das Alte Testament Deutsch
ATD.A	Das Alte Testament Deutsch, Apokryphen
ATANT	Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testa- ments
ATM	Altes Testament und Moderne
AzTh	Arbeiten zur Theologie
BBB	Bonner biblische Beiträge
<i>BBR</i>	<i>Bulletin for Biblical Research</i>
BBSup	Bulletin for Biblical Research Supplement
BC	Biblischer Kommentar über das Alte Testament
BEATAJ	Beiträge zur Erforschung des Alten Testaments und des Antiken Judentums
BETL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium
BEvT	Beiträge zur evangelischen Theologie

BFCT	Beiträge zur Förderung christlicher Theologie
BHQ	Biblia Hebraica Quinta
<i>Bib</i>	<i>Biblica</i>
<i>BibInt</i>	<i>Biblical Interpretation</i>
BibInt	Biblical Interpretation Series
BJSUCSD	Biblical and Judaic Studies from the University of California, San Diego
<i>BK</i>	<i>Bibel und Kirche</i>
BKAT	Biblischer Kommentar, Altes Testament
BLS	Bible and Literature Series
<i>BN</i>	<i>Biblische Notizen</i>
BN.B	Biblische Notizen Beihefte
BThS	Biblich-Theologische Studien
BWANT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament
<i>BZ</i>	<i>Biblische Zeitschrift</i>
BZABR	Beiheft zur Zeitschrift für altorientalische und biblische Rechtsgeschichte
BZAW	Beiheft zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
CahRB	Cahiers de la Revue Biblique
CBET	Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology
CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CBQMS	Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
CBTJ	<i>Calvary Baptist Theological Journal</i>
CC	Continental Commentaries
COS	<i>The Context of Scripture</i> . Edited by William W. Hallo. 3 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1997–2002.
CrStHB	Critical Studies in the Hebrew Bible
CThM	Calwer theologische Monographien
<i>DBSup</i>	<i>Dictionnaire de la Bible: Supplément</i> . Edited by Louis Pirot and André Robert. Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1928–.
<i>DCH</i>	<i>The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew</i> . Edited by David J. A. Clines. 9 vols. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 1993–2014.
DCLY	Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature Yearbook
DJD	Discoveries in the Judaean Desert
<i>DSD</i>	<i>Dead Sea Discoveries</i>
FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament
FB	Forschung zur Bibel

FOTL	Forms of Old Testament Literature
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
GOF	Göttinger Orientforschungen
GKC	Gesenius, Wilhelm. <i>Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar</i> . Edited by Emil Kautzsch. Translated by Arthur E. Cowley. 2nd ed. Oxford: Clarendon, 1910.
GTA	Göttinger theologische Arbeiten
H	Holiness Code
HAL	Köhler, Ludwig, and Walter Baumgartner, eds. <i>Hebräisches und Aramäisches Lexikon zum Alten Testament</i> . 4 vols. 3rd ed. Leiden: Brill, 1967–1990.
HALOT	<i>The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . Ludwig Köhler, Walter Baumgartner, and Johann J. Stamm. Translated and edited under the supervision of Mervyn E. J. Richardson. 4 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1994–1999.
HAT	Handbuch zum Alten Testament
HBCE	Hebrew Bible: A Critical Edition
HBM	Hebrew Bible Monographs
HBS	History of Biblical Studies
HCOT	Historical Commentary on the Old Testament
HKAT	Handkommentar zum Alten Testament
HThKAT	Herders theologischer Kommentar zum Alten Testament
IBC	Interpretation, a Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching
ICC	International Critical Commentary
impf.	imperfect
ISBL	Indiana Studies in Biblical Literature
JBL	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
Joüon	Joüon, Paul. <i>A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew</i> . Translated and revised by T. Muraoka. 2 vols. Subsidia Biblica 14. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1991.
JSHRZ	Jüdische Schriften aus hellenistisch-römischer Zeit
JSJ	Journal for the Study of Judaism
JSJSup	Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement
JSS	<i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i>
JTS	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
KAT	Kommentar zum Alten Testament

KÄT	Kleine ägyptische Texte
KEH	Kurzgefasstes exegetisches Handbuch
KHC	Kurzer Hand-Commentar zum Alten Testament
LÄ	<i>Lexikon der Ägyptologie</i> . Edited by Wolfgang Helck et al. 7 vols. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1972–1992.
LHBOTS	Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies
LXX	Septuagint
MÄSt	Münchener ägyptologische Studien
MDAI	<i>Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts</i>
MT	Masoretic Text
MThS	Münchener theologische Studien
NEchtB	Neue Echter Bibel
NIB	<i>The New Interpreter's Bible</i> . Edited by Leander E. Keck. 12 vols. Nashville: Abingdon, 1994–2004.
NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament
OBC	Orientalia Biblica et Christiana
OBO	Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis
OBO.S	Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis, Sonderband
OBS	Oxford Bible Series
OLA	Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta
OLZ	<i>Orientalische Literaturzeitung</i>
OTE	<i>Old Testament Essays</i>
OTL	Old Testament Library
OTS	Old Testament Studies
PAe	Probleme der Ägyptologie
per.	person
PFES	Publications of the Finnish Exegetical Society
r	recto
RB	<i>Revue biblique</i>
REg	<i>Revue d'égyptologie</i>
RevQ	<i>Revue de Qumrân</i>
SÄK	<i>Studien zur altägyptischen Kultur</i>
SAOC	Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilizations
SB	Sources bibliques
SBAB	Stuttgarter biblische Aufsatzbände
SBB	Stuttgarter biblische Beiträge
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBS	Stuttgarter Bibelstudien
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology

sg.	singular
<i>SJOT</i>	<i>Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament</i>
SOTSMS	Society for Old Testament Studies Monograph Series
<i>SP</i>	<i>Sacra Pagina</i>
STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah
StPohlSM	Studia Pohl Series Maior
Syr.	Syriac
TB	Theologische Bücherei
<i>TDOT</i>	<i>Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament</i> . Edited by G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren. Translated by John T. Willis et al. 15 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974–2006.
Tg.	Targum(im)
<i>TLOT</i>	<i>Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . Edited by Ernst Jenni and Claus Westermann. Translated by Mark E. Biddle. 3 vols. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997.
<i>TLZ</i>	<i>Theologische Literaturzeitung</i>
<i>TZ</i>	<i>Theologische Zeitschrift</i>
<i>UF</i>	<i>Ugarit-Forschungen</i>
v	verso
<i>VT</i>	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
Vulg.	Vulgate
VWGTh	Veröffentlichungen der Wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft für Theologie
WAW	Writings from the Ancient World
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
WO	<i>Die Welt des Orients</i>
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
<i>ZABR</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für altorientalische und biblische Rechtsgeschichte</i>
<i>ZAH</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Althebraistik</i>
<i>ZÄS</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde</i>
<i>ZAW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
ZBK	Zürcher Bibelkommentare
<i>ZTK</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche</i>

Introduction

1.1. On Previous Interpretations of Proverbs 2

The second chapter of the book of Proverbs has long generated a special fascination. Hermann L. Strack, in his Proverbs commentary from the year 1888, already perceived that Prov 2 provides a key to understanding the first collection of the book of Proverbs. He viewed the twenty-two verses as a summary of the instructions in chapters 3–7.¹ In his commentary on Proverbs in the *Handkommentar zum Alten Testament* (1898), Wilhelm Frankenberg also emphasized the thematic intertwining between Prov 2 and the following chapters and underlined especially the connection between 2:12–15 (“Seduction of the Happiness of the Sinners”) and 2:16–19 (“Seduction by the Flattery of the Adulterous”) and the instructions in chapters 1–4 and 5–7.² These accord with other works from the end of the nineteenth century that call attention not only to the independence of the collection of Prov 1–9 but also to the internal relationships of its nine chapters.³

1. See Hermann L. Strack, *Die Sprüche Salomos*, Kurzgefasster Kommentar zu den heiligen Schriften des alten und neuen Testaments sowie zu den Apokryphen A 6 (Nördlingen: Beck, 1888), 313, 315–16, who distinguishes between four sections in ch. 2, which aligns with the following chapters as follows: 3:1–26 as the implementation of 2:1–11; 3:27–4 as the implementation of 2:12–15; ch. 5 as a “first implementation” of 2:16–19; 6:1–19 as a “second implementation” of 2:16–19; chs. 8 and 9 are concluding speeches; see also pp. 315–16, for the articulation of the detailed cross-references.

2. Wilhelm Frankenberg, *Die Sprüche*, HKAT 2/3.1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1898), 3 (“Verführung durch das Glück der Frevler” and “Verführung durch die Schmeichelrede des ehebrecherischen Weibes”). Unless otherwise noted, all translations are mine.

3. Already found in Heinrich Ewald, *Die Dichter des Alten Bundes II: Die Salomonischen Schriften*, 2nd ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1867), 47–48. On

In various investigations, recent scholarship has affirmed the special importance of the second chapter in the overall context of 1–9 and at the same time highlighted the differences to chapter 1.⁴ While chapter 1 diverges into quite distinct sections of “a prologue” (1:1–7), “the warning about wicked men” (1:8–19), and “a warning speech by personified wisdom to the inexperienced” (1:20–33), Prov 2 unfolds a “program of instruction” for what follows.⁵

The verses are closely linked thematically with Prov 3–7 and articulate, following the argument of Arndt Meinhold, the four themes treated in the subsequent sapiential instructions: correct relationship with God (2:5–8; see 3:1–12), conduct with other people (2:9–11; see 3:21–35), the warning about wicked men (2:12–15), and the warning about the foreign woman (2:16–19). The latter two themes are each developed in three instructions: the warning about the wicked men (2:12–15) in 1:8–19; 4:10–19; and 4:20–27, as well as the foreign woman (2:16–19) in the instructions of 5:1–23; 6:20–35; and 7:1–27.⁶

Based on this evidence, scholarship to date on Prov 2 has focused primarily on the connections with chapters 1–9 and the statements on the foreign woman in 2:16–19. A great number of interpretive possibilities have been discussed, beginning from the foreign woman as an adherent to a foreign cult, to the foreign woman as an adulteress or sorceress, reaching as far as the foreign woman as a “poetic personification.”⁷ This is, for example,

the “repetitions in the book of Proverbs and their implications,” see also Franz Delitzsch, *Biblical Commentary on the Proverbs of Solomon*, trans. M. G. Easton, 2 vols. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1874–1875), 3, and on Prov 1–9 esp. 26–27. German original: *Salomonisches Spruchbuch*, BC 4.3 (Leipzig: Dörffling & Franke, 1873).

4. See Robert B. Y. Scott, *Proverbs; Ecclesiastes: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 18 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1965), 42; Otto Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos (Proverbia)*, BKAT 17 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1984), 29; Arndt Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, ZBK 16.1–2 (Zurich: TVZ, 1991), 43–46. The peculiarity of Prov 2 was already underscored by John Miller in his Proverbs commentary from 1872 (Miller, *Commentary on the Proverbs* [London: Nisbet, 1872], 22).

5. Following the formulation by Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 43. On this characteristic, see also Michael V. Fox, “The Pedagogy of Proverbs 2,” *JBL* 113 (1994): 234–36. The structure of ch. 1 must naturally be treated separately; see also below §4.2.5.

6. See Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 43, and the diagram of the structure of Prov 1–9 on p. 46.

7. That they are adherents to a foreign cult can be found in one of the first studies on the topic: Gustav Boström, *Proverbiastudien: Die Weisheit und das fremde Weib in Sprüche 1–9*, Lunds Universitets årsskrift 1/30.3 (Lund: Gleerup, 1935), 123–27,

what Claudia V. Camp suggests for the symbolic meaning of the foreign woman in her work on figures of wisdom. She sees in her a metaphor “for the disruptive and chaotic forces that threaten the shalom of individual and society.”⁸ According to Camp, various themes converge in the figure of the foreign woman: “Problems of identity, problems of theodicy, problems of political struggle, problems of purity, problems of authority, all seem ameliorated by means of Proverbs’ dramatic female imagery, above all by the construction of woman as Other in the figure of the Strange woman.”⁹

Regardless of where one stands within the spectrum of possible interpretations, the example of the foreign woman demonstrates a development that provides a glimpse into the history of a particular theme. While the Hebrew term (זרה) originally means an actual foreign woman, the figure of the foreign or strange woman in Proverbs increasingly becomes the antithesis of Lady Wisdom (as in Prov 9) and later even takes on demonic features that become a serious danger for wisdom (4Q184).¹⁰

The example of the foreign woman opens a broader horizon for the interpretation of Prov 2. The chapter stands not only in connection with the other chapters of the first part of the book of Proverbs, but it also presents its own particular position. Considering previous scholarship on Prov 2 it is obvious that besides the foreign woman, the connections of Prov 2 to the other chapters of Prov 1–9 garnered hardly any attention. This is true, for example, for the 2000 book by Achim Müller. Müller declares that he rejects the thesis that a table of contents was planted in chapter 2 for Prov

which also has more recent adherents; see Joseph Blenkinsopp, “The Social Context of the ‘Outsider Woman’ in Proverbs 1–9,” *Bib* 72 (1991): 472. See also the overviews by Christl Maier, *Die “fremde Frau” in Proverbien 1–9: Eine exegetische und sozialgeschichtliche Studie*, OBO 144 (Fribourg: Presses Universitaires; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1995), 7–13; and Claudia V. Camp, *Wise, Strange and Holy: The Strange Woman and the Making of the Bible*, JSOTSup 320 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2000), 40–43.

8. Claudia V. Camp, *Wisdom and the Feminine in the Book of Proverbs*, BLS 11 (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1985), 116; See also Camp, *Wise, Strange and Holy*, 66–71.

9. Camp, *Wise, Strange and Holy*, 70–71. Maier, *Die “fremde Frau,”* 252, underlines the fact that the figure of the foreign woman “should not be interpreted one dimensionally.”

10. See Maier, *Die “fremde Frau,”* 253–54; Stuart Weeks, *Instruction and Imagery in Proverbs 1–9* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); 164–68; and Nancy Tan Nam Hoon, *The “Foreignness” of the Foreign Woman in Proverbs 1–9: A Study of the Origin and Development of a Biblical Motif*, BZAW 381 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2008), 165–72.

1–9.¹¹ He argues especially for the connection between Prov 2 and Prov 4 on the basis of lexemic correspondences and finds relationships in 4:10–29 that refer not only to 2:12–15, but also to 2:20 for example, and therefore a verse that is often ruled out of the original layer of 2:1–22.¹² Even if the details of Müller’s study should be evaluated critically, it articulates two important aspects that are significant for the present study: Müller points out the necessity for a lexemic investigation that goes beyond only indicating mere thematic connections.¹³ He is able to demonstrate convincingly that the relationships to chapter 4 are considerably more extensive than those between Prov 2 and chapters 5–7 or chapter 3, which by itself does not, however, say anything about the redaction-historical place of Prov 2 in the first collection.¹⁴ At the same time, Müller’s analysis elucidates that the connections to other texts transgress the classical literary-critical categorizations of chapter 2; in the present case the correspondences are “distributed throughout the entirety of chapter 2.”¹⁵

This final point is significant for the analysis of Prov 2 because it leads to the question of what degree literary criticism can facilitate a better understanding of the text. Earlier scholarship was very optimistic in this regard and separated out not only individual verses but also larger passages as secondary. One can refer paradigmatically to Roger Norman Whybray’s investigation concerning wisdom in Proverbs from 1965. Whybray saw the original layer of Prov 2 in 2:1, 9, 16–19, which are only six of the twenty-two verses.¹⁶ Whybray is not alone in his attempt to tackle the complex text

11. Achim Müller, *Proverbien 1–9: Der Weisheit neue Kleider*, BZAW 291 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2000), 60.

12. Müller, *Proverbien 1–9*, 61; for compositional analysis of Prov 2, see below, §2.2.1.

13. This already appears in the opening citation of Strack’s 1888 commentary, which comprehensively expounds the lexemic commonalities between Prov 2 and the following chapters (Strack, *Die Sprüche*, 315–16). For an evaluation of Müller’s study, see §4.1 of this work.

14. See Müller, *Proverbien 1–9*, 61. The problem with Müller’s work is that he in part draws wide-reaching literary-critical and redaction-historical conclusions from a rather limited textual basis; on this see also the queries by Jutta Krispenz, review of *Proverbien 1–9*, by Achim Müller, *TLZ* 127 (2002): 163–64.

15. Müller, *Proverbien 1–9*, 72 (“über das ganze Kapitel 2 verteilt”).

16. See Roger N. Whybray, *Wisdom in Proverbs: The Concept of Wisdom in Proverbs 1–9*, SBT 45 (London: SCM, 1965), 40; and Whybray, “Some Literary Problems in Proverbs I–IX,” *VT* 16 (1966): 492. Since then Whybray has, however, grown more

of Prov 2 by means of literary-critical operations. For example, Crawford H. Toy and Carl Steuernagel identify 2:5–8 as a theological interpretation, and Diethelm Michel and Rolf Schäfer designate the section concerning the foreign woman in 2:16–19 secondary.¹⁷

To begin, the last two verses of Prov 2 were seen as objectionable. Michel attempts to identify an apocalyptic addition in 2:21–22; similarly, Christl Maier does not view the verses as apocalyptic but evaluates them as secondary.¹⁸ Conversely, others have called attention to various internal relationships within the chapter indicating a masterful overall composition and are thus rather skeptical of literary critical operations.¹⁹

A third overarching question—beyond the question of the position of Prov 2 within the collection of 1–9 and possible literary-critical operations in chapter 2—concerns the intertextual connections between Prov 2 and other Old Testament literature. By discussing Whybray's thesis, William McKane emphasizes the proximity of Prov 2 and other traditions in his study from the year 1970. He especially highlights the allusions to Deuteronomy and speaks of a "reinterpretation" of earlier materials.²⁰ Otto

cautious; see Whybray, *The Composition of the Book of Proverbs*, JSOTSup 168 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994), 17–18.

17. Carl Steuernagel, "Die Sprüche," in *Die Heilige Schrift des Alten Testaments*, ed. Alfred Bertholet, 4th ed. (Tübingen: Mohr, 1923): 281; Crawford H. Toy, *The Book of Proverbs*, ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1899), 34–38; Diethelm Michel, "Proverbia 2: Ein Dokument der Geschichte der Weisheit" in *Alttestamentlicher Glaube und Biblische Theologie: Festschrift für Horst Dietrich Preuß zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Jutta Hausmann and Horst D. Zobel (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1992), 239–40. Rolf Schäfer, *Die Poesie der Weisen: Dichotomie als Grundstruktur der Lehr- und Weisheitsgedichte in Proverbien 1–9*, WMANT 77 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1999), 67, is generally quite cautious; however, he considers 2:5–8 and 16–19 "reinterpretive" passages.

18. See Maier, *Die "fremde Frau,"* 91–92. In his detailed analysis of Prov 2, Michel arrives at the following basic layer: 2:1–4, 9–11, 12–15, 20 (see Michel, "Proverbia 2," 240–41 with an overview of the textual layers). This perspective also appears in Müller, *Proverbien 1–9*, 68.

19. See Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 66; and Hans Ferdinand Fuhs, *Das Buch der Sprichwörter: Ein Kommentar*, FB 95 (Würzburg: Echter, 2001), 58–59. On attempts to subdivide the text in two parts (1–11 and 12–22 as, e.g., already Ewald, *Die Dichter*, 81), see below §2.2.1.

20. See William McKane, *Proverbs: A New Approach*, OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1970), 279–81, who also finds such "reinterpretation" outside Prov 2 and on this basis separates out particular passages as secondary.

Plöger adopts this position in his commentary on Proverbs for the “Bib-lischer Kommentar” (1984) and sees two approaches converging with one another in Prov 2: “Yahweh piety and wisdom instruction.”²¹ Other scholars in turn reference the similarity of the content of the final verses 2:20–22 to Deut 28 and to Ps 37, which yields a quite complex overall result.²²

Summarizing the observations made so far, three aspects can be maintained. (1) Proverbs 2 is, on the one hand, important to the overall outline of Prov 1–9 and is linked by a whole range of themes to the other sections of the first part of the book of Proverbs. (2) At the same time, the instruction of 2:1–22 indicates several problems that in the past have often been resolved with the help of literary criticism. They concern, to cite Plöger once again, the relationship between “Yahweh piety and wisdom instruction.”²³ Finally, (3) the result is made complex by the fact that within Prov 1–9 a “relecture” of other traditions can be found in which the Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic tradition is of particular importance.

1.2. Proverbs and Deuteronomy in Previous Scholarship

The question on the relationship between Prov 1–9 and the book of Deuteronomy leads into one of the most important scholarly debates on wisdom literature. This debate results from the fact that the book of Proverbs connects with both ancient Near Eastern literature and Old Testament texts. Scholars of the nineteenth century took for granted that the book of Proverbs should be understood on the basis of its location within Old Testament literature. One reason for this position was the fact that the ancient Near Eastern parallels to Proverbs had not yet been discovered.²⁴ A representative position for scholarship of this time can be found in Franz Delitzsch, who wrote in his commentary from 1873 with regard to Prov 1–9: “Generally, the poetry of this writer has its hidden roots in the older writings. Who does not hear, to mention only one thing, in i. 7–ix. an

21. Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 25.

22. Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 70–71; Bruce K. Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 236, with reference to Deut 28:15–68; and Michael V. Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, AB 18A (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 124, with reference to Ps 37; on this, see §3.2.1 below.

23. Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 25.

24. See the overview in Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 1–4, 11–12.

echo of the old שמע (hear), Deut vi. 4–9, cf. xi. 18–21? The whole poetry of this writer savours of the Book of Deuteronomy.”²⁵

It was indisputable for Delitzsch that the poetry of the author of Prov 1–9 “has its hidden roots in the older writings.” Delitzsch was not alone in holding this position. Based on his studies on the book of Deuteronomy Abraham Kuenen summarized in 1869: “Proverbial poetry in the seventh century also had its Deuteronomist, the author of Prov. i 7–ix 18.”²⁶

Whereas Kuenen dated both Deuteronomy and the book of Proverbs in the late monarchic period, scholars two decades later located Proverbs in the Persian era. In his commentary from 1898, Frankenberg stressed the following with regard to the book of Proverbs as part of Old Testament wisdom literature:

The literature of *hokhmah* belongs squarely in the postexilic period since it was only then that the historical conditions for its development existed. It presupposes the law with its teaching—established as an unshakable truth through the experience of the exile—that God has decreed life for those who heed his commandments and death for those who transgress them.²⁷

The analysis of the connections between the book of Proverbs and other Old Testament literature, in particular Deuteronomy, was connected to methodological questions. Of special importance is a study by the French biblical scholar André Robert. In the years 1934–1935, spread over a number of issues of *Revue Biblique*, Robert published several articles on “les attaches littéraires bibliques de Prov. I–IX” (“the biblical literary ties of Prov 1–9”). The title already expresses the nature of Robert’s study: Robert

25. Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 34.

26. Abraham Kuenen, *De Godsdienst van Israel tot den ondergang van den jood-schen Staat I*. (Haarlem: Kruseman, 1869), 456; and Rudolf Smend, “The Interpretation of Wisdom in Nineteenth-Century Scholarship,” in *Wisdom in Ancient Israel: Essays in Honor of J. A. Emerton*, ed. John Day, Robert P. Gordon, and H. G. M. Williamson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 262.

27. Frankenberg, *Die Sprüche*, 6: “Die Literatur der Chokmah gehört ganz der nachexilischen Zeit an, da erst in dieser die histor. Bedingungen zu ihrer Entstehung gegeben sind; ihre Voraussetzung ist das Gesetz mit seiner durch die Erfahrung des Exiles zur unerschütterlichen Wahrheit gewordenen Lehre, dass Gott auf die Erfüllung seiner Gebote Leben, auf ihre Übertretung Tod gesetzt hat.”

addresses literary relationships and does not investigate along the lines of classic tradition-historical criticism. He instead focused on the interdependencies of two written traditions.²⁸

Even if his method—Robert speaks of the “anthological process” (“procédé anthologique”)—can be critiqued with regard to its guiding criteria and the fact that Robert proceeds more inductively than with a reflective and systematically substantiated approach, he still demonstrates an abundance of relationships for Prov 1–9 that prove groundbreaking for the further work on the book of Proverbs.²⁹ The “style anthologique” that Robert recognizes in the first collection allows for the verification of a whole series of intertextual interconnections with Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic literature and also with prophecy and the Psalms.³⁰

Scholarship after Robert has continued in this vein and pointed out that other parts of the book of Proverbs, or, as the case may be, individual chapters within Prov 1–9, are connected with the central texts of Deuteronomy. In an article from the year 1965, George Wesley Buchanan, for example, went so far as to read the entire section of Prov 2:20–7:3 as a “midrashic expose” (“exposé midrashique”) on Deut 6:4–9 and 11:18–22.³¹ Other scholars discussed proximity to the Decalogue and its two sections for Prov 30:1–14: verses 1–9 articulate the relationship with God and are therefore similar to the first tablet of the Ten Commandments. Proverbs 30:1–14 instead concern human relationships and can be related with the second tablet.³² A relationship to the Decalogue has also been considered

28. Gerlinde Baumann, *Die Weisheitsgestalt in Proverbien 1–9: Traditionsgeschichtliche und theologische Studien*, FAT 16 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1996), 58.

29. For the anthological process, see Renée Bloch, “Littéraires (Genres),” *DBSup* 5 (1957): 411. For proceeding inductively, see §1.2 of the present work.

30. For the first collection, see André Robert, “Les attaches littéraires bibliques de Prov I–IX,” *RB* 44 (1935): 348. For examples throughout scripture, see Robert, “Attaches,” 347, Deutero-Isaiah: Isa 41:2, Prov 8:14; Isa 49:1–5, Prov 8:22; Trito-Isaiah: Isa 65:2, Prov 1:22; Isa 66:14, Prov 3:8; Deut 8:5, Prov 3:11–12.

31. George W. Buchanan, “Midrashim Pré-Tannaïtes: A propos de Prov I–IX,” *RB* 72 (1965): 238. See also Gerald H. Wilson, “‘The Words of the Wise’: The Intent and Significance of Qohelet 12:9–14,” *JBL* 103 (1984): 183–89, who collects a series of terminological commonalities between Prov 1–9 and Deuteronomy.

32. See, e.g., Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 496. This thesis is, however, significantly dependent on the delimitation of the unit. See also Michael V. Fox, *Proverbs 10–31*, AB 18B (New York: Doubleday, 2009), 850, who separates 30:1–9 from 30:10–33; and below §4.3.

for Prov 6:20–35. Similarly, Prov 3:1–3; 4:1–9; 6:20–23 have been linked to the Shema in Deut 6:4–9.³³

The latter was pointed out in the work of Michael Fishbane, who—like Robert—combined his observations on the textual evidence with methodological aspects. In an article from 1977, Fishbane saw the instruction of Prov 6:20–35 as influenced by Deut 5:6–18 and 6:4–9.³⁴

Deuteronomy	Proverbs
6:4, 6	6:20
6:6	6:22
6:8	6:21
5:9–11	6:34, 29
5:16	6:20
5:17 (5:18)	6:32
5:17 (5:19)	6:30–31
5:18 (5:21)	6:25, 29

Fishbane developed his concept of “inner-biblical exegesis/interpretation” on the foundation of this and other literary evidence.³⁵ This program based itself on a genuine connection between postbiblical and biblical literature:

33. Schäfer, *Die Poesie*, 268. Also Müller, *Proverbien 1–9*, 122–23. See also, for 3:3, Gerrit Wildeboer, *Die Sprüche*, KHC 15 (Freiburg im Breisgau: Mohr, 1897), 8 with reference to Deut 6:8 and 11:18.

34. Michael Fishbane, “Torah and Tradition,” in *Tradition and Theology in the Old Testament*, ed. Douglas A. Knight (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977), 284, here pointing esp. to Deut 5 and 6, though he later became more cautious; see Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 288, esp. n. 20 with discussion of the approaches of Robert, Delitzsch, Buchanan, and his own (284).

35. A detailed overview cannot be provided at this point. For earlier works on the topic, see, e.g., the study by Albert Gélin on the phenomenon of “relectures bibliques” (“La question des ‘relectures’ bibliques à l’intérieur d’une tradition vivante,” *SP* 1 [1959]: 303–15) and that by Nahum M. Sarna from the year 1963 on Ps 89 (“Psalm 89: A Study in Inner Biblical Exegesis,” in *Studies in Biblical Interpretation* [Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2000], 377–94). A recent overview appears in Bernard M. Levinson, *Legal Revision and Religious Renewal in Ancient Israel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), ch. 6 (95–181). See also Daniel Boyarin, *Intertextuality and the Reading of Midrash*, ISBL (Bloomington: Indiana State University Press, 2006); and for an overview Carol Bakhos, “Midrash,” in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Biblical Interpretation*, ed. Steven L. McKenzie, 2 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 2:10–18.

“The post-biblical relationship between authoritative texts and their reuse *also* exists in the biblical period.... For in the earlier period we can apprehend the later phenomenon in its nascent, pre-canonical modes.”³⁶

Fishbane started with the postbiblical phenomenon found especially in Jewish literature and then transferred it to the biblical literature. This methodology is linked to a different understanding of “torah.” The term can identify, on the one hand, “specific authoritative teachings” in the pre-canonical Hebrew Bible and, on the other hand, the canonical text itself at a later time.³⁷ The decisive point is that in both cases the torah stands for teachings—to cite Fishbane once again—“whose authority and formulation precede their reuse by Tradition.”³⁸

From Fishbane’s work it is only a short step to scholars who define the relationship between Proverbs and Deuteronomy in terms similar to those used by Delitzsch or Frankenberg. In Hans Ferdinand Fuhs’s 2001 commentary on Proverbs, it is out of question that the book of Proverbs presupposes the Pentateuch and develops the idea of a faith grounded on YHWH’s Torah.³⁹ An influence of certain passages in Proverbs by the commandments and Deuteronomy is also mentioned in Tremper Longman’s 2006 Proverbs commentary, even though Longman emphasizes that “law and wisdom are not identical.”⁴⁰ Finally, in one of the most recent commentaries on Proverbs (2017), Ryan O’Dowd drew an explicit link to Delitzsch and argued in favor of a connection between the book of Proverbs and Deuteronomy because “law and wisdom are not as opposed as was once believed.”⁴¹

O’Dowd’s statement refers to a research tradition that took a contrary position to Delitzsch, Robert, and Fishbane. This position is paradigmatically formulated in one of the most influential commentaries on the book of Proverbs from the last two decades. In his 2000

36. Fishbane, “Torah and Tradition,” 275, emphasis original.

37. Fishbane, “Torah and Tradition,” 275–76.

38. Fishbane, “Torah and Tradition,” 276.

39. Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 18 (“ein an JHWHs Tora ausgerichteteter Glaube”).

40. Tremper Longman III, *Proverbs*, Baker Commentary on the Old Testament Wisdom and Psalms (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006), 81. See also Longman, *Proverbs*, 131 with n. 3 where he distances himself from the position of Richard Clifford that the laws, mentioned in Prov 3:1–12, are “totally distinct from the laws found in the Pentateuch.”

41. Ryan O’Dowd, *Proverbs*, Story of God Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017), 40.

commentary for the Anchor Bible Series, Michael Fox argued regarding the similarities between Proverbs and Deuteronomy: “Even if Proverbs and Deuteronomy use similar terms and motifs in speaking of wisdom instruction and Yahweh’s Torah, that does not mean that these come from the same source, only that terms of honor learned from the one book are used in the other.”⁴²

A similar position can be found in the work of Whybray and in recent commentaries on Proverbs such as, for example, by Richard J. Clifford (1999), Leo G. Perdue (2000), and James A. Loader (2014),⁴³ all of which follow a position that was shaped by a study from Moshe Weinfeld. In his 1972 book Weinfeld argued that the book of Deuteronomy should be viewed against the backdrop of a strong sapiential tradition.⁴⁴ Based on earlier investigations, Weinfeld developed the argument that Deuteronomy originated in wisdom circles of Jerusalem.⁴⁵ Against this backdrop, Weinfeld explained the similarities and affinity in content of Deuteronomy and Proverbs in terms of a one-way influence of wisdom upon Deuteronomy and not the other way around.⁴⁶ Weinfeld’s position shaped research on Proverbs for decades because he offered an approach that made it possible to explain the similarity between certain passages in Proverbs and key texts in Deuteronomy such as Deut 5, 6, or 11 by the sapiential influence on the book of Deuteronomy and not by a specific connection of the book of Proverbs with Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic thought. By doing

42. Fox, *Proverbs* 1–9, 79.

43. Roger N. Whybray, *The Intellectual Tradition in the Old Testament*, BZAW 135 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1974), 121 n. 191; Richard J. Clifford, *Proverbs: A Commentary*, OTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1999), 81 n. 7; Leo G. Perdue, *Proverbs*, IBC (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2000), 129; and James A. Loader, *Proverbs 1–9*, HCOT (Leuven: Peeters, 2014), 73 and 274 n. 9.

44. Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic School* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1972).

45. In his study Weinfeld presented thoughts that he first published in the Yehezkel Kaufmann Jubilee Volume from 1960 and in a couple of other articles: “The Dependence of Deuteronomy upon Wisdom Literature,” in *Yehezkel Kaufmann Jubilee Volume: Studies in Bible and Jewish Religion Dedicated to Yehezkel Kaufmann on the Occasion of His 70. Birthday*, ed. Menahem Haran (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1960), 89–105 [Hebrew]. See as well Weinfeld, “The Origin of Humanism in Deuteronomy,” *JBL* 80 (1961): 241–47; and Weinfeld, “Deuteronomy: The Present State of Inquiry,” *JBL* 86 (1967): 249–62.

46. A summary of the features in which the book of Deuteronomy shows an affiliation with wisdom can be found in Fox, *Proverbs* 10–31, 952.

so, a separation was created between wisdom literature and Deuteronomy, which constitutes one of the main theological texts of the Old Testament.⁴⁷

It is helpful to step back for a moment at this point and take a brief look into the history of research. Weinfeld's position can already be found when Robert published his articles on the connection between Proverbs and other biblical literature.⁴⁸ In his 1933 book, Johannes Fichtner presented the thesis that the terms "torah" and "mitsvah" in Proverbs are always used with a sapiential, "hokmatic," rather than a "nomistic," sense.⁴⁹ He argued that there is a decidedly nontheological use of the term "torah," which one cannot derive from the theological meaning of the word. It instead forms the root of the understanding of torah as instruction.⁵⁰

Fichtner's position is connected to a shift of paradigm in research on Proverbs. Whereas scholars during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries interpreted Proverbs as a *sui generis* part of biblical literature, the discovery of ancient Near Eastern parallels, particularly in Egyptian wisdom literature, in the 1920s led to a fundamental shift in perspective: Whatever resembled ancient Near Eastern texts must be foreign to the Bible. With the discovery of the Egyptian Instruction of Amenemope in 1923 and its parallels with Prov 22:17–24:22, a flood of comparative studies appeared that paved the way for a new understanding of biblical wisdom literature. Whereas previously such literature was regarded as largely unique to ancient Israel, now it served as a window into the ancient Near Eastern world. The studies of Walter Baumgartner and of the aforementioned Fichtner, both published in 1933, emphasize the similarities of

47. For the previous argumentation, see also Bernd U. Schipper, "Afterword," 308–10.

48. One example, almost a decade earlier than Weinfeld, is André Barucq, *Le livre des Proverbes*, SB (Paris: Gabalda, 1964), 31, who argued against Robert, discussing a reverse dependence in his Proverbs commentary: rather than the texts of the book of Proverbs referring to earlier literature, these are instead marked by intellectual material from wisdom.

49. Johannes Fichtner, *Die altorientalische Weisheit in ihrer israelitisch-jüdischen Ausprägung: Eine Studie zur Nationalisierung der Weisheit in Israel*, BZAW 62 (Gies-sen: Töpelmann, 1933), 83; see also Gerhard Liedke and Claus Petersen, "תורה," *TLOT* 3:1416.

50. See also the argumentation by Liedke and Petersen, "תורה," 1416–17; and Liedke, *Gestalt und Bezeichnung alttestamentlicher Rechtssätze*, WMANT 39 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1971), 195–96, who sees the origins of torah in the earlier sapiential instruction.

biblical wisdom literature to the ancient Near East and its differences from other biblical texts.⁵¹ This increasingly led to the view that the book of Proverbs was closely related to ancient Near Eastern texts but not to other biblical texts. Thus, in 1958, Hartmut Gese, following Baumgartner, wrote, “It is widely acknowledged that the wisdom instruction is a foreign body in the world of the Old Testament.”⁵² The same position can be found two decades later in an influential study by Horst Dietrich Preuss, who defined wisdom literature as a “foreign body” within the Old Testament. From a more systematic perspective, there can be no doubt that this position, established by Fichtner in 1933 and carried on by Gese and Preuss some decades later, was influenced by the “Wort-Gottes-Theologie” shaped by the work of Karl Barth. The special focus on the revelation of the divine word in German theology of the early twentieth century led to a perspective that contrasted the book of Deuteronomy with its concept of divine revelation with Old Testament literature that display similarities to ancient Near Eastern literature. To articulate it differently, the fundamental differences between the *religionsgeschichtliche Schule* of Hermann Gunkel or Hugo Gressmann on one side and Old Testament scholars such as Walter Eichrodt and Johannes Hempel on the other also had an influence on the understanding of the location of the book of Proverbs between the ancient Near East and the Old Testament.⁵³

When summarizing the discussion in previous research on Proverbs and Deuteronomy, three aspects are important:

(1) Whichever position one follows, there is textual evidence for a connection between Proverbs and Deuteronomical/Deuteronomistic thought that must be explained: the similarity of some passages in Proverbs with the Decalogue (Deut 5), the Shema (Deut 6), and a possible connection between the instructions in Prov 1–9 and Deuteronomy.

51. Walter Baumgartner, *Israelitische und altorientalische Weisheit*, Sammlung gemeinverständlicher Vorträge und Schriften aus dem Gebiet der Theologie und Religionsgeschichte 166 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1933).

52. Hartmut Gese, *Lehre und Wirklichkeit in der alten Weisheit: Studien zu den Sprüchen Salomos und dem Buche Hiob* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1958), 2 (“Es ist anerkannt, dass die Lehre der Weisheit in der Welt des Alten Testaments einen Fremdkörper darstellt”); see also Horst Dietrich Preuss, *Einführung in die alttestamentliche Weisheitsliteratur*, Urban-Taschenbücher 383 (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1987), 186–87.

53. For the history of research see Rudolf Smend, *Kritiker und Exegeten: Porträtskizzen zu vier Jahrhunderten alttestamentlicher Wissenschaft* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2017), 751–55.

(2) If one attempts to interpret this evidence by means of the theory of sapiential influence on the book of Deuteronomy (e.g., Weinfeld, Fox), one must interact with current research on the book of Deuteronomy and its literary formation.⁵⁴ Already Alexander Rofé in a 1974 review of Weinfeld's book pointed to the fact that the book of Deuteronomy can hardly be treated as if it were of one piece.⁵⁵ Given that the book of Deuteronomy is the product of a complex redactional history that comes to an end in the Second Temple period, its authors cannot belong to wisdom circles at the royal court of Jerusalem as Weinfeld argued. Therefore, it is no longer possible to argue for a "one-way direction"—from wisdom to Deuteronomy. Rather, one must think in terms of a complex interplay between wisdom and torah, which can probably be linked to both the literary formation of Deuteronomy and the composition of the book of Proverbs.

(3) Both insights call for a new investigation of the well-known literary evidence. What is the role of Deuteronomy in the book of Proverbs in general and within Prov 1–9 in particular? Further, how does Deuteronomy relate to Prov 2, which has a unique position within the first part of the book of Proverbs? If one takes seriously the dictum of Strack from the year 1888 that chapter 2 is a "summary" of Prov 1–9 and connects this with the reception of Deuteronomy, then redaction and composition-historical questions concerning not only Prov 1–9 but the entire book of Proverbs take center stage.⁵⁶ To what degree—one must ask—can the reception of Deuteronomy revealed in Proverbs, and concretely in the frame around the actual proverbial wisdom (1–9; 28–31), shed light on the composition and formation of the book of Proverbs itself?

1.3. Egyptian Wisdom Literature and the Phenomenon of "Textual Coherence"

The overviews on previous interpretations of Prov 2 (§1.1) and the relationship between Deuteronomy and the book of Proverbs (§1.2) have shown that an investigation of the actual biblical texts cannot omit methodological reflection. Robert, for example, established the "antho-

54. This paragraph draws on Schipper, "Afterword," 311.

55. Alexander Rofé, review of *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic School*, by Moshe Weinfeld, in *Deuteronomy: Issues and Interpretation*, OTS (London: T&T Clark, 2002), 221–30; repr. from *Christian News from Israel* 24 (1974): 204–9.

56. Strack, *Die Sprüche*, 313.

logical method,” which helped him to explain terminological similarities between Deuteronomy and the book of Proverbs. Fishbane, on the other hand, used the connection between Prov 6:20–35 and Deut 5 and 6 as one piece of evidence for his model of “innerbiblical exegesis” or “innerbiblical interpretation.”

Both approaches were developed further.⁵⁷ In a response to a fundamental critique of Michael Fishbane’s book *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* by Lyle Eslinger, for example, Benjamin D. Sommer emphasized the difference between the concept of “intertextuality,” which is debated in current scholarship, and the paradigms of “innerbiblical exegesis” and “innerbiblical allusion.”⁵⁸ The main point of critique for Eslinger was Fishbane’s diachronic approach, since he builds his argument on historical assumptions. Sommer pointed out that innerbiblical exegesis and innerbiblical allusion “necessarily involves a diachronic component,” but intertextuality focuses on linkages between texts “from the cultural system in which the text exists.”⁵⁹ This fundamental distinction becomes even clearer if one looks at the differences between innerbiblical exegesis and innerbiblical allusions.⁶⁰ Both concepts lead to conclusions on dating texts since one text is later than the other, but there is one fundamental difference. Innerbiblical exegesis points to a direct connection between two texts, where the later text “exists to explain the earlier text.” In contrast, innerbiblical allusion points to elements such as shared terms as well as stylistic and thematic patterns that connect two or more texts.⁶¹

A look into the book of Proverbs shows that within wisdom literature one can find a literary phenomenon that goes beyond what is classically described as innerbiblical exegesis or innerbiblical allusion. It is a phe-

57. See the overview in Bernd U. Schipper, *Hermeneutik der Tora: Studien zur Traditionsgeschichte von Prov 2 und zur Komposition von Prov 1–9*, BZAW 432 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2012), 10–18.

58. Lyle Eslinger, “Inner-biblical Exegesis and Inner-biblical Allusion: The Question of Category,” *VT* 42 (1992): 47–58.

59. Benjamin D. Sommer, “Exegesis, Allusion and Intertextuality in the Hebrew Bible: A Response to Lyle Eslinger,” *VT* 46 (1996): 486.

60. In his work, Sommer consistently uses Ziva Ben-Porat’s understanding of allusion: Ben-Porat, “The Poetics of Literary Allusion,” *PTL: A Journal for Descriptive Poetics and Theory of Literature* 1 (1976): 105–28.

61. George L. Brooke, “Inner-biblical Interpretation,” in McKenzie, *Oxford Encyclopedia of Biblical Interpretation*, 1:445; and Sommer, “Exegesis, Allusion and Intertextuality in the Hebrew Bible,” 485, 487.

nomenon Daniel C. Snell labeled “twice-told proverbs” in a study from 1992. In this study, Snell listed about two hundred examples of sapiential sentences from the book of Proverbs that occur twice.⁶² Snell summarized this material and pointed to different types of quotations, such as whole verses or half verses, repeated with one, two, or more dissimilar words. Further evaluation of the material has shown that the literary phenomenon in Proverbs can be connected to ancient Near Eastern, in particular Egyptian, wisdom literature. Since the Egyptian material leads to fundamental insights about the rules of scribalism and textuality, a closer look into the Egyptian texts themselves is required.⁶³

1.3.1. Citations and Allusions in Egyptian Wisdom Literature

In Egyptology, broad scholarship has developed on the reception of earlier literature in what is called the Late Period, that is, the historical period reaching from the seventh–sixth centuries BCE until the Greco-Roman era.⁶⁴ Using quite different terminology, whether “restoration,” “renaissance,” or “repristination,” this scholarship has pointed to a phenomenon empirically demonstrable in the texts themselves.⁶⁵ The Egyptian material provides evidence that the individual citations not only allude to a spe-

62. Daniel C. Snell, *Twice-Told Proverbs and the Composition of the Book of Proverbs* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1993), 70. See also Knut M. Heim, *Poetic Imagination in Proverbs: Variant Repetitions and the Nature of Poetry*, BBRSup 4 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2013).

63. For the following see Bernd U. Schipper, “Phenomenon of ‘Textual Coherence,’” 101–10. On the importance of ancient Near Eastern texts for the dynamics of textuality, see also David M. Carr, *Writing on the Tablet of the Heart: Origins of Scripture and Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 17–91.

64. See also Jan Assmann, “Rezeption und Auslegung in Ägypten: Das ‘Denkmal memphitischer Theologie’ als Auslegung der heliopolitanischen Kosmogonie,” in *Rezeption und Auslegung im Alten Testament und in seinem Umfeld: Ein Symposium aus Anlass des 60. Geburtstags von Odil Hannes Steck*, ed. Reinhard Gregor Kratz and Thomas Krüger, OBO 153 (Fribourg: Presses Universitaires; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1997), 126.

65. See, e.g., Jochem Kahl, *Siut-Theben: Zur Wertschätzung von Tradition im alten Ägypten*, PAe 23 (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 351, who uses the term “repristination” in place of earlier approaches by Hellmut Brunner and John A. Wilson. On the discussion as a whole, see also Susanne Neureiter, “Eine neue Interpretation des Archaismus,” SÄK 21 (1994): 222–42.

cific text, but that each author refers to the preexisting written tradition.⁶⁶ A stream of tradition can be established for Egyptian wisdom literature from the Old Kingdom (2700–2200 BCE) to the Greco-Roman period.⁶⁷ Not only were earlier texts transmitted, but they were also taken up by later texts.⁶⁸

The aforementioned period, the seventh–sixth centuries and the Twenty-Sixth Dynasty, accounts for a large number of earlier texts, for example, copies of the Instruction of Cheti, of Any, of Hardjedef, of Amenemhet, and of Amenemope.⁶⁹ These instructions were not merely read at that time; they were also incorporated into new literary works. In an article from the year 1979 concerning “citations from life instructions,” Hellmut Brunner called attention to texts from the first millennium that quoted those from the earlier, “classical” sapiential instructions. These citations appear in the context of a technique of reference that goes back to the Middle Kingdom. Citations from the Instruction of Hardjedef appear in the Instruction for Merikare (P 127–28), in Papyrus Berlin 1197 (Abydos, Eleventh Dynasty), and in the tomb of Onuris-Cha (Thebes 359), and until the Instruction of Khasheshonqi from the Persian period.⁷⁰ What is inter-

66. A short overview of the material appears in Bernd U. Schipper, “Kultur und Kontext: Zum Kulturtransfer zwischen Ägypten und Israel/Juda in der 25. und 26. Dynastie,” *SÄK* 29 (2001): 315–17; a detailed presentation of the citations from the various texts is found in Waltraut Guglielmi, “Zur Adaption und Funktion von Zitaten,” *SÄK* 11 (1984): 349–50.

67. This was demonstrated by Brunner in various works; see Hellmut Brunner, “Eine neue Entlehnung aus der Lehre des Djedefhor,” *MDAI* 14 (1956): 17–19; Brunner, “Ein weiteres Djedefhor-Zitat,” *MDAI* 19 (1963): 53; Brunner, “Djedefhor in der römischen Kaiserzeit,” in *Recueil d'études dédiées à Vilmos Wessetzky à l'occasion de son 65. anniversaire*, ed. László Kákossy, StudAeg 1 (Budapest: Eotvos Lorand Tudományegyetem, 1974), 55–64; and Brunner, “Zitate aus Lebenslehren,” in *Studien zu altägyptischen Lebenslehren*, ed. Erik Hornung and Othmar Keel, OBO 28 (Fribourg: Presses Universitaires; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1979), 112–15; and the lexicon article written by him on “citations” in *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* (Brunner, “Zitate,” *LÄ* 6:1415–20).

68. See also Schipper, “Phenomenon of ‘Textual Coherence,’” 100–126, on which this chapter relies.

69. See the summary in Ursula Verhoeven, “Von hieratischen Literaturwerken der Spätzeit,” in *Literatur und Politik im pharaonischen und ptolemäischen Ägypten*, ed. Jan Assmann and Elke Blumenthal, Bibliothèque d'étude 127 (Cairo: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 1999), 259.

70. See the compilation of the evidence in Brunner, “Zitate aus Lebenslehren,”

esting in these references is not only the citation itself, but also that the transposition of the parts of the sentence and the exchange of the verb for a synonym is corroborated.⁷¹

Hardjedef II	Merikare E
(2) Make good [<i>s:mnḥ</i>] ⁷² your house [<i>pr</i>] in the necropolis [<i>ḥr-nṯr</i>], make worthy [<i>s:igr</i>] ⁷³ your place [<i>s.t</i>] in the West (<i>jmn.tt</i>).	(127) Make worthy [<i>s:igr</i>] your place [<i>s.t</i>] in the West (<i>jmn.tt</i>), (128) make good [<i>s:mnḥ</i>] your house [<i>ḥw.t</i>] in the necropolis [<i>ḥr-nṯr</i>], by being upright, by doing justice [<i>mʒ^c.t</i>].

The Instruction for Merikare cites from the Instruction of Hardjedef using chiasitic word order. Hardjedef 2b is quoted exactly in Merikare 127, whereas Hardjedef 2a is quoted in Merikare 128.⁷⁴ The instruction of Merikare transposes the two parts of the sentence from Hardjedef, and in one instance replaces a word with a synonym: the word for “house,” *pr*, is replaced by the related term *ḥw.t*.⁷⁵ The most interesting addition is the subsequent clause, “by being upright, by doing *Maʿat*,” which marks a new emphasis. Whereas Hardjedef does not make a connection to *maʿat*, justice (*mʒ^c.t*) becomes the decisive standard for Merikare.⁷⁶ The scribe of the

121–22. For reading the Egyptian name on the main manuscript of the instruction on Pap. British Museum 10508 as “Khasheshonqi” and not in the traditional way as “Ankhsheshonqi,” see Joachim F. Quack, *Einführung in die altägyptische Literaturgeschichte III: Die demotische und gräko-ägyptische Literatur*, 2nd ed., Einführungen und Quellentexte zur Ägyptologie 3 (Berlin: LIT, 2009), 111.

71. See Guglielmi, “Adaption,” 352. Hieroglyphic text of Hardjedef II in Wolfgang Helck, *Die Lehre des Djedefhor und die Lehre eines Mannes an seinen Sohn*, KÄT 9 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1984), 6. Text of Merikare in Joachim F. Quack, *Studien zur Lehre für Merikare*, GOF 4/23 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1992), 77. The following example is taken from Schipper, “Phenomenon of ‘Textual Coherence,’” 102.

72. For the word *s:mnḥ* see Leonard H. Lesko, ed., *A Dictionary of Late Egyptian* (Berkeley: B. C. Scribe Publications, 1982–1990), 3:51: “to establish, to make perfect, to confirm.”

73. Lesko, *Dictionary*, 3:14: “to enrich, to make splendid, to make excellent.”

74. Quack, *Merikare*, 76–77; see also Guglielmi, “Adaption,” 352.

75. Brunner, “Djedefhor,” 50–51.

76. See Gerhard Fecht, *Der Vorwurf an Gott in den “Mahnworten des Ipu-wer”* (Pap. Leiden I 344 recto, 11, 11–13, 8; 15, 13–17, 3): *Zur geistigen Krise der ersten Zwischenzeit und ihrer Bewältigung*, AHAW.PH 1972/1 (Heidelberg: Winter, 1972), 132–33.

Instruction of Merikare obviously adapted the phrase from the Instruction of Hardjedef but also expanded it within a new context.

Similar evidence can be found for the Instruction of King Amenemhet I (for his son Sesostri I), such as chiasitic word order as well as changes in emphasis.⁷⁷ Furthermore, the quotations from the Instruction of King Amenemhet I point to the fact that the instruction was obviously used not only within wisdom literature but in other genres as well. An interesting example is provided by a text from the first millennium BCE. The so-called Piye Stela, a report of the historical events under a Cushite ruler named Piye, who campaigned in Egypt in the late eighth century, reads:⁷⁸

Amenemhet	Piye Stela
(3) For no man has friends [<i>mr.w</i>] ⁷⁹ on the day of woe [<i>n=s hrw n ksn.t</i>].	(73) I did not find a friend [<i>mr</i>] on the day of woe [<i>n hrw ksn.t</i>].

These texts have nearly the same wording, with only slight differences. The word for “friend” (*mr*) is used in the plural in Amenemhet but appears in the singular in the Piye Stela. A second difference is the grammatical construction: in Amenemhet, the phrase is formed as a negated existential sentence (*nn wn mr.w n=s hrw n ksn.t*), whereas in the Piye Stela a verbal form (a negated perfect) is used (*n gmn=j mr n hrw ksn.t*).⁸⁰

The quoted phrase is typical for the Instruction of Amenemhet and does not appear in other instructions as one might expect. Hence, one can conclude that we have a quotation from the wisdom instruction in the Piye Stela.⁸¹

77. For the Instruction of King Amenemhet I, see Günter Burkard and Heinz-Josef Thissen, *Einführung altägyptische Literaturgeschichte I: Altes Reich und Mittleres Reich*, 3rd ed., Einführungen und Quellentexte zur Ägyptologie 1/6 (Berlin: LIT, 2008), 107–8. The text is also documented in the Late Period, including in a papyrus fragment from Elephantine; see Joachim F. Quack, “Aus einer spätzeitlichen literarischen Sammelhandschrift,” *ZÄS* 130 (2003): 182–85. For the formal element of chiasm, see Brunner, “Zitate aus Lebenslehren,” 121–23.

78. The following paragraph is from Schipper, “Phenomenon of ‘Textual Coherence,’” 103–4. Translation of Instruction of Amenemhet I from *AEL* 1:136. Piye Stela from “The Victory Stela of King Piye (Piankhy),” trans. Miriam Lichtheim (*COS* 2.7:46).

79. Lesko, *Dictionary*, 1:228: “serfs, lower classes, weavers.”

80. Terminology according to Alan H. Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar: Being an Introduction to the Study of Hieroglyphs*, rev. and 3rd ed. (Oxford: Griffith Institute, 1957), §§107–108 (82–83).

81. Nicolas-Christophe Grimal, *La Stèle triomphale de Pi(’ânkh)y au Musée du*

One should not overstate this evidence, since a scribe may have merely used a simple proverb, but an additional observation by Brunner seems to be significant here: Given that this is not the only quotation from a wisdom text in the Piye Stela, Brunner argued that Piye quoted with the intention of displaying his knowledge of the Egyptian wisdom tradition.⁸² This would make good sense in a political situation where Piye, claiming power in Egypt as a Cushite ruler, wanted to present himself in line with the Egyptian tradition. This can be seen further in the text's use of traditional royal ideology.⁸³

According to other material, a number of classical wisdom texts were popular in the Twenty-Fifth and Twenty-Sixth Dynasties (late eighth, seventh, and sixth centuries); among them is the Instruction of Amenemope. This instruction illustrates why one should speak of a continuing tradition of wisdom texts that shaped the Egyptian literary tradition over centuries.⁸⁴ In various passages, the Instruction of Amenemope from the late Rameside period quotes from the Instruction of Ptahhotep (2000 BCE) as well as from the Instruction of Any, which is contemporary to Amenemope:

Ptahhotep	Amenemope 23
(119) If you are among guests at the (120) table of one greater than you, (121) take what he gives as it is set before you (your nose); (122) look at what is before you. [<i>dgg=k r ntj m-b3h=k</i>]. (AEL 1:65)	(13) Do not eat in the presence of an official (14) and then set your mouth before [him]; 15 if you are sated pretend to chew, 16 content yourself with your saliva; (17) look at the plate that is before you [<i>dgg=k r p3 q3j ntj m-b3h=k</i>], (18) and let it serve your needs.

Caire JE 48862 et 47086–47089 (Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 1981), 7Gu7 (24*).

82. This is emphasized by Brunner, "Zitate aus Lebenslehren," 147–48. For quotations on the Piye Stela, see also Guglielmi, "Adaption," 353 (Sinuhe B 274 and Piye Stela l. 12).

83. Grimal, *Stèle triomphale de Pi(ʾānkh)y*, 269–70.

84. See for this phenomenon the dissertation of Jennifer R. Houser Wegner, "Cultural and Literary Continuity in Demotic Instructions" (PhD diss., Yale University, 2001), who has demonstrated this convincingly (see esp. ch. 5, "Native Themes in the Demotic Wisdom Texts: A Cultural Continuity," 265–381); furthermore Quack, *Einführung*, 111–13.

The phrase “look at what is before you” (*dgg=k r ntj m-b3h=k*) from Ptah-hotep 122 is quoted verbatim in Amenemope 23.17, except that the word “plate” (Egyptian *q3j*) is added with an article in the masculine singular (*p3 q3j*). The topic of the aphorism, to teach the student the wisdom of observing the etiquette of social hierarchy, is no longer addressed to a general person “who is greater” (Ptahhotep); rather, it refers explicitly to the official.⁸⁵

Another example can be found in Amenemope 26.2–3 and Any B 14:⁸⁶

Any B 14	Amenemope 26
(15) Let [him] beat you while your hand	(2) Let him beat you while your hand
(16) [is on your chest], [let him revile you while] you are silent.	is on your chest, (3) let him revile you while you are silent.

In his commentary on the Instruction of Any, Joachim Friedrich Quack showed that Any is so close to Amenemope that the phrase of Any B 14 can be reconstructed by Amenemope 26.⁸⁷ Another example is Any B 18.7 and Amenemope 15.13–14:

Any B 18	Amenemope 15
(7) Keep away from a hostile man [<i>rk3</i>], do not let him be your comrade.	(13) Do not converse with a heated man, (14) so as to befriend a hostile man [<i>rk3</i>].

85. Diethard Römheld, *Wege der Weisheit: Die Lehren Amenemopes und Proverbien 22,17–24,22*, BZAW 184 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1989), 72; Bernd U. Schipper, “Die Lehre des Amenemope und Prov 22,17–24,22: Eine Neubestimmung des literarischen Verhältnisses,” ZAW 117 (2005): 238–39; for Ptahhotep, see Friedrich Junge, *Die Lehre Ptahhoteps und die Tugenden der ägyptischen Welt*, OBO 193 (Fribourg: Presses Universitaires; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2003), 38; for Amenemope, see Vincent P.-M. Laisney, *L’Enseignement d’Aménémopé*, StPohlSM 19 (Rome: Pontifical Bible Institute, 2007), 204–6.

86. Quoted from Schipper, “Phenomenon of ‘Textual Coherence,’” 105. For Any B 14, see Joachim F. Quack, *Die Lehren des Ani: Ein neuägyptischer Weisheitstext in seinem kulturellen Umfeld*, OBO 141 (Fribourg: Presses Universitaires; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1994), 149. For Amenemope 26, see “Instruction of Amenemope,” trans. Lichtheim (COS 1.47:121); and Laisney, *Enseignement*, 221–22 with n. 1258.

87. Quack, *Die Lehren des Ani*, 149. For Any B 18, see AEL 2:138. For Amenemope 15, see AEL 2:155; and Laisney, *Enseignement*, 149.

The phrase, which is more an allusion than a direct quote, appears also in the demotic Instruction of Khasheshonqi 14.3: “Do not have a thief for a companion [lest] he causes you to be killed” (AEL 3:170), and in the instruction from P.Louvre 2414, 2, 2: “Do not make a bad man your companion.”⁸⁸

A fourth example can be found in Any B 20.10 and Amenemope 11.10–11.⁸⁹

Any B 20	Amenemope 11
(10) Choose the good one and say it, while the bad is shut in your belly [<i>jw t3 bjn ḏḏ ḥ.t m-ḥt=k</i>].	(10) Put the good remark on your tongue, (11) while the bad is concealed in your belly [<i>jw p3 ḏw ḥ3p m-ḥt=k</i>].

Both texts share the exhortation to good speech, that is, speech according to *maʿat*. Here Amenemope mentions the tongue, while Any only states that one should choose the good. The passage of Amenemope 11.11 contains the same phrase as Any B 20.10. As far as the syntax is concerned, we have in both cases a circumstantial clause introduced by *jw*⁹⁰ with synonyms *t3 bjn* and *p3 ḏw* “the bad” and the verbs *ḏḏḥ* and *ḥ3p*.⁹¹

These examples illustrate a specific technique by which certain phrases were quoted, in some cases synonyms were used, and in other cases the phrases were combined with new elements. Obviously, the scribes used phrases from earlier texts when composing their own pieces of literature.⁹² By doing so, the author anchored himself in a tradition of texts. He used wisdom instructions to develop thoughts that allude to these texts while shaping and framing them in his own way. In sum, he located his work within a tradition of prestigious texts that seems to have had a normative character.⁹³

88. Quack, *Die Lehren des Ani*, 163–64, with reference to Papyrus Insinger 11, 22–13, 7.

89. Quack, *Die Lehren des Ani*, 174. For Any B 20, see AEL 2:149. For Amenemope 11, see AEL 2:153; and Laisney, *Enseignement*, 113 and 118.

90. Gardiner, *Grammar*, §117.2.

91. For a broader examination, see Schipper, “Die Lehre des Amenemope,” 236–37.

92. There are several other examples from Egyptian literature; see, e.g., Guglielmi, “Adaption,” 351–60; and the examples discussed in Schipper, *Hermeneutik*, 30–31.

93. See Wegner, “Literary Continuity,” 381, who pointed especially to the use

This literary procedure, which works by means of citations despite recontextualizing them, also appears in a wisdom text that has hardly been given any attention to date in Old Testament scholarship.⁹⁴ It concerns the wisdom instruction Papyrus Brooklyn 47.218.135. The text has long been known in Egyptology, but the *editio princeps* was first presented in the year 1994 by Richard Jasnow.⁹⁵ The hieratic manuscript dates to the Saite Period, which means in the Twenty-Sixth Dynasty.⁹⁶

The name of the third-to-last king of the Twenty-Sixth Dynasty, Apries, who reigned from 589 to 570 BCE, appears in the narrative frame.⁹⁷ It deals with the only known Egyptian wisdom instruction to date from the seventh–sixth centuries that was newly composed in this time. In light of the question of citations from earlier wisdom instructions, the actual wisdom maxims are especially interesting.⁹⁸ It contains not only diverse allusions to earlier instructions but also commonalities with the later demotic wisdom instructions, that is, with the Instruction of Khasheshonqi and Papyrus

of the Instruction of Ptahhotep in the demotic Instruction of Khasheshonqi. More recently, Hans Werner Fischer-Elfert has published a translation of an ostrakon from the Berlin papyrus collection (Oberlin P. 12383) containing parts of §7 of the Instruction of Hordjedef (Fischer-Elfert, “Ein neuer Mosaikstein im Hordjedef-Puzzle [§7] [Ostrakon Berlin P. 12383],” in *Texte, Theben, Tonfragmente: Festschrift für Günther Burkard*, ed. Dieter Kessler et al., ÄAT 76 [Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2009], 119).

94. As far as I know, it only appears in a note from the work of Stuart Weeks, but he does not assess the text further (Weeks, *Instruction*, 26 n. 50).

95. Richard Jasnow, *A Late Period Hieratic Wisdom Text (P.Brooklyn 47.218.135)*, SAOC 52 (Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 1992), 1–3; and for literature on the text, Quack, *Einführung*, 107 n. 188. A German translation of the text appears in Joachim F. Quack, “Ein neuer ägyptischer Weisheitstext,” *WO* 26 (1993): 10–19 (with numerous philological notes); and in modified form (but with considerably fewer philological notes) in Friedhelm Hoffmann and Joachim F. Quack, *Anthologie der demotischen Literatur*, 2nd ed., *Einführungen und Quellentexte zur Ägyptologie* 4 (Berlin: LIT, 2018), 230–38.

96. See also Quack, *Einführung*, 107; Verhoeven, “Literaturwerke,” 256–59; Jasnow, *Wisdom Text*, 7, who identify the naming of Apries as the *terminus post quem*.

97. Apries was followed by Amasis (570–526) and Psammetich III (526–525); see Jürgen von Beckerath, *Chronologie des pharaonischen Ägypten: Die Zeitbestimmung der ägyptischen Geschichte von der Vorzeit bis 332 v. Chr.*, MÄS 46 (Mainz: von Zabern, 1997), 84–88.

98. The overall composition of the text cannot be discussed at this point; on this see Jasnow, *Wisdom Text*, 22–35; and the overview of the content in Quack, *Einführung*, 107–10.

Insinger.⁹⁹ An initial example from the Papyrus Brooklyn contains references to the Instruction of Hardjedef (Old Kingdom).¹⁰⁰

Brooklyn Papyrus 4.8	Hardjedef 6–7
Love your household, choose many ladies of the harem.	When you can feed yourself, ground a household, take a capable wife for yourself.

The topic is the same in both instructions, but the statement is formulated differently. Therefore, one would not assume a literal citation, but rather an allusion in which a topic is taken up and modified.¹⁰¹ The same is the case for a well-known statement from Egyptian wisdom that appears both in the Brooklyn Papyrus and also in the Instruction of Khasheshonqi.¹⁰²

Brooklyn Papyrus 4	Khasheshonqi 14
(10) The property of the truthful will not pass away. A robber will not leave anything for his son.	(7) Whoever steals the property of another will find no profit from it.

There is a commonality in the content; however, the topic (stolen property having no permanence) is shaped differently in each case. This is also true for a topic that links the Instruction of the Brooklyn Papyrus with what is called the “Loyalist Instruction” from the Middle Kingdom and texts from the Ramesside-period schools. The Brooklyn Instruction in column 6 addresses the fieldworker and his tasks.¹⁰³

Brooklyn Papyrus 6
(18) The farmer is the chief of all professions.

99. See the list of references in Jasnow, *Wisdom Text*, 205–8.
100. The parallels mentioned by Jasnow, *Wisdom Text*, 82, on Khasheshonqi 18, 19, “The one who loves to live in his house, he warms himself on his beam,” is instead somewhat freer. See also Burkard and Thissen, *Literaturgeschichte I*, 83–84.
101. The literature on the topic is different, speaking consistently of a “citation”; see Jasnow, *Wisdom Text*, 82; and Quack, *Einführung*, 234 esp. n. 366.
102. The verse is also cited in the Instruction of Amenemope 9.16.
103. For the context see, Hans Werner Fischer-Elfert, *Die Lehre eines Mannes für seinen Sohn: Eine Etappe auf dem “Gottesweg” des loyalen und solidarischen Beamten des Mittleren Reiches*, 2 vols., ÄgAbh 60 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1999), 402–3, where the translation follows (for Brooklyn Pap.; see, however, Quack, *Einführung*, 19).

They serve him.
His hands are their breath of life.

Loyalist Instruction §10

(1) It is the workers who produce the foodstuffs.

Loyalist Instruction §9

(7) It is the working people who produce what is.

(8) One lives from what is on their arms.

The passage in the Brooklyn instruction appears in the context of other sayings that highlight the farmer and refer to the importance of his occupation.¹⁰⁴ It takes up a specific topic that was already mentioned in a wisdom text from the Middle Kingdom, that is, around thirteen hundred years before the drafting of the Brooklyn instruction.

1.3.2. Scribalism and Textuality

To summarize the discussion so far, the aforementioned examples illustrate a specific technique in which certain phrases are quoted. In some cases synonyms are used and in others they are combined with new aspects.¹⁰⁵ A system of references can be found with both citations of earlier texts and allusions in which a topic is taken up. The scribes clearly used phrases from earlier texts when composing their own pieces of literature.¹⁰⁶ By means of this practice, the author anchored himself within a tradition of texts. He used wisdom instructions to develop thoughts that allude to these texts, while shaping and framing them in his own way. In sum, he located his work within a distinguished tradition that seems to have a normative character. Given that these texts were used in ancient schools and for educating scribes, another assumption can be made: by quoting from other wisdom instructions, a literary discourse was established in which the interpretation of one text was used by a later text—regardless of whether it was in line with the previous argument or contradicted it. The

104. So also in 6, 7–8, 9, 10; see also Fischer-Elfert, *Lehre*, 402.

105. The following paragraphs draw on Schipper, “Phenomenon of ‘Textual Coherence,’” 108–10.

106. There are, however, several other examples from Egyptian literature; see, e.g., Guglielmi, “Adaption,” 351–60; and the examples discussed by Schipper, *Hermeneutik*, 30–31.

new text not only takes the old one into account; it also comments on it or expands it. However, the precondition for this interpretation is that the reader—not just the author—of the text was also aware of these connections. This is exactly what the evidence suggests.

Papyrus Anastasi I (P.BM 10247) from the Ramesside period sheds an interesting light on this very issue. The second part of this text contains a literary discourse between two scribes. Hori, the author of the letter, writes to a scribe named Amenemope and accuses him of being a poor scribe.¹⁰⁷ He does not know the cities of Syria-Palestine, he cannot do arithmetic, and he needs six other scribes to write a letter. In short, this Amenemope does not have the competencies of a scribe. Interestingly enough, being a good scribe, at least according to Papyrus Anastasi I, includes familiarity with older texts, especially those belonging to wisdom literature. Of special importance is 10, 9–11, 8:

You have provided with great secrets and have quoted to me one of Hardjedef's maxims [*ṭzw*], but you do not know whether it is good or bad. Which chapter [*ḥw.t*] precedes it and which one follows it? You are supposed to be an expert scribe, at the head of your colleagues having the lore of every book engraved in your heart.¹⁰⁸

This papyrus mentions the Instruction of Hardjedef, and it is this very wisdom text that had been quoted in other texts for centuries.¹⁰⁹ Moreover, according to pAnastasi I 10, 9–11, 8, it is not only the knowledge of older proverbs that is important but also their context and specific meaning. It is clear that the scribes learned certain passages and proverbs in order to be able to quote them and explain their literary contexts. The text mentions two different terms—*ṭzw* and *ḥw.t*. The first means the “saying” (or “sentence”), the latter the “stanza” or “chapter.”¹¹⁰ In his study on Papyrus Anastasi I, Hans Werner Fischer-Elfert showed that the phrase in chapter 10 indicates a so-called incipit-verse. This is a verse that signals

107. Hans Werner Fischer-Elfert, *Die satirische Streitschrift des Papyrus Anastasi I*, KÄT 7 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1992), 93–100.

108. Edward F. Wente, *Letters from Ancient Egypt*, WAW 1 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990), 103. See as well Fischer-Elfert, *Streitschrift*, 94–95.

109. See the examples above in §1.3.1.

110. For the term *ṭzw*, see Lesko, *Dictionary*, 4:115: “saying, proverb” as plural: “speeches, phrases, sentences.”

the beginning of the *hw.t* chapter.¹¹¹ According to this reading, Amenemope quotes from an incipit collection of the beginnings of chapters from the Instruction of Hardjedef.¹¹² Furthermore, it was important to know the context of such verses and to memorize them, as is expressed by the phrase “to put it in your heart” (Papyrus Anastasi 11, 8).¹¹³ This very literary technique can be found in material from the Late Period (Twenty-Fifth and Twenty-Sixth Dynasty). It is a technique in which scribes learned the wisdom instructions by quoting the initial verses of different chapters—or, in Egyptian, the *tzw*-verses.

A number of writing boards and ostraca are extant from the seventh and sixth centuries BCE that were used for scribal exercises.¹¹⁴ This material provides insight into the manner in which texts were studied and memorized. Six ostraca and fragments of papyri are preserved from the Instruction of Amenemope that all exhibit one major similarity: They all contain single phrases or a combination of them.¹¹⁵ An ostrakon now in the Turin Museum (Turin Suppl. 4661) preserves only the title of the Instruction of Amenemope.¹¹⁶ The same can be found on a graffito from the temple of Ramesses III in Medinet Habu that contains nothing but the first line of the instruction.¹¹⁷ In addition, a writing board from the Louvre collection preserves the first three lines of the introduction.

The same evidence can be found in the Late Period for other instructions, such as, for example, Amenemhet. An ostrakon from the Theban tomb of Senenmut (TT 353) contains the first lines of different chapters from the Instruction of Amenemhet.¹¹⁸ The students of wisdom were

111. Fischer-Elfert, *Streitschrift*, 96: “Ein Vers, der gleichsam das Erkenntnissignal des mit ihm einsetzenden *hw.t*-Kapitels abgegeben hat.”

112. Fischer-Elfert, *Streitschrift*, 96: “Das bedeutet, dass ‘Amenemope’ aus einer incipit-Sammlung von Kapitelanfängen der Djedefhor-Lehre zitiert hat.”

113. Fischer-Elfert, *Streitschrift*, 97 with n. 8 (*htj-hr.jb*).

114. Ursula Verhoeven, *Untersuchungen zur späthieratischen Buchschrift*, OLA 99 (Leuven: Peeters, 2001), 16 and 20.

115. A good overview on the material can be found in Laisney, *Enseignement*, 5. See Schipper, “Die Lehre des Amenemope,” 240–42.

116. Georges Posener, “Quatre tablettes scolaires de basse époque (Aménémope et Hardjédef),” *REG* 18 (1966): 55–65.

117. Georges Posener, “Une nouvelle tablette d’Aménémopé,” *REG* 25 (1973): 251–52; see also Schipper, “Die Lehre des Amenemope,” 241 n. 36.

118. Wolfgang Helck, “4. Proverbia 22,17ff. und die Lehre des Amenemope,” *AfO* 22 (1968/1969): 26.

apparently trained in learning and writing the *tzw*-verses, as Papyrus Anastasi I suggests. The same can be seen on other writing boards from the Late Period. Günter Vittmann recently published a school tablet from the Asasif (J 94478) that contains the superscription of the Instruction of Cheti. This object can be correlated, as Vittmann pointed out, with a writing board from the Louvre collection (Louvre E 8424) that contains the heading and the title of the Instruction of Cheti.¹¹⁹ The first line of this instruction can also be found on a potsherd from the Late Period, published by Mohammad El Bialy and Hartwig Altenmüller.¹²⁰

Other material illustrates how these texts were learned. A writing board now in the Turin Museum (Turin Cat. 6237) provides an interesting combination of single lines with dating data.

A student wrote down Amenemope 24.1 to 25.9 on this writing board in such a way that each line contains a single verse of the instruction. The text, however, is not equally distributed on the verso and recto sides of the tablet. The verso side begins with Amenemope 25.2, and, in line 9, the student jumps back to 24.1, which is continued on the recto side up to 25.1 in the correct order. This text, written in a hieratic script, preserves dates in the left margin: day 8 (v 8), day 10 (v 11), day 12 (v 12), day 16 (v 17), day 10? (r 3), day 14? (r 8), day 4 (r 14). The student apparently copied the passage over a period of several days and started in the middle of the tablet (verso) and wrote down the rest of text, after the recto side was filled, at the beginning of the verso side.¹²¹

Such dates are also known from other ostraca and school tablets.¹²² They document the fact that wisdom texts were copied over a period of days and thus memorized. It is apparent that such a technique helps with remembering certain phrases. This is especially so when taking the other material into account, for the so-called incipit-verses, that is, those verses forming the beginning of a chapter that are mentioned explicitly

119. Günter Vittmann, "Eine spätzeitliche Schülertafel aus dem Asasif," *AeL* 16 (2006): 187.

120. Hartwig Altenmüller and Mohammed El Bialy, "Eine spätzeitliche Topfscherbe aus Saqqara mit dem Anfang der Lehre des Duat-Cheti," in Kessler, *Texte-Theben-Tonfragmente*, 21–26.

121. On this point see Schipper, "Die Lehre des Amenemope," 241; and Posener, "Tablettes," 60–61.

122. Hans O. Lange, *Das Weisheitsbuch des Amenemope: Aus dem Papyrus 10,474 des Britischen Museum*, Historisk-filologiske meddelelser 11.2 (Copenhagen: Host, 1925), 9 with n. 1 (Ostrakon Liverpool and Ostrakon Cairo 25224).

in Papyrus Anastasi I.¹²³ To summarize the argument so far, two aspects are important.

(1) In Egypt we have the literary phenomenon of quotations in which specific passages are initially cited by an author. After learning these (wisdom) texts at school, the author placed himself in a tradition of distinguished texts by making explicit connections to these texts. Given that the author and the reader were both scribes—or literati, one might say—not only the author but also the reader were aware of this connection. The reference to the other text creates a link between both texts—whether to follow the original line of argument or whether to mark a difference.

(2) This is contextualized by an ongoing tradition in Egyptian texts, especially of wisdom literature, from Early to the Late Periods, that is, the Persian and Greek eras. At present, the only complete papyrus version of the Instruction of Amenemope dates to the Twenty-Sixth Dynasty, that is the seventh–sixth centuries BCE.¹²⁴ Other wisdom texts, such as the Instruction of King Amenemhet I, the teaching of Ptahhotep, and the Instruction of Hardjedef, became part of a cultural heritage of ancient Egypt and were used in the temple-schools of the late first millennium BCE.¹²⁵

1.3.3. Textual Coherence in Egyptian and Israelite Wisdom Literature

When looking at the evidence from a systematic perspective, the material discussed above points to a form of scribalism in which certain passages were memorized. Previous texts were studied in the temple schools and became part of the textual memory of the scribes. In his studies on cultural memory (“das kulturelle Gedächtnis”), Heidelberg Egyptologist Jan Assmann developed the concept of “textual coherence/continuity.”¹²⁶ Based on his own work on tombs from the Late Period, Assmann argued that

123. This is confirmed by the aforementioned quotations from wisdom instructions. Amenemope 24.22, e.g., which has a quotation from the instruction of Any, is the incipit verse of the twenty-sixth chapter of the Instruction of Amenemope; see Laisney, *Enseignement*, 216.

124. Verhoeven, “Literaturwerke,” 259.

125. For these temple-schools, in Egyptian “houses of life,” see Joachim F. Quack, “Die Initiation zum Schreiberberuf im Alten Ägypten,” *SÄK* 36 (2007): 251.

126. Jan Assmann, *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization: Writing, Remembrance, and Political Imagination* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 70.

similarities as well as differences between texts should be seen as an integral part of “cultural mnemo-technique,” in which texts were used by later texts in the manner of quotation.¹²⁷ Such a mnemo-technique was essential since a “cultural memory is not biologically transmitted,” as Assmann emphasizes: “It has to be kept alive through the sequence of generations. This is the matter of cultural mnemo-technics, that is, the storage, retrieval, and communication of meaning.”¹²⁸ Thus, the phenomenon of textual coherence (or “textual continuity”) entails “a framework of references that cancel out the break inherent in writing.”¹²⁹

Following this line of argumentation, one can define the phenomenon of textual coherence with Assmann as an intentional quotation of older texts. It derives its meaning from a correspondence to a general development of canonical or, one might even say, normative texts. Hence, a quotation does not mean simply a direct takeover of a linguistic sequence; it rather implies a scheme of references. The text became part of a literary discourse where the quotations served literarily as “road signs.”¹³⁰ Such a literary discourse was first of all a discourse of a scribal elite. Like Sumero-Akkadian literature, texts in ancient Egypt were part of a curriculum that was studied by students who would become members of a literate elite.¹³¹

Even though Israelite scribal culture, as David Carr has rightly pointed out, cannot simply be seen as an “extension of the Egyptian scribal system,” the same phenomenon can be found within the book of Proverbs as in Egyptian wisdom literature.¹³² The so-called twice-told proverbs illustrate how texts, in this case, wisdom sayings, were memorized and placed in a

127. See Jan Assmann, *Sonnenhymnen in thebanischen Gräbern: Mit einem Glossar von Sylvia Schoske*, Theben 1 (Mainz: von Zabern, 1983), xxxiv; Assmann, *Cultural Memory*, 85; and Schipper, *Hermeneutik*, 32–34.

128. Assmann, *Cultural Memory*, 72. See as well Richard Jasnow, “Remarks on Continuity in the Egyptian Literary Tradition,” in *Gold of Praise: Studies on Ancient Egypt in Honor of Edward F. Wente*, ed. Emily Teeter and John Larson, SAOC 58 (Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 1999), 193–210, for the phenomenon of “continuity” in Egyptian literary tradition.

129. The German term “textuelle Kohärenz” might be translated into English by “textual continuity” or “textual coherence.” Assmann uses both terms, see *Cultural Memory*, 70 and 85; quotation from 85.

130. Assmann, *Cultural Memory*, 70–83.

131. See also Carr, *Writing on the Tablet of the Heart*, 82.

132. Carr, *Writing on the Tablet of the Heart*, 88.

different context to create separate arguments. This can be illustrated by means of a few examples:¹³³

(1) Twice-told proverbs, as seen in Prov 10:2 and 11:4, can form the core of small units, setting the theme for those units.

10:2

Treasures of wickedness are *of no use*,
but *righteousness delivers from death*.

לא־יועילו אוצרות רשע
וצדקה תציל ממות

11:4

Wealth is *of no use* on the day of wrath,
but *righteousness delivers from death*.

לא־יועיל הון ביום עברה
וצדקה תציל ממות

Proverbs 10:1–5 focuses on the theme of poverty and wealth, which is emphasized in 10:2a. In contrast, 11:3–8 deals with the act–consequence nexus, particularly the consequences of doing righteousness (cf. 11:5, 6). Here, the theme of the second half of the proverb is taken up.

(2) Twice-told proverbs reflect certain adjustments to their respective contexts, as can be seen in 12:13 and 29:6.

12:13

In the transgression of the lips is an evil trap,
but *a righteous person* comes out of trouble.

בפשע שפתים מוקש רע
ויצא מצרה צדיק

29:6

The transgression of an evil man is a trap,
but *a righteous person* sings and rejoices.

בפשע איש רע מוקש
וצדיק ירון ושמח

133. The following section draws on Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 350–54.

Whereas 12:13 speaks in general terms of “the transgression of the lips” (פשע שפתים), 29:6 refers to the wrongdoing of “an evil man” (איש רע). This difference corresponds to the surrounding context of each verse. Proverbs 12:13–25 concerns correct and false speech, in which the use of the word “lips” (שפתים) makes sense. In contrast, 29:1–15 focuses on the individual (איש “man”), who is mentioned already in 29:1.¹³⁴

(3) Twice -told proverbs are placed in different systems of meaning.

13:14

*The torah of the wise person is a fountain of life
for avoiding the snares of death.*

תורת חכם מקור חיים
לסור ממוקשי מות

14:27

*The fear of YHWH is a fountain of life
for avoiding the snares of death.*

יראת יהוה מקור חיים
לסור ממוקשי מות

Whereas 13:14 argues solely on a sapiential level, 14:27 refers to YHWH. The same message is placed in a different context, in one case in a sapiential framework and the other in a religious one.

(4) Twice-told proverbs contain a thematic shift.

10:15

*The wealth of a rich person is his fortified city;
the ruin of the poor is their poverty.*

הון עשיר קרית עוז
מחתת דלים רישם

18:11

*The wealth of a rich person is his fortified city;
And like a wall—in his imagination.*

הון עשיר קרית עוז
ובחומה נשגבה במשכיתו

134. See also 12:13–25; Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 418.

The first half of each verse is the same, while the second half reflects a characteristic shift. Whereas 10:15 evaluates wealth positively through the contrast between the rich and poor, 18:11 indicates that such a positive view of wealth is merely the figment of the rich person's imagination. Proverbs 18:12 adds to the idea in 18:11b:

18:12: Before destruction one's heart is haughty,
but *before honor (there is) humility*.

The theme of wealth is connected not only with false perception but also with pride. Here 18:12b is also a partial twice-told proverb that is identical with 15:33b:

15:33: The fear of YHWH is discipline for wisdom,
and *before honor (comes) humility*.

This example illustrates a further point: not only are individual verses or half verses combined in different ways to create a thematic shift; a different system of reference is also observable. In 18:12, the half verse "and before honor (there is) humility" is part of a general aphorism, while in 15:33 it is part of a YHWH proverb.

The examples, which could easily be extended by other twice-told proverbs, show not only the citation of texts but the incorporation of the previous text into a separate composition or even a separate argument.

Summarizing the evidence so far, the discussion of Egyptian wisdom literature has revealed a literary phenomenon that was part of scribal education in general: the study of previous literature and the relationship to other texts through citations or allusions. The examples from ancient Egypt and the book of Proverbs lead to the conclusion that such connections are intentional. They point to a literary discourse in which the scribe not only located himself within a tradition of authoritative texts but also created his own argument. This is especially true if a cited verse points to a certain chapter or train of thought, as can be seen in the quote from Papyrus Anastasi I. Given that the texts were written *by* scribes *for* scribes, and that the readers of this literature were trained in the same way as its authors, the citations and allusions are related to a form of *textualism* that can be found in both ancient Egypt and ancient Israel. From a methodological point of view, this form of *textual coherence* can be split up into two phenomena: (1) *allusions* where one text refers to the other through

shared terms and stylistic and thematic patterns and (2) *citations* where a full or a half-verse is quoted.

1.4. The Approach of This Book

The evaluation of previous research on Prov 2 (§1.1) and of the connection between Deuteronomy and the book of Proverbs (§1.2), as well as the methodological reflections on the phenomenon of textual coherence (§1.3) have consequences for the design of this study. Since the point of departure for all theories, whether on the formation of Prov 1–9 or on the relationship between the book of Proverbs and Deuteronomy, is actual textual work, the following analysis will start with an analysis of the particular chapter that was recognized by earlier research as crucial for the understanding of Prov 1–9: the instruction of Prov 2. Chapter 2 of the present study will investigate the structure and the train of thought within Prov 2 based on the analysis of the text. This is followed in chapter 3 by the investigation of cross-references between Prov 2 and other literary traditions. What forms of *textual coherence* arise, where are allusions or citations made to other traditions, and where are key words and central terms named and possibly accorded new semantic associations? This also includes references to Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic texts since §1.2 of this introduction has shown that a tradition-historical exegesis of a text from Prov 1–9 cannot go without an evaluation of its connections to Deuteronomy.

Chapter 4 starts with an evaluation of the connections between Prov 2 and other chapters from the first part of the book of Proverbs (Prov 1–9), and continues to general reflections on the redaction and composition of the book of Proverbs. This is followed in chapter 5 by an approach that leads back to the aforementioned discourse on Proverbs and Deuteronomy. Under the title “The Hermeneutics of Torah,” the thesis will be presented that the literary formation of the book of Proverbs can be connected to a theological discourse that was fundamentally shaped by the interplay of wisdom and torah. The detailed argumentation will show that this discourse transgresses the limits of individual biblical books and shaped the formation of Prov 1–9 as well as the book of Proverbs itself. Thus, the aim of the present study is not only to present an interpretation of Prov 2 and its place within the first part of the book of Proverbs (Prov 1–9) but also to gain further insights into the hermeneutics of the formation of Proverbs as a book within the scribal culture of the Persian and Hellenistic eras.

Textual Analysis: The Instruction of Proverbs 2

2.1. Translation

- (1) My son, if you accept my words
and my commandments you store up with you,
- (2) by^a making ^byour ear^b attentive to wisdom
inclining your heart ^cto understanding^c,
- (3) indeed,^a if to insight you call,
^bto understanding you raise your voice^b,
- (4) if you seek it like silver
and as for (hidden) treasures you search for it,
- (5) then you will understand the fear of YHWH
and the knowledge of God^a will you find,
- (6) for YHWH gives wisdom,
(for)^a ^bfrom his mouth^b (come) knowledge and understanding;
- (7) he stores up^a competence for the upright,
as a shield to ^bthose who walk^b blamelessly,
- (8) by guarding the paths of justice
and the way of his faithful one^a he preserves;
- (9) then you will understand righteousness and justice
and uprightness—every good track,
- (10) for (then) wisdom will come into your heart,
and knowledge will be pleasant to your appetite,^a
- (11) prudence will watch over you
(and) understanding will guard^a you;
- (12) in order to save you from the way of evil,
from the man^a who speaks perversities,
- (13) those^a who forsake the paths of uprightness,
to walk in the ways of darkness,
- (14) those who rejoice in doing evil,
who delight in the perversities of evil,
- (15) whose paths are crooked,

- and who are devious in their (own) tracks;
 (16) in order to save you ^afrom the strange woman,^a
 from the foreigner who has made her words smooth,
 (17) who forsakes the companion^a of her youth
 and the covenant of her God she has forgotten;
 (18) surely, ^ait leads (down) to death—her house^a
 and to the Rephaim her tracks;
 (19) all who go to her will not return
 and they will not reach the paths of life;^a
 (20) so that you will walk in the way of the good
 and the paths of the righteous you will walk,
 (21) for the upright will inhabit the land
 and the blameless will remain in it,
 (22) but the wicked will be cut off from the land
 and the treacherous ^awill be rooted out^a of it.

Textual Notes¹

2a. The construction ל + inf. can indicate a goal (“in order to”) or an accompanying circumstance (“by”).² In light of the overall structure of the unit, the latter is more likely, since the aim of 2:1a is achieved only in 2:12–22; see also Joüon §124o.

2b–b. “your ear” (אָזְנְךָ) can be understood either as the object or the subject of קָשַׁב.³ In Sir 3:29 it is the subject, although a clause with ל + inf. cannot express a subject directly; thus אָזְנְךָ should be taken as object (Müller, *Proverbien* 1–9, 52 n. 2; and Joüon §125x).

2c–c. Vulg., Syr., and Tg. reflect MT (לְתוֹבוֹנָה). LXX has a double translation: παραβαλείς δὲ αὐτήν ἐπὶ νοθεύτησιν τῷ υἱῷ σου (“and you shall

1. The textual notes follow Schipper, *Proverbs* 1–15, 101–2.

2. The first was argued by Ewald, *Die Dichter*, 74; Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 75; Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 62; Michel, “Proverbia 2,” 223. See for the latter Frankenberg, *Die Sprüche*, 25; Berend Gemser, *Sprüche Salomos*, 2nd ed., HAT 1.16 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1963), 22; McKane, *Proverbs*, 214; Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 22; Müller, *Proverbien* 1–9, 52; Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 213; Schäfer, *Die Poesie*, 52.

3. As object: Frankenberg, *Die Sprüche*, 22; Gemser, *Sprüche*, 22; McKane, *Proverbs*, 213; Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 22; Michael V. Fox, *Proverbs: An Eclectic Edition with Introduction and Textual Commentary*, HBCE 1 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2015), 106; Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 213; as subject: Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 62; GKC §155m.

incline it as to the admonition of your son”). The phrase τῷ υἱῷ σου presumably goes back to a dittography of ב to בן, that is, from לבך to לבנך.⁴

3a. For the particle בי, see below §2.2.2.

3b–b. Some Greek manuscripts as well as Syr. and Tg. reflect MT. Due to its double translation, LXX adds τὴν δὲ αἰσθησιν ζητήσης μεγάλη τῇ φωνῇ (“[if you] seek perception with a loud voice”). Vulgate has a double translation of Prov 2:2b: *et inclinaveris cor tuum prudentiae* (“and you will incline your heart to knowledge”).

6a. On the syntax of the sentence see Müller, *Proverbien 1–9*, 53 n. 1; and Michel, “Probleme,” 219.

6b–b. Instead of מפיו (“from your mouth”), LXX reads καὶ ἀπὸ προσώπου αὐτοῦ (“and from his presence”), apparently rendering ומפניו.

7a. LXX and Syr. follow the *ketiv* (וצפן), while Vulg. and Tg. follow the *qere* יצפן. Ultimately, the *ketiv* should be preferred over the stylistically smoother *qere*.⁵

7b–b. Vulgate, Syr., and Tg. follow MT (תם להלכי). LXX has τὴν πορείαν αὐτῶν (“their journey”), probably via להלכותם (“for their walking,” see Fox, *Textual Commentary*, 92).

8a. LXX and Syr. reflect the *qere* (pl.: חסידיו, “his faithful ones”). Vulgate and Tg. have *sanctorum* (“of the holy ones”). The *ketiv*, with the singular חסידו, is the *lectio difficilior* compared to the *qere*. In the original text, the group identity is not intended (see §§3.2.1 and 5.3.3 below).⁶

11a. The unassimilated *nun* in תנצרכה (“will guard you”) is a linguistic peculiarity (see also Prov 5:2b). Wildeboer, *Die Sprüche*, 6 explains this as indicating “particular emphasis” (“besonderen Nachdrucks”); GKC §§66–67 conjectures that this results from a pause (on this, see Müller, *Proverbien 1–9*, 53 n. 8). However, in light of the carefully designed composition of Prov 2, one should instead follow Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapter 1–15*, 214 n. 15 in assuming that the *nun* is unassimilated in order to create assonance with לנצר (“by guarding”) in 2:8.

4. See Fox, *Textual Commentary*, 92. A paratactical connection of תטה with 2:2a (“and”) is suggested by Ewald, *Die Dichter*, 74; Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 22; Baumann, *Die Weisheitsgestalt*, 228.

5. See Wildeboer, *Die Sprüche*, 6; Schäfer, *Die Poesie*, 52, and with a different position Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 114.

6. For this text-critical decision, see Fox, *Textual Commentary*, 94; and Weeks, *Instruction*, 197–98; in contrast to Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 75; Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 23; and Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 214, who follow the *qere*.

16a–a. Symmachus, Vulg., Syr., and Tg. agree with MT (מאשה זרה, “from the strange woman”). LXX has ἀπὸ ὁδοῦ εὐθείας (“from the straight path”) and probably understands the evildoers from the preceding verses as the subject of לְהצִילָךְ (“in order to save you”), thus changing the sense of 2:16–17 and inserting υἱέ, μὴ σε καταλάβῃ κακὴ βουλή (“my son, do not let bad counsel overtake you”) into 2:17.⁷

18a–a. For the translation of this sentence, see §2.2.3 below.

19a. 4Q525 (4QBeat), Vulg., Syr., and Tg. reflect MT (חיים). LXX adds a double translation:⁸ οὐ γὰρ καταλαμβάνονται ὑπὸ ἐνιαυτῶν ζωῆς (“for they are not being seized by years of life”), which according to Fox goes back to two variants in the Hebrew *Vorlage*, although it can also be explained as a variant of MT (this is also the case for the additional lines 3–4 in the LXX of 2:21).⁹

22a–a. LXX, Vulg., Tg., and Syr. have “will be banished” (passive plural, ἐξωσθήσονται), perhaps in the tradition of the older Babylonian vocalization of סחף as a *qal* passive (סחפו).¹⁰

2.2. Textual Analysis

As already presented in the short section on the history of scholarship (§1.1), the text has often been the object of literary-critical operations. On the basis of “tensions and inconsistencies in content,” various passages have been cut out, including 2:5–8, 16–19, and also 21–22.¹¹ However, the question is whether the textual observations made by those who subdivide Prov 2 into different layers can also be explained in a different manner. Therefore, the following section begins with a description of the surface

7. Jan de Waard, *Proverbs*, BHQ 17 (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2008), 32*; Fox, *Textual Commentary*, 95.

8. On this see Paul de Lagarde, *Anmerkungen zur griechischen Übersetzung der Proverbien* (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1863), 12.

9. See Fox, *Textual Commentary*, 96.

10. See de Waard, *Proverbs*, 32*; Fox, *Textual Commentary*, 97, who emends MT to סחפו; and Dominique Barthélemy, *Job, Proverbes, Qohelet et Cantique des Cantiques*, vol. 5 of *Critique textuelle de l'Ancien Testament*, ed. Clemens Locher, Stephen D. Ryan, and Adrian Schenker, OBO 50.5 (Fribourg: Presses Universitaires; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2015), 467–68.

11. Quotation from Michel, “Proverbia 2,” 235 (“inhaltlichen Spannungen und Uneinheitlichkeiten”). On this, see the overviews in Clifford, *Proverbs*, 46; and Fox, “Pedagogy,” 236.

layer of the text. This will allow first for discussion of the text itself, which is then followed by questions concerning compositional breaks.

2.2.1. On the Form and Structure of the Text

Even the external form of the text itself indicates a thoughtful structure. The text consists of twenty-two verses that—if one follows a thesis presented by Arndt Meinhold and David Noel Freedman—corresponds to the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet.¹² Both have argued that Prov 2 should be read as an acrostic, analogous to Prov 31:10–31.¹³ The difference between the two consists in the fact that Prov 31 is actually in the form of an alphabetic acrostic: each of the twenty-two verses begins with a different letter.¹⁴ Proverbs 2, on the other hand, does not strictly follow the letters of the alphabet. A comparable case appears in Lam 5, which unlike the other poems of Lamentations, does not employ the alphabetic structure. However, the text still follows the paradigm of twenty-two verses.¹⁵ If one can also use this as a starting point for Prov 2, then several further questions arise.¹⁶

Regardless of whether or not one views the alphabetic acrostics as a “special form of the word and name acrostics,” the form targets an audience that is educated with regard to literature.¹⁷ The alphabetic structure can serve as

12. As far as I understand, the thesis of the acrostic structure of Prov 2 first appears in an article by Patrick W. Skehan from 1947: “The Seven Columns of Wisdom’s House in Proverbs 1–9,” *CBQ* 9 (1947): 190–98, reprinted in revised form in Patrick W. Skehan, *Studies in Israelite Poetry and Wisdom*, CBQMS 1 (Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1971), 9–14.

13. Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 63; David N. Freedman, “Proverbs 2 and 31: A Study in Structural Complementarity,” in *Tehillah le-Moshe: Biblical and Judaic Studies in Honor of Moshe Greenberg*, ed. Mordechai Cogan, Barry L. Eichler, and Jeffrey H. Tigay (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1997), 50; see also Clifford, *Proverbs*, 45. In his essay from 1997, Freedman offers detailed analysis of the formal and metric structure that demonstrates to some extent also the limits of such a comparison.

14. Karin Brockmüller, “Eine Frau der Stärke—Wer findet sie?” *Exegetische Analysen und intertextuelle Lektüren zu Spr 31,10–31*, BBB 147 (Berlin: Philo, 2004), 55.

15. Delbert R. Hillers, *Lamentations: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 7A (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 161.

16. See, on the other hand, Paul Overland, “Literary Structure in Proverbs 1–9,” PhD diss., Brandeis University, 1988, 9 esp. n. 30, who considers the use of the letters *aleph* and *lamed* accidental.

17. Brockmüller, *Frau*, 55 (“Spezialform der Wort- und Namensakrostichie”), toward which the following overview is oriented. On the origin of the acrostic see

an aid for the memorization of the text. One would not go wrong in locating the *Sitz im Leben* of the acrostic as the school or rather in wisdom instruction. With regard to Prov 31, Ignatius Gous argues for the inclusion of a cognitive-scientific approach. From this point of view, the form of the alphabetic acrostic reminds the reader of their own education, when they learned the alphabet. That is, when they discovered that the world of language that they were already familiar with (they could already speak without knowing the alphabet) had a system of order that they had not previously recognized.¹⁸ Recent scholarship tends to view the acrostic structure as a token of completeness or also an “exhaustive treatment of the topic.”¹⁹

The acrostic structure thereby refers (1) to an educational setting. It presupposes (2) an educated audience. And it emphasizes (3) the comprehensive nature of the text. This applies precisely to Prov 2. The text offers a meaningful whole, whose “comprehensive” character is clear in the grammatical character of the text:²⁰ Prov 2 consists de facto of only a single sentence.²¹ It concerns a conditional structure that begins after the invocation “my son” (בני) with a protasis (introduced by אם). Two apodoses follow along with three final constructions, two of which are constructed identically (each introduced by ל + infinitive). The last final clause constitutes the focal point.²² It opens with למען (“so that”) and contains a justification introduced by כי (“for”). As a whole, the grammatical structure yields six units:

also Klaus Seybold, “Akrostichie bei Deuteriojesaja?” in *Vielseitigkeit des Alten Testaments: Festschrift für Georg Sauer zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. James A. Loader and Hans V. Kieweler, Wiener Alttestamentliche Studien 1 (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 1999), 80 and 88–89 (see also Seybold, “Akrostichie im Psalter,” *ThZ* 57 [2001]: 172–83). A helpful overview with discussion of extrabiblical material appears in Will Soll, *Psalms 119: Matrix, Form, and Setting*, CBQMS 23 (Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1991), 5–34. Soll only treats the alphabetic acrostics, including three texts from Qumran (11–12).

18. Ignatius G. P. Gous, “Proverbs 31:10–31: The A to Z of Woman Wisdom,” *OTE* 9 (1996): 35–51.

19. Brockmüller, *Frau*, 56 (“erschöpfende Behandlung des Themas”).

20. Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 63; Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 216 (“to suggest its completeness”); Freedman, “Proverbs,” 50–51; and Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 59.

21. So already Ewald, *Die Dichter*, 82; and Toy, *Proverbs*, 31; see also Wildeboer, *Die Sprüche*, 5; Gemser, *Sprüche*, 24–25; Clifford, *Proverbs*, 46; and Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 126; differently Frankenberg, *Die Sprüche*, 25.

22. Schäfer, *Die Poesie*, 64 appropriately characterizes it as a “main final clause.” See also McKane, *Proverbs*, 279.

1. 2:1–4 Protasis (introduced by **אם**, “if”)
2. 2:5–8 First apodosis (introduced by **אז**, “then”)
3. 2:9–11 Second, noticeably shorter apodosis (also introduced by **אז**, “then”)²³
4. 2:12–15 Final clause (first purpose, introduced by **להצילך**, “in order to save you”; **ל** + inf.)
5. 2:16–19 Final clause (second purpose, introduced by the same wording **להצילך**, “in order to save you”)
6. 2:20–22 Concluding statement, introduced by **למען** (“so that”) and followed by a justification opened by **כי** (“for”)

These six units, again first considered only in formal terms, indicate a logical structure in and of themselves. The text can be divided into two equally long sections: 2:1–11 and 2:12–22.²⁴ Both parts contain three strophes, two of four and one of three verses. They are formed with a regular meter and can be split up into eleven or rather 4+4+3 bicola:²⁵

A	(11 bicola)	B	(11 bicola)
2:1–4	4 bicola	2:12–15	4 bicola
2:5–8	4 bicola	2:16–19	4 bicola
2:9–11	3 bicola	2:20–22	3 bicola

This poetic structure of the text is formed further by the masterful composition of the strophes.²⁶ It is striking that the opening letter of the strophes in the first half is the letter *aleph*. In the second half, all the strophes open with a *lamed*.²⁷

23. Sometimes only 2:9–10 are summarized; see Müller, *Proverbien 1–9*, 54–56 for an overview of the approaches.

24. So already Ewald, *Die Dichter*, 81. See also Dennis Pardee, *Ugaritic and Hebrew Poetic Paralellism: A Trial Cut*, VTSup 39 (Leiden: Brill, 1988), 70–71.

25. Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 217; and Clifford, *Proverbs*, 45. For the structure of Prov 2 see also Perdue, *Proverbs*, 87–88; and Schäfer, *Die Poesie*, 53–54.

26. Gemser, *Sprüche*, 24; Helmer Ringgren, *Sprüche, Prediger, das Hohe Lied, die Klagelieder, das Buch Esther*, 3rd ed., ATD 16 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1981), 18; and Overland, “Structure,” 124, who correctly indicates that such an extensive conditional structure is extraordinary.

27. Ronald E. Murphy, *Wisdom Literature: Job, Proverbs, Ruth, Canticles, Ecclesiastes and Esther*, FOTL 13 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981), 56; Clifford, *Proverbs*, 45.

Part 1

- 2:1 אם תקה (בני) (“if you accept”) (adopted in 2:3 and 4 אם)
 2:5 אז תבין (“then you will understand”)
 2:9 אז תבין (“then you will understand”)

Part 2

- 2:12 להצילך (“in order to save you”)
 2:16 להצילך (“in order to save you”)
 2:20 למען (“so that”)

This observation is a further indication that the author of Prov 2 followed an acrostic structure. For many acrostics the *lamed* line is designated as the “textual center” or a “reversal in the text.”²⁸ The author of Prov 2 apparently took his cue from these two letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Both of them have a special location: *aleph* as the beginning and *lamed* as the middle.²⁹ In this respect, Prov 2 appears as a text that exhibits a thoughtful formal structure. Apparently, this structure should even emphasize the special nature of the instruction on the formal level. In doing so, it also articulates a feature that characterizes the text as a whole. The artful composition develops diverse connections between the verses and sections by means of individual letters and words.³⁰

2.2.2. The First Part (2:1–11)

These formal elements traverse the entire first part of the text (2:1–11). The section is subdivided by conjunctions and infinitive construction. For example, 2:2 is subordinated to 2:1 by means of a final infinitive, while 2:3–4, introduced by כִּי, are adjunctive to it.³¹

28. Brockmüller, *Frau*, 59.

29. A similar case might appear in Sir 24, where a *lamed* in 24:13 denotes the middle of the chapter; see Alice M. Sinnott, *The Personification of Wisdom*, SOTSMS (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005), 120, for an overview of the interpretations and a discussion of the Greek text.

30. Brockmüller, *Frau*, 60–61 attempts to establish this artful structure not only through the use of the letters *aleph* and *lamed*, but also with the letter *taw*. The graphic depiction of the letters (Brockmüller, *Frau*, 60) does not, however, indicate any meaningful structures with the use of the *taw* comparable to those of the *aleph* and *lamed*.

31. See Maier, *Die “fremde Frau,”* 86, whose conclusions will be considered below.

The particle **כִּי** is often interpreted as an emphatic **כִּי** and translated accordingly (“Yes, if you call”).³² Anneli Aejmelaeus raises serious doubt on such usage in an investigation of the particle in Biblical Hebrew and argues for viewing **כִּי** analogous to a **ו**: “Just as **ו** is used in narration as a universal connective to introduce clauses, **כִּי** appears in argumentative types of texts as a kind of argumentative coordinator.”³³ One can further specify this use by observing the evidence in which an introductory **כִּי** is combined with **אם**. It functions as an “argumentative coordinator” in Exod 8:17; 9:2; 10:4; 23:22; Lev 21:2; Deut 11:22; and often. The use of the particle in Prov 2:3 in connection with **אם** is explained by the argumentative style of the chapter and highlights this further on the verbal level (see below §2.3).³⁴

The two units of 2:5–8 and 2:9–11 are each introduced by the construction **אז תבין** (“then you will understand”).³⁵ Proverbs 2:6–8 and 2:10–11 further justify the statement in the opening clause: 2:8a is, like 2:2a, initially subordinated by an infinitive. When one observes the terms used, it is notable that wisdom terminology dominates 2:1–11. The entire first part is traversed by substantives from the semantic field “wisdom.” Central terms appear, such as **חכמה** (“wisdom,” 2:2a, 6a, 10a), **תבונה** (“understanding,” 2:2b, 3b, 6b, 11b), **דעת** (“knowledge,” 2:5b, 6b, 10b), **מזמה** (“prudence,” 2:11a), as well as the root **בין** (noun **בינה** [“insight”] in 2:3a; as well as the verb **בין** [“to understand”] in 5a).³⁶ In other words, terms from the semantic field “wisdom” are placed in specific relationship with one another.³⁷

The root **חכם** (“to be wise”) is often parallel to **בין** (“to understand”) and **ידע** (“to know”) (see Deut 32:39; Job 32:9; Hos 14:10; Jer 9:11). The combination of the nouns **חכמה** (“wisdom”), **דעת** (“knowledge”), and **תבונה** (“understanding”) also appears regularly.³⁸ Michael V. Fox investigates the

32. Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 75–76; Gemser, *Sprüche*, 22; Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 22; Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 62; Müller, *Proverbien* 1–9, 52.

33. Anneli Aejmelaeus, “Function and Interpretation of **כִּי** in Biblical Hebrew,” *JBL* 105 (1986): 205.

34. At the same time, this distinguishes the **כִּי** in 2:3 from the **כִּי** at the beginning of 2:6.

35. On its structuring function see Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 24.

36. See also the overview in Maier, *Die “fremde Frau,”* 88 (table 2), who, however, conflates rather imprecise semantic fields. The verbs **לקח** (2:1a), **צפן** (2:1b), **קשב** (2:2a), and **נטה** (2:2b) cannot equally be subsumed under the semantic field “keep/protect.”

37. See already Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 75–76.

38. Hans-Peter Müller, **חכם**, *TDOT* 4:371; Helmer Ringgren, **בין**, *TDOT* 2:105; and Fox, *Proverbs* 1–9, 37.

range of meaning more closely and delineates the content as follows:³⁹ He differentiates between “expert knowledge,” which an artisan, for example, may also possess. It relates to the pragmatic aspect of thought that is related to particular actions. On the other hand, conceptual thought aims toward intellectual insight. He connects the former with the term חכמה (“wisdom”). According to Fox, this term articulates, “that one may be an ‘expert’ in right living and good character.”⁴⁰ With this definition, however, Fox suppresses the theological dimension of חכמה that adheres to the term (at least in the late period) and that can also be found in the book of Proverbs.⁴¹

In contrast תבונה (“understanding”) stands for the pragmatic aspect. The word targets an action and “frequently means skill in an occupation.”⁴² In contrast to בינה (“insight”), it can also be related to God (as in Prov 4:19; Jer 10:12; 51:15; Ps 136:5). The word is derived, just like בינה, from the root בִּין, which originally means “to give heed to, to perceive” and is often connected with expressions for “hear” and “see.”⁴³ While תבונה appears mostly in wisdom literature, the term בינה from the same root frequently appears beyond wisdom literature. It denotes “insight” and also “understanding.” In 1 Chr 12:33 it refers to the interpretation of signs and astrologers, while in Deut 4:6 it is connected to the law, which is Israel’s “wisdom and insight.”⁴⁴ The emphasis here lies on the rational acquisition of the object and on human insight. In Isa 27:11 the inhabitants of the pagan city are described as “without understanding.” In this case בינה is rendered by “insight” and תבונה by “understanding.”⁴⁵

This analysis indicates that the three central terms of wisdom thinking already appear in 2:1 and 2. They mark out a spectrum that covers

39. Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 32–34 and 37–38; and Fox, “Words for Wisdom,” *ZAH* 6 (1993): 149–69. On the whole also see the still helpful terminological definition by Toy, *Proverbs*, 32–33.

40. Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 33.

41. See, e.g., Prov 3:19–20; 8; and on them Bernd U. Schipper, “Kosmotheistisches Wissen: Prov 3,19f. und die Weisheit Israels,” in *Bilder als Quellen/Images as Sources: Studies on Ancient Near Eastern Artefacts and the Bible Inspired by the Work of Othmar Keel*, ed. Susanne Bickel et al., OBO.S (Fribourg: Presses Universitaires; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007), 503–4. For an overview, see Müller, “חכם,” 4:373–78; and on the approach taken by Fox see §3.3.1 below.

42. Ringgren, “בִּין,” 2:106.

43. Ringgren, “בִּין,” 2:100.

44. See Ringgren, “בִּין,” 2:105; and §3.1 below on Deut 4:6.

45. See also Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 25.

both expert knowledge as well as the practical and theoretical aspects of knowledge. The protasis (2:1–4) explains the way the student of wisdom can make this spectrum their own in characteristic manner:

- (1) My son, if you accept my words
and my commandments you store up with you,
- (2) by making your ear attentive to wisdom,
inclining your heart to understanding.

The storing of the commandments takes place within the heart, the acceptance of the words within the ear. Proverbs 2:1a and 2a as well as 2:1b and 2b match one another and emphasize two aspects of learning: the external denotes the intake of the wisdom discourse, and the internal expresses its internalization.⁴⁶ Proverbs 2:3–4 continue this line of thinking by emphasizing the pursuit of wisdom. It is precisely such actions that result from hearing the words (2:1a, 2a) and the internalization (2:1b, 2b): active calling (קרא, 2:3a), raising of the voice (נחן, 2:3b), seeking (בקש *piel*, 2:4a), and searching (חפש, 2:4b). The progression of the verses itself indicates not only the parallelism of the bicola, but also an intensification in the wording. First there is calling and raising of the voice, then seeking and searching. While the verbs in 2:1–3 quasi describe the students of wisdom in a seated position—they hear the words and accept them—they themselves become active in 2:4. What follows from the hearing and the internalization of the words is not only calling, but also self-activation, including breaking through the static receptive posture.⁴⁷ Proverbs 2:4 articulates the special value of the search through the mention of the object. The seeking (בקש *piel*) should not only be understood here in the sense of the search for processed metal or means of payment, but also as the laborious digging for the raw material itself.⁴⁸ The parallelism

46. Schäfer, *Die Poesie*, 54–55, with a convincing analysis of the verses. See also Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 60, who foregrounds the aspect of holistic orientation.

47. Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 219, follows Plöger and attempts to differentiate here between a “feminine” perspective (“passive acceptance of wisdom in the ear and heart”) and a more “masculine” perspective (“aggressive activity of calling out for it and searching for it”).

48. Siegfried Wagner, “בקש,” *TDOT* 2:229–41; and Wildeboer, *Die Sprüche*, 25, who reasons on the basis of the parallelism with the treasure seeker (Jer 41), which is correct given the content of the overall context of Prov 2. See also Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 25; and Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 60.

from 2:4b describes this raw material analogously as “hidden treasure” (מטמון).⁴⁹ Both indicate the intention of conscious goal-oriented action that will encounter considerable hardship.⁵⁰ The protasis (2:1–4) thereby unfolds a first line of thinking arranged in artful parallelisms with the interweaving of related words. It comprises its own dynamic—moving from hearing to toilsome and time-consuming action.⁵¹

The two apodoses in 2:5–8 and 2:9–11 continue this line of thought by concretely describing what was only metaphorically suggested in the image of the “treasure.” It concerns the understanding (בין) of the fear of YHWH (2:5) and righteousness (צדק, 2:9). Beginning with consideration of the first apodosis (2:5–8), it is striking that the wisdom terms mentioned in the protasis are taken up once again, but now they are attributed explicitly to YHWH. The three terms חכמה (“wisdom”), תבונה (“understanding”), and דעת (“knowledge”), of which the first two are named already in 2:2a or 2b, 3b respectively, appear in a causal clause introduced by כי. The wisdom student should strive for the education that ultimately comes from YHWH. He is the one who gives wisdom as well as other things, whether glory (Ps 84:12), honor (Gen 34:35), or strength and power (Deut 8:18; Ps 29:11).⁵² The statement is especially emphasized through the prefixing of the subject (YHWH) at the beginning of 2:6.⁵³ This same theological determination of central wisdom terms is additionally stressed through the syntactic subordination of 2:6 to 2:5. As a result, the focus lies on the understanding (once again the root בין, cf. the noun in 2:3), which is specified, however, as the understanding of the fear of YHWH and recognition of God. The theologically central conception יראת יהוה (“fear of YHWH”) is supplemented here by means of the parallelism with the construction

49. On the meaning of מטמון, see Gen 43:23; Job 3:21; Isa 45:3; and Jer 41:8; and DCH 5:239, s.v. “מטמון.”

50. Wildeboer, *Die Sprüche*, 25, speaks of “the enduring, zealous endeavor” (“der dauernde[n], eifrige[n] Bemühung.”

51. See also Overland, “Structure,” 124; Perdue, *Proverbs*, 88; and Christine Roy Yoder, *Proverbs*, AOTC (Nashville: Abingdon, 2009), 24 with reference to Job 28:3–4 and 9–11.

52. Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 25. YHWH is mentioned as the giver of wisdom in 1 Kgs 3:9, which speaks of the “hearing heart” (לב שמע). See also Job 35:11; 38:36. To what degree this constitutes a late conception (Müller, *Proverbien* 1–9, 64 n. 7) will be clarified in ch. 3.

53. A prefixed subject also appears in 2:9; see further Maier, *Die “fremde Frau,”* 86, esp. n. 3.

דעת אלהים (“knowledge of God”) in which the more neutral אלהים also refers to YHWH.⁵⁴

The exact meaning of דעת אלהים in this case is not easy to identify. When one begins with the word דעת (“knowledge”) and its use, then it is apparent that it is often used analogously to חכמה (“wisdom”) in Old Testament wisdom. At the same time, they should not be seen as synonymous. Hebrew דעת denotes knowledge, and its usage does not point to a kind of umbrella term.⁵⁵ In his well-known essay “‘Wissen um Gott’ bei Hosea als Urform von Theologie,” Hans W. Wolff argues in favor of situating the expression in priestly service. It denotes “the priestly task of the cultivation and transmission of a certain knowledge about God that can be learned and can also be forgotten.”⁵⁶ Reinhard G. Kratz has by contrast demonstrated that “progress in the knowledge of God” appears, at the end of which stands the “knowledge of the scribal sages.”⁵⁷ The theological determination of the term contrasts with the attempt by John L. McKenzie to understand דעת אלהים more generally as the awareness and implementation of traditional morality.⁵⁸ The parallelism in 2:5 between the fear of YHWH and דעת אלהים instead suggests more of a theological than a purely ethical meaning. As a result, the expression in Prov 2:5 is translated “knowledge of God.”

The parallelism between fear of YHWH and דעת אלהים has a twofold purpose. First, the parallelism emphasizes that the two entities refer to YHWH. Second, 2:5 also provides further specification for the word דעת in 2:6. The דעת appears quasi religiously tinted; wisdom, knowledge, and insight come from the mouth of YHWH.⁵⁹

54. Also Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 223. This carries consequences for the interpretation of 2:17.

55. Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 31, describes it as “the broadest of the wisdom words.” See also Gerhard Johannes Botterweck, “ידע,” *TDOT* 5:465–66.

56. Hans W. Wolff, “Wissen um Gott bei Hosea als Urform von Theologie,” in *Gesammelte Studien*, 2nd ed., TB 22 (Munich: Beck, 1965), 205; for Prov 2, adopted from Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 60.

57. Reinhard G. Kratz, “Erkenntnis Gottes im Hoseabuch,” in *Prophetenstudien: Kleine Schriften* 2, FAT 74 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 304 and 309 (“Fortschritt der Gotteserkenntnis” and “Erkenntnis des schriftgelehrten Weisen”).

58. On the referent of the positions, see Botterweck, “ידע,” 5:466; and Yoder, *Proverbs*, 26. See also John L. McKenzie, “Knowledge of God in Hosea,” *JBL* 74 (1955): 22–27.

59. So already Strack, *Die Sprüche*, 315–16. See also Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 60, and below §3.1.3.

This thought is elucidated further in 2:7 and 2:8 and connected with a new semantic field: the terminology of the way. If one considers the terminology of the chapter as a whole, it is striking that it contains two broad semantic fields: “wisdom” and “way.”⁶⁰ While the former dominates the first part (2:1–11), the latter governs the second part (2:12–22). It is interesting that one does not encounter a single wisdom term in the second part of Prov 2.⁶¹ The reverse is also the case: there is no terminology connected with the way in 2:1–6. Proverbs 2:7–8 and the second apodosis in 2:9–11 have something of a hinge function within the overall structure of 2:1–22. They introduce the metaphor of the way and (in a second step) combine it with the wisdom terminology:

Way/Go	Wisdom	
		7a
הלך “to walk”		7b
ארחות “paths”		8a
דרך “way”		8b
	בין “to understand”	9a
מעגל “track”		9b
בוא “to come”	חכמה “wisdom”	10a
	דעת “knowledge”	10b
	מזמה “prudence”	11a
	תבונה “understanding”	11b

It is striking that central terms from the semantic field “way/go,” are analogous to the use of terms from the semantic field “wisdom.” The use of the term דרך “way” concerns the use of the “central way lexeme” of the Old Testament, which has a correspondingly broad meaning.⁶² Its meaning as

60. Maier, *Die “fremde Frau,”* 88–89; Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 62; and Clifford, *Proverbs*, 45–46.

61. The אמרים from 2:1 are only mentioned in 2:16a.

62. For an overview, see Markus P. Zehnder, *Die Wegmetaphorik im Alten Testament: Eine semantische Untersuchung der alttestamentlichen und altorientalischen Weg-Lexeme mit besonderer Berücksichtigung ihrer metaphorischen Verwendung*, BZAW 268 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1999), 294–96.

“way of life” stands in the foreground, though the majority of the cases place the stress on the negative meaning. It concerns specific behaviors that are identified as wrong and criticized accordingly.⁶³

The use of the terms אֶרֶץ and מַעְגַּל in Prov 2 illustrates this aspect further. The word אֶרֶץ “path,” specified in Prov 2:8 as the “paths of justice” (אַרְחוֹת מִשְׁפָּט), is the second most frequent way lexeme in the Old Testament and is attested repeatedly in wisdom language.⁶⁴ It forms a poetic synonym to דֶּרֶךְ. The word “track” (מַעְגַּל) is linked with it rather infrequently. It is used twice in Prov 2 (2:15, 18) out of only thirteen attestations in the entire Old Testament.⁶⁵ It is used in Ps 65:12 in the sense of “track” and in Ps 17:5 with the sense of the way of life commanded by God: “My steps held fast to your track.”⁶⁶ All three terms therefore refer to the theme of the way of life, which means that 2:7–9 in Prov 2:1–11 already prepare the way for the second part. This theme is developed in terms of content by means of the theme of “right action.” This theme has a central function in 2:12–22, but it appears only in the previously mentioned three verses (2:7–9) within 2:1–11. Two levels are de facto linked with one another: YHWH’s ordinances for life and the human’s appropriate behavior.⁶⁷

The references mentioned above illustrate that the two sections of the first part of the sapiential instruction of Prov 2 discussed thus far are not only closely connected to one another, but they also anticipate the second part. This double interconnection (on the one hand to 2:9–11, on the other to 2:12–22) means that the first apodosis in 2:5–8 should not be removed from its context, as is often done. One should instead interpret the observations by McKane and others in a different manner. McKane views the verses as a “reinterpretive” passage oriented toward the text.⁶⁸ He argues that two levels appear in the text—one with wisdom vocabulary (“vocabulary of old wisdom”) and another with religiously influenced “Yahwistic”

63. Zehnder, *Wegmetaphorik*, 328.

64. Zehnder, *Wegmetaphorik*, 385. Attestations in wisdom are, e.g., Job 13:27; 22:15; 33:11; 34:11; Prov 2:15, 20; 4:14; 9:15; and 22:25.

65. Zehnder, *Wegmetaphorik*, 413; and DCH 5:379–80, s.v. “מַעְגַּל.”

66. The word is used with the same sense in Ps 23:3, where it expresses the faithful lifestyle; see also Zehnder, *Wegmetaphorik*, 417 n. 430.

67. Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 62.

68. So McKane, *Proverbs*, 280, in his dispute with Whybray’s composition criticism; adopted by Schäfer, *Die Poesie*, 67; see also Maier, *Die “fremde Frau,”* 91.

language that reinterprets the terminology of the old wisdom.⁶⁹ However, this itself could also derive from the style of the author of Prov 2 and be consciously intended by him.⁷⁰ As such, one must instead consider the degree to which the author of the wisdom instruction offers a reinterpretation of wholly different traditions. Then this is ultimately a literary technique that cannot be evaluated in terms of literary criticism. Instead, it should be interpreted as a method of textual coherence.⁷¹

Proverbs 2:7–8 continue the discussion about the specification of YHWH as the source of all wisdom. They do this by anticipating themes that will be unfolded in the following sections. The section's prospective nature appears concretely in the terminology. The formula of 2:7a, that YHWH “stores up” (צָפַן *qal*) competence for the upright, should be understood to mean that YHWH saves competence for them—in the sense of צָפַן *qal* “store” like a hidden commodity that is concealed for a certain time in order to make it inaccessible.⁷² The semantic level in this verse connects with the treasure metaphor from 2:4 and constructively continues the line of thought from 2:1–4.⁷³ In doing so it mentions two wisdom categories with the terms יָשָׁר and תָּם. The word group of תָּם denotes “conduct as the right, benign, upstanding, and just, whether expressed in a single act or in a general way of life.”⁷⁴ For the most part, this characterizes especially exemplary people such as, for example, Noah or the topos of the righteous in the Psalms.⁷⁵ By contrast, the root יָשָׁר has a broader meaning and refers

69. On this attempt see the detailed critique by Frederick M. Wilson, “Sacred and Profane? The Yahwistic Redaction of Proverbs Reconsidered,” in *The Listening Heart: Essays in Wisdom and the Psalms in Honour of Roland E. Murphy*, ed. Kenneth G. Hoglund, JSOTSup 58 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987), 320–26.

70. McKane, *Proverbs*, 281; and Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 25, who speaks of a “convergence of two points of view”; similarly Clifford, *Proverbs*, 46.

71. See also below, §2.3.

72. See Prov 30:5; and Maier, *Die “fremde Frau,”* 106. On the meaning for צָפַן *qal* in the sense of “conceal, hide,” see Josh 2:4; Job 14:13; 20:26 (with a negative sense that fire is stored up); Ps 27:5 (the mountains by God). See also Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 114.

73. On the central term of the “faithful” (חֲסִידִים), see below, ch. 3.

74. Benjamin Kedar-Kopfstein, “תָּם,” *TDOT* 15:707. See also Josef Tropper, “Tmym ‘m YHWH: ‘Vollkommen vor dem Herrn,’” *UF* 19 (1987): 297–98 for synonymous expressions.

75. See Gen 6:9; Pss 15:2; 84:12; 101:2, 6; 119:1; and Alexandra Grund, “Die Himmel erzählen die Herrlichkeit Gottes”: *Psalm 19 im Kontext der nachexilischen Toraweisheit*, WMANT 103 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2004), 268–69.

to human conduct that can be characterized as honest and also upright. Verbal usage of the root denotes the “right, honest, upright, conduct that does not go astray or out of bounds” (cf. Prov 21:8).⁷⁶ Both terms are used in connection with the faithful (חסיד, pl. חסידים). In Ps 18:26 the term is mentioned parallel to תמים and in Mic 7:2 parallel to ישר.⁷⁷ As a result, the context allows no doubt that it does not have a purely ethical category in mind, but rather behavior toward YHWH that is grounded in a special relationship.⁷⁸

At first glance, the second apodosis (2:9–11) does not contain the theological intensification that is developed in nearly hymnic fashion in 2:5–8.⁷⁹ For starters, the previously mentioned wisdom terminology links to 2:1–4 on the verbal level. By means of the summarizing asyndeton in 2:9b כל מעל טוב צדק ומשפט ומישרים “every good track,” the three terms in 2:9 “righteousness and justice and uprightness”) are related to the correct life-style.⁸⁰ If one reads the section of 2:9–11 on its own without the run-up from 2:1–8, then it appears quasi profane and without theological imprint. In the overall style of the first part, however, it becomes clear that such a distinction—in one place a theological perspective, in another a nontheological one—misses the point of the text. Proverbs 2:9a אז תבין צדק ומשפט “then you will understand righteousness and justice”) is influenced by 2:5a (אז תבין יראת יהוה, “then you will understand the fear of YHWH”).⁸¹ The parallel nature of the two apodoses extends into the structure, concretely to the introductory phrase אז תבין (“then you will understand”). The question, however, is whether any further characteristics of the author’s mode of operation are tangible. To what degree are different points of view bound together in the text through syntactically parallel structures? In the present case of 2:5 and 2:9, it appears that it goes so far that one perspective qualifies the other. The theological determination of wisdom qualifies the

76. L. Alonso-Schökel, “ישר,” *TDOT* 6:466.

77. See also Helmer Ringgren, “חסיד,” *TDOT* 5:76.

78. This aspect will be addressed in more detail within the framework of the tradition-historical analysis. See below, §3.2.1 and on the חסידים also §5.3.3.

79. Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 61; and Perdue, *Proverbs*, 90.

80. Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 115; and Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 79.

81. Bernhard Lang, *Die weisheitliche Lehrrede: Eine Untersuchung von Sprüche 1–7*, SBS 54 (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1972) 78–79, who describes “this juxtaposition of religious and nonreligious means of expression” (“Nebeneinander von religiöser und nicht-religiöser Ausdrucksweise”) as “characteristic of the instructions” (“charakteristisch für die Lehrreden”).

nontheological aspect of education, the success of life, and the lifestyle that corresponds to wisdom thought. The author does this without providing the section of 2:9–11 with explicit theological character. The parallelism of the syntactic construction suffices to realize the intended effect. As a whole, the literary operation juxtaposes different aspects with one another. However, the primary syntactic (and argumentative) structure of the text produces something of a thematic hierarchy that colors the general ethical statements in a quasi-theological manner.

Such determination of the wisdom way of life is also tangible in the vocabulary of 2:9–11. With *חכמה* (“wisdom”) and *דעת* (“knowledge”), 2:10 mentions two central wisdom terms that in themselves are not theologically charged.⁸² From the background of 2:6, where both are explicitly qualified as gifts of YHWH (constructed with the verb *נתן*, “to give”), they now appear in a religious light.⁸³ The expression that wisdom “comes into your heart” (verb *בוטא*), links to the statement from 2:2, according to which the heart should draw close to insight. The movement in the action of the student of wisdom, first hearing, then internalizing, then active seeking, finds its first goal here. This also means that *חכמה* and *דעת*, as Schäfer formulates poignantly, lead “simultaneously to the ‘good’ lifestyle and to personal piety.”⁸⁴ By means of the formulation in 2:10b *ידעת לנפשך ינעם* (“and knowledge will be pleasant to your appetite”), a series of statements begins that emphasizes the benefit of wisdom for the wisdom student. The focus in 2:10b, 11a, and 11b therefore lies less on the nouns (*דעת*, *מזמה*, and *תבונה*) than on the verb connected with them: *נעם qal* only appears eight times in the Old Testament. The verb is used in love poetry, though it also possesses a connotation for royal theology.⁸⁵ In Ps 27:4 (as a noun), it relates to YHWH, and in the language of the Psalms it describes the “experience of joy and beauty.”⁸⁶ With *שמר* in 2:11a and *נצר* in 2:11b, two verbs

82. See also on Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 31–34 (no. 2 + 4).

83. On the notion of YHWH as giver of wisdom, see §3.1.3. For religious light, see Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 62.

84. Schäfer, *Die Poesie*, 57 (“zugleich zur ‘guten’ Lebenspraxis und zu persönlicher Frömmigkeit”).

85. For love poetry, see Song 7:7–10a; and Tryggve Kronholm, “נעם,” *TDOT* 9:469.

86. Friedhelm Hartenstein, *Das Angesicht Jahwes: Studien zu seinem höfischen und kultischen Bedeutungshintergrund in den Psalmen und in Exodus 32–34*, FAT 55 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 103–4 (citation from p. 104, “Erfahrung der Freude und Schönheit”).

appear that are encountered numerous times in wisdom contexts. The two generally express the duty of the wisdom student to keep the commandments (in his heart, נצר in Prov 3:1, cf. 6:20, with שמר in 4:4 and 4:21) and also to watch his own behavior (Prov 4:13).⁸⁷ Interesting is Prov 3:21, which in analogy to Prov 2:11 connects the verb נצר with the noun מזומה:

My son, may these not depart⁸⁸ from of your eyes,
guard competence and prudence.⁸⁹ (3:21)

The use of the noun מזומה (“prudence”) characterizes a human’s own thought, sometimes also their hidden thoughts.⁹⁰ As a result, it can be used both negatively and positively, though within the Proverbs in chapters 1–9 it always appears with a positive meaning.⁹¹

From the background of Prov 3:21, the intention of 2:11 becomes clear. What the student of wisdom should achieve actually befalls him; wisdom and understanding safeguard him. This change from the subject of the action to the object is expressed in all three verbs of 2:10b–11 and picks up on the introductory statements of the protasis.⁹² The desire of the student of wisdom that listens to wisdom and allows it to set him in motion so that he searches for it as for hidden treasure will be sweet in knowledge. Prudence will keep him, and insight will protect him. It describes something of a cycle that does, however, place a particular emphasis.⁹³ The thought process developed reaches a provisional end in 2:11, in that what the student of wisdom as the subject should do then overtakes him.⁹⁴ He has, so to speak, reached the goal, but it has not yet been concretized more closely. From the background of 2:5–8, there is no doubt that YHWH is ultimately

87. It is striking that נצר in 2:8 and 2:11 does not have an assimilated *nun*. The root appears mostly in the assimilated form (see Deut 32:10; 33:9; Pss 12:8; 25:21; 32:7) also in Prov 3:1, but unassimilated in Prov 5:2; see also Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 79 and 85.

88. For the translation and the grammar see Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 150.

89. On the translation, see Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 82 esp. on n. 8.

90. Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 34.

91. See 2:11; 5:2; 8:12 in contrast to the negative meaning in 12:2; 14:17; 24:8. However, the negative meaning appears often in the Psalter (e.g., Pss 10:2, 4; 21:12; 37:7) and in the book of Sirach (44:4). See also Isa 23:20 and 51:11. Cf. Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 26; and Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 62.

92. A similar change of subjects (formed with שמר) can be found in Prov 4:6.

93. See also Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 77: “the thoughts revolve in a circle only apparently.”

94. Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 62.

the one who protects and guards. This is expressed once again through the verbs שמר and נצר, which one encounters both in 2:8 and also in 2:11.⁹⁵ YHWH “guards” (נצר, 2:8) the “paths of justice” and “preserves” (שמר) the way of those faithful to him. From the background of this context, the student of wisdom now appears as a “faithful one” (חסיד). Here the connection between neutral wisdom terms and theological coloring reaches its initial goal.

With regard to the argument of the first part of the instruction of Prov 2 as a whole, a three-part conclusion can be maintained. (1) In contrast to the view of some previous scholars, verses 1–11 prove to be a coherent unit. Proverbs 2:5–8 likewise cannot be separated from their context, but are artfully linked to it. (2) Wisdom terms dominate the first part of the instruction, but these terms receive religious coloring through their connection with YHWH. YHWH is the giver of wisdom such that the instruction imparted by the wisdom teacher (2:1) takes on a theological dimension.⁹⁶ As a result, both the instruction of the wisdom teacher and also the learning by the student of wisdom are related to the determination of wisdom by YHWH.⁹⁷ (3) This train of thought is characterized as unequivocally positive in 2:1–11. There is neither antithesis nor negative qualification for not following the instruction. At the same time, the terminology of the way prepares for the negative aspect and with it the second part of the instruction.

2.2.3. The Second Part (2:12–22)

The second part of the wisdom instruction of Prov 2 is connected closely in terms of syntax with 2:1–11. Proverbs 2:10–11 govern the two appearances of the infinitive להציל (“in order to save you”) in 2:12a and 2:16a.⁹⁸ These in turn mark two sections of the text structured similarly in formal terms. Both 2:12–15 and also 2:16b–18 present descriptions syntactically defined by the accumulation of nominal clauses. The two are related to one another

95. Overland, “Structure,” 74.

96. See Clifford, *Proverbs*, 47, who emphasizes with regard to the thought process in 2:1–11: “These verses hold in perfect balance divine initiative and human activity.”

97. Fox, “Pedagogy,” 242; followed by Clifford, *Proverbs*, 46. See also Yoder, *Proverbs*, 27; and Perdue, *Proverbs*, 89, who underlines the aspect of “divine grace.”

98. Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 81; Wildeboer, *Die Sprüche*, 5; Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 26; Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 63; and Overland, “Structure,” 102–3.

through a participle of the root עזב (“abandon/forsake”) in 2:13 and 2:17. Thus, a word is used that is rich in meaning for the contextual classification of Prov 2.⁹⁹ Commonalities in structure also appear in the מאיש (“from the man”) from 2:12b and the מאשה (“from the woman”) from 2:16a as well as the respective actions. Both the man from 2:12b and also the woman from 2:16a “talk.” In 2:12b this is expressed through the verb דבר (“to speak”), in 2:16b through the substantive אמריה (“her words”). They do not concern actions as such; the field of meaning of “talking” instead links up with the “words” (אמרים) from 2:1. The speech of the wisdom teacher and its use, which are described in detail in the first part (2:1–11), are now juxtaposed to the speech of the man in 2:12–15 and the woman in 2:16–18.¹⁰⁰ The fact that this speech is damaging has already been made clear through the introductory להצילך. Hebrew נצל *hiphil* does not describe something like a threatening danger, but rather a concrete condition “from which something is removed.”¹⁰¹ The root itself originally identifies a procedure of separation in which something is “removed” or rather “torn out.”¹⁰² The conditions from which this “snatching” takes place could be situations in which escape is impossible (Judg 8:34; 1 Sam 12:10–11; and often) or situations that exclude precisely such action. Therefore, the verb appears with the sense of “rescue from” the power of enemies (Judg 8:34; 1 Sam 12:10–11) and the plight (1 Sam 26:24; Ps 54:9), and also the “protecting from” death (Josh 2:13; Ps 31:19; Prov 10:2; 11:4), Sheol (Ps 86:3; Prov 23:14), or the sword (Exod 18:4; Ps 22:21).¹⁰³

One can initially conclude that the use of נצל *hiphil* in Prov 2:12, 16 describes a situation in the sense of a condition from which one must be rescued or safeguarded. The participial construction in 2:12b (מדבר, “the one who speaks”) accords with this determination. It does not concern a danger that appears suddenly, but rather an enduring and therefore dangerous condition. The question is, however, whether 2:12–15 and 2:16–19 describe a situation from which escape is still possible or a condition that is comparable to death or Sheol from which escape is no longer possible.

99. See also Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 229; and §3.1 of the present work with a detailed investigation of the tradition-historical background.

100. See already Frankenberg, *Die Sprüche*, 27; see also Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 117–19.

101. Frank-Lothar Hossfeld, “נצל,” *TDOT* 9:536. See also Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 228–29; and Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 116–17.

102. Jan Bergman, “נצל,” *TLOT* 2:760–62.

103. Hossfeld, “נצל,” 9:536.

With regard to the use of *hiphil* נָצַל, it points more in favor of the latter. The combination between the *hiphil* and the preposition מִן (“from”) should be understood in the sense of “take out, rescue” and generally concerns an existential situation from which one is rescued (Pss 86:13; 91:3; 144:7; cf. Ps 22:21; Exod 18:4).¹⁰⁴ YHWH is the one who rescues (cf. Deut 23:15; Jer 1:19; Isa 31:5), but an abstraction can also function as the subject of *hiphil* נָצַל. In Prov 10:2, “righteousness” (צִדְקָה) saves from death (also Prov 11:4). In Prov 2, the infinitive is governed by the terms מִזְמָה (“prudence”) and תְּבוּנָה (“understanding”) in 2:11. In this case, wisdom terms are accorded a task otherwise connected to YHWH: the “saving from” existential, mortal danger.¹⁰⁵

If one first considers the terminology of the second part (2:12–22) before analyzing the two sections more closely, then it is striking that the two outlined semantic fields “way/go” and “correct action” are now broadly developed. The metaphor of the way appears in every section of the second part and is represented most strongly in comparison to all other semantic fields through a total of seventeen attestations.¹⁰⁶ The substantive דֶּרֶךְ “way” is used four times (2:7b, 12a, 13b, 20a), the word אֲרָחוֹת “paths” five times (2:8a, 13a, 15a, 19a, 20b), and the word מַעְגַּל “track” three times (2:9b, 15b, 18b). The verbs הָלַךְ “go” (2:7b, 13b, 20a) and בּוֹא “come” (2:10a, 19a) appear three and two times respectively.¹⁰⁷ Alone this statistical evidence illustrates that the mention of the man (אִישׁ) from 2:12 and the words of the woman (אִשָּׁה) from 2:17 carry a congruent action with them. Matching the line of reasoning in the first part, here as well the words lead to action. In the first part it concerns setting out in order to seek wisdom and therefore a movement toward the one from whom wisdom emanates—YHWH. Part 2 describes the exact opposite movement: not toward YHWH, but rather away from him. Unequivocally negative actions are articulated in what follows by means of the way metaphor.

This is illustrated already in 2:12 through the continuation of the opening infinitive לְהַצִּילָךְ (“in order to save you”) with מִדֶּרֶךְ רָע (“from the way of evil”). The word רָע (“evil”) appears as a key term in the following verses, linking the semantic field “good-evil” in a characteristic manner

104. Bergman, “נָצַל,” 2:760–62.

105. Frankenberg, *Die Sprüche*, 27–28.

106. Clifford, *Proverbs*, 45–46.

107. See also Maier, *Die “fremde Frau,”* 88–89.

with the terminology of the way.¹⁰⁸ For after the first mention of טוב (“good”) in 2:9b, an entire series of evaluative terms appear in 2:12–15 and 2:18–20: רע (“evil”) in 2:12a, 14a, 14b, also the negatively connoted nouns חשך (“darkness,” 2:13b), מות (“death”), and רפאים (“Rephaim,” 2:18). These contrast with the positively tinted terms חיים (“life,” 2:19b) and טובים (“the good,” 2:20a). The line of reasoning of the wisdom instruction takes on an increasingly dualistic tension in the second part. Misconduct is explicitly placed before the eyes of the student of wisdom after the first part proved the benefits of wisdom in a virtually promotional manner.

Connected with this is a third semantic field that is also heard for the first time in 2:7–8: correct action. A whole series of substantives appears in 2:7–22 that express correct or faulty conduct. In 2:7a, 9b, and 21a there is talk of the ישרים (“the upright,” cf. also ישר in 13a), in 2:12b and 14b the abstract term תהפכות (“perversities”) is found, and in 2:9a, 20 the term צדק (“righteousness”) or the צדיקים (“the righteous”). All three semantic fields are connected to one another in 2:12–15. The verses indicate an inner structure that is already recognizable through the terminology—the guiding theme is repeated in each case through various terms: “way” (דרך, 2:12a, 13b), “path” (ארח, 2:13a, 15a), “evil” (רע, 2:12a, 14a and b), and “perversities” (תהפכות, 2:12b, 14b).¹⁰⁹ All four terms are used twice in 2:12–15. With תהפכות a term from the world of wisdom is mentioned that is encountered multiple times in the book of Proverbs (Prov 6:14; 8:13; 10:31–32; 16:28–30; 23:33). In every case, what is in view is perverse speech or even the perversities conceived by the heart (6:14; 23:33).¹¹⁰ The intension is, therefore, a faulty attitude that determines one’s thinking and speech.¹¹¹

This is realized further in 2:13, which speaks of forsaking the “paths of uprightness” (ארחות ישר).¹¹² The root ישר denotes the use of a previously mentioned central wisdom term. The word is often connected to the

108. See also the table in Maier, *Die “fremde Frau,”* 88; and more generally Perdue, *Proverbs*, 91; as well as Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 63, who emphasizes that it thereby develops something of a “contrary to YHWH’s order” (“Gegenordnung zur Anordnung JHWHs”).

109. Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 228.

110. Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 79–80; Toy, *Proverbs*, 42; and Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 117.

111. See also Weeks, *Instruction*, 198, who refers to Deut 32:20, “where the ‘generation of perversity’ is a reference to Israel’s apostasy.”

112. On the central term עיב see §3.1.1.

metaphor of the way. As a predicate it can function to designate the type of the ethically oriented person.¹¹³ If one follows the line of thought in the text, 2:13 then speaks of persons who have abandoned the straight paths in order to go on dark ways.¹¹⁴ As is typical for wisdom literature, “darkness” (חשך) is considered the antithesis to wisdom. Darkness appears often in connection with the fate of the wicked, especially in Job (Job 5:14; 15:22, 23).¹¹⁵ In Job 19:8 and 29:3 it is related to the righteous who walk through darkness, or darkness can lie on their path (אורח, Job 19:8). At the same time, חשך can also be a poetic word for the realm of the dead.¹¹⁶ Again in the book of Job, several attestations of this meaning also appear in wisdom thought (see Job 15:30; 17:13). As a result, there is much in favor of concluding that בדרכי חשך (“in the ways of darkness”) in 2:13b already alludes to the death (מות) in the passage about the woman in 2:17. Proverbs 2:12–15 therefore develop a line of reasoning that targets life as a whole and describes a habitus that is diametrically opposed to the wisdom ideal.

Careful consideration of this thought makes the nature of the statements in 2:14–15 more conspicuous. The way of the wicked from 2:12 is neither made more concrete nor described more fully. It instead addresses the basic attitude that is opposed to the message of the wisdom teacher. Proverbs 2:14 takes up the abstract term רע (“evil”) from 2:12 and uses it twice. This matches the two terms from the semantic field of “be happy/rejoice” in 2:14a (the adjective שמח) and 2:14 b (the verb גיל). In Prov 10:1; 15:20 (cf. 17:21), the clever son brings the father or the parents (Prov 23:24–25) happiness (שמח). In 2:14 instead it is the fools who desire to do wickedness.

A wise son makes his father happy/glad [שמח],
a foolish son is his mother grief. (10:1)

The father of a fool cannot be happy [שמח]. (17:21b)

113. Alonso-Schökel, “ישר,” 6:468.

114. On the idiosyncratic plural in 2:13a (העזובים), see Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 117; and Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 63.

115. See also §3.3.

116. Helmer Ringgren, “חשך,” *TDOT* 5:251 and 255 with reference to 1 Sam 2:9. See also the range of the evidence in Wilhelm Gesenius, *Hebräisches und Aramäisches Handwörterbuch über das Alte Testament*, ed. Rudolf Meyer and Herbert Donner, 18th ed. (Berlin: Springer, 2010), s.v. “חשך,” 408; and *HAL* 1:347–48, s.v. “חשך”; *HALOT* 1:361–62, s.v. “חשך”; and *DCH* 3:325–26, s.v. “חשך.”

This “desire for wickedness” is then strengthened through the verb גיל in 2:14b. The verb describes rejoicing or exulting. It is used both in relation to YHWH and also with a profane meaning.¹¹⁷ In Ps 97:1, 8 it is related to praise of YHWH and the divine law:¹¹⁸

Zion heard it and was happy,
and the daughters of Judah exulted
because of your law, YHWH.

In Ps 9:15 the construction expresses celebration about YHWH’s help (cf. Pss 13:6; 89:17).¹¹⁹ Proverbs 2:14b diametrically opposes this thought. The verse expresses, as is already clear from the root שמה, the desire of the wrongdoer to do wickedness. Here, too, a habitus is again under consideration that comprises “heart and soul.”¹²⁰ This is particularly serious because the way of the wrongdoer is described as twisted and devious in 2:15. The terminology that is used is once again markedly wisdom oriented. The adjective עקש in 2:15a denotes the “crooked” path in Prov 10:9; 28:6 (in the sense of the “wrong” way). The verb לון in 2:15b also appears in Prov 14:2 with the metaphor of the way and denotes the “inverted” in contrast to the straight in Prov 3:22. In both cases לון is contrasted with the root ישר.

When one views the line of reasoning in 2:12–15, it is striking that 2:14–15 exemplify the core statement from 2:12–13. There is basically nothing more to add to the abandoning the paths of uprightness and walking on the ways of darkness in 2:13, but apparently it was important to the author of the wisdom instruction to return to this thought once again in order to emphasize it. This takes place through the theme of “desire for wickedness,” which in the end—without explicitly laying this out in 2:14–15—leads to destruction.¹²¹ Thereby the theme of the following two sections is already anticipated: the way to destruction that will encounter the person who makes faulty conduct their habitus.

117. See Hab 3:18; Isa 29:19; 41:16 (YHWH); and also Isa 16:10 (the gathering of the harvest); and Isa 9:2b (the distribution of war spoils); on the range of the evidence, see Christoph Barth, “גיל,” *TDOT* 2:474–75.

118. Reinhard Müller, *Jahwe als Wettergott: Studien zur althebräischen Kultlyrik anhand ausgewählter Psalmen*, BZAW 387 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2008), 86.

119. Gesenius, *Handwörterbuch*, s.v. “גיל,” 213; and *HAL* 1:182, s.v. “גיל,” with further documentation; *DCH* 2:345–46, s.v. “גיל”; and *HALOT* 1:189–90, s.v. “גיל.”

120. So Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 230; see also Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 117.

121. See Clifford, *Proverbs*, 48.

The second final clause (2:16–19) exhibits the same formal structure as the first one. Once again, an infinitive construction is placed at the beginning. It is followed in the second verse by the word עזב (“to forsake,” 2:17a). The third and fourth lines continue with a description of the fate of the wrongdoer.¹²² Like in 2:12–15, the section concerning the woman (אשה) is also marked by the metaphor of the way, which is specified further by the lexical field of “good-evil.” The existential aspect that includes life as a whole is markedly developed in comparison with the previous section.¹²³ Proverbs 2:18 mentions death (מות) and the “Rephaim” (רפאים). Proverbs 2:19 contrasts both terms with the “paths of life” (ארחות חיים). The section thereby takes on its special character in the more detailed description of the woman in 2:16, contrasting with the man from 2:12. It concerns a אשה זרה, a “strange woman,” which analogously to Prov 5:20; 6:24; 7:5; 23:27 is also simply denoted as the “strange” (זרה).¹²⁴ Like the man in 2:12, the speech begins with what is dangerous and from which one must be saved (נצל *hiphil*). For the woman makes her words “smooth” (חלק *hiphil*).

The root חלק I is consistently encountered with profane applications and can denote the “smoothing/smoothing out” (hammering) of metals (Isa 41:1) or polished stones (by water; 1 Sam 17:40). When connected to speech, the root also receives the meaning “flatter,” for example, of (false) prophets that do not speak the truth but instead flatter (Isa 30:10). The root is also used in order to express flattery more generally of one’s neighbor (Prov 28:3; 29:5).¹²⁵ In Ps 36:3 the sinner flatters himself; in Prov 5:3; 7:5, 21 it is the strange woman. In all three cases concerning the strange woman, חלק refers to the woman’s speech. In 5:3 it is the mouth that is “smoother” than oil. In 7:21 it is the flattering lips (see also Ps 5:10), while the same connection between חלק I and the root אמר appears in 7:5 that is found in Prov 2:16. The text thereby warns more against the speech of the strange woman than a concrete action. As was already the case in 2:12–15, the verses remain quite general and do not make any concrete statements. One gets the impression that it was more important to the author of Prov

122. See Fox, “Pedagogy,” 236; and Schäfer, *Die Poesie*, 65, who offers a schematic of the similarities between 2:12–15 and 2:16–19.

123. Perdue, *Proverbs*, 91–92; Fox, *Proverbs* 1–9, 121; and Toy, *Proverbs*, 48.

124. Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 68.

125. Klaus D. Schunck, “חלק I,” *TDOT* 4:445–46; Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 231; Fox, *Proverbs* 1–9, 119; and Gesenius, *Handwörterbuch*, s.v. “חלק1,” 359; *DCH* 3:241–44, s.v. “חלק I.”

2 to allude to a concrete context than to explicitly name it.¹²⁶ Still to be investigated, however, is the degree to which the theme of the strange woman in Prov 2 presupposes the other wisdom instructions in Prov 1–9 of the figure of the woman. The terminological proximity between 2:16 and 7:5 could provide an initial indication.¹²⁷

An allusion, which at the same time indicates an ambiguity, also appears in 2:17. This verse could be the one discussed the most in the entire chapter. What is concretely intended by the “companion/friend of her youth” (אֱלוֹף נְעוּרֶיהָ) and the “covenant of her God” (בְּרִית אֱלֹהֶיהָ)? The question is compounded by the fact that the two statements are placed in synonymous parallelism to one another, meaning that the author of Prov 2 does not think that one statement can be considered without the other.¹²⁸ Beginning with the אֱלוֹף נְעוּרֶיהָ of 2:17a opens up a certain spectrum of meaning.

In Gen 36:15–19 (1 Chr 1:51–54) אֱלוֹף is used analogously to the term שָׂר (“prince”). Otherwise the word instead denotes “someone intimate, friend, companion.”¹²⁹ The closest parallel to Prov 2:17 is constituted by Jer 3:4.¹³⁰

Have you not called me from then on: “My father, you are the companion [אֱלוֹף] of my youth [נְעוּרַי].”

As in Prov 2:17, there is a connection between אֱלוֹף and נְעוּרִים. The passage has been called upon multiple times to illuminate the meaning of 2:17b, yet with varying results. McKane and Bruce Waltke argue on the basis of the parallelism between אֱלוֹף and אָב (“father”) in Jer 3:4 for the teacher or rather the husband as the teacher of the woman/wife.¹³¹ In contrast,

126. See also ch. 3 of this study.

127. See also ch. 4 of this work; and Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 26, who maintains for 2:16–19 that “a theme is introduced almost only in key words that receives a detailed justification in chs. 5–7” (“fast nur in Stichworten ein Thema angeschnitten wird, das in den folgenden Kapiteln 5–7 eine ausführliche Begründung findet”).

128. Schäfer, *Die Poesie*, 61.

129. See Ps 55:14; Prov 16:28; Mic 7:5; and often. See also Jer 11:19; and Gesenius, *Handwörterbuch*, s.v. “אֱלוֹף,” 63; *HAL* 1:53–54, s.v. “אֱלוֹף”; *DCH* 1:288–89, s.v. “אֱלוֹף”; and *HALOT* 1:54, s.v. “אֱלוֹף.”

130. Wilhelm Rudolph, *Jeremiah*, 3rd ed., HAT 1.12 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1968), 24–25; and Jack R. Lundbom, *Jeremiah 1–20: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 21A (New York: Doubleday, 1999), 303.

131. McKane, *Proverbs*, 286; Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 231.

already Delitzsch emphasizes the consideration of an allegorical meaning here.¹³² Jeremiah 3:1–5 addresses Israel’s infidelity to YHWH and develops it on the basis of the topic of marital law from Deut 24:1–4.¹³³ Deuteronomy 4:1–5 develop this thought through the example of the remarriage between a man and a divorced woman. This is enriched through the image of the “beloved of my youth” found widely in scribal prophecy.¹³⁴ Therefore, Jer 3:4 cannot simply be seen as a neutral teaching by the father. It should instead be read in light of the background of the overall argument in Jer 3:1–5 and interpreted in light of the tradition of the unfaithful people of God.¹³⁵ Israel is newly “instated as YHWH’s sons.”¹³⁶ A meaning referring to the people of God suggests itself for Prov 2:17, especially when one adds the formulation in 2:17a.

The formula *את ברית אלהיה שכחה* (“the covenant of her god she has forgotten”) in 2:17b is interpreted variously in scholarship. Gordon P. Hugenberger has summarized the discussion on Prov 2:17 and articulates three possible interpretations. One can understand the “covenant of her God” either (1) as a covenant with another god besides YHWH (G. Boström, O. Plöger), (2) the covenant of Sinai and therefore related to YHWH (A. Cohen, D. Kidner, W. McKane) or (3) as the covenant of her wedding (Hugenberger himself).¹³⁷ However, consideration of the language definitely indicates one particular interpretive possibility.

132. Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 82, with reference to the history of interpretation.

133. See also Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 49; and Georg Fischer, *Jeremia 1–25*, HThKAT (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2005), 185. The composition criticism of the chapter will not be discussed further at this point. See also Konrad Schmid, *Buchgestalten des Jeremiabuches: Untersuchungen zur Redaktions- und Rezeptionsgeschichte von Jer 30–33 im Kontext des Buches*, WMANT 72 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1996), 279, who convincingly shows that within Jer 3:1–4:2, only the sections 3:6–11 and 3:14–18 can be separated out. On the development of the overall composition, see Schmid, *Buchgestalten*, 280.

134. See Hos 2:17; 3:1; Mal 2:14–15; and Ezek 16. On Mal 2 see also below §3.3.2.

135. Schäfer, *Die Poesie*, 61.

136. Schmid, *Buchgestalten*, 281 (“als Jhwhs Söhne eingesetzt”).

137. Gordon P. Hugenberger, *Marriage as a Covenant: A Study of Biblical Law and Ethics Governing Marriage, Developed from the Perspective of Malachi*, VTSup 52 (Leiden: Brill, 1994) 297–302; and Yoder, *Proverbs*, 31, with discussion of the possibilities. Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 231, also considers the marital bond; so also Gemser, *Sprüche*, 27; and Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 82. Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 27, instead reckons with a covenant with a different deity; Wildeboer, *Sprüche*, 7, “the covenant arranged by God” (“den von Gott geordneten Bund”).

The connection of שכח (“to forget”) with ברית אלהיה (“covenant of her god”) is singular within the Old Testament. The term ברית (“covenant”) with the verb שכח otherwise only appears with the Tetragram or with an accusative object related to YHWH.¹³⁸ The closest parallel in terms of content for the connection of the verb שכח appears in Deut 4:¹³⁹

Be careful that you do not forget [שכח] the covenant [ברית] of YHWH, your God, which he made with you and do not make for yourself an idol of any form, for YHWH, your God, has commanded you. (4:23)

Because YHWH your God is a merciful God. He will neither let you fall nor destroy you, and he will not forget the covenant of your ancestors, which he swore to them. (4:31)

These two late (or post) Deuteronomistic influenced verses clearly indicate the forgetting of the covenant in the sense of a transgression of the First (or rather Second) Commandment.¹⁴⁰ A similar formulation also appears in the previously mentioned passage in Jer 3. Proverbs 2:21 bemoans the fact that the sons of Israel “have perverted their ways and forgotten YHWH, their God [יהוה שכח].”¹⁴¹ On the background of the evidence, it becomes clear that Prov 2:17 does not contemplate a foreign deity, but a covenant with YHWH. The fact that אלהים in Prov 2 also denotes YHWH is already evident from the parallelism in 2:4 between fear of YHWH and knowledge of God.¹⁴² In the end, Meinhold’s summary proves correct:

138. Maier, *Die “fremde Frau,”* 98.

139. See also Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 65, who additionally points to Deut 6:12; 8:11; 14:19.

140. Maier, *Die “fremde Frau,”* 98–99; and on Deut 4 Eckart Otto, “Deuteronomium 4: Die Pentateuchredaktion im Deuteronomiumsrahmen,” in *Das Deuteronomium und seine Querbeziehungen*, ed. Timo Veijola, PFES 62 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996), 196–222; Timo Veijola, *Das fünfte Buch Mose Deuteronomium: Kap. 1, 1–16, 17*, ATD 8.1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004), 95 and 107–10; as well as Lothar Perlitt, *Deuteronomium*, BKAT 5.1 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener-Verlag, 1990), 338–39 and 353–54. On the literary location of Deut 4 see §3.1.1.

141. On the literary (and literary-critical) categorization of the verse see Schmid, *Buchgestalten*, 287–88; and Fischer, *Jeremia*, 198.

142. Differently Boström, *Proverbiastudien*, 104; and McKane, *Proverbs*, 286. Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 68, notes that Elohim only appears three times as the name for the deity YHWH in the book of Proverbs (2:5; 3:4; 25:2). See also Toy, *Proverbs*, 35, who also notes 30:9.

When it states that the “strange woman” has forgotten the covenant of her God, then this does not at the same time mean the marriage covenant, but the neglect of the duties that are put upon her because of the relationship of the people to which she belongs with God.¹⁴³

The statement of 2:17 thereby depicts misconduct by the woman that targets the people of God as a whole by means of the chosen terminology. However, as already stated above, this is hardly made concrete. Like the section on the (wickedly acting) man, the text curiously does not concretize the assertion. It evidently alludes to a specific context. With regard to the strange woman, one can first conclude that she was not a “foreigner,” but rather a woman belonging to the people of God.¹⁴⁴

Proverbs 2:18–19 make the misconduct of the woman concrete in light of the resulting consequences.

To begin with, the Masoretic Text of 2:18 raises several problems. It is repeatedly emphasized that the (according to the MT) feminine verb form שָׁחָה (from שָׁח, “to sink”) is governed by a masculine subject (בֵּית, “house”). Interpreters either change the verb (usually to שָׁמָה, “to be desolate,” or שָׁתָה, “to drink”) or the noun (to נְתִיבָתָה or נְבִתִיבוֹתָה, “her pathway/s”). In the eclectic edition of the text prepared by Fox, this is one of the places where Fox changes MT without the evidence of another textual witness.¹⁴⁵ Following A. Müller and Maier here, the verb שָׁחָה “to lead down” is most likely, which entails a shift of stress to the last syllable.¹⁴⁶ A key word of the death imagery in the Old Testament appears

143. Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 69 (“Wenn es von der ‘fremden Frau’ heißt, sie habe den Bund ihres Gottes vergessen, dann ist damit gleichfalls nicht der Ehebund gemeint, sondern ihr Vernachlässigen der durch die Gottesbeziehung des Volkes, in die sie gehört, gegebenen Pflichten”).

144. Similarly Gemser, *Sprüche*, 25.

145. Michael V. Fox, *Textual Commentary*, 96: בֵּית שָׁחָה אֶל־מָוֶת נְתִיבָתָה “indeed, her path sinks to death”; on Fox, *Textual Commentary* itself, see Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 41; and the different position of Ronald Hendel, Adrian Schenker, and Clemens Locher: Hendel, “Comparing Critical Editions: BHQ Proverbs and HBCE Proverbs,” *ZAW* 128 (2016): 681–83. Schenker and Locher, “Zwei neue Textausgaben der hebräischen Bibel im Vergleich: Biblia Hebraica Quinta und The Hebrew Bible; A Critical Edition,” *ZAW* 128 (2016): 468–71.

146. Schäfer, *Die Poesie*, 54 n. 2 (with a detailed discussion of the possible readings); and Maier, *Die “fremde Frau,”* 85. See Barthélemy, *Critique Textuelle*, 465–66; and Schäfer, *Die Poesie*, 62–63, who offers an overview of emendation proposals. See also John A. Emerton, “A Note on Proverbs II.18,” *JTS* 30 (1979): 153–58; and Oswald

in 2:18 with מוֹת.¹⁴⁷ The term מוֹת (“death”) only appears in connection with the רפאים in Prov 2:18. The רפאים denote a pre-Israelite people group in narrative contexts.¹⁴⁸ However, the word is likely connected with the Ugaritic *rp’um* and is probably derived from the root *rpy* (“the feeble, powerless ones”).¹⁴⁹ In the Ugaritic texts it denotes the inhabitants of the underworld. According to the classic scholarly understanding, it concerns deified kings.¹⁵⁰ The term also appears with this meaning in the Old Testament. In Ps 88:11 the word denotes the shades (“ghosts”) of the dead. In Job 26:5 it is the ghosts of the dead who “tremble” (חִיל *polel*). Finally, in the well-known satirical song for Helel in Isa 14:9, the ghosts of the dead are stirred up.¹⁵¹ Interestingly, the conception of the רפאים in the sense of the deceased or rather ghosts of the dead also appears in the book of Proverbs:

But he does not know that the Rephaim are there,
Those called by her are in the depths of Sheol. (9:18)

Loretz, “Ugaritische und hebräische Lexikographie (III),” *UF* 14 (1982): 141–42, with discussion of the emendation proposals made by Dahood and Held. See also Clifford, *Proverbs*, 45 n. b; and on the LXX the explanations by Johann Cook, *The Septuagint of Proverbs: Jewish and/or Hellenistic Proverbs? Concerning the Hellenistic Colouring of LXX Proverbs*, VTSup 69 (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 140.

147. On מוֹת see Matthias Krieg, *Todesbilder im Alten Testament oder: “Wie die Alten den Tod gebildet,”* ATANT 73 (Zurich: TVZ, 1988), 144–45; and Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 65–66.

148. See Gen 14:5; 15:20; Deut 2:11, 20; for the evidence, see Rüdiger Liwak, “רפאים,” *TDOT* 13:602–14.

149. See Liwak, “רפאים,” 13:606; and Josef Tropper, *Nekromantie: Totenbefragung im Alten Orient und im Alten Testament*, AOAT 223 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener-Verlag; Kevelaer: Butzon & Bercker, 1989), 125.

150. See Tropper, *Nekromantie*, 125–26; and Liwak, “רפאים,” 13:607. In contrast, Brian B. Schmidt, *Israel’s Beneficent Dead: Ancestor Cult and Necromancy in Ancient Israelite Religion and Tradition*, FAT 11 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1994), 71–92, sees the Ugaritic *rp’um* as warriors in service of the king that are understood as mythic heroes.

151. In the Isaiah apocalypse, in Isa 26:14, the word is parallel to the dead (מֵתִים); see Willem A. M. Beuken, *Jesaja 1–12*, HThKAT 34 (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2003), 378; and on the broader context, Reinhard Scholl, *Die Elenden in Gottes Thronrat: Stilistisch-kompositorische Untersuchungen zu Jesaja 24–27*, BZAW 274 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2000), 125.

The one who strays from the way of understanding,¹⁵²
he will rest in the assembly of the Rephaim. (21:16)

These two passages attest that the book of Proverbs was familiar with the original Canaanite conception of the Rephaim as inhabitants of the underworld.¹⁵³ However, one must agree with Brian B. Schmidt that the Old Testament רפאים did not possess any power, but in the poetic passages, the term “only functioned to designate humanity’s postmortem, weakened existence.”¹⁵⁴ In this regard, one must also remain careful about seeing a special allusion to Canaanite mythology in the terms מות and רפאים in Prov 2:18.¹⁵⁵ Within the line of argument in Prov 2:16–19, the specific terminology of 2:18 instead serves to broaden the “way of darkness” already linked explicitly in 2:13 to death and the world of the dead.¹⁵⁶

An interesting compositional principle of the text appears here on the structural level. A theme is first touched on and then taken up again, and in the course of the instruction it is repeatedly developed. This has already been recognized for the way metaphor that is mentioned in 2:9–11, but first developed in detail in 2:12–22. Therefore, Prov 2:18 should be interpreted more within the horizon of the previously mentioned passages of Proverbs as well as in connection with Prov 1:12, where the evildoers speak of Sheol devouring the living.¹⁵⁷

152. The verb שכל in the *hiphil* means “understand, realize,” but it can also denote achievement or success; see HAL 2:1238, s.v. “שכל”; DCH 8:353, s.v. “שכל”; and HALOT 2:1491–92, s.v. “שכל.”

153. Loretz, “Lexikographie,” 146.

154. Schmidt, *Dead*, 269.

155. Cf. Loretz, “Lexikographie,” 147. Whether this passage alludes to the Sumerian Ishtar hymn as argued by Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 233, is questionable.

156. This of course changes on the level of the textual history. In the LXX the phrase μετὰ τῶν γιγγενῶν appears, which can be understood as a reference to the giants; see also Matthew Goff, “Subterranean Giants and Septuagint Proverbs: The ‘Earth-Born’ of LXX Proverbs,” in *With Wisdom as a Robe: Qumran and Other Jewish Studies in Honour of Ida Fröhlich*, ed. Károly D. Dobosa and Miklós Köszeghy, HBM 21 (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2009), 149–50.

157. See also Stephanie U. Gulde, “Der Tod als Figur im Alten Testament: Ein alttestamentlicher Motivkomplex und seine Wurzeln,” in *Tod und Jenseits im alten Israel und in seiner Umwelt*, ed. Angelika Berlejung and Bernd Janowski, FAT 64 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 80–81.

We will swallow them alive like Sheol,
and the blameless like those who go down to the pit.

As a result, “her house” (ביתה) should not be understood as a building, but rather genealogically as a generational sequence whose lifeline sinks down into death.¹⁵⁸

The line of thought from 2:17–18 is continued in 2:19 through a specification of what preceded. The one who “goes to her” (באיה) will not return. Interpreters have often understood “go to a woman” as a sexual act and referred to texts like Gen 6:4; 16:2; and also Prov 6:29.¹⁵⁹ The common use of the verb בוא suggests, however, a different meaning. “Going to a woman” in the sense of the sexual act is always a construction of בוא and the prepositions אל or ל.¹⁶⁰ The verb בוא with a direct suffix, without preposition like in 2:19, can instead denote “moving in” (in Josh 15:18; Judg 1:14 a young woman to a husband) or also interaction with someone.¹⁶¹ As a result, there are hardly any sexual connotations here. It would also be conceivable from the background of the line of argument of Prov 2 developed to this point that it simply means putting oneself in motion. The בוא from 2:19 could then match the seeking (בקש) and the searching (חפש) from 2:4. As was already the case in the positive presentation of wisdom, an activation in the sense of goal-oriented action results from hearing the instruction.

This goal-oriented action is defined further in 2:19 by the statement that the “paths of life” (חיים ארחות) will not be reached through such action. As a result, the next stage of the argumentative structure is reached. For while 2:1–11 are formulated positively, 2:12–18 are unfolded by means of the negative example of the antithesis to wisdom, such that what one does not attain is first spoken of as the *via negativa*. The text states what one misses, if one does not follow the words of the wisdom teacher, but rather those of wicked men and (especially) those of the strange woman. On the backdrop of the overall argument of the text, the verse transitions to the dualism of 2:20–22, though its content is still connected with the

158. Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 65.

159. Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 122. Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 233, thinks of a prostitute.

160. As found in the previously mentioned texts; see also Gen 30:3; 38:8; Deut 22:13; and Gesenius, *Handwörterbuch*, s.v. “בוא,” 129; DCH 2:101–27, s.v. “בוא.”

161. With this meaning the verb is often paired with יצא; see Deut 28:6; 1 Sam 29:6.

section concerning the strange woman. The expression אַרְחוֹת חַיִּים (“paths of life”) makes use of a combination of words that is closely connected with the range of meaning of the word אַרְחָה.¹⁶² A quarter of all Old Testament attestations are related to the way of life.¹⁶³ However, the formula “path of life” does not appear in every case; the formula instead only appears in a few passages.¹⁶⁴ Quite informative is Ps 16:11, where אַרְחָה חַיִּים is decidedly connected to YHWH and is articulated as his gift. As a result, the formulation “You show me the path of life” (יָדַע *hiphil*) in Ps 16:11 allows for one to call to mind instruction by YHWH.¹⁶⁵ In Prov 15:24 this thought is shaped further in light of the world of the dead, Sheol:

The path of life [אַרְחָה חַיִּים] goes upward for an intelligent person,
in order to avoid Sheol below.

The path of life leads to YHWH and therefore away from the path of Sheol. The fact that this thought of the way of life is part of wisdom instruction is made clear by Prov 4:4:

He taught me and said to me: May your heart hold fast to my words,
keep my commandments, and you will live.

Proverbs 4:4 elucidates the connection between the instruction (here the “commandments,” מִצְוֹת), the internalization of the teaching in the heart (i.e., in thought), and the way of life.¹⁶⁶ If one links this with Ps 16:11, then the construction אַרְחוֹת חַיִּים does not simply have the way of life in mind, but also instruction by YHWH that leads to “reaching the paths of life” (Prov 2:19).¹⁶⁷

162. See Isa 2:3; and Isa 3:12; Mic 4:2; Pss 25:4; 44:19; 119:15. On Ps 119 see §3.2.2.

163. Zehnder, *Wegemetaphorik*, 391 n. 320.

164. On this point the evidence from the concordance collected by Zehnder, *Weg-metaphorik* must be further differentiated because the formulation “path of life” goes beyond the general meaning “way of life.”

165. See Frank-Lothar Hossfeld and Erich Zenger, *Die Psalmen I*, NEchtB 29 (Würzburg: Echter, 1993), 112; and on the range of evidence, Gesenius, *Handwörterbuch*, s.v. “אַרְחָה,” 97; DCH 4:99–112, s.v. “יָדַע I.”

166. Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 170. On the conception of the heart, see the excursus in §3.3.1; and Yoder, *Proverbs*, 25–26.

167. Instructive in this context are also passages in which אַרְחָה is related to YHWH’s instruction; see Pss 25:4; 44:19; 119:15.

The goal of the sapiential instruction of Prov 2 is reached with the main final clause of 2:20–22.¹⁶⁸ The break from the preceding section first becomes clear through the change in persons in 2:20a. The person who was in view in the two infinitives להצילך (with 2nd per. sg. suffix, “in order to save you”) 2:12–19 is again addressed. Following the introductory למען (“so that”) in 2:20 is the second-person singular (impf. *qal*) of the verb הלך (“to walk”). Considering first the semantic field, it is striking that the section is closely connected to the previous verses even just through the metaphor of the way. The terms דרך (“way”), הלך (“to walk”), and ארחות (“paths”) from the semantic field “way/go” appear. Further interconnection with the preceding verses is realized through the concept of the צדיקים (“the righteous”), which connects to 2:9a and the verb שמר.¹⁶⁹ This shows that 2:20–22 are closely connected with the preceding verses and can hardly be separated out as a secondary redactional addition.¹⁷⁰ The train of thought unfolded in 2:1–19 in this respect reaches its conclusion in the pinnacle of the contrast between those who follow the wisdom instruction and those who hold to the message of the wicked man and the strange woman. The former is denoted “good” (2:20a: טובים), “the righteous” (2:20b: צדיקים), “the upright” (2:21a: ישרים), and “the blameless” (2:21b: תמימים); the latter as “wicked” (2:22a: רשעים) and “treacherous” (2:22b: בוגדים). The parallelism of the terms in relation to those that follow the wisdom instruction establishes a connection to the predicates that were defined in 2:5–9 in light of YHWH. In addition to the righteous (root צדק), 2:7 also mentions the terms ישרים (“upright,” 2:21a) and תם (“blameless,” cf. 2:21b). As a result, a connection is established between 2:20–21 and 2:7–8. Immediately articulated is the fact that righteousness or blameless conduct is ultimately the gift of YHWH. This connection can be illustrated further through the semantics of the terms.

The word תמימים, which belongs to the root תמם (“to be complete, to be perfect”), initially denotes something faultless or perfect.¹⁷¹ In cultic

168. It is also conceivable to understand 2:20 as a consequence from something rather than as a further final clause. See Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 233–34, with references to further literature; and Exod 10:1; 11:9; Isa 30:1; as well as Jer 44:8.

169. With regard to these terms, the verb שמר does not fit the context because the semantics in 2:20b and 2:8b are different. In one case it concerns the preservation of the paths of the righteous by the student of wisdom (2:20b), in the other the divine preservation of the way of the faithful (2:8b).

170. Also Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 28; in contrast with Michel, “Proverbia 2,” 236–37.

171. HAL, s.v. “תם”; HALOT 2:1753, s.v. “תם”; and the article by Josef Tropper mentioned in n. 74.

contexts the sacrificial animal is called תמים in the sense of flawless (Lev 4:3, 23; 5:15, 18; 22:21; and often). In Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic contexts human conduct can be blameless with regard to God (Deut 18:13; 32:4).¹⁷² The evidence is similar in wisdom literature. The term is connected with צדק ("righteousness") in Job 12:4 and denotes the pious and the righteous.¹⁷³ This matches Ps 19:8, where the torah of YHWH is called תמים.¹⁷⁴ The term apparently alludes to a field of reference, whereby according to Ps 84:12 it is even a gift of YHWH. Therefore, on the semantic level, the term תמים alludes to the "faithful" (חסיד) in 2:8. Here it is striking that תמים appears in Ps 84:12 in connection with the word "shield" (מגן), which is also the case in Prov 2:7b.

With תמים ("blameless"), a word is used that, on the one hand, denotes human conduct in accord with the torah and, on the other, instead is traced back to the gift of YHWH. This term is placed in a context in 2:20–22 that has definite parallels within the book of Proverbs. One is Prov 11:5, which contains both the previously mentioned range of words and also the theme of the way.

The righteousness [צדקה] of the blameless [תמים] levels his way [דרך],
but through his wickedness [רשעה] a wicked (person) [רשע] falls.

The contrast between the righteous or the blameless and the wicked established in Prov 2:20–22 is emphasized in a very similar way.¹⁷⁵ The fact that this juxtaposition can also be expressed through other key terms from Prov 2:20–22 is attested by Prov 14:19.¹⁷⁶

The evil [רעים] bow down before the good [טובים],
and the wicked [רשעים] at the gates of the righteous one [צדיק].

The impression arises in light of these references that the terminology of 2:20–22 is intentionally linked with the previously mentioned semantic field. The "good" (טובים) resonates with the key word רע ("evil") from

172. See also Josh 24:14; 2 Sam 22:24; and Ps 18:24 constructed in contrast to עון.

173. See also Ps 15:2.

174. See also Grund, "Die Himmel," 222–23.

175. See also Prov 11:20, where those "of crooked minds" are characterized as תועבה for YHWH.

176. Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 303; Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 238.

2:12–19.¹⁷⁷ At the same time, the terms illustrate the linkage to both parts of Prov 2, both to 2:1–11 and also to 2:12–19. Proverbs 2:20–22 therefore form a conclusion constructed through manifold references to the argument as a whole. However, it contains an interesting intensification.

It is remarkable that the conduct of the student of wisdom is not described as “wise” or even blameless in an ethical sense, but rather as “pious” behavior according to YHWH. The religious aspect of 2:5–8, which some interpreters evaluate as a foreign body within the overall style of Prov 2, which therefore serves as an argument for its elimination, is in fact closely linked to the wisdom teaching.¹⁷⁸ This aspect is unfolded in the antithesis between the righteous and the wicked and therefore in the connection of the first and the second parts of the instructional speech. The step-by-step unfolding of the antithesis in the style of the instruction takes on virtually normative character in 2:21–22, which mentions the theme of the inhabitation of the land. This is interesting first on a linguistic level because “dwelling” in the land” (שכן) is parallel to “remaining” in it (יתר *niphal*).¹⁷⁹

The root יתר in the first place means “be left over” and in the *niphal* it has a reflexive basic meaning, “prove to be superfluous, to be left over.”¹⁸⁰ Interesting are the attestations of יתר *niphal* with ב. In Isa 4:3 the ones “remaining” in Jerusalem (literally: “the remnant,” הנוותר בירושלם) is connected with the thought of the remainder. Also similar is Ezek 14:22, which contains יתר *niphal* with ב as well (as in Prov 2:21 constructed with the direct suffix: נותרה בה, “remain in it/left a remnant in it”).¹⁸¹

The righteous in 2:22 are contrasted in quite dramatic terms with the fate of the wicked and rebellious. The latter are destroyed or torn out of the land. Both terms used, כרת and נסח, emphasize the radical nature of the operation. The verb כרת *niphal* denotes “extermination” or “destruction” and can indicate the annihilation of nations in the historical literature (Josh 11:21: the Elamites; Josh 23:4: all nations) or also of specific groups (1 Sam 20:15: David’s enemies; 1 Sam 28:9: interpreters of signs and mediums).¹⁸²

177. On the range of evidence see Ingeborg Höver-Johag, “טוב,” *TDOT* 5:309–11.

178. Perdue, *Proverbs*, 86–87; and Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 67, who speaks of “wisdom faith formation” (“weisheitliche[r] Glaubensbildung”).

179. Toy, *Proverbs*, 52–53; and Wildeboer, *Die Sprüche*, 8.

180. Tryggve Kronholm, “יתר I,” *TDOT* 6:485.

181. Kronholm, “יתר,” 6:485; and *DCH* 4:343–44, s.v. “יתר.”

182. See also Judg 4:24; 1 Sam 20:15; and Gerhard F. Hasel, “כרת,” *TDOT* 7:345–46. See also below, §3.3.1.

The root כרת (“to cut off”) only appears in connection with the root נסח in Prov 2:22. Therefore, it concerns a specific linguistic use, one that intertextual analysis in chapter 3 can show to be more delimited.

Bringing together the previous analysis, several observations can be made for the second part of the wisdom teaching. Proverbs 2:12–22 link up both syntactically and in terms of content with 2:1–11 and are connected to it by means of several terminological references. In the center stand the semantic fields “way/go” and “good/evil.” Interestingly enough, wisdom terminology does not appear. The connection with the definition of wisdom in 2:1–11 is only established through the juxtaposition of the wisdom teacher (2:1) with the speech of the wicked man and the strange woman (2:12, 16). However, it is interesting how the structure of the argument becomes increasingly clear. It appears that one compositional principle for the author of the sapiential instruction of Prov 2 is to touch on a theme and then return to develop it at a later point. For example, the terminology of “the way” in 2:7–9 hints at the juxtaposition of the “right” and “erroneous” ways in 2:12–19, which is intensified in 2:20–22. This principle of composition also appears in the comparison of the passages concerning the wicked man (2:12–15) and the strange woman (2:16–19). In both cases the way leads to death, which itself is explicitly mentioned in 2:18. Following this line of reasoning, 2:19 marks the transition to the dualistic climactic statement in 2:20–22 in which the wisdom instruction makes a *via negativa* statement for the first time. The expression “paths of life” (אֲרָחוֹת חַיִּים) has a semantic range that not only relates to YHWH but is also linked to the idea of an instruction by YHWH. This already demonstrates that the teaching of the wisdom teacher in Prov 2 is closely connected to the teaching of YHWH. The wisdom that he communicates is, in the end, the gift of YHWH (2:6).¹⁸³

2.3. On the Composition of Proverbs 2

The analysis of Prov 2 has proven the text to be a meaningful unit with a clear and carefully conceived structure. This can be traced into the individual clauses and shows itself in the complex parallelisms, which themselves lead to syntactic peculiarities (fronting the subject or object). At the same time, the formal structure conforms to a complex conditional

183. Wildeboer, *Die Sprüche*, 6; and Strack, *Die Sprüche*, 319–20.

framework with a precisely configured internal structure. The repeated occurrence of individual clausal components (protasis three times, apodosis twice, final clause three times) is therefore explained as a result of the masterful overall composition of the chapter.¹⁸⁴ This matches the relationships between the individual sections. A compositional principle becomes apparent in which the author of the sapiential instruction develops a strict line of thought by means of the citation of themes and parallelism of specific passages. This is connected with a clear dramatic composition. The text begins with a description of wisdom and ends with the dualistic contrast of remaining in or being uprooted from the land. When considering the semantic fields, it becomes striking that wisdom terminology only appears at the beginning, while the theme of “the way” moves increasingly into the foreground over the course of the text. This is linked with the intensification of the argument. It is not clear at first glance that the text does not articulate alternatives. There is no second chance for those who have preferred the speech of the wicked man or the strange woman to the wisdom teacher.¹⁸⁵

A further aspect concerns the topic itself. Plöger correctly indicates that the text does not offer “detailed development,” but rather “short disclosures that match the specific themes of the characters introduced in chapter 2.”¹⁸⁶ Further analysis will need to pursue this aspect more thoroughly in order to identify its importance for the position of Prov 2 within Prov 1–9. To what degree do the short statements from Prov 2 presuppose themes from the other instructions that it touches on? Regardless of the fact that this question is still in need of detailed treatment, the two-fold dimension of the sapiential instruction of Prov 2 has already become clear.¹⁸⁷ On one hand, the text develops an inner dynamic. On the other, there is the thematic entanglement with the other instructions of the first collection of the book of Proverbs. They concern, as is outlined especially in the second part of Prov 2, conduct that comprises all of life, which—to

184. A multiple protasis also appears in Job 36:8–12 and in Ps 7:4–5. See Müller, *Proverbien 1–9*, 57 with n. 8.

185. Clifford, *Proverbs*, 48.

186. Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 29 (“ausführliche Entfaltung” and “knappe Angaben, wie es dem in bestimmte Themen einführenden Charakter von Kap. 2 entspricht”). Similarly Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 63, who speaks of the “general terminology” (“allgemeine Begriffe”); see also Yoder, *Proverbs*, 29.

187. See also ch. 4 of the present study.

the degree that the formulation of “house” in 2:18 can be understood as intergenerational—already has significance for the future in the present.

2.3.1. The Formal Structure of Proverbs 2 in the Context of Proverbs 1–9

Scholarship has often noted the peculiar character of Prov 2 within Prov 1–9. This is related first to the content of the chapter and second to the style of the instruction itself. Fox summarizes the line of reasoning in a single sentence in an article on the pedagogy of Prov 2—completely in keeping with the formal structure of Prov 2: “If you do what I say, you will learn wisdom, which will bring you to fear of God and righteousness, which will protect you and keep you away from wicked men and women and thereby ensure you a long life.”¹⁸⁸

The text contains a clear proclamation that is unfolded in a complex structure, first becoming noticeable from its style. The conditional structure of Prov 2 is singular within Prov 1–9. Otherwise, imperatives dominate.¹⁸⁹ For example, an abundance of imperatives are encountered in the first large group of instructions found in Prov 1:8–19. It recommends concrete behavior for the student of wisdom.¹⁹⁰ In Prov 2, on the other hand, the sapiential instruction remains quite restrained. At the same time, it is striking that even with all the metaphors in 2:12–15 and 16–19, Prov 2 does not communicate through images with regard to wisdom itself. A statement like the one appearing in Prov 1:8–9 would therefore be inconceivable in a twofold sense in Prov 2:

Hear, my son, the discipline of your father,
and do not reject the *torah* of your mother!
For they are a garland of grace for your head
and pendants for your neck.¹⁹¹ (1:8–9)

Proverbs 2 is set apart both by the lack of this form of imperative style and also by the omission of such developed metaphors. This is noteworthy

188. Fox, “Pedagogy,” 235–36. See Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 126; similarly Yoder, *Proverbs*, 32.

189. So already Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 75–76. See also Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 59; Fox, “Pedagogy,” 234.

190. For Prov 1:8 see Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 77, and on the imperative style also Prov 3:1, 7, 9.

191. For such figurative speech concerning wisdom itself, see also Prov 3:13–20.

because every other sapiential instruction in Prov 1–9 not only contains an imperative style, but also matches the verbal imagery. Consideration of the nine other instructions in 1:8–19 (1), 3:1–12 (2), 3:21–35 (4), 4:1–9 (5), 4:10–19 (6), 4:20–27 (7), 5:1–23 (8), 6:20–35 (9), and 7:1–27 (10) reveals that imperative formulations appear in 3:1; 3:21; 4:1; 4:10; 4:20; 5:1; 6:20; and 7:1.¹⁹² Embellished metaphors are encountered in all of the other teachings, though they can take thoroughly divergent forms. There are statements according to which wisdom is “more precious than pearls” (3:15) or will provide a “garland of grace” for one’s head (4:9; cf. 1:9).¹⁹³ These images are, interestingly, only encountered in the first instructional speech, while the latter instructions place their emphasis on the wicked men (4:20–27) and the strange woman (5:1–23; 6:20–35; 7:1–27).¹⁹⁴

Compared with this background, Prov 2 seems almost propositional. Only its search for silver and hidden treasure in 2:4 draw near to the other approach to speaking about wisdom. It is otherwise dominated by the syntactical form of the conditional argumentative style. One gets the impression that the figurative speech is unnecessary for the author because his message becomes increasingly strong over the course of the argument. Heeding the words and commandments (מצות) leads to understanding of the fear of YHWH (2:5).¹⁹⁵ The metaphorical proclamations in 2:7 that YHWH stores up competence “as a shield to those who walk blamelessly” does not stand alone as such. Instead, 2:6–7 alludes to a connection between the upright person and his or her opposite, to which the concluding verses 20–22 then tie back. Two metaphors correspond to this: the “way” (דרך) and the “path” (ארח). The explicit mentions of the “paths of the righteous” and the “way of his faithful” aim at the antithesis of “righteous” and “sinner,” thus going beyond the “way” metaphor of 2:12–15 and 2:16–19. A change takes place especially in 2:7 and 2:8 that is important for the further development. At this juncture, wisdom, the fear of YHWH, and its meaning were mentioned in purely positive terms without any limitations; 2:7–8 anticipates the later antithesis. This takes place in the form of an internal disparity. The discourse in 2:7a concerns prudence for

192. On the composition and structure of Prov 1–9 see Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 44–45; Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 46 with a chart, and below §4.2. The classical numbering will be retained here.

193. Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 187–88, 257–58, 281–82.

194. On this see also Baumann, *Die Weisheitsgestalt*, 259.

195. On this see §3.1.1.

the “upright” (ישרים), a term that is taken up again in 2:21a. The image in 2:7b shifts to the “shield” (מגן), bringing in the protective aspect and the delimitation from others who will be taken up in the “safeguarding” of 2:8a. In 2:8b the suffix “his faithful one” (חסידו) makes a conscious correlation that, on the one hand, ties in with the “upright” from 2:7a and, on the other hand, makes an intentional distinction. What distinguishes the artful composition of the text is that this distinction is not immediately developed, but, completely in keeping with the style of 2:1–4, the importance of wisdom is highlighted in positive terms.

In what follows, however, the text takes on an increasing binding character. The normative nature becomes progressively clear. As a result, the dictum cited from Fox at the beginning of this section on the overall style of Prov 2 is only partially accurate. The special pedagogy of the chapter becomes increasingly exclusive over the course of the thematic development and finally leads to the fundamental antithesis of 2:20–22. It arrives at a position that is by all means related to the imperative structure of the other sapiential instructions in Prov 1–9. To state it differently, despite the adopted conditional form, Prov 2 is not too distanced from the instructions in Prov 1–7 with regard to the claims of the text.¹⁹⁶ The author of Prov 2 does not develop an open concept that might, so to speak, remain a vague proposal for discussion. It instead develops the same normative claim also arising in the other instructions. This can be observed merely with the fact that the author of the sapiential instructions formulates no alternatives that would offer the possibility of a choice. He is instead of the opinion that the one who gets involved with the strange woman or wicked man is lost forever.

2.4. Conclusion: On the Intention of Proverbs 2

The analysis presented here begins with the formal structure of the sapiential instruction of Prov 2 and then considers its sections. What results is an artistic construction to which the edifice is attached and which extends into the connections between key words. Through the orientation provided by the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet and the outline on the basis of *aleph* and *lamed*, Prov 2 exhibits a

196. On the imperative style, see Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 59; also Yoder, *Proverbs*, 35, who summarizes with regard to the wisdom instruction of Prov 2: “the parent’s claim is categorical.”

structure that expresses the comprehensive nature of its message. The acrostic character targets an instructional setting in which the structure of the alphabet provides a memory aide for the content. From this background Prov 2 comes across as a didactic text that arises from the socio-cultural location of the school or educational establishment. This is developed in the text through a conditional framework in which the thought process manifests itself as an act-consequence event. It would be a mistake, however, to conclude from this conditionality that there is an openness to the content. The instruction of Prov 2 instead draws its strength from an internal dynamic that calls forth a movement that only reaches its goal in the final sequence. This goal—remaining in the land—should not be understood in terms of a future expected action; it appears as the logical consequence of present action.¹⁹⁷

Through an artistic as well as a complex manner, the text of the wisdom teaching offers instruction for present action. This takes place on the literary level through the combination of the various sections, for example, 2:5–8 and 2:9–11 in which the different perspectives converge with one another.¹⁹⁸ This is especially tangible in the first part of the instruction on 2:1–11. Statements about wisdom appearing there are juxtaposed to those concerning the relationship of wisdom to YHWH. The speech of the wisdom teacher in 2:1 thereby appears to draw near to the speech of YHWH, for wisdom, perception (knowledge), and insight come from YHWH's mouth (2:6). Even if—in keeping with the wisdom instructional setting—a wisdom teacher is speaking here, what he says takes on divine and therefore normative authority. The internalization of the instruction and its implementation in word and deed (2:2–4) can only thus be explained as leading to understanding (בין) of the fear of YHWH and the discovery of the understanding of God. What appears here is the cooperation of human and divine action.¹⁹⁹ In doing so, three levels intertwine: (1) the instruction of the wisdom teacher, (2) the hearing and seeking of the students of wisdom, and finally (3) the action of YHWH.²⁰⁰

This accentuation, which can also be found in the interpretive history of Prov 2, has implications for the meaning of the central wisdom terms

197. Yoder, *Proverbs*, 34.

198. Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 25.

199. So also Clifford, *Proverbs*, 47; Fox, "Pedagogy," 242; and Yoder, *Proverbs*, 34.

200. This already appears in the medieval commentary by Sa'adia Gaon; see Fox, "Pedagogy," 242.

in 2:1–4.²⁰¹ These take on theological hues from the backdrop provided by the textual analysis, even though this coloring remains to be investigated in more detail within the framework of tradition-historical analysis.²⁰² The overarching spectrum of wisdom thought is thereby mentioned in 2:1–4: the wisdom competence (חכמה, “wisdom”), the pragmatic aspect (תבונה, “understanding”), and the intellectual one (בינה, “insight”). These three central wisdom terms appear first in 2:2–3 as independent entities that are the object of human speculation and pursuit. However, in 2:6 they are explicitly traced back to YHWH. The course of the argument in 2:1–5 is therefore provided justification that the intellectual preoccupation with wisdom not only leads to action (seeking and searching), but also to deeper understanding of the fear of YHWH. The student of wisdom who truly aspires to wisdom will find fear of YHWH and knowledge of God (2:5).

As a result, the function of 2:6–8 lies in its emphasis on the cooperation of human striving for wisdom and divine action.²⁰³ YHWH preserves competence (2:7), which is mentioned as an aim of the reflection on wisdom: the protective function. The formulation of the shield together with the verb “to store up” (צפן) illustrate that grasping wisdom is not automatic.²⁰⁴ It requires YHWH’s assistance. Such cooperation between human initiative and divine action means that one need no longer fear the dangers to which the student of wisdom is normally subjected. When 2:11 states that “prudence” (מזמה) will guard you and “understanding” (תבונה) will protect you, then the person’s own thought and the divine wisdom coming from YHWH in 2:6 work together. This is articulated through the imperatives in 2:12 and 2:16 (“in order to save you”). This saving is exemplified in a twofold manner: with regard to the wicked men (2:12–15) and with regard to the strange woman (2:16–19).

As a result, a further singularity appears: the text contains quite general statements that at first give off the impression of an openness or even

201. On the interpretation of Prov 2 in the church fathers see the overview by J. Robert Wright, *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon*, ACCS 9 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2007), 16–17, with special reference to Augustine, Origen, and Clement of Alexandria.

202. It is evident that even just the return of the conception of the “mouth of YHWH” alone takes up a theme from Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic theology; see also below, §3.1.

203. Yoder, *Proverbs*, 34–35; Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 76–77.

204. Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 61.

indetermination. For example, in the discussion of the “evil,” it is not concretely stated how this concept should be understood.²⁰⁵ Instead, the consequences of the action and the way of life itself are referenced. It leads to death, as the section on the strange woman illustrates. Moreover, the individual analysis leads to the recognition that the short proclamations about the strange woman touch on themes both from the book of Proverbs and outside it. It appears that the key to the sapiential instruction of Prov 2 lies here, for the previously mentioned openness proves only to be an alleged openness when one arrives at 2:22. It applies exclusively to those who, in accord with 2:1–11, associate their thinking with the wisdom emanating from YHWH and follow the instruction of the wisdom teacher. When one does this, then basically nothing can go wrong for them. They will remain in the land and receive protection from YHWH.²⁰⁶ At the same time, it is worthwhile to observe those that function as models in the text. These are the *ישרים* (“the upright,” 2:7, 21), the *חסיד* (“the faithful,” 2:8), the *צדיקים* (“the righteous”), and the *טובים* (“the good,” 2:20), as well as the *תמימים* (“the blameless,” 2:21). It is also the case here that when one encounters wisdom terms, however, a religious plane is reached by means of the context and the combination with other terms, for example, the “faithful” (*חסיד*). The depths of this will be plumbed further within the framework of the tradition-historical analysis.

Finally, Prov 2 mirrors a remarkable self-confidence that already emanates from the external form. The conditional structure articulates both a clear and simultaneously irrevocable context: one thing leads to another, and the result is a logical consequence of what precedes. Its basis is an understanding of wisdom in which wisdom is considered the manifestation of God’s will and not a human quality. This concurrently articulates the starting point for the subsequent analyses. They will clarify the degree to which this is not only a property of the wisdom tradition itself but where it alludes to other traditions and, as a result, how the text might possibly be located within a specific discourse, within which it is accorded a particular voice. The author of Prov 2 had no doubt both that his teaching alone leads to permanence in the land and that it accords with the will of YHWH.

205. Yoder, *Proverbs*, 29.

206. See Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 133, who states the message of Prov 2 with the formula: “if you seek wisdom, you *will* find it” (emphasis original) See also Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 67, who adopts Fox’s line of reasoning.

When looking at the interpretive history of Prov 2, the claim of the text has also always been seen as a problem. The Jewish medieval commentators emphasized, for example, that one only experiences delight in wisdom after experiencing in-depth searching and reflection. It is not automatic, but as Sa'adia Gaon realized, it must be viewed as the result of a long journey. One first recognizes its value and use in spite of all efforts and troubles "when one has achieved it."²⁰⁷ In this respect, Prov 2 formulates a goal in its opening part that can be obtained first when one demonstrates the conduct articulated in 2:12–19. As a result, it is only a small step to conclude that the author of Prov 2 already presupposed a specific textual tradition and reflection concerning wisdom. The impression emerges that Prov 2 is a highly reflective text containing a whole series of references—whether internal or external to the book of Proverbs. This will be the starting point for the tradition-historical analysis that follows. Its results will again return to the question of the intention of Prov 2 before investigating the place of the sapiential instruction of Prov 2 within the book of Proverbs.

207. Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 67. See also Fox, "Pedagogy," 242 with the translation of the relevant passage: "Do not suppose that from the beginning of your inquiry in [wisdom] you will attain its benefit and enjoy it. Rather, be patient, for its beginnings are wearisome, but if you work through them, you will later arrive at lasting satisfaction and joy and happiness"; Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 132.

On the Tradition History of Proverbs 2

The analysis of Prov 2 has shown that the text is guided by the fundamental connection between an act and its consequences. The instruction of Prov 2 evokes the ways to life and death but does not set forth their content. The structure as a whole and its deeper meaning must still be developed. In the following tradition-historical analysis the location of the sapiential instruction in relation to other Old Testament traditions will be evaluated. In keeping with the preliminary methodological considerations, the discussion will start from a broadened notion of tradition history in which the focus lies on the relations to different traditions, that is, to texts. In continuity with the observations on the text, and also with previous scholarly discussion on Prov 2, three textual traditions are important: (1) Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic, (2) wisdom psalms, and (3) late prophetic, especially eschatological texts, though the theme of the strange woman should also be addressed in this context. Previous scholarship has recognized all three traditions with varying emphases, but their connection to one another remains uninvestigated. The following sections will first consider each textual tradition on its own and then, in a second step, inquire about its importance for understanding Prov 2.

3.1. Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic Traditions

The introductory outline of the history of scholarship (§1.2) has already shown that the connection between Deuteronomy and Prov 1–9 has received attention since the works of Delitzsch in 1873.¹ The following

1. See §1.1 above and also Stuart Weeks, “Wisdom in the Old Testament,” in *Where Shall Wisdom Be Found? Wisdom in the Bible, the Church and the Contemporary World*, ed. Stephan C. Barton (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1999), 29–30.

analysis will show that connections to Deuteronomistic ideas can be found in Prov 2. These connections take on deeper meaning in light of the place of Prov 2 within Prov 1–9 (ch. 4) and the reception of Deuteronomy in Proverbs (ch. 5).

3.1.1. The Commands (מצות), Proverbs 2:1

In the search for central terms of the Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic tradition in Prov 2, the first discovery already takes place in 2:1. In parallel to the “words” (אמרים) in 2:1a, one finds in 2:1b the “commands” or “commandments” (מצות). The question is to what degree it conceives of a divine law. When one begins with the word itself, then it must first be maintained that מצוה does not originally refer to divine authority. The noun derives from the verb צוה and belongs to the legal sphere.² In this context it denotes legal norms or legal judgments. Therefore, according to Jer 32:6–14, it can be used as a judicial term in the redemption of an agricultural field.³ “The word *mišwâ* is authoritative in and of itself. A *mišwâ* should be followed because it has been given by someone with authority.”⁴ This can be, for example, a father (Jer 35) or a king (2 Kgs 18:36; Isa 36:21). Accordingly, the term denotes “the commanded” or also “the commandment” that is equivalent to the “duty” or even the “obligation” from the perspective of the addressee.⁵ Building on this understanding, in Deuteronomistic tradition the term relates to God, the divine will, and eventually to the commandments. At the same time, it is important for Deuteronomy that the laws and the legal norms rest on divine revelation.⁶ The term

2. Helmer Ringgren and Baruch Levine, “מצוה,” *TDOT* 8:505–6; and Liedke, *Gestalt*, 190.

3. See also Liedke, *Gestalt*, 191.

4. Ringgren and Levine, “מצוה,” 8:506; and Yoder, *Proverbs*, 24. See also 2 Chr 24:21; 30:12; Neh 12:24–25; and Jer 27:4; 36:8; 38:27; 39:11; 51:59. A problem with Jer 35 is that the text has been edited Deuteronomistically; see also Liedke, *Gestalt*, 189.

5. *DCH* 5:446, s.v. “מצוה.” See also Jakob Barth, *Die Nominalbildung in den semitischen Sprachen* (Hildesheim: Olms, 1967), 243 n. 161; and on the original meaning of the word in the sense of “commandment,” Liedke, *Gestalt*, 194.

6. It is widely known that this very conception separates Hebrew Bible law from that of ancient Near East. On the resulting problems and hermeneutical questions, which in the end also effect the analysis of Prov 2, see Bernard M. Levinson, “*The Right Chorale*”: *Studies in Biblical Law and Interpretation*, FAT 54 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 32–33; and below §5.1.

appears in this sense as a central term for the first time in Deut 1–11.⁷ It is used in Deut 4:2 (“the commandments of YHWH,” *מצות יהוה*) and in 6:25 (“this entire commandment,” *כל מצוה הזאת*). In this case it is unequivocally related to the divine commandments.⁸ Therefore, *מצוה* and *תורה* are closely linked to one another.⁹

On the basis of this meaning in Deuteronomistic literature, the term *מצוה* is adopted by other traditions.¹⁰ In addition to Pss 19 and 119, which will be discussed further below, especially interesting with regard to Prov 2 is Lev 26 in its relationship with Deut 28.¹¹ Leviticus 26 can serve as an initial example for a literary process that will be important: the *relecture* of a text from Deuteronomy that simultaneously exhibits a shift in emphasis.¹²

Strictly speaking, Lev 26 presents a correction of Priestly theology from Deuteronomy, which is why the Priestly Document at this point appears “Deuteronomistic.”¹³ The law is identified as revealed by God, entirely in keeping with the Deuteronomic perspective.¹⁴ The defining term in both Deut 28 and also in Lev 26 is *מצוה*. It is used three times in Lev 26 (26:3, 13,

7. Ringgren and Levine, “מצוה,” 8:510; and Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 107.

8. Deut 6:25 can likely be traced back to a late editor of the chapter, though it ties into the original intention of the section, which according to 6:5 “already presupposes the legal understanding of ‘these words’” (Timo Veijola, *Moses Erben: Studien zum Dekalog, zum Deuteronomismus und zum Schriftgelehrtentum*, BWANT 149 [Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2000], 92). See also the analysis of Eckart Otto, *Deuteronomium 4,44–11,32*, HThKAT (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2012), 784.

9. William M. Schniedewind, “The Textualization of Torah and the Deuteronomistic Tradition,” in *Das Deuteronomium zwischen Pentateuch und Deuteronomistischem Geschichtswerk*, ed. Eckart Otto and Reinhard Achenbach, FRLANT 206 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004), 157.

10. Liedke and Petersen, “תורה,” *TLOT* 3:1416–18.

11. See §§3.2.2 and 3.2.3 below.

12. Reinhard Müller, “A Prophetic View of the Exile in the Holiness Code: Literary Growth and Tradition History in Leviticus 26,” in *The Concepts of Exile in Ancient Israel and Its Historical Contexts*, ed. Ehud Ben Zvi and Christoph Levin, BZAW 404 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2010), 207–28.

13. Norbert Lohfink presents this in detail: “Die Abänderung der Theologie des priesterlichen Geschichtswerks im Segen des Heiligkeitgesetzes: Zu Lev. 26,9.11–13,” in *Studien zum Pentateuch*, SBAB 4 (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1988), 166–67. See also Eckart Otto, “Innerbiblische Exegese im Heiligkeitgesetz,” in *Die Tora: Studien zum Pentateuch; Gesammelte Schriften*, BZABR 9 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2009), 90.

14. Georg Braulik, “Gesetz als Evangelium: Rechtfertigung und Begnadigung nach der deuteronomischen Tora,” in *Studien zur Theologie des Deuteronomiums*,

15) and five times in Deut 28 (28:1, 9, 13, 15, 45). Obedience and disobedience to the מצוה are linked in both cases with blessing and curse.¹⁵ As a result, it is central for both the Priestly and Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic tradition that the plural form of the noun denotes the “totality of laws.”¹⁶ However, the question is whether such a meaning for the plural form of מצוה can also be applied to Prov 2:1b.

Consideration of the usage of the term in the book of Proverbs itself suggests such a use, even if—simply on the basis of the word מצוה—it is not mandatory.¹⁷ Instead, further arguments are needed in order to render a connection between Prov 2 and Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic tradition plausible.

In the book of Proverbs, the term מצוה appears a total of eleven times (1:8; 2:1; 3:1; 4:4; 6:20, 23; 7:1, 2; 10:8; 13:13; 19:16). Among these, the singular use dominates in the older proverbs (13:13; 19:16 in contrast to the plural in 10:8), while the plural does so in Prov 1–9 (only singular in 6:20, 23; all of the other five attestations have the plural). It is not only interesting that one often encounters the plural, but also the form with a suffix. In 1:8; 2:1; 3:1; 4:4; and 7:1–2, the מצוה refer to the teacher (only 6:20 reckons with the command of the father; 6:23 is the only place without a suffix in Prov 1–9).

Gerlinde Baumann points out that מצוה with a suffix always refers to YHWH with one exception (Jer 35:18). She concludes concerning the usage of the term in Prov 1–9 that the boundary between human and divine commandments should be transgressed or rather blurred.¹⁸ The following argument will show that this interpretation describes a central fact that is tangible in different places in Prov 2. The language has more

SBAB 2 (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1988), 135–36; Otto, “Exegese,” 92; and Müller, “Prophetic View,” 228.

15. Ringgren and Levine, “מצוה,” 8:513; and on Lev 26: Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 3B (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 23–46. On the relationship between H and Deut, see also Jeffrey Stackert, *Rewriting the Torah: Literary Revision in Deuteronomy and the Holiness Legislation*, FAT 52 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 209–11.

16. Ringgren and Levine, “מצוה,” 8:513.

17. William P. Brown, “The Law and the Sages: A Reexamination of *Tôrâ* in Proverbs,” in *Constituting the Community: Studies on the Polity of Ancient Israel in Honor of S. Dean McBride Jr.*, ed. John T. Strong and Steven S. Tuell (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2005), 255.

18. Baumann, *Die Weisheitsgestalt*, 295.

than one dimension; it can—if one begins with individual terms—be interpreted in both one direction and the other, which also complicates exact determination.¹⁹

The problem of an exact identification becomes clear through consideration of the closer context in Prov 2. The word *מצות* from 2:1b is parallel to the *אמרי* “my words” of 2:1a. The term *אמר* basically means the word, the speech, or even the instruction. In some cases, it can also designate the word of God (Josh 24:27).²⁰ The focus of the around fifty attestations lies in the Psalms, in the book of Job, and in Proverbs. As a result, there is no initial proximity to Deuteronomic theology or to the theme of torah.²¹ Such a connection is established more by means of parallel terms—for example, through *תורה* in Ps 78:1—than by anything inherent within the term itself. The range of evidence in the book of Proverbs, especially in Prov 10–24, suggests a general meaning. The word *אמר* is understood in Prov 22:21 as “trustworthy words” (*אמרי אמת*) and in 23:12 as a word of knowledge.²² The text of Job 23:12 is interesting with regard to Prov 2:1 because it makes a similar statement:

From the commandments [*מצות*] of his lips I will not deviate,
in my breast²³ I keep the words of his mouth [*צפנתי אמרי פיו*]. (Job 23:12)

As in Prov 2:1, the nouns *מצוה* and *אמר* along with the verb *צפן* appear, though here related to the “words of his mouth” and therefore to the words of YHWH. It is interesting in Job 23:1–17 that this is linked to the way of

19. See Fox’s objections to Baumann (Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 79), which are, however, indebted to Fox’s general approach, see §3.1.2 below.

20. On the “divine words” of Num 24:4, 16; Ps 107:11 and the “words of the holy one” in Job 6:10, see, Gesenius, *Handwörterbuch*, s.v. “אמר,” 77; and DCH 1:325, s.v. “אמר.”

21. Siegfried Wagner, “אמר,” TDOT 1:342–43.

22. Prov 23:12 makes mention of the “knowledgeable words”; Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 389; and Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 327–28.

23. For the text-critical variants, see Markus Witte, *Philologische Notizen zu Hiob 21–27*, BZAW 234 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1995), 73–74; and Marvin H. Pope, *Job: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 15 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1965), 172. See also Markus Witte, *Vom Leiden zur Lehre: Der dritte Redegang (Hiob 21–27) und die Redaktionsgeschichte des Hiobbuches*, BZAW 230 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1994), 117, who points out the similarity to Prov 2:1 (120 n. 243, with reference to Ps 119:11; Prov 2:1; 7:1; Deut 32:1; Hos 6:5; and Jer 9:19).

the pious, where 23:11 explicitly expresses the fact that this way is focused on the way of God: “My foot holds fast to his footprint, his way I observe [שמר], and I do not deviate.”²⁴ The textual analysis of Prov 2 demonstrated that the theme of the way moves into the focus in the second part of the instruction. With שמר Job 23:12 uses a term that denotes obedience to YHWH’s command in Deuteronomistic tradition.²⁵ Furthermore, the phrase “his mouth” (פיו), as will be demonstrated, is also important in Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic literature.²⁶

If these observations on the text are correct, then it indicates an interesting situation: It not only establishes a direct line from Prov 2 to Deuteronomy, but also to a broad textual tradition in wisdom texts appearing in the book of Proverbs, in the book of Job, and also in other locations. They relate to an entity of torah in the sense of the Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic law.²⁷

With regard to Prov 2:1 and the Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic tradition, two aspects can be summarized:²⁸ (1) The “storing up” of the commandments (צפן מצות) in this form is singular and cannot be deduced to arise from the Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic tradition.²⁹ (2) However, with the word מצוה, a keyword of the Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic tradition is used. The plural form utilized here could point to the entirety of the divine commandment—completely in keeping with that tradition.

3.1.2. The Inclining of the Heart (נטה לב), Proverbs 2:2

The picture developed thus far also holds true for the phrase of the “inclining of the heart” (נטה לב) in Prov 2:2. The instruction of Prov 2 cannot be interpreted within a single line of thought; it instead opens up various fields of meaning. Therefore, two possibilities are initially contrasted with

24. On the intention of Job 23:1–17 see Witte, *Vom Leiden*, 129.

25. Ringgren and Levine, “מצוה,” 8:511; and Hans Strauss, *Hiob: 2. Teilband 19,1–42,17*, BKAT 16.2 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2000), 79, with reference to Deut 30:14 and Jer 31:33.

26. See also §3.1.3.

27. See also ch. 5 below.

28. It is interesting that both terms only appear in Proverbs within individual verses that in turn exhibit close relationships with 2:1. E.g., 7:1 urges: “My son, keep [שמר] my words, and store my commandments with you.” See also below §4.1, which considers these relationships in detail.

29. Within Prov 1–9 מצות is also linked with the תורה (Prov 3:1; 6:20, 23; 7:2).

one another in the interpretation of 2:2. On one hand, the expression can be understood as a classic formula calling for attention. Several attestations appear especially in Egyptian instruction literature, which also contains the parallelism of “ear” and “heart.” Noteworthy here are the Instructions of Amenemope and of Any:³⁰

Amenemope	Any
(3.9) Give your ears, hear what is said, (3.10) give your heart to their understanding. (3.11) It is useful to place them in your heart.	(B 15.1) [Behold, I am telling you these] useful counsels, which should be important in your heart. (15.2) Observe them so that it may go well with you and that all evil is far from you.

From the background of these texts, several commentators attempt to understand the statements in Prov 2:2, to orient the ear to wisdom and to incline the heart to it, as a call to attention.³¹ While there are parallels to the ear and the heart in the Egyptian texts that also emphasize the importance of taking counsel to heart, the precise formulation of Prov 2:2b to “incline [the] heart” (נטה לב) does not appear in the previously mentioned instructions.³²

The phrase constructed with the root נטה *hiphil* is instead attested many times in other Old Testament texts. To incline the heart or also to “turn in a specific direction” can basically mean to turn toward someone.³³ In 2 Sam 19:14 David captivates the men of Israel so much that they turned their hearts to him (נטה *hiphil*). They “stick with him” and later follow him into battle. In addition to this rather secular meaning, the

30. Schipper, “Die Lehre des Amenemope,” 234; on the meaning of the heart in the introductory sections of Egyptian instructions, see Christa Kayatz, *Studien zu Proverbien 1–9: Eine form- und motivgeschichtliche Untersuchung unter Einbeziehung ägyptischen Vergleichsmaterials*, WMANT 22 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1966), 45–46. The English translation follows the new critical edition of Amenemope: Laisney, *Enseignement*, 46–49; and Quack, *Die Lehren des Ani*, 84–87.

31. Fox, *Proverbs* 1–9, 110; Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 221, with reference to Amenemope; and Kayatz, *Studien*, 44.

32. Neither does the term appear in Prov 22:17, which speaks of “inclining” the ear; see also Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 378, and Bruce K. Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs: Chapter 15–31*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 217.

33. On the basic meaning of the root in *hiphil*, see Helmer Ringgren, “נטה,” *TDOT* 9:385.

expression also appears in religious contexts, especially in Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic literature. In 1 Kgs 11 Solomon's foreign wives make his heart apostate. The speech of YHWH in 1 Kgs 11:2 proclaims with regard to the foreign wives: "You shall not enter into marriage with them, neither they with you; so that they do not incline your heart to their gods" (נטה *hiphil*). The opposite is emphasized in the Deuteronomistic passage of 1 Kgs 8:58: to incline the hearts to YHWH (נטה *hiphil*) "in order to go in all his ways and to observe [שמר] his commandments [מצותיו], his ordinances [חקיו], and his stipulations [משפטיו]." This thought also appears in a positive formulation in Ps 119:36, where it states: "turn my heart to your decrees."³⁴ This assumes that the expression נטה לב is not aimed simply at calling for attention, but it is instead related to the divine law. As a result, it constitutes a parallel to Prov 2:2, for the construction נטה לב (*hiphil*) is usually formulated with a person as the object and not with an abstract noun such as תבונה.³⁵

Therefore, it can be concluded, first, that the expression "to incline the heart" (נטה לב) should not be understood simply in the sense of a call to attention. It instead targets the further action of the addressee. Even if Prov 2:2 allows for some similarity to the classic call to attention in wisdom texts, the construction also points to Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic tradition.³⁶ This again demonstrates that Prov 2 oscillates between wisdom language and legal themes. Finally, a deeper dimension is indicated that can only be discovered by means of semantic analysis. It has yet to be decided at this point, however, whether the degree to which this so-called deeper dimension of the text is intentionally inscribed in this sapiential instruction or if it instead constitutes a general theological matrix that is used implicitly rather than explicitly.

34. Ringgren, "נטה," 9:385; and on Ps 119 below §3.2.2.

35. An abstraction appears as an object in Ps 49:5 (the inclining of the ear, see also Ps 78:1). Also interesting is Ps 141:4, which speaks of inclining the heart to evil words.

36. See also the expression in Deut 30:14, according to which the word (here meaning the commandment) "is in your mouth and in your heart"; Schipper, "Der Dekalog im Sprüchebuch," 268–300; and Erik Aurelius, "Heilsgegenwart im Wort Dtn 30,11–14," in *Liebe und Gebot: Studien zum Deuteronomium: Festschrift zum 70. Geburtstag von Lothar Perlitt*, ed. Reinhard Gregor Kratz and Hermann Spieckermann, FRLANT 190 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000), 15.

3.1.3. YHWH, the Law, and Wisdom, Proverbs 2:6

Proverbs 2:6 says that YHWH “gives” (נתן) wisdom and that knowledge and insight come “out of his mouth” (מפיו).³⁷ The phrase is remarkable in two respects. The first relates to the “mouth of YHWH”; the second concerns the תבונה (“understanding”) and דעת (“knowledge”) that come out of it. The expression of YHWH’s mouth appears frequently in texts that speak of God’s commandment, his directive, or his commission.³⁸ The phrase פִּי יְהוָה is encountered both in Priestly (Exod 17:1; Lev 24:12; Num 3:16, 39, 51; and often) and in Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic literature (Deut 34:5; Josh 15:13; 17:4; 19:50; 21:3; 22:9; 2 Kgs 24:9).³⁹ Deuteronomy 8:3, where the phrase refers to the law, is important for understanding Prov 2:6:

So he humbled you and let you hunger and then gave you manna to eat, which neither you nor your fathers knew, so that he could make you recognize [ידע *hiphil*] that one does not live by bread alone, but that one lives from everything that goes out of the mouth of YHWH [פִּי יְהוָה].

Deuteronomy 8:3 belongs to the section 8:1–6, which contains a theological reflection concerning the meaning of the wilderness wandering.⁴⁰ The text is marked by the triad of “to remember” (זכר, 8:2), “to recognize” (ידע *hiphil*, 8:3, 5), and “to keep” (שמר, 8:6). The emphasis in 8:3 is on the contrast between the “bread” (here representing all sustenance) and what goes out of the “mouth of YHWH” (פִּי יְהוָה). However, this does not concern just any word of God (following the LXX), but rather the laws (מצות, 8:2).⁴¹ God’s pronouncements are located in the center (see Deut 23:24; Num 30:13; Jer 17:16), which culminate in the law. “Everything that comes forth from the mouth of Yahweh means first and foremost Yahweh’s commandments.”⁴² Therefore, the phrase פִּי יְהוָה can mean the instruction or also the command

37. But see Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 224, who argues that it concerns prophetic terminology; see Isa 1:20.

38. Félix García López, “פה,” *TDOT* 11:497.

39. García López, “פה,” 11:497.

40. Eduard Nielsen, *Deuteronomium*, HAT 1.6 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1995), 104–5; and Eckart Otto, *Deuteronomium* 4,44–11,32, 899.

41. So Veijola, *Das fünfte Buch Mose*, 220.

42. This formulation comes from García López, “פה,” 11:497; similar is Veijola, *Das fünfte Buch Mose*, 220.

of YHWH himself (1 Sam 12:14–15; 15:24), and in this text it is used in parallel to מצוה (1 Kgs 13:21).⁴³ In Deut 8 this is connected with the notion of instruction. Deuteronomy 8:5–6 state:

- (5) Therefore, you should recognize in your heart [ידע *qal*], that YHWH, your God, disciplines [יסר *piel*] you, like a man disciplines his son,
 (6) and you shall keep [שמר] the commandments of YHWH [מצות יהוה], your God, by walking in his ways and fearing [ירא] him.

The two verses offer something of a compendium of wisdom, commandments, fear of YHWH, and the path of life that is characteristic for this layer of Deuteronomy. Deuteronomy 8:1–6 is a late literary addition to the book of Deuteronomy.⁴⁴ The text offers a position that exhibits a special interest in the connection between law and wisdom.

The verses cited (8:5–6) link this with the human cognitive faculty. One should “recognize” in his heart (ידע) that YHWH is disciplining (יסר) him. With the root יסר, a term appears that is encountered multiple times in Proverbs. The term יסר can denote the instruction of a person, but it often is used in the sense of discipline or correct.⁴⁵ In contrast with the verb למד (*piel*), יסר brings in something of a punishing aspect. It concerns the discipline carried out by the teacher.⁴⁶

The content of Deut 8:2–6 explains the reason for the use of יסר instead of למד: the hardship of the wilderness wandering is linked theologically with the notion of YHWH’s instruction; therefore, it must appear as discipline. Important with regard to Prov 2 is that this aspect of teaching is connected

43. The verb מרה “be stubborn” is often used here so that the word combination carries the meaning, “to oppose a command”; see Casper J. Labuschagne, “פה,” *TLOT* 2:979.

44. Eckart Otto, *Das Deuteronomium im Pentateuch und Hexateuch: Studien zur Literaturgeschichte von Pentateuch und Hexateuch im Lichte des Deuteronomium-rahmens*, FAT 30 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), 144 n. 140, considers the section 8:2–5 post-Deuteronomistic; Veijola, *Das fünfte Buch Mose*, 211, assigns the text to his redactor “DtrB” (which follows the approach of Christoph Levin, *Die Verheissung des Neuen Bundes: In ihrem theologiegeschichtlichen Zusammenhang ausgelegt*, FRLANT 137 [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1985]); see also the reference in Veijola, *Das fünfte Buch Mose*, 4. For critique of the thesis of a redactional level of DtrB see Perlitt, *Deuteronomium*, 288.

45. Robert D. Branson and G. Johannes Botterweck, “יסר,” *TDOT* 6:129.

46. See also the use of the noun מוסר in Jer 2:30; 5:3, where it is connected with blows of rebuke.

with YHWH's commandments and the metaphor of the way. Deuteronomy 8:5–6 appears almost as something akin to a summarizing program for Prov 2.⁴⁷ It concerns the father's training (in Deut 8 related to YHWH), which has the commandments (YHWH's) as their object. They should be grasped by one's understanding (the heart), which in turn has effects on the way of life. This connects with serious differences that become clear with the root שָׁמַר and the concept of fear of YHWH. While keeping the commandments and fear of YHWH are the achievement of the student of wisdom (and therefore Israel) in Deut 8, in Prov 2 this appears to be accomplished by the teacher of wisdom or rather YHWH. In Prov 2:5 an understanding of the fear of YHWH results from the search for wisdom, such that YHWH guards the way of those faithful to him (2:7). Therefore, in the context of Prov 2, what is called for in Deut 8 appears as a logical consequence of observing the teaching of wisdom. To state it more pointedly, one could say that Prov 2 responds to one who, having read Deut 8, asks how it all can be accomplished. This indicates that Prov 2 also maintains the deeper sense of the fear of YHWH from Deuteronomy.

The concept of the fear of YHWH becomes virtually a singularity in Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic literature in the phrase “fearing YHWH” (that is, constructed verbally as in Deut 8:6). “As Becker and Derousseaux observe, the use of ‘to fear Yahweh’ is remarkably uniform, both grammatically and semantically, in Deuteronomic and Deuteronomistic literature.”⁴⁸ In terms of content, this is related to the covenant between YHWH and his people, the בְּרִית (cf. Deut 5:29, the heart is the location of the fear of God), which can have a cultic dimension.⁴⁹ On the other hand, in wisdom literature fear of YHWH does not necessarily allude to the covenant or the cult. The concept instead articulates the knowledge of the laws of the world and the power of YHWH; יִרְאָת יְהוָה comes to indicate “proper conduct.”⁵⁰ Even though there is a linguistic difference between the construct-absolute combination that appears multiple times in wisdom literature and the verbal construction in Deuteronomy, the context in Deut 8:6 indicates that the fear of YHWH in Prov 2:5 has a nomistic character.⁵¹

47. See also Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 105.

48. Hans Ferdinand Fuhs, “יִרְאָ,” *TDOT* 6:306.

49. Fuhs, “יִרְאָ,” 6:310.

50. Fuhs, “יִרְאָ,” 6:311.

51. The construct-absolute combination appears in Prov 1:7, 29; 8:13; 9:10; 10:27; 14:27; 15:33; and Isa 11:2, 3; 33:6; Pss 19:10; 34:12.

The line of thought recognized in Deut 8 also appears in Deut 4. Like Deut 8, the fourth chapter of Deuteronomy concerns a text that plays a key role in the determination of the relationships between “wisdom and Deuteronomy.”⁵² Of special importance are 4:5 and 6:

See, I have taught [למד] you laws and rules, that YHWH my God has commanded me to do in the land that you are entering to take possession of it.

You shall guard and do them, for that will be your wisdom [חכמה] and your insight [בִּינָה] in the eyes of the nations who will hear all these laws and say: Surely this great nation is a wise and discerning people.

Just as with Deut 8, chapter 4 was not written all at one time. It results from a complex process of compositional growth. The first thing of importance here is that the chapter as a whole cannot be viewed as old in the same way it was seen in earlier scholarship: Deut 4–5 should be dated later than Deut 1–3.⁵³

Within Deut 4:1–40, verses 5–8 mark a subunit that occupies a special place in its context.⁵⁴ The focus is on the notion of YHWH as Israel’s

52. Weinfeld, *Deuteronomic School*, 305; Georg Braulik, “‘Weisheit’ im Buch Deuteronomium,” in *Studien zum Buch Deuteronomium*, SBAB 24 (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1997), 246–47; Christoph Hardmeier, “Die Weisheit der Tora (Dtn 4,5–8): Respekt und Loyalität gegenüber JHWH allein und die Befolgung seiner Gebote; ein performatives Lehren und Lernen,” in *Freiheit und Recht: Festschrift für Frank Crüsemann zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Christoph Hardmeier, Rainer Kessler, and Andreas Ruwe (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2003), 226–27; and more recently Thomas Krüger, “Law and Wisdom according to Deut 4:5–8,” in Schipper and Teeter, *Wisdom and Torah*, 34–54.

53. Otto, *Das Deuteronomium im Pentateuch*, 110; Braulik, “Weisheit,” 248–49 (Deut 4:5–8 presupposes Deut 1:9–18); and Veijola, *Moses Erben*, 221. See also Perliitt, *Deuteronomium*, 300–301. Deut 4 in its present form must be reckoned among the latest texts of Deuteronomy; see Thomas Krüger, “Zur Interpretation der Sinai/Horeb-Theophanie in Dtn 4,10–14,” in *Schriftauslegung in der Schrift: Festschrift für Odil Hannes Steck zu seinem 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Reinhard G. Kratz, Thomas Krüger, and Konrad Schmid, BZAW 300 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2000), 85.

54. Veijola, *Das fünfte Buch Mose*, 110–11 and 221; and Dietrich Knapp, *Deuteronomium 4: Literarische und theologische Interpretation*, GTA 35 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1987), 31, view the section as secondary; differently Perliitt, *Deuteronomium*, 310–11, who emphasizes the special character of 4:5–8 (even just from the repetition of parts of 4:1 in 4:5).

teacher, “training” his people.⁵⁵ The root לָמַד in Deut 4:5a rarely appears in the Pentateuch, but it is quite frequent in Deuteronomy. The late compositional layers of Deuteronomy designate the laws as the object of the “teaching” (4:5; 5:31; 6:1; 11:19) or the fear of YHWH as the goal of learning (14:23; 17:19; 31:12, 13).⁵⁶ Therefore, YHWH teaches his people, even if the actual teacher is Moses. Moses conveys the ordinances and statutes to the people that supplement the Decalogue (Deut 4:1, 5, 14; 5:31; 6:1). In addition to 4:1, 5, 14, the fact that Moses teaches the ordinances and statutes also appears within the context of the Decalogue in 5:1 and 6:1.⁵⁷ However, the texts leave no doubt that YHWH is the ultimate authority.

In Deut 4:5–6 the “laws and rules” of YHWH (חֻקִּים וּמִשְׁפָּטִים) designate Israel’s חִכְמָה (“wisdom”) and בִּינָה (“insight”).⁵⁸ Two particularities result. The first is that there is a connection between YHWH and the verb לָמַד. The second is the relationship between wisdom and insight and Israel as a collective.⁵⁹ Hebrew חִכְמָה (“wisdom”) is only otherwise mentioned in 34:9 (Joshua will be filled with the “spirit of wisdom”); בִּינָה (“insight”) appears only here in Genesis to 2 Kings.⁶⁰ This wisdom consists of the precise observance of the laws and the (historical) memory on the encounter between YHWH and his people on Horeb (Deut 4:9–14).⁶¹ It develops a concept that separates the people of Israel from other nations when it lives in accordance with the law.⁶² This perspective is unfolded in a teaching

55. Deut 4:38; see 8:5 and Veijola, *Moses Erben*, 221.

56. Veijola, *Das fünfte Buch Mose*, 99; and Veijola, “Thora als Inhalt der Lehre in der deuteronomistischen Literatur,” in *Leben nach der Weisung: Exegetisch-historische Studien zum Alten Testament*, ed. Walter Dietrich and Timo Veijola, FRLANT 224 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2008), 83–84.

57. Perlitt, *Deuteronomium*, 311; and Moshe Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy 1–11: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 5 (New York: Doubleday, 1991), 326.

58. The meaning of the double expression is unclear. See also Braulik, “Weisheit,” 249–51, who relates חֻקִּים וּמִשְׁפָּטִים to the law.

59. חִכְמָה and תְּבוּנָה are otherwise always connected to the individual, as, e.g., in Deut 11:2 as attributes of the coming messianic king; see §3.3.3 below.

60. Perlitt, *Deuteronomium*, 311.

61. Hardmeier, “Weisheit,” 251.

62. Perlitt, *Deuteronomium*, 312. See also Thomas Krüger, “Gesetz und Weisheit im Pentateuch,” in *Das menschliche Herz und die Weisung Gottes: Studien zur alttestamentlichen Anthropologie und Ethik*, ATANT 96 (Zurich: TVZ, 2009), 165, who notes the important point from Deut 4 that Israel’s special wisdom will also be recognized by other nations. See also Sir 24:31 and below §5.4.

that, viewed simply in formal terms, can be recognized as such by means of the opening instructional formula in Deut 4:1.⁶³ The analysis of Prov 2 has already noted that the covenant thematic also appears in Deut 4. By means of a construction comparable to Prov 2:17, Deut 4:23 emphasizes the abandonment of the covenant (the verb שכח and the ברית of God, cf. Deut 4:31).⁶⁴

The central terms demonstrate a link between Prov 2 and Deut 4. From the background of Deut 4:5–6 and the explicit mention of חכמה and בינה (“wisdom” and “insight”) appear in Prov 2:6 “as entities that have drawn close to the commandments of YHWH.”⁶⁵ This connection, already articulated by Baumann, is further strengthened by the line of thinking of the commandments of YHWH, teaching, fear of YHWH, and the way metaphor in Deut 4. Both the appearance of specific keywords as well as thematic correspondences establish a link between Prov 2 and Deut 4.⁶⁶ As a result—whether or not one sees the text as coherent or not—the relationship between wisdom and law defines both the redactional textual layers of Deuteronomy as well as Prov 2. In the texts investigated from Deuteronomy (Deut 4, 8), wisdom and wisdom learning (expressed through חכמה and בינה as well as the verbs למד and יסר) draw close to the laws of YHWH. Wisdom receives a nomistic garment, which also appears to be the case in Prov 2. Arising from this background is the question of to what degree Prov 2 (as well as other texts of Prov 1–9) can be linked with this discourse that becomes tangible in the redaction history of Deuteronomy.⁶⁷

3.1.4. The Metaphor of the Way and the Land, Proverbs 2:12–22

The final commonality with Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic thinking to be discussed in this chapter concerns the topic of the way metaphor and the land. The detailed analysis above indicates that the structure of the

63. On this see Hardmeier, “Die Weisheit,” 228–29.

64. Schäfer, *Die Poesie*, 266; and on Deut 4:32–40 Veijola, *Das fünfte Buch Mose*, 114–15.

65. Baumann, *Die Weisheitsgestalt*, 230 (“als die in die Nähe zu den Geboten JHWHs gerückte Größen”).

66. On this see ch. 5 below, which discusses the connections between Deut 6 and 11 and Prov 6. The literary evidence will illustrate that there is textual coherence here.

67. See also Gemser, *Sprüche*, 25, who notes the stylistic similarities between Prov 2 and the speeches of Deuteronomy; and Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 58, who speaks of a “Deuteronomic preaching style” (“dtn Predigtstil”).

section of Prov 2:12–22 is based on the two infinitive constructions in 2:12 and 2:16 (“in order to save you” להצילך) and the concluding final clause in 2:20–22. In each case the infinitive form להצילך in 2:12 and 2:16 is supplemented by an actor (the man, the strange woman) who “abandons” (verb עזב) something. In 2:13 it is the “path of uprightness”; in 2:17 it is the “companion of her youth.”⁶⁸

The place to being analysis is initially the verb עזב (“to abandon, forsake”). It denotes abandonment and is used in the sphere of social interaction to express the “end of a relationship of solidarity between members of a community or group.”⁶⁹ Transferred to YHWH, it takes on a different meaning. As Waltke emphasizes in his comments on Prov 2, it is often used “in the law and the prophets for Israel’s apostasy from the LORD and his covenant” (Deut 29:24; Jer 1:16; 9:12; 31:16).⁷⁰ The concept is encountered especially in Deuteronomistic texts and concerns the commandments or rather the instruction of YHWH, which an individual or the people are guilty of abandoning (1 Kgs 18:18; 2 Kgs 17:16). In the Deuteronomistic as well as Chronistic traditions, the term is characteristically used in the context of abandonment of the law or covenant, ultimately meaning a betrayal of YHWH himself.⁷¹ This is illustrated in the previously mentioned text of Deut 28. The chapter on the blessings and curses offers diverse evidence for the commandments (מצות) and for the motif of abandonment (עזב, v. 20); therefore, it stands in close proximity to Prov 2:20–22.⁷²

Following the commitment to the covenant (Deut 26:16–19; 27:9–10), Deut 28:1–68 proclaims a series of conditional blessings and curses on the people.⁷³ The text opens with the formula “if you truly listen to the voice of YHWH, your God,” in order to continue with a circumstantial clause “by

68. On this see §2.2.3.

69. Erhard Gerstenberger, “עזב,” *TDOT* 10:589.

70. Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 229.

71. Gerstenberger, “עזב,” 10:590. See also Neh 9:17, 19, 28; 1 Chr 28:9; 2 Chr 12:3; 15:2; 24:20; 32:31.

72. Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 66; Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 235; and Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 124. Buchanan (“Midrashim,” 229) attempts instead to interpret Prov 2:20 in light of Deut 11:22, but the parallel to Deut 28 is much closer.

73. The individual problems of the text cannot be treated in detail here. See already Gerhard von Rad, *Deuteronomy: A Commentary*, trans. Dorothea Barton, OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1966), 173–76; and Nielsen, *Deuteronomium*, 253–54 (with discussion of Hölscher’s literary-critical thesis) and 256–57 (on the interpretation of the text by Plöger).

keeping all his commandments.” With the verb שמר and the noun מצות, this text contains two central terms of Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic theology. The formula is part of the pronouncement of blessing comprised of 28:1–14 and followed by a very lengthy curse proclamation (28:15–68).⁷⁴ The line of thought unfolded is that Israel will be blessed as long as it maintains YHWH’s מצות. It will be raised above all other nations (28:1). It will be blessed in the land that YHWH will give (28:8), where humans and animals will flourish beyond measure. Deuteronomy 28:13–14 return to the opening thought and mention the מצות that should be observed and maintained (28:14). Deuteronomy 28:15 connects with this and transitions to the decree of the curses.⁷⁵

Two different theological concepts become clear from this basic development of the content: On the one hand there is the concept of the gift of the land as fulfillment of the promise to the ancestors. On the other hand, there is the possibility of the loss and dispossession of the land. As a result, the theological resolution could not consist of a revocation of the promise—this would have placed the relationship with God in general in question. There was instead an emphasis on the law.⁷⁶ This led to the combination of the land and the law in relationship with one another, now in the theme of the ברית, the covenant, as it was already recognized in Deut 4. The leading criterion is the Deuteronomistic law as the object of the exhortation. This thought also appears in the verse of Deut 28 that exhibits proximity in terms of terminology and content with Prov 2.

Deuteronomy 28:63 belongs to a compositional layer that constitutes a redaction within Deut 28. The Deuteronomistic-influenced verses 62–68 carry on the thinking of 28:20, according to which the abandonment of YHWH (עזב) provides the primary reason for the curse.⁷⁷ The focus is on

74. For the structure, see Eckart Otto, *Deuteronomium* 23,16–34,12, HThKAT (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2017), 1977–80.

75. Nielsen, *Deuteronomium*, 254.

76. See Lothar Perlitt, “Motive und Schichten der Landtheologie im Deuteronomium,” in *Deuteronomium-Studien*, FAT 8 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1994), 104–5, whose argument is followed here.

77. This is presented quite beautifully in the relatively long verse through the short relative clause אשר עזבתי at the end; see Nielsen, *Deuteronomium*, 258. On the redactional character of Deut 28:62–68, see Hans U. Steyermanns, *Deuteronomium 28 und die adê zur Thronfolgeregelung Asarhaddons: Segen und Fluch im Alten Orient und in Israel*, OBO 145 (Fribourg: Presses Universitaires; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1995), 377–83; Otto, *Das Deuteronomium im Pentateuch*, 119, and on

the notion that the people are guilty of having abandoned YHWH, who himself remained faithful.⁷⁸ This event of cursing becomes concrete in the Deuteronomistic theology of the land that follows in 28:62–68 with the loss of the land:

Just as YHWH delighted in you, treating you well and making you numerous, so YHWH will delight over you, annihilating you and destroying you [שמד *hiphil*], and you will be rooted out [נסח *niphal*] of the land [אדמה] that you enter to conquer it. (28:63)

A comparison of this verse with Prov 2:22 reveals several commonalities in both the content and terminology:

The wicked will be cut off [כרת] from the land, and the treacherous will be rooted out [נסח *hophal*] of it [the land: ארץ].

The core proclamations coincide in that the one who does not follow YHWH (and his commandments) will be destroyed and rooted out of the land. The linguistic form displays both synonyms and specific word combinations. Two different terms, כרת and שמד, appear for “destroy,” which have similar meanings. The phrase “rooted out of the land” takes the same shape in both texts. A form of the verb נסח appears in both Deut 28:63 and Prov 2:22: in Deuteronomy it is a *niphal* and in Proverbs a *hophal*. The verb appears a total of only four times in the Old Testament (Deut 28:63; Ps 52:7; Prov 2:22; 15:25); of these, the present sense of rooting out of the land only appears in Deut 28:63 and Prov 2:22.⁷⁹ This suggests that Prov 2:22 is a citation of Deut 28 that adopts the content of the proclamation and shapes it through the use of synonymous or related terminology. This is also the case for the description of the land. Both the word אדמה used in Deut 28:63 and the specified word ארץ in Prov 2:21–22 are significant in Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic land theology.⁸⁰ As a result, Prov 2:20–22

the text in general Veijola, *Moses Erben*, 171–73, with a detailed discussion of the approaches.

78. Steymanns, *Deuteronomium*, 334–35.

79. In Ps 52:7[ET 5] the verb denotes the tearing out of the tent (52:7a), in Prov 15:25 the tearing down of the house of the proud; see Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 258–59; and Wildeboer, *Die Sprüche*, 8.

80. However, ארץ has a wider field of meaning than אדמה (see Deut 1:8, 35; 6:10, 18, 23; 8:1; 10:11; and further). On the meaning of אדמה in Deuteronomistic thought,

demonstrates a linguistic and thematic connection to Deut 28. This leads to the hypothesis that the author of the Proverbs passage was familiar with the Deuteronomistic land theology developed in Deut 28.

3.1.5. Summary

The detailed analysis has shown that Prov 2 assimilates Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic theological themes. The text belonged to a discussion revolving around the relationship between wisdom and law, describing a combination of God's commandments with his instruction, the way of Israel, and the fear of YHWH. This discourse can be clearly associated with late Deuteronomistic additions to Deuteronomy. Central significance is accorded especially to Deut 4, 8, and 28. Deuteronomy 8 formulates an argumentative structure consisting of the connection of education and commandments as well as walking in YHWH's ways; this also appears in Prov 2. The sapiential instruction of Prov 2 thereby seems to be some kind of concretion of the program laid out in Deut 8:3, 5, 6. This concretion is also shaped by allusions to Deut 4 and 28. Proverbs 2 is similar to Deut 4 in its combination of חכמה ("wisdom") and בינה ("insight") with the "commandments" (מצות) through the "land" theme of Deut 28. The line of thought therefore moves through the terminology of the commandments. This is emphasized both in Deut 8 and 4, and also in Deut 28, in each case unfolding a different emphasis. As a result, Prov 2 contains a combination that links up with these Deuteronomistic texts and pursues the line of thought even further—quite in keeping with Deuteronomy. This has consequences for the understanding of the "words" (אמרים) and "commandments" (מצות) of the wisdom teacher (Prov 2:1). They appear to take on nomistic hues from the background of the texts from Deuteronomy. The message of the wisdom teacher draws near to YHWH's commands, which is also expressed through the formula of the "mouth of YHWH" in 2:6.

At the same time, the detailed analysis has demonstrated that the instruction of Prov 2 can hardly be categorized in a single field of reference. This appears clearly in the "inclining of the heart" in Prov 2:2. The formulation links, on the one hand, with the classic instructional opening

see Josef G. Plöger, "אדמה," *TDOT* 1:92–93; and for ארץ, Jan Bergman and Magnus Ottosson, "ארץ," *TDOT* 1:404–5.

formula of wisdom texts; on the other hand, it can be connected linguistically with Deuteronomistic texts. The wisdom instruction of Prov 2 flickers simultaneously between two different fields of reference, without one excluding the other. Therefore, the following analysis must now demonstrate whether these fields of reference can be defined more precisely and how they relate to the above-recognized discourse between wisdom and law. At the same time, it must be kept in mind that individual texts can, as is the case with Prov 2, refer to various textual traditions, so they themselves must be located in a complex network of references.

3.2. Wisdom Psalms

The questions raised at the end of the previous chapter become concrete when one reads Prov 2 in the context of late psalms. It is well known that Ps 19 and Ps 119 themselves refer to a discourse concerning wisdom and law (torah), and through this theme they also contain references to the book of Proverbs.⁸¹ Before investigating this connection, focus will first be accorded to the psalm most often mentioned in discussion of Prov 2. Toy already indicates the proximity between Prov 2 and Ps 37 in his commentary on Proverbs from the year 1899.⁸² Toy stresses especially, as do many others after him, the similarities between the concluding verses of Prov 2 and the motif of the psalm that those who do not adhere to YHWH will meet an evil end.

3.2.1. Psalm 37: Salvation and Disaster

Psalm 37 exhibits an acrostic structure that orients its forty verses according to the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet.⁸³ The psalm is artfully

81. On this see §§3.2.2 and 3.2.3 below.

82. Toy, *Proverbs*, 37–38; and also before him Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 83–84; and after him Clifford, *Proverbs*, 49; Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 28; and Michel, “Proverbia 2,” 236, who all emphasize the similarity of Prov 2:20–22 to Ps 37. In the most recent study on Ps 37 by Narciso Crisanto Tiquillahuanca (*Die Armen werden das Land besitzen: Eine exegetische Studie zu Psalm 37, Beiträge zum Verstehen der Bibel* 16 [Berlin: LIT, 2008]), however, this only appears on the margins (126).

83. Walter Brueggemann, “Psalm 37: Conflict of Interpretation” in *Of Prophet’s Visions and the Wisdom of Sages: Essays in Honour of R. Norman Whybray on His Seventieth Birthday*, ed. Heather A. McKay and David J. A. Clines, JSOTSup 162 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 251; Crisanto Tiquillahuanca, *Die Armen*, 117. Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalmen I*, speak of a “life precept of the wise for the poor.”

constructed, and it is defined by a theme closely related to the second half of the wisdom instruction of Prov 2, specifically its conclusion in verses 20–22: the fate of those who do not follow YHWH's will in contrast with those who observe it. The psalm develops this theme through the antithesis of the “righteous” and the “wicked.”⁸⁴

Scholarship has frequently discussed whether the psalm is unified, or if the complex structure speaks in favor of literary growth.⁸⁵ This is based on the fact that the psalm does not consist of a strict line of argumentation, but rather a stepping forward and backward in the flow of thought.⁸⁶ To that effect there are three aspects concretizing the main theme of the psalm spread throughout the psalm: (1) the warning against resentment against the success of the wicked (37:1, 7b); (2) trust in YHWH, who will not let the righteous be disappointed (37:3, 7, 19, 22, 34), and (3) the proclamation that the wicked will meet an unpleasant end (37:2, 10, 20).⁸⁷ Strictly speaking, all three aspects are already unfolded in the opening three verses, though the subsequent verses are shaped in various ways and provide concretization through different formulations.

The development of this basic thought also mentions wisdom themes.⁸⁸ Psalm 37:1–2 address the wisdom ideal of the one who does not burn in anger but instead remains sober (cf. 37:7–8).⁸⁹ Psalm 37:16 cites a classic wisdom proverb constructed with *tob-min* (טוֹב-מִן) “Better is the little of the righteous than the wealth of many wicked.” The psalm also reflects the

84. Willam P. Brown, “Come, O Children ... I Will Teach You the Fear of the Lord (Psalm 34:12): Comparing Psalms and Proverbs,” in *Seeking Out the Wisdom of the Ancient: Essays Offered to Honor Michael V. Fox on the Occasion of His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. Ronald L. Troxel, Kelvin G. Friebel, and Dennis R. Magary (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2005), 87; and Markus Witte, *Von Ewigkeit zu Ewigkeit*, BThS 146 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2014), 48–51.

85. See Pierre Auffret, “‘Aie confiance en lui, et lui, il agira’: Etude structurelle du Psaume 37,” *SJOT* 4.2 (1990): 13–14, with discussion of the approaches and a suggested internal structure of the psalm.

86. On this see Stuart Weeks, “Wisdom Psalms,” in *Temple and Worship in Biblical Israel*, ed. John Day, LHBOTS 422 (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2007), 304.

87. Auffret, “Confiance,” 24; and Hermann Spieckermann, “What is the Place of Wisdom and Torah in the Psalter?,” in *“When the Morning Stars Sang”: Essays in Honor of Choon Leong Seow on the Occasion of His Sixty-fifth Birthday*, ed. Scott J. Jones and Christine Roy Yoder, BZAW 500 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2017), 304.

88. Ronald E. Murphy, *The Gift of the Psalms* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2000), 88, formulated, “if ever a psalm could be classified as wisdom, it is this one.”

89. Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalmen I*, 229.

instruction from the act-consequence nexus and emphasizes the connection between the righteous person and “his” God (37:31). This is linked to the topic of the land. As a result, the theme of the land as the divine gift of salvation to his people pervades the psalm as a key motif.⁹⁰ This theme is, as 37: 17 cited above already echoes, related to the poor. The psalm appears as something of a “manifesto for the poor and dispossessed.”⁹¹ The proclamation placed in the center is 37:11a: “The humble will possess the land.” A reversal of relationships is, therefore, connected with this concept. The poor were previously persecuted by the wicked (= the rich) and threatened with death (37:14, 32). Now the rich borrow, and from the righteous (= the rich) they receive release of debt (37:21).

Scholarship is agreed that the psalm must be located in a double context. It refers back, on the one hand, to a social situation; on the other hand, it contains diverse tradition-historical allusions.⁹² Rainer Albertz assesses the text within the context of Isa 29:17–24; 57:1–2; 58: 5–9a; 59:1–21; and Pss 94; as well as 109. He locates Ps 37 in a situation where the poor social strata are exploited, bullied, and taken to court by the rich.⁹³ The tradition-historical context of the psalm is essentially governed by Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic land theology. Psalm 37 exhibits clear references to Deut 28, appearing virtually as something of a summary of the connection between the theologies of land and law developed there.⁹⁴

When the relationship between Prov 2 and Ps 37 is investigated from this background, caution is recommended. For Ps 37 evidently is a text that, like Prov 2, reacts to specific traditions. As a form of scribal work, it presupposes a series of other texts.⁹⁵ At the same time, Ps 37 contains

90. See 37: 9, 11, 18, 22, 27, 29, and 34; and Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalmen I*, 229.

91. Adapted from Klaus Seybold, *Die Psalmen*, HAT 1/15 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1996), 155.

92. Brueggemann describes it as “a powerful practice of social ideology” (“Psalm 37,” 239); see also Otto Kaiser, *Ideologie und Glaube: Eine Gefährdung christlichen Glaubens am alttestamentlichen Beispiel aufgezeigt* (Stuttgart: Radius, 1984), 38–39.

93. Rainer Albertz, *A History of Israelite Religion in the Old Testament Period: Vol. II: From the Exile to the Maccabees*, trans. John Bowden, OTL (London: SCM, 1994), 496–97, with reference to the conflict described in Neh 5. Similarly Seybold, *Die Psalmen*, 155.

94. Crisanto Tiquillahuanca, *Die Armen*, 125.

95. Witte, *Von Ewigkeit zu Ewigkeit*, 51; and Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalmen I*, 229–30, according to whom Ps 37 “mixes” three streams of theology that indicate its late compositional setting (fifth century).

several commonalities with Prov 2 that must be investigated more closely. It also exhibits the key words צדיק (“the righteous one,” Ps 37:6, 12, 16, 17, 21, 25, 29, 32, 39; cf. Prov 2:9, 20), רשע (“the wicked one,” Ps 37:10, 12, 14, 16–17, 20–21, 28, 32, 34–35, 38, 40; cf. Prov 2:22), רע (“evil,” Ps 37:27; cf. Prov 2:12, 14), and דרך (“walk,” Ps 37:5, 7, 14, 22; cf. Prov 2:8, 12–13, 20).

These key words primarily concern the second part of Prov 2. Of the nine attestations, two appear in 2:1–11 and seven in 2:12–22. This terminological evidence takes on deeper meaning when placed together with the proclamations from Ps 37 that are significant with respect to Prov 2.⁹⁶

(3) Trust in YHWH and do good;
inhabit the land [ארץ שכן] and remain faithful.

(5) Commit your way to YHWH and trust in him; he can act.

(9) For those who do wickedness will be cut off [כרת],
but those who trust in YHWH will possess the land [ארץ ירש].

(11) The humble [ענוים], however, will possess the land [ארץ ירש],
and their desire will be great peace.

(22) Surely those blessed by him will possess the land [ארץ ירש];
those cursed by him will be wiped out [כרת].

(27) Avoid evil [רע] and do good;
then you will dwell [שכן] forever [in the land]!

(28) For YHWH loves justice, and his faithful [חסידים] he will not forsake,
but the seed of the wicked [רשע] will be wiped out [כרת].

(29) The righteous [צדיקים] will possess the land [ארץ ירש]
and dwell [שכן] forever [in it].

Both the lexicographic and the thematic evidence correspond to the antithesis between the righteous and the wicked in Prov 2:20–22. With the expression ארץ שכן, “dwell/live (in) the land,” a formulation is used that appears parallel to כרת only in Prov 2 and Ps 37 within the Old Tes-

96. See also Maier, *Die “fremde Frau,”* 100, whose conclusion is followed here.

tament.⁹⁷ This indicates a certain proximity between the two texts. The exegetical evidence cannot however, be interpreted in a single direction.

This becomes clear through consideration of the expression ירש ארץ (“possess the land”), which appears multiple times in Ps 37. It concerns a classic Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic “possession formula.”⁹⁸ However, it does not appear in Prov 2, so in this regard Ps 37 is closer to the Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic land theology than the instruction of Prov 2. At the same time, lines can be drawn from Prov 2 both to Deut 28 and to Ps 37. Proverbs 2:21a links to Ps 37 through the phrase שכן ארץ. Proverbs 2:22b conforms to the use of the verb נסח in Deut 28. The word ברת (“cut off”) in 2:22a can, in turn, be explained through Ps 37. The verb ברת appears often in Priestly contexts in order to describe the wiping out of those who transgress the law (Lev 17:10; 19:19; 20:3, 5, 6, 18).⁹⁹

A further commonality is the mention of the “loyal one/faithful” (חסידים/חסיד) in Prov 2:8 and Ps 37:28.

The word חסיד appears thirty-two times within the Old Testament, twenty-five of those coming in the Psalter.¹⁰⁰ It first of all signifies the loyal adherents to YHWH and can therefore also be rendered “faithful/loyal.” It can refer to those who hold fast to YHWH during a challenging situation (such as in the Blessing of Moses, Deut 33:8). The divine counterpart to this allegiance to YHWH according to 2 Sam 22:26 is matching action on the part of YHWH for his חסיד. YHWH shows himself loyal to his חסיד (cf. Ps 18:26).¹⁰¹ In the Song of Hannah (1 Sam 2:9), this “safeguarding” of the חסיד by YHWH is concretized further. In addition, the same formulation appears with the verb שמר that is encountered in Prov 2:8. It is interesting that this is contrasted with the wicked (רשעים) in 1 Sam 2:9 and connected with the theme of light-dark (חשך). Quite similar is Ps 97:10. Unlike Prov 2:8 and 1 Sam 2:9, Ps 97:10 mentions the חסידים, using the plural. This plural meaning dominates the Psalms (30:5; 31:24; 50:11; 79:2;

97. The phrase ירש ארץ also appears in Prov 10:30; see Maier, *Die “fremde Frau.”*

98. See Norbert Lohfink, “ירש,” *TDOT* 6:383–86; and the classic investigation by Joseph G. Plöger, *Literarkritische, formgeschichtliche und stilkritische Untersuchungen zum Deuteronomium*, BBB 26 (Bonn: Hanstein, 1967), 60–128. The formula ירש ארץ appears in Deut 2:31; 3:12, 20; 4:14, 47; 5:33; 9:4; 11:31; 30:5.

99. Hasel, “ברת,” 7:347–49.

100. Ringgren, “חסיד,” 5:76; and Lazar Gulkowitsch, *Die Entwicklung des Begriffes ḥāsīd im Alten Testament* (Tardu: Mattiesen, 1934), 11.

101. Ringgren, “חסיד,” 5:76–77. This treatment is also emphasized in the Psalms; see Pss 4:4; 31:24.

85:9; 116:15; 132:9; 145:10; 148:14; 149:1, 5, 9). The texts therefore indicate a development from the *singular* “faithful” to the *plural* “devout.”¹⁰² The former appears to be linked with the singular, the latter with the plural. In Mic 7:2 the prophet laments that there is no longer anyone חסיד and trustworthy (ישר) in the land. In 2 Sam 22:26 (Ps 18:26) it names the blameless (תמים) in parallel to חסיד. Neither case concerns a group identity, but rather an individual who is especially connected to YHWH. On the other hand, the previously mentioned (consistently late) psalms have in mind a group.¹⁰³ Sometimes the חסידים are connected with priests or the cult.¹⁰⁴ The word חסידים in 2 Chr 6:41 and in Ps 132:9, 16 is parallel with the כהנים. In Ps 149:1, 5, 9 it is related to the community that is described with more detail in Ps 50:5: “Gather to me all my חסידים, who have concluded a covenant with me.” Those intended have concluded a covenant with a sacrifice, that is, the covenant people.¹⁰⁵ Even if one can hardly connect the חסידים exclusively with the covenant people, the texts attest to a development in the direction of a group identity that—following recent studies—is even important for the redactional history of the Psalter.¹⁰⁶

From the backdrop of the range of attestations, one can draw several conclusions about Ps 37 and Prov 2. The term חסיד is related to the individual “faithful” who enjoys special proximity to YHWH and is characterized by certain behavior. This behavior can be further described with terms also encountered in Prov 2. The range of attestations illustrates that the categories תמים (“the blameless”) and ישר (“the upright”) do not simply intend general ethical behavior, but rather a special connection to YHWH resulting from this behavior. This is also the case for Ps 37, though there the term is plural and connects with a series of other terms:

102. It therefore concerns a development going in the opposite direction from the one proposed by Gulkowitsch in his study of the term from the year 1934 (*Die Entwicklung*, 18–23).

103. Müller, *Jahwe*, 88.

104. Gulkowitsch, *Entwicklung*, 18, who has the “cultic community at the temple” in mind.

105. Ringgren, “חסיד,” 5:77–78; Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalmen I*, 313; and Peter C. Craigie and Marvin E. Tate, *Psalms 1–50*, 2nd ed., WBC 19 (Nashville: Nelson, 2004), 365. See also Pss 89; 30:2; and 52:11.

106. See Christoph Levin, “Das Gebetbuch des Gerechten: Literargeschichtliche Beobachtungen am Psalter,” in *Fortschreibungen: Gesammelte Studien zum Alten Testament*, BZAW 316 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2003), 387; and generally §5.3.3 of the present work with further remarks on the topic.

the poor or the “humble,” who are blessed (ברך) by YHWH and the righteous (צדיק).¹⁰⁷ This group—in keeping with the specified meaning of the word—is brought into explicit connection with the laws of YHWH and his torah in Ps 37:30–31:

(30) The mouth of the righteous one utters wisdom [חכמה],
and his tongue speaks justice [משפט].

(31) The *torah* [תורה] of his God is in his heart,
so that his steps do not slip.

The verses attest to a characteristic connection between wisdom, the righteous group, the torah, and the theme of the way.¹⁰⁸ Each of these aspects also appears in Prov 2, whereby the word משפט is encountered in precisely the same verse that mentions the חסיד (2:8). From the background of Ps 37 and the previously mentioned expositions on the term חסיד, the text-critical problem of Prov 2:8b also appears in a different light. Its reading of the *qere*, also supported by the Septuagint and the Syriac (חסידים),¹⁰⁹ could indicate that in the course of the textual history the “loyal one” in Prov 2:8 (*ketiv* חסיד) was interpreted as the group of the “pious.” The connections between Ps 37 with Prov 2 could have promoted such an understanding.¹¹⁰

The line of thought developed in Prov 2:5–8 and 9–12 that YHWH gives wisdom in order to protect the paths of justice and comes into “your heart” corresponds to the conception of Ps 37:30–31. The connection between wisdom and torah only specifically takes place here. The mouth of the righteous speaks wisdom and justice, for the torah of God is in his heart. Linked with this is the theme of the way (“his steps do not slip”), resulting, on the whole, in an entire series of commonalities between Prov 2 and Ps 37. These commonalities cannot, as is often done, be limited to the antithesis between the righteous and the wicked and the theme of the land.¹¹¹ Instead, the texts both reflect a connection between wisdom and

107. The word עניים in 37:11 can be understood on one hand in the sense of עניים or as derived from ענו “bowed, humble”; see Seybold, *Die Psalmen*, 154.

108. See Brown, “Come, O Children ... I will Teach You the Fear of the Lord,” 88.

109. On this see §2.1 with text note 8a. Gulkowitsch, *Die Entwicklung*, 12, on the other hand, views Prov 2:8 as a “textual corruption.”

110. It is noteworthy that the difference between the *ketiv* (singular) and *qere* (plural) also appears in 1 Sam 2:8.

111. Crisanto Tiquillahuanca, *Die Armen*, 125.

torah that links the two entities with the theme of the way and the conception of the חסידים or חסיד.

However, in spite of all the similarities, the general thrusts of the texts differ. If one follows the thesis of Albertz, Ps 37 concerns a group that is poor and will possess the land in the future. This thrust secured the psalm a broad reception in Qumran. The text is related to the “congregation of the poor” as well as to the priests and the Teacher of Righteousness. (4Q171 [4QpPs^a] 37 II, 10, 19).¹¹² On the other hand, the addressees of Prov 2 most certainly did not consist of a group of the dispossessed or poor. For while Ps 37 offers proclamations oriented toward the future that the poor *will* possess the land and live in it, a present orientation dominates Prov 2.¹¹³ The teacher’s addressees will *remain* living in the land. Even though a future dimension resonates within Prov 2:21–22, it appears that the things Ps 37 expects in the future can be realized in the present in Prov 2 on the basis of the conditional structure.¹¹⁴

Drawing the individual observations together, it appears, first of all, that Prov 2 and Ps 37 demonstrate close similarities in terms of content and terminology. The commonalities concern not only the concluding verses of Prov 2:21–22, but also the nomistic definition of wisdom. These are stressed explicitly in the psalm through the mention of the torah, while Prov 2 oscillates back and forth simultaneously between nomistic and wisdom fields of reference. In addition, an interesting connection is demonstrated at the structural level. Both texts exhibit a distinctive connection between wisdom, torah, and the theology of the land. All three aspects hark back to Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic theological themes. They are connected by the verb כרת, which originates from the Priestly tradition and are assigned to the (individual) חסיד or rather the group of the חסידים.

112. John Allegro, “4Q171,” in *Qumran Cave 4.I (4Q158–4Q186)*, DJD V (Oxford: Clarendon, 1968), 42–50; and Witte, *Von Ewigkeit zu Ewigkeit*, 58. Furthermore, 37:1–4 is attested in 11Q7 (11QPs^c) and 11Q9 (11QPs^e); as well as 37:7–26, 28–40 in 4Q83 (4QPs^a); and 37:18–19 in 4Q85 (4QPs^c); see Seybold, *Die Psalmen*, 155; and for the text itself Maurya P. Horgan, “Psalm Peshier 1 (4Q171 = 4QpPs^a = 4QpPs 37 and 45),” in *Pesharim, Other Commentaries, and Related Documents*, ed. James H. Charlesworth et al., Princeton Theological Seminary Dead Sea Scrolls Project 6B (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 6–23.

113. Brueggemann, “Psalm 37,” 247.

114. On this see the comparison with eschatological texts in §3.3.3 below.

On the methodological level, the different accents of the texts could be understood as evidence for a particular form of scribal exegesis. They update earlier texts (in the present case Deut 28) in different ways. In Ps 37 the focus is placed on the poor and on future action. In Prov 2 on the other hand, there is already a “remaining in the land” that can be experienced in the present. This contrast opens up a realm of questions that leads back to the older thesis of Robert: the handling of Deuteronomy and the concept of torah in the postexilic period. Therefore, the following analysis must take into account whether a specific discourse on “torah” and “wisdom” can be found here. Although this discourse is characteristic of this period in the Old Testament’s literary history, it is difficult to discern clear lines of tradition in texts from this period.

3.2.2. Psalm 119: Wisdom and Torah

Psalm 119 is among the most complex texts of the entire Old Testament.¹¹⁵ In consideration of the 176 verses constituting the psalm, Bernhard Duhm allows himself to become carried away and makes the following statement:

What sort of purpose the author had in view during the composition of these 176 verses, I do not know. In any case, this “psalm” is the most meaningless product that one ever used to blacken paper; one could more easily wear down a heretic with it than with all seven penitential psalms.¹¹⁶

115. The theme of wisdom and torah also appears in Ps 19. Because this text is later than Ps 119, Ps 119 will be discussed first. On the chronology see Grund, “*Die Himmel*,” 289, in contrast to earlier scholarship: Bernhard Duhm, *Die Psalmen*, 2nd ed., KHC 14 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1922), 419; Hermann Gunkel, *Die Psalmen*, 5th ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1968), 80; and Artur Weiser, *Die Psalmen*, 2 vols., 8th ed., ATD 14/15 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1973), 136.

116. Duhm, *Die Psalmen*, 427–28 (“Was der Autor bei der Abfassung dieser 176 Verse für einen Zweck im Auge gehabt hat, weiss ich nicht. Jedenfalls ist dieser ‘Psalm’ das inhaltsloseste Produkt, das jemals Papier Schwarz gemacht hat; mit ihm könnte man einen Ketzer eher mürbe machen als mit sämtlichen sieben Bußpsalmen”). Duhm’s dictum is prominent in the history of scholarship and has been cited repeatedly; see Ronald N. Whybray, “Psalm 119: Profile of a Psalmist,” in *Wisdom, You Are My Sister: Studies in Honor of Roland E. Murphy on the Occasion of His Eightieth Birthday*, ed. Michael L. Barré, CBQMS 29 (Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1997), 31 n. 2; Frank-Lothar and Erich Zenger, *Psalms* 3, trans. Linda M. Maloney, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2011), 257; Kent A. Reynolds,

These striking words from 1922 have not prevented a whole series of scholars from dealing with the psalm and pointing out the meaningful nature of the text. In the meantime, Ps 119 has come to be reckoned as a masterful text attesting to a connection between torah and wisdom that later gave rise to Jesus Sirach, whose characterization of wisdom is, however, thoroughly distinct from it.¹¹⁷

The interlinking of different lines of tradition is central for Ps 119, whether it be Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic theology or the wisdom tradition.¹¹⁸ It is to the credit of Alfons Deissler for working out these literary relationships in his habilitation thesis published in 1955. Quite in keeping with his teacher Robert, Deissler speaks of the “anthological character” of the psalm and makes mention of an entire series of “innerbiblical connections.”¹¹⁹ Before discussing these in more detail, the structure and thrust of the psalm must first be presented. For his work, as well the scholarship of the past two decades, has led to different insights than those from the time of Duhm. One reason for this development is the determination of the concept of torah.

Recent works have demonstrated that Ps 119 develops a notion of the study of torah that leads to the Jewish tradition of the study of scripture.¹²⁰ The psalm is considerably more than a “colorful compilation of wisdom proverbs” as Gerhard von Rad formulates.¹²¹ It consists of a methodical structure with an, in itself, concise progression of thoughts. One is

Torah as Teacher: The Exemplary Torah Student in Psalm 119, VTSup 137 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 13.

117. Josef Schreiner, “Leben nach der Weisung des Herrn: Eine Auslegung des Ps 119,” in *Freude an der Weisung des Herrn: Beiträge zur Theologie der Psalmen; Festschrift für Heinrich Gross*, ed. Ernst Haag and Frank-Lothar Hossfeld, SBB 13 (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1986), 397; Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalms* 3, 258–60 and 263 (with reference to Sir 38:24–39:11).

118. Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Psalms 60–150: A Commentary*, trans. Hilton C. Oswald, CC (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1989), 414.

119. Alfons Deissler, *Psalm 119 (118) und seine Theologie: Ein Beitrag zur Erforschung der anthologischen Stilgattung im Alten Testament*, MThS 1/11 (Munich: Zink, 1955), 270. See also §1.1 of the present work and Robert’s own study on Ps 119 (“Le sens du mot loi dans le Ps CXIX [Vulg. CXVIII],” *RB* 46 [1937]: 182–206).

120. Reynolds, *Torah*, 181; and Yehoshua Amir, “Psalm 119 als Zeugnis eines proto-rabbinischen Judentums,” in *Studien zum Antiken Judentum*, BEATAJ 2 (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 1985), 4, who considers the psalm as the “first attestation of the rabbinic era.” (“erstes Zeugnis der rabbinischen Epoche”).

121. Gerhard von Rad, “‘Gerechtigkeit’ und ‘Leben’ in der Kultsprache der Psalmen,” in *Gesammelte Studien zum Alten Testament I*, TB 8 (Munich: Kaiser, 1958), 230.

first struck by the acrostic structure. The psalm separates formally into twenty-two parts, each with eight verses, corresponding to the letters of the Hebrew alphabet.¹²² The thought progression is essentially the theme of the obligatory nature of the commitment to the torah. Both entities—the torah itself and the posture of the psalmist—are formed in the text through various semantic fields. Eight terms appear for the semantic field “law/instruction,” and they are all used about the same amount:¹²³ אמרה (“word/dictum”), nineteen times; דבר (“word”), twenty-two times; חק (“statue”), twenty-two times; מצוה (“commandment”), twenty-two times; משפט (“regulation/legal stipulation”), twenty-three times; עדות (“testimony”), twenty-three times; פקודים (“precepts”), twenty-one times; and finally תורה (torah), twenty-five times.¹²⁴ These terms are spread throughout the twenty-two sections of the psalm, whereby the accent is clearly placed on the word *torah*. It appears already—in accordance with the location of the focus—in the first verse of the psalm. However, it would fall short to conclude from the various terms for “torah” that the main proclamation of the psalm lies in defining the nature of this torah. Strictly speaking there are no statements at all about the peculiar character of the torah. Not a single commandment is cited, nor anything stated about a particular kind of legal casuistry.¹²⁵ The torah instead appears as an entity with which one can construct a relationship. The psalm concerns the relationship of the psalmist to the torah; this is the primary accent of Ps 119.¹²⁶

122. See the detailed analysis by David N. Freedman, *Psalm 119: The Exaltation of Torah*, BJSUCSD 6 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1999), 25–36 (illustration on p. 34); as well as Whybray, “Psalm 119,” 31.

123. See also Reynolds, *Torah*, 109–11.

124. Tina Arnold, “Die Einladung zu einem ‘glücklichen’ Leben: Tora als Lebensraum nach Ps 119,1–3,” in *The Composition of the Book of Psalms*, ed. Erich Zenger, BETL 238 (Leuven: Peeters, 2010), 401–2; Freedman, *Psalm 119*, 35; in contrast Jon D. Levenson, “The Sources of Torah: Psalm 119 and the Modes of Revelation in Second Temple Judaism,” in *Ancient Israelite Religion: Essays in Honor of Frank Moore Cross Patrick*, ed. Patrick D. Miller, Paul D. Hanson, and S. Dean McBride (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987), 561–62, still considers the terms for way of דרך “way” and ארה “path” torah terms. He thereby comes to a total of ten terms.

125. Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalms* 3, 256–57; and Seybold, *Die Psalmen*, 473.

126. This has been worked out in detail by Amir (“Psalm 119,” 4). Also Schreiner, “Leben,” 417. The fact that the psalm concerns a prayer is stressed by Whybray, “Psalm 119,” 32; and Grund, “*Die Himmel*,” 285. In contrast, Soll, *Psalm 119*, 116–23, interprets the psalm as a didactic text. A combination of both thoughts can be found in

This relationship expresses itself through different formulations—“loving” the commandments (אהב, 119:97, 113, 119, 127, 140, 160, 163, 165, 167), “delighting” in torah (שׂוּשׁ, 119:14, 16, 111, 162), “trusting” in it (בטח, 119:42; אמן, 119:66), or “desire” for it (אבה and its derivatives, 119:20, 40, 111, 162).¹²⁷ One can illustrate this emphasis clearly with a citation from Ps 37:30–31:

(30) The mouth of the righteous utters wisdom,
and his tongue speaks what is right.

(31) He has the instruction of his God in his heart;
his steps do not falter.¹²⁸

What unfolds in the 176 verses of Ps 119 reads like an explication of these two verses. It concerns the way of the righteous that is given a model in the example of the psalmist.¹²⁹ In the center is the psalmist’s statement that he will not forget the word of YHWH (119:16, 61, 83, 93, 109, 141, 153, 176).¹³⁰ The word of YHWH in the form of the torah and his instruction is capable of preserving the psalmist and protecting him from adversity.

The psalm accomplishes this portrayal through the contrast of the righteous and the wicked. One encounters the “wicked” (רשעים) as the counterpart to the psalmist multiple times (119:53, 61, 95, 110, 119, 155). The only way to endure and not be destroyed from the earth is through dedication of the “entire heart” (בכל לב, 119:2) to torah and therefore to the fear of God.¹³¹ Accordingly, the requests of the psalmist are that God not abandon him (verb עזב, 119:8), and the reminiscence of the lament psalms. The psalmist cries from sorrow (119:28) and must fear disgrace and shame (119:39; cf. v. 22).¹³² Noteworthy here is how

Reynolds, *Torah*, 181: Psalm 119 is a didactic text but it “promotes Torah to the center of religious practice.” See also Spieckermann, “What Is the Place,” 311.

127. Amir, “Psalm 119,” 6–8.

128. Schreiner, “Leben,” 400.

129. See the formulation by Seybold (*Die Psalmen*, 472): “Ps 119 offers a *spiritual exercise* for a life following YHWH’s word and will” (“Ps 119 bietet eine *exercitia spiritualia* für ein Leben nach JHWHs Wort und Willen” [emphasis original]). This is also the approach taken by the most recent monograph-length study of Ps 119: Reynolds, *Torah*, 57–65. See also Levenson, “Sources,” 566; and Arnold, “Die Einladung,” 412.

130. See Whybray, “Psalm 119,” 31; and Deissler, *Psalm 119*, 293–94, who stresses the meaning of the divine word for the one praying.

131. Schreiner, “Leben,” 405.

132. Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalms* 3, 269–70.

the psalm understands the torah. While Deuteronomistic theology conceives God as the one who establishes the God-nation relationship, Ps 119 depicts the relationship of the individual to the torah.¹³³ As a result, the characteristic term ברית (“covenant”) does not appear in the psalm, indeed the torah also appears as something quite dynamic.¹³⁴ On one hand it is the epitome of reliability and permanence (119:142), yet at the same time it is also a life-giving power connected with YHWH’s person (cf. the frequent formulation with the 2nd sing. suffix “your torah”) from which miracles can originate (119:18).¹³⁵ Even though the posture toward the torah—safeguarding, loving, and not forgetting (see Ps 119:34, 44, 55, 61, 97, 113, 157, 163, 165)—links up with central Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic topoi (see Deut 6:7–9; and Josh 1:8), the torah itself appears to be an open quantity that the believer can individually assimilate.

Through the particular conception of torah in Ps 119 that has an entire way of life in view, life is presented with its overall ambivalence.¹³⁶ The psalm depicts this openness with regard to the concept of torah both through the use of the various terms and through the closer definition of torah. Three ideas converge: First is the idea of a cosmic law (119:89–91), in which the word of YHWH is connected with the heavens (cf. Ps 19).¹³⁷ The second is the conception of divine instruction that is issued to the psalmist in a direct manner (119:26–29). Finally, there is the torah in the sense of the tradition that is imparted to the psalmist through a teacher (119:99–100).¹³⁸ The particular nature of this psalm is determined by this last element, torah in the sense of a tradition, which is condensed here in literary form in multiple ways. For, ever since the previously mentioned works by Robert and Deissler, scholarship has been in agreement that the

133. Kraus, *Psalms 60–150*, 413; Amir, “Psalm 119,” 11; and Reynolds, *Torah*, 57.

134. Karin Finsterbusch, “Yahweh’s Torah and the Praying ‘I’ in Psalm 119,” in Schipper and Teeter, *Wisdom and Torah*, 119–35. The absence of the term ברית in the psalm can perhaps be explained by the fact that the word refers to the community, while the psalm concerns an individual; see Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalms* 3, 260.

135. Kraus, *Psalms 60–150*, 413.

136. This entire way of life is stressed by Amir, “Psalm 119,” 17, and at the same time it constitutes the dynamic, open to the future understanding of torah in the psalm.

137. Grund, “*Die Himmel*,” 287.

138. Levenson, “Sources,” 570.

psalm must be read in light of a whole series of other texts.¹³⁹ It concerns a form of scribal work that refers to other literary traditions.

Within the context of the analysis of Prov 2, most important are the relationships with the Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic and wisdom traditions.¹⁴⁰ Already in 119:2, the “seeking” of YHWH (דרש *qal*) “with the whole heart” (בכל לב) mentions a central theological phrase of Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic tradition.¹⁴¹ The formulation in Ps 119:2 matches Deut 4:29 and is attested multiple times in Deuteronomy.¹⁴² The expression is accorded a place of prominence in Ps 119 with six attestations (119:2, 10, 34, 58, 69, 145). It appears within the context of further Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic-oriented statements like adherence (דבק *qal*) and love (אהב). The root דבק appears in Ps 119:31 in relation to the precepts (עדות), an entity comparable to the torah. “Adhering to the testimonies” in 119:31 is related directly to YHWH. It thereby matches the formulations in Deut 4:4; 10:20; 11:22; 13:5; and 30:20.¹⁴³ The verb is explicitly related to YHWH in Deut 10:20. In Deut 11:22 it is linked with the commandments (מצות), which are equated with going YHWH’s way and with love. The latter, the verb אהב (“to love”), is mentioned multiple times in Ps 119 (119:47, 97, 113, 127, 132, 140, 159, 163, 165, 167) and is clearly related to the commandments (מצות, 119:47, 127) or the torah (119:97, 113).¹⁴⁴

As a result, the psalm cites a central theological concept of Deuteronomy, one that in fact appears already in Deut 6:5.¹⁴⁵ According to Deut 6, this love becomes concrete by placing YHWH’s commandments and prohibitions “in your heart” (6:7). The argument aims to establish a connection between the love of God and the reciprocal love of people that primarily becomes concrete in obedience to his words and command-

139. See Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalms* 3, 263, who view the psalm as an attestation of “a proto-rabbinic Judaism.”

140. Deissler, *Psalm 119*, 274–76, also sees an abundance of evidence of prophetic literature. However, in part these allusions do not have the same quality as the attestations to Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic tradition and must be discussed separately.

141. Reynolds, *Torah*, 36; Deissler, *Psalm 119*, 89; and Levenson, “Sources,” 563.

142. Deut 6:5; 10:12; 11:13; 13:4; 26:16; 30:2, 6, 10; and on this topos Weinfeld, *Deuteronomic School*, 320–65; and §3.1.2 above.

143. Deissler, *Psalm 119*, 127; and Reynolds, *Torah*, 35.

144. In 119:132 this refers to the name YHWH. See Freedman, *Psalm 119*, 90 n. 2.

145. See Deut 5:10; 7:9; 10:12; 11:1, 13, 22; 30:6, 16, 20; and Hermann Spieckermann, “Mit der Liebe im Wort: Ein Beitrag zur Theologie des Deuteronomiums,” in Kratz and Spieckermann, *Liebe und Gebot*, 192–93.

ments.¹⁴⁶ This very thought also marks Ps 119. It concerns keeping the commandments, for which the chosen terminology can be concretized in various ways. In this respect one should agree with Deissler in maintaining that texts like Deut 4:1–9 and 6:1–7 form, as it were, the “native intellectual air” of the author of Ps 119.¹⁴⁷

In addition to these references to Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic tradition, there are allusions to the world of the laments.¹⁴⁸ For example, the formulation in 119:8, “do not utterly forsake me” (אל תעזבני עד מאד), is similar to Pss 27:9; 38:22; and 71:9.¹⁴⁹ Further echoes of this context are “save me” from 119:94 (ישע *hiphil*, cf. Pss 3:8; 6:5; 7:2; 12:2), “redeem me” in 119:134 (פדה *qal*, cf. Pss 25:22; 44:27; 78:42), and the expression “let me not be ashamed” in 119:31 (בוש *qal*, cf. Pss 25:2, 20; 31:2, 18). The diverse references to the lament literature are supplemented through the central motif of the enemies. These mock (119:51), slander (119:69), and oppress the psalmist (119:78, 122), so they are described as “persecutor” (119:84, 157, 161) or “attacker” (119:139, 157).¹⁵⁰ It is important for the argument of Ps 119 that these enemies not only attack the psalmist, but they are also YHWH’s enemies. They stray from the commandments (119:21) and are denoted multiple times as “wicked” (רשעים; 119:53, 61, 95, 110, 119, 155). Especially interesting is 119:119, which connects the רשעים with the land theme: “You put an end to all the wicked in the land as dross, therefore, I love your stipulations.” The connection between רשעים (“wicked”) and ארץ (“land”) also appears in Prov 2:22, a passage for which other interconnections have already been established. However, before considering the links between Ps 119 and Prov 2, the relationship between the psalm to wisdom texts in general needs to be discussed.

In his study Deissler gathers a considerable amount of evidence to illustrate the sapiential coloring of the psalm.¹⁵¹ This is reflected in, for

146. Spieckermann, “Liebe,” 193 and 197.

147. Deissler, *Psalm 119*, 271 (“heimatliche geistige Luft”). This is interesting because Deut 4 and 6 also influence a whole series of other texts; on this see §5.1.

148. The individual evidence for the Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic tradition cannot be investigated at this point; see the still valuable compilation by Deissler, *Psalm 119*, 270.

149. See Reynolds, *Torah*, 44, with which the following examples conform.

150. Deissler, *Psalm 119*, 285.

151. This anchoring in wisdom thought led Rudolf Kittel to designate the psalm as an “instructional poem” (*Die Psalmen*, KAT 13 [Leipzig: Deichert, 1922], 381). In contrast, others have not described the psalm as a wisdom psalm; see the short overview of the literature in Soll, *Psalm 119*, 116–18.

example, the verbs “understand” (בין, 119:27, 34, 52, 73, 95, 100, 104, 125, 130, 144, 169), “recognize” (ידע, 119:75, 79, 125, 152), and “contemplate” (שיח, 119:15, 27, 48, 78, 148).¹⁵² In addition is the attestation of the way metaphor, which one encounters both in wisdom literature as well as in Ps 119, though it cannot be limited to these two corpora.¹⁵³ Turning from the lexicographic evidence to idiomatic formulations or expressions, further references arise. Among these, it is striking, on the one hand, that there are allusions to various texts, while, on the other, there are specific references, primarily concerning two texts: Prov 8 and Prov 2. With regard to the overall spectrum, the following commonalities can be observed:¹⁵⁴

1. The participle למד *piel* only appears with the meaning “teacher” in Ps 119:99 and Prov 5:13.
2. The formula of the “one walking blamelessly” (תמימי דרך) appears this way in Ps 119:1 and Prov 11:20.
3. The construction “to go/lead astray from” (מן + שגה) with reference to instruction or commandment appears in Ps 119:10 (*hiphil*), 21 (*qal*), 118 (*qal*); and Prov 19:27 (*qal*).
4. Fear (ירא) for the commandment/the judgments appears in Prov 13:13 and Ps 119:120.
5. In Prov 6:23 the commandment (מצוה) is described as a lamp and the torah as light. Both terms, נר and אור, are also used in Ps 119:105, which states “for your word is a lamp for my foot and a light for my byway.”

Even these few examples show that Ps 119 likely had access to the entire book of Proverbs.¹⁵⁵ The references are not, however, distributed equally throughout Proverbs. They instead concentrate on specific chapters. One of

152. Deissler, *Psalm 119*, 107–8.

153. Deissler, *Psalm 119*, 272–73, mentions a whole series of terms, yet these are instead prescribed by the thematic of the way and do not establish a specific proximity between Ps 119 and wisdom literature.

154. See Reynolds, *Torah*, 51; and the compilation by Avi Hurvitz, *Wisdom Language in Biblical Psalmody* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1991) [Hebrew], 42–44, 51–54, 58–60, 108–11, 113–16; and Hurvitz, “Wisdom Vocabulary in the Hebrew Psalter: A Contribution to the Study of ‘Wisdom Psalms,’” *VT* 38 (1988): 41–51. A maximal conclusion appears in Deissler, *Psalm 119*, 273, which should, however, be tested.

155. Deissler, *Psalm 119*, 272–73.

these is Prov 8, which contains a whole series of commonalities with Ps 119.¹⁵⁶ Another important text is Prov 2, where interesting commonalities appear:¹⁵⁷

1. The expression “store/hide” (צִפֵּן) the commandments, identified as characteristic for Prov 2:1, also appears in Ps 119:11 with regard to the “words” (אִמְרָה) stored in the heart. The statements correspond such that the commandments in Prov 2:1 are parallel to the words.
2. Both Ps 119:36 as well as Prov 2:2 contain the expression “inclining of the heart” (נִטָּה לֵב). In Prov 2 one should incline the heart to understanding (תְּבוּנָה); in Ps 119 it is to the “testimonies” (עֲדוּת), a term that can parallel “torah.”
3. A more thematic than terminological commonality appears in Ps 119:72 and Prov 2:4. The seeking as if for silver and the searching as if for hidden treasure in Prov 2:4 is related to wisdom, understanding, and insight (בִּינָה). In Ps 119 this theme applies to the torah, stating that the torah “of your mouth is better for me than gold and silver.”
4. A thematic similarity also appears in Ps 119:1 and Prov 2:7. The above-cited verse of the psalm praises those whose way is blameless. By contrast, Prov 2:7 speaks of the shield that YHWH saves for those who walk blamelessly.
5. In addition are a series of terms attested in both texts appearing in the context of certain themes. First is the semantic field of the “way” with the terms דֶּרֶךְ and אֶרֶץ. Both terms are used in the texts to formulate the theme of the way of life.
6. Linked with this is the contrast between the righteous and the wicked. As was already stressed, the antithesis of the צַדִּיק and the רָשָׁעִים appears in Ps 119, and the latter, the wicked, appears in 119:119 in connection to the land thematic.
7. Finally, it is interesting that some of the synonyms for torah in Ps 119 are also encountered as central terms in Prov 2: the “commandments” מִצְוֹת and the “word” (אִמְרָה/אִמֵּר, 2:1), as well as the “judgment” (מִשְׁפָּט, 2:8).

156. See §5.2.2 of this study. For the following list see Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 290–91.

157. Reynolds, *Torah*, 52; Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 105; and on the commonalities already Frankenberg, *Die Sprüche*, 25–26.

What is first striking from the evidence is that there are a whole series of similarities, but these are seldom specific. It is interesting that Ps 119 does not contain the wisdom terms used in Prov 2. It mentions neither חכמה, תבונה, nor בינה.¹⁵⁸ The only wisdom term encountered in Ps 119 is דעת, though this word has a rather broad field of meaning and goes beyond wisdom in a narrow sense.¹⁵⁹ Wisdom terms dominate Prov 2, while Ps 119 focuses on terms for torah. Upon closer examination it turns out that the author of Ps 119 intended a counterpoint to the wisdom texts by relating the qualities of wisdom to the torah.¹⁶⁰ This can be seen through comparison of the thought progressions of Ps 119 with Prov 2.

Both texts begin with the heart's recognition of God (לֵב, Ps 119:2; Prov 2:2). This awareness of God establishes "a practical, religious-ethical relationship" between the person and YHWH, which bears implications for the entire life.¹⁶¹ The thought of putting the proverb in the heart is expressed in Ps 119:11 through the formulation "incline the heart." Psalm 119:36 contains the same construction as Prov 2:2b. Furthermore, this form of following the will of YHWH is expressed by both texts with the metaphor of the way. It describes a way of life, though the global aspect of life is emphasized more in Prov 2 through the theme of death than it is in Ps 119. Also common to both texts is the contrast between the righteous and the wicked. The fundamental difference in the message of the texts can be illustrated through the use of the verb שמר ("to keep"), a term that originates in Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic tradition.¹⁶² A petition appears as a prayer request in Ps 119:5 to orient the way toward keeping (שמר) the law.¹⁶³ In Prov 2:8 it instead states that YHWH keeps (שמר) the way of his faithful. A difference between the texts becomes tangible through the use of the verb שמר and the noun "way" (דֶּרֶךְ) that goes beyond the difference between torah and wisdom. While the psalmist hopes to keep the "way of YHWH," this results from following the wisdom instruction according to Prov 2. YHWH himself keeps the way of the loyal one (חסיד). One might

158. This is also the case for the word מזמה ("prudence") in Prov 2:11, which is not used in Ps 119.

159. On this see §2.2 above.

160. See also Spieckermann, "What Is the Place," 311.

161. Heinz-Josef Fabry, "לֵב," *TDOT* 7:432, and on the significance of the heart see §3.3.1.

162. On this see §3.1 above.

163. Deissler, *Psalm 119*, 93.

formulate this in a more pointed fashion by stating that Ps 119 stresses the unavailability of the successful life and the necessity of emphasizing the practice of torah, while Prov 2 exhibits a certainty. The psalmist in Ps 119 experiences hostility and injustice. He is oppressed and persecuted (119:86, 121). In contrast, the wisdom instruction of Prov 2 awakens the impression that those who orient themselves with their “whole heart” to God’s wisdom and commandments cannot experience harm. While there is the danger of strange men and the strange woman, in the end these do not pose any real threat to the one that follows the wisdom instruction. What is requested from YHWH in Ps 119 appears as something the student of wisdom in Prov 2 can obtain.¹⁶⁴ By means of the form of its wisdom instruction (as a conditional statement), Prov 2 constructs something of an automatism describing what one could call a legally specified act-consequence nexus between observance of the wisdom instruction and the successful life. Psalm 119 takes a position contrary to this legal construction. It stresses the inaccessibility of the successful life and the importance of the torah as a gift of YHWH.¹⁶⁵

3.2.3. Psalm 19 and Torah Wisdom

The discussion on the relationship between wisdom and torah that so far has only been a rough sketch takes on further contour with Ps 19. It demonstrates, however, that this discussion increasingly leads away from the question concerning whether texts refer back to the Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic tradition or not. It is also the case that some interrelations, as became clear in the comparison between Ps 119 with Prov 2, are difficult to explain in terms of a textual coherence, regardless of the fact that, given the extent of the allusions in Ps 119, it is likely that the author of the psalm was familiar with Prov 2. Apparently there are tangible positions in the texts that were developed with knowledge of one another. The form of tradition-historical exegesis practiced here will first help to map out such positions, though these will not be prematurely interpreted in the sense of unilateral lines of connection. This is also the case for Ps 19, for the text

164. On this see §3.3.3 below.

165. The implications of the redaction history of the thesis unfolded here cannot be detailed at this point. See Martin Leuenberger, *Konzeptionen des Königtums Gottes im Psalter: Untersuchungen zu Komposition und Redaktion der theokratischen Bücher IV–V im Psalter*, ATANT 83 (Zurich: TVZ, 2004), 371.

is not only closely connected with Ps 119, but it also offers a definition of wisdom and torah that goes beyond Ps 119.

Already at first glance it becomes clear that Ps 19 consists of two parts: a section concerning the topic of creation, and one that focuses on the law.¹⁶⁶ Especially influential in the history of scholarship was the commentary by Duhm, who took up earlier theses that separate a “Psalm 19A” from a “Psalm 19B.”¹⁶⁷ The main arguments for this thesis, which has also been maintained more recently, are the different topics of the sections of 19:2–7 and 19:8–11.¹⁶⁸ While the first concerns heavenly glory, the latter focuses on the torah of YHWH:

19:2a: The heavens tell of the glory of El.

19:8a: The *torah* of YHWH is perfect.

Starting from the different divine names and the divergent themes, the two sections are assigned to different authors. The third part of the psalm in which the psalmist first has their say (19:12–15) is generally accorded to the second part (19:8–11).¹⁶⁹ Regardless whether this is correct or whether one should instead begin from the premise of more recent scholarship that the psalm is a unified composition, the final form provides the basis for the following analysis.¹⁷⁰

When beginning from the final form, then the individual sections of content—whether or not they too have been subject to compositional expansion—certainly make sense. The starting point here is the location

166. Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalmen I*, 128. Anja Klein “Half Way between Psalm 119 and Ben Sira: Wisdom and Torah in Psalm 19,” in Schipper and Teeter, *Wisdom and Torah*, 137–38 sees “three clear-cut parts”: 19:2–7; 19:8–11; and 19:12–15.

167. Duhm, *Psalmen*, xiv; see also Hermann Spieckermann, *Heilsgegenwart: Eine Theologie der Psalmen*, FRLANT 148 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1989), 62 n. 7.

168. Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Psalms 1–59*, trans. Hilton C. Oswald (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1988) 268–69; and for an overview of the history of scholarship, see Grund, “Die Himmel,” 5–6; and Hartmut Gese, “Die Einheit von Psalm 19,” in *Alttestamentliche Studien* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1991), 139–40.

169. On attempts to understand the structure—whether as a unity or not, see the overview by J. Ross Wagner, “From the Heavens to the Heart: The Dynamics of Psalm 19 as Prayer,” *CBQ* 61 (1999): 247–48.

170. For the psalm as a unified composition, see Gese, “Die Einheit,” 146–47; and Grund, “Die Himmel,” 5–6 and 327–28.

of the text within the late postexilic literature. As Hartmut Gese, Matthias Albani, and Alexandra Grund have demonstrated, the text reflects a way of thinking that establishes a connection between the course of the sun “in the heavens” and the righteous way of life “on earth.”¹⁷¹ Both sections provide interpretations of one another, connecting with one another through a “wisdom-based concept of cosmic-earthly correspondence.”¹⁷² Underlying this is a way of thinking that relates the order of the heavens with the earthly social order. It is important here that 19:7–9 are linked to the ancient Near Eastern conception of the sun, but that the sun does not, however, appear as an independent entity. It is instead subject to God.¹⁷³ While independent from whether the transfer of solar aspects to YHWH presents a special aspect of Jerusalem theology or not, one must assume that this conception was expanded in the postexilic period.¹⁷⁴ As a result there is a religious-historical line from preexilic worship of YHWH to the apocalyptic-Enochic belief in God in the postexilic period in which the understanding of solar righteousness functions as a kind of hinge.¹⁷⁵ A conception appears in Ps 19 that leads directly to the Enoch literature and has condensed literarily, for example, in the Book of Dreams in 1 En. 83, where the obedience of the sun, moon, and stars to God’s law becomes an occasion for praise.¹⁷⁶ This connection of wisdom, the course of the sun,

171. Grund, “*Die Himmel*,” 102; Gese, “*Die Einheit*,” 146; and also Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalmen I*, 129. On the motif of the sun see the detailed analysis by Martin Arneht, “Psalm 19: Tora oder Messias?” *ZAR* 6 (2000): 84–96.

172. Matthias Albani, “*Das Werk seiner Hände verkündigt die Feste: Die doxologische Bedeutung des Sonnenlaufs in Psalm 19*,” in *Gottes Ehre erzählen: Festschrift für Hans Seidel zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Matthias Albani and Timotheus Arndt (Leipzig: Thomas, 1994), 254 (“kosmisch-irdisches Entsprechungsdenken weisheitlicher Art”). See also John Howell, “Psalm 19: Relating the Natural Order with the Torah’s Wisdom,” *Theology* 112 (2009): 243–50 with a rather unique interpretation.

173. Albani, “*Das Werk*,” 240–41.

174. That solar aspects were a part of Jerusalem theology is the view of Matthias Albani, *Astronomie und Schöpfungsglaube: Untersuchungen zum astronomischen Henochbuch*, WMANT 68 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1994), 314–15; see also Bernd Janowski, *Rettungsgewissheit und Epiphanie des Heils: Das Motiv der Hilfe Gottes am Morgen im Alten Orient und im Alten Testament*, WMANT 59 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1989), 190; and the excursus in Grund, “*Die Himmel*,” 81–86, whose conclusions are adopted here.

175. Albani, *Astronomie*, 315.

176. Albani, *Astronomie*, 247; see also Grund, “*Die Himmel*,” 93–100, with further examples for the connection between the “regulatory authority of the sun” and

and torah mirrors a particular conception of torah that is also attested outside of Ps 19 to some degree.¹⁷⁷ The link between YHWH's torah and the heavenly order also appears in Ps 119:89–91 and in Prov 6 and 8.¹⁷⁸ In consideration of Prov 2, the definition of torah in the section of Ps 19:8–11 is especially interesting.¹⁷⁹

(8) The *torah* of YHWH is perfect, renewing life.

The testimonies [עדות] of YHWH are trustworthy, they make wise the simple.

(9) The precepts [פקודים] of YHWH are right, they gladden the heart; the commandment [מצוה] of YHWH is pure, illuminating the eyes.

(10) Fear of YHWH [יראת יהוה] is spotless, it remains forever.

The judgments of YHWH [משפטי יהוה] are true, all of them are just.

(11) They are more costly than gold and much fine gold,
and sweeter than honey and honeycomb.

The section mentions five further terms in parallel to torah, which are also linked together in the concluding 19:11, becoming synonyms for the commandments.¹⁸⁰

19:8a: תורת יהוה, “the *torah* of YHWH”

19:8b: עדות יהוה, “the testimonies of YHWH”

a “Torah related understanding of righteousness” (94). For 1 En. 83 see George W. E. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch: A Commentary on the Book of 1 Enoch*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001), 345–53.

177. This concerns the question of the connection between Ps 19 and Prov 6 as well as the conception of torah wisdom in general; see below §5.1; and Michael Fishbane, *Text and Texture: Close Readings of Selected Biblical Texts* (New York: Schocken, 1979), 85–86. Interesting in this context is also the thesis put forth by Arneth that the torah takes over the function of the king in Ps 19 (Arneth, “Psalm 19,” 110).

178. The connection between Ps 19 and Prov 6:23 already appears in Rashi; see Timotheus Arndt, “‘Die Tora leuchtet besser,’” in Albani and Arndt, *Gottes Ehre erzählen* 258.

179. On the structure see Arneth, “Psalm 19,” 92; Wagner, “Heavens,” 245; and on the contrary Sheri L. Klouda, “The Dialectical Interplay of Seeing and Hearing in Psalm 19 and Its Connection to Wisdom,” *BBR* 10 (2002): 190, who summarizes 2:8–12. A subject of its own is the connection of Ps 19 and Prov 8, see Klein, “Half Way,” 139; and Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 291.

180. Arneth, “Psalm 19,” 97. Arndt Meinhold, “Überlegungen zur Theologie des 19. Psalms,” *ZTK* 80 (1983): 126, speaks of “interchangeable terms” (“Austauschbegriffe”) See also Wagner, “Heavens,” 254–55.

19:9a: פְּקוּדֵי יְהוָה, “the precepts of YHWH”

19:9b: מִצְוֹת יְהוָה, “the commandments of YHWH”

19:10a: יִרְאֵת יְהוָה, “the fear of YHWH”

19:10b: מִשְׁפָּטֵי יְהוָה, “the judgments of YHWH”

It is not surprising that the term *torah* appears at the beginning and the nomistic word מִשְׁפָּטִים (“judgments”) at the end. Both terms point toward Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic literature.¹⁸¹ At the same time, however, it would fall short to derive all of the synonyms from the Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic tradition. The word עֲדוּת “testimonies” instead points toward the Priestly sphere, while פְּקוּד “precept” with the meaning found here is encountered primarily in late *torah* psalms, twenty-one times alone in Ps 119 as well as once each in Pss 103:18; 111:7; and 19:9.¹⁸²

Each term receives its specific character in Ps 19 through its explicit reference to YHWH. Grund proposes the appealing thesis that the terms “refer to a multiplicity of authoritative ruling and legal traditions.”¹⁸³ However, the question is whether they are connected with one another not only by means of the concluding verse 19:11 but also through their explicit reference to YHWH, for the genitive construction is quite uncommon in several cases, such as מִצְוֹת יְהוָה (“the commandments of YHWH”) in 19:9b and מִשְׁפָּטֵי יְהוָה (“the judgments of YHWH”) in 19:10b. The latter is unique in this form within the Hebrew Bible; the former finds parallels only in 1 Sam 13:13 and Josh 22:3. As a result, the text not only alludes to divergent concepts (and traditions), but these are also explicitly related to YHWH. The actual achievement of the author of Ps 19 thereby consists in depicting the articulated terms as synonyms, that is, as equivalences, opening up a range of terms for law that go beyond the concept of *torah* in a narrow sense. In such a way, now “the fear of YHWH” (19:10a, יִרְאֵת יְהוָה) can also have a nomistic nuance. It no longer appears as the well-known wisdom category but instead as a parallel term to *torah*.¹⁸⁴

The author’s achievement goes further, for this parallelism of the terms is only one feature of the text. The other is the closer designation

181. Grund, “*Die Himmel*,” 216–17. Similar, though with a difference emphasis, also Fishbane, *Text*, 86–88.

182. Grund, “*Die Himmel*,” 217.

183. Grund, “*Die Himmel*,” 219 (“auf eine Vielzahl von autoritativen Gebots- und Rechtstraditionen”).

184. Fuhs, “יִרְאֵת,” 6:313–14; and §3.1 above

of the terms as perfect, reliable, right, sincere, and true. These words also name a range that otherwise describes “divine or human words (reliable, sincere, true, נאמנה, ברה, אמת), point to the cult (pure, טהר), or name ethical qualities (perfect, right, תמים, ישר).”¹⁸⁵

Turning to Prov 2 with this in mind, two aspects become important. (1) With the fear of YHWH (2:4), the commandments (מצוות, 2:1), and the judgment (משפט, 2:9), Prov 2 contains three of the six key terms from Ps 19:8–10. (2) In addition, both of the ethical attributes used in Ps 19, the roots תמים and ישר, appear in Prov 2.¹⁸⁶ Of these terms, however, only fear of YHWH appears in a genitive construction that is comparable to Ps 19, so the context is also different. As a result, one can hardly assume a specific proximity or a textual coherence between the texts. At the same time, the question arises to what degree Prov 2 might be connected with Ps 19 on another level. For if the thesis so far developed is correct, then Prov 2 alludes to a torah tradition, but this allusion remains within the framework of the wisdom instruction. The accent lies on wisdom itself. Therefore, Ps 19 establishes a clarity that the author of Prov 2—perhaps consciously—avoids. Wisdom is defined in light of the torah. The torah is the actual entity that one should pay attention to, though it can certainly have wisdom contours. As a result, the understanding of torah in Ps 19 is, in the end, based on a foundation of wisdom thought according to which the heavenly order and the earthly social order are related to one another.

These textual observations lead to the question of the degree to which the process of “sapientializing the torah” discussed in more recent literature in the context of Ps 19 and Ps 119 must be seen as part of a discourse that concerns the juxtaposition of two different systems of reference. Both recur equally to earlier, written traditions—wisdom and torah.¹⁸⁷

3.2.4. Summary

The analysis of this section demonstrates that Prov 2 can be located in the context of wisdom psalms like Pss 37, 19, and 119. This placement is,

185. Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalmen I*, 133; and Grund, “*Die Himmel*,” 222–23.

186. Prov 2:7 and Ps 19:13–14 mention the threat of this way of life, see Grund, “*Die Himmel*,” 268 n. 1060.

187. On this term, see Grund, “*Die Himmel*,” 338–52; as well as §5.2.2, which addresses the connections between Ps 19 and Prov 8.

however, quite divergent in the individual scenarios. For Ps 37 the special closeness allows for the conclusion of a specific connection. This is especially true for the comparison of Prov 2:20–22 with Deut 28 and Ps 37. Although the psalm itself refers to Deuteronomistic land theology, it still offers several characteristic terms from Prov 2 like the verb כרת (“cut off”) and the noun חסיד (“the loyal one”). The formulations of Prov 2:20–22 are also similar to Deut 28, which points to the conclusion that Prov 2 makes references to both texts, that is, to Deut 28 and Ps 37. Interesting in this context is the conception of torah in Ps 37, for in comparison with Ps 119 or Ps 19, it appears less distinct and virtually without contour.

Psalm 37 equates the divine torah with the words of wisdom (חכמה) in 37:30–31. Therefore, it does not reflect any type of contrast between wisdom and torah such as those that appear in Pss 19 and 119. This yields the following conclusion with regard to the content: when one accounts for the other lexical commonalities and outlined dependencies, a line begins with Ps 37, followed then by Ps 119, which presumably presupposes the book of Proverbs as a whole, and then Ps 19 at the end, which itself links with Ps 119 and implements a specific connection between the cosmic order and the earthly social order.¹⁸⁸ Proverbs 2 would either be placed between Ps 37 and Ps 119 or before Ps 37. In terms of methodology, this shows that scholarship’s repeated investigation of the articulated interconnections between Prov 2 and other Old Testament texts does not necessarily point to literary dependency (though this could certainly occur in individual cases). It instead indicates a tradition-historical spectrum. Within this discourse—apparently in the adoption of Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic theology—there is a discussion of the relationship between wisdom and torah. From the background of the texts investigated thus far, one can name different stages for this discourse (which are also tangible in the redactions of Deuteronomy).¹⁸⁹ For example, with regard to

188. For the place of Ps 19 between Ps 119 and later literature see Klein, “Half Way,” 147.

189. This question cannot be treated further within the framework of the present book. See the additional comments by Krüger, “Gesetz,” 173, who (with reference to, among others, Deut 4) emphasizes that “the discussion concerning the relationship between wisdom and law tangible in the second century BCE in Sirach and Baruch is already laid out and prepared in the Pentateuch” (“daß die Diskussion über das Verhältnis von Weisheit und Gesetz, die im 2. Jh. v. Chr. bei Sirach und Baruch greifbar wird, im Pentateuch selbst bereits angelegt und vorbereitet ist.”).

the relationship between wisdom and torah, Ps 37 has an integrated view of the two concepts. On the other hand, Prov 2 emphasizes wisdom itself, which attempts to accomplish what torah claims for itself. Finally, Pss 119 and 19 present exactly the opposite position: torah takes the place of personified wisdom, though torah in Ps 119 does not yet have a comparable independent meaning like it does in Ps 19, where it is an earthly entity that corresponds to a cosmic world. While Ps 119 relates the torah to YHWH and in the end maintains openness with regard to the conceptualization of torah, Ps 19 merges this with a sapientialization of torah.

However, these thoroughly divergent conceptions of wisdom and torah converge at one point: all of the texts prove to be examples of “textual coherence.” They are texts that recur to available written traditions in which the Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic has pride of place. This means that different theological emphases become tangible through the application of the same literary procedure. The texts are the work of scribes, literati, that allude to different traditions. These are related—so much can already be stated—to a discourse that not only interprets the concept “torah” divergently but could also describe its relationship to wisdom in different ways. As a result, the analysis to this point also shows that it concerns a postexilic discourse. Depending on the dates of Pss 119 and 19, it could extend as far as texts like Ben Sira or the book of Baruch.¹⁹⁰ Its thematic cornerstones are, in addition to the relationship between wisdom and torah, the life of the righteous (in general described with the metaphor of “the way”), his relationship with God, and the contrast with the wicked. A more precise description of these cornerstones requires turning attention to a sphere of texts that have yet to be discussed: late prophetic literature.

190. Both Ps 119 and Ps 19 date to the early Hellenistic period; see Grund, “*Die Himmel*,” 290; and Reynolds, *Torah*, 179. The *terminus ante quem* is the third century, when the final redaction of the Psalter should be placed. See also the considerations by Armin Lange, “The Significance of the Pre-Maccabean Literature from the Qumran Library for the Understanding of the Hebrew Bible: Inter-marriage in Ezra/Nehemiah—Satan in 1 Chron 21:1—the Date of Psalm 119,” in *Congress Volume 19: Ljubljana 2007*, ed. André Lemaire, VTSup 133 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 213–17, who dates the text between the middle of the fourth and the third centuries. Also interesting is the similarity of both texts to Ben Sira; see Grund, “*Die Himmel*,” 289; and §5.4 in this work.

3.3. Late Prophetic Texts

The late prophetic tradition focuses on a group of texts that has classically been connected with the phenomenon of innerbiblical interpretation. Scholarship in the past several decades has demonstrated that texts from the books of Jeremiah, Isaiah, and the Twelve Prophets stand in a complex system of relationship with one another.¹⁹¹ It concerns a dynamic process in which certain parts of the literature of the postexilic period respond to, or rather carry on, the same traditions. This perspective conforms with the results reached so far in this chapter. The investigated traditions are not rigidly separated units, but in part are closely woven with one another. A system of reference can be articulated in the Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic tradition that apparently influenced different literature. This influence reaches, as has long been recognized by scholarship, not only to wisdom literature and individual psalms, but also to prophetic texts.¹⁹² Accordingly, the following discussion will expand the horizon and further work out the lines established thus far. This concerns the question of the relationships between wisdom and torah, the reception of Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic ideas (especially with regard to the torah and living according to it), and finally the fundamental contrast of the righteous and the wicked. The goal is to illuminate the literary-historical and theological backdrop for reading Prov 2. Two further themes will also be addressed that have repeatedly arisen in the previous discussion of Prov 2, though they have been omitted from the analysis to this point: the strange woman in Prov 2:16–19 and Mal 2:10, 14, as well as the so-called apocalyptic-eschatological section of Prov 2:21–22 and its relationship with Third Isaiah.¹⁹³

191. See, e.g., Jakob Wöhrle, *Die frühen Sammlungen des Zwölfprophetenbuches: Entstehung und Komposition*, BZAW 360 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2006); and Wöhrle, *Der Abschluss des Zwölfprophetenbuches: Buchübergreifende Redaktionsprozesse in den späten Sammlungen*, BZAW 389 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2008). On the discussion on the Book of the Twelve see also Elena di Pedé and Donatella Scaiola, eds., *The Book of the Twelve—One Book or Many?*, FAT 2/91 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016).

192. The parade example for this is in the book of Jeremiah, which already Wilhelm Gesenius in his *Geschichte der hebräischen Sprache und Schrift* (Leipzig: Vogel, 1815) pointed out has commonalities with Deuteronomy; see Helga Weippert, *Die Prosareden des Jeremiabuches*, BZAW 132 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1973), 4.

193. Neither is this similarity new; it has repeatedly been discussed in scholarship; see e.g. Robert in his article from the year 1935 (“Attaches,” 506–7).

3.3.1. Jeremiah 31–32 and the “New Covenant”

For the interpretation of Prov 2, both the passage on the new covenant in Jer 31–32 and the determination of the relationship between wisdom and torah in Jer 8:8–9 are important. Recent discussion has noted the references in the passage of the new covenant to Deuteronomy, thereby articulating a line of tradition that originates in central passages of Deuteronomy and continues into the literature of the Second Temple period.¹⁹⁴ This is the case for both Jer 31:31–34 and also for Jer 32:37–44.¹⁹⁵ At the same time, recent works on the topic have demonstrated that the lines of connection between the book of Jeremiah and Deuteronomy must be tested in each individual case. Winfried Thiel’s traditional and in German scholarship widely received thesis of a “Deuteronomistic redaction” of the book of Jeremiah has proven helpful, but in the end it is unsustainable as an overall approach. Deuteronomistic language in the sense of Thiel’s criteria also appear in texts of the book of Jeremiah that are no longer focused on the thematic standards of Deuteronomy.¹⁹⁶ This insight also concerns the passages on the new covenant in Jer 30–31, which Thiel designated as “Deuteronomistic.”¹⁹⁷ Konrad Schmid presents evidence in a study on Jer

194. Finally, the observation that Jer 31:31–34 is a later text can already be found in earlier scholarship. Bernhard Duhm, *Das Buch Jeremia*, KHC 11 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1901), 255, describes the passage as the “gush of a scribe” (“Erguss eines Schriftgelehrten”). See also Sigmund Mowinckel, *Zur Komposition des Buches Jeremia* (Kristiania: Dybwad, 1914), 47, who counts the texts among the latest supplements to the book of Jeremiah; and the overview of the history of scholarship in Schmid, *Buchgestalten*, 187–88; and in Jack R. Lundbom, *Jeremiah 21–36*, AB 21B (New York: Doubleday, 2004), 370–76.

195. On the connection between Jer 31–32 and passages in Deuteronomy see Winfried Thiel, *Die deuteronomistische Redaktion von Jeremia 26–40*, WMANT 52 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1981), 25–26 and 36–37. See also Schmid, *Buchgestalten*, 70–71.

196. Cf. Schmid, *Buchgestalten*, 347. Criticism of Thiel’s thesis already appears in Karl-Friedrich Pohlmann, *Der ferne Gott: Studien zum Jeremiabuch; Beiträge zu den “Konfessionen” im Jeremiabuch und ein Versuch zur Frage nach den Anfängen der Jeremiatradition*, BZAW 179 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1989), 16–18; and in Levin, “Das Gebetbuch,” 63–66. See also the overview of scholarship in Christl Maier, *Jeremia als Lehrer der Tora: Soziale Gebote des Deuteronomiums in Fortschreibungen des Jeremiabuches*, FRLANT 196 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2002), 34–37.

197. This concretely concerns Jer 30:1–3 and 31:31–34; see Thiel, *Redaktion*, 20 and 24, who follows his teacher Siegfried Herrmann (*Die prophetische Heilserwartung*

30–33 that the four chapters exhibit “scribal activity.” He shows that the individual compositional levels of the chapter were constructed with the use of preexisting textual material designed exclusively for its literary context.¹⁹⁸ The thesis is controversial because the opinion is often presented even today that one could extract the basic stock of Jer 30–31 through literary-critical means that can be dated to the early proclamation of the prophet addressing the former Northern Kingdom.¹⁹⁹ Independent of the detailed discussion of the texts, of primary importance with regard to Prov 2 is that the two relevant passages on the new covenant in Jer 30–33 are most likely postexilic. Beginning with the first passage, Jer 31:31–34, it describes a unique conception for the Old Testament: the word combination ברית חדשה (“new covenant”) is only encountered in Jer 31:31.²⁰⁰ The passage indicates a theological concept that forges new territory with regard to the previously established determination of torah:

- (31) Look, days are coming, oracle of YHWH,
when I will cut a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house
of Judah,
(32) not like the covenant that I cut with their fathers on the day when I
took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt,
which they have broken, my covenant—
though I am indeed their master, oracle of YHWH.
(33) But this is the covenant that I will cut

im Alten Testament: Ursprung und Gestaltwandel, BWA[N]T 5 [Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1965], 179–85 and 195–204). See also the overview in Lundbom, *Jeremiah 21–36*, 374–75.

198. Schmid, *Buchgestalten*, 196.

199. See, e.g., Bernard P. Robinson, “Jeremiah’s New Covenant: Jer 31,31–34,” *SJOT* 15 (2001): 204: “in substance Jeremianic (not Deuteronomistic)”; and Lundbom, *Jeremiah 21–36*, 376. The thesis itself goes back to Heinrich Ewald, developed in his work, *Die Propheten des Alten Bundes II*, 2nd ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1867–1868), 83–84. In the end the question calls for a detailed discussion of, among other issues, the linguistic markers of Jeremianic authorship. This cannot be provided in the context of the present analysis. See also Hermann J. Stipp, “Sprachliche Kennzeichen jeremianischer Autorschaft,” in *Prophecy in the Book of Jeremiah*, ed. Hans M. Barstad and Reinhard G. Kratz, BZAW 338 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2009), 177–78.

200. The tradition is then adopted in the New Testament (Luke 22:10; 1 Cor 11:25) and in Qumran. On the whole see Fischer, *Jeremia*, 171; and Hermann Josef Stipp, *Jeremia 25–52*. HAT 1/12.2 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2019), 274–85.

with the house of Israel after those days, oracle of YHWH:

I will put my *torah* [תורה] in their inward parts,
and upon their heart I will write [כתב] it,
and I will be their God and they will be my people.

(34) And they will no longer teach [למד]

one another or the one his brother with the words:

“Know YHWH,” for they will all know me, from the smallest to the
greatest, oracle of YHWH, for I will forgive their debt and remember
their transgression no more.

The focus is set on the notion that YHWH himself will place the torah in the “inward parts” (בקרבים) of the people so that this torah can no longer be broken.²⁰¹ This notion stands, however, in clear contrast to the conception of torah in Deuteronomy, which becomes a focal point in illustrating the previously mentioned problem with a Deuteronomistic redaction of the book of Jeremiah. The passage sounds Deuteronomistic, but it no longer rests upon the basis of Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic thought.²⁰² It instead unfolds a conception that takes a critical view on torah in its previous sense.

This concept can be grasped more precisely when the passage is read against the background of three other texts: the Shema in Deut 6:4–9, the oracle of the lying stylus of the scribe in Jer 8:8, and the proclamation in Jer 17:1 that the sins of Judah are written “on the tablet of its heart.” Together these three form the background from which the declaration in Jer 31 gets its meaning. It does not concern direct verbal agreements but rather texts that form the negative contrast to Jer 31.

This first concerns the statement in Deut 6:4–9 that “the words” (הדברים) should be “on your heart” (על לבבך, 6:6). In Deut 6 this idea is connected with the notion of instructing the next generation (6:7, the verb שגן *piel*, “repeat”). While Deut 6:4–9 elaborately emphasizes the notion of instruction, this is entirely absent from Jer 31.²⁰³ No reciprocal instruction appears there (31:34, למד *piel*, “teach”); instead everyone

201. Magnar Kartveit, “Reconsidering the ‘New Covenant’ in Jeremiah 31:31–34,” in *The Book of Jeremiah: Composition, Reception, and Interpretation*, ed. Jack R. Lundbom, Craig A. Evans, and Bradford A. Anderson, VTSup 178 (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 168: an “internalized Torah.”

202. See Herrmann, *Heilserwartung*, 179; and Schmid, *Buchgestalten*, 69, who has mapped this convincingly.

203. Veijola, *Das fünfte Buch Mose*, 175; and Eckart Otto, “Mose der Schreiber,” in

can “know” (ידע) YHWH. In the verb למד *piel*, the text uses a technical term for learning (*qal*) or teaching (*piel*).²⁰⁴ Even though this term does not appear in Deut 6, the author of Jer 31:31 still employs a central idea from Deuteronomy that is an integral part of its theological understanding.²⁰⁵ The notion that YHWH’s torah should be passed on to the next generation already appears in Deut 4 and is otherwise attested in multiple places.²⁰⁶ Jeremiah 31:34 distances itself sharply from this conception in that the teaching, and therefore one of the central theological tenants of Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic tradition, drops out: YHWH himself “writes” (כתב) the torah on the hearts. The phrase “on their hearts” (על לבם) may perhaps refer to על לבבך (“on your heart”) from Deut 6:6, while at the same time stressing a difference from Deut 6:9. For in that text the people themselves should write (כתב) the words on the doorposts and the city gates.²⁰⁷ As a result the central thought of Jer 31 forms something of a counterweight to Deut 6: Only God can put the torah in hearts. The person is not himself capable. As a consequence, every form of instruction is superfluous.²⁰⁸

It would, however, be mistaken to understand Jer 31 as a critique of the torah itself. The text is much more concerned with the form of dissemination. The author of that passage places the focus on YHWH’s unmediated action, which disqualifies all authoritative human mediators. Therefore, the text moves along the lines of the well-known declaration from Jer 8:8–9, which offers an interesting connection between wisdom, torah, and scribes:

Die Tora, 471, who notes that Deut 6:6–9 presupposes the idea that the people of the covenant can write.

204. Arvid Kapelrud, “למד,” *TDOT* 8:5.

205. See Deut 4:1, 5, 10; 5:1, 31; 6:1; 11:19; 14:23; 17:19; 18:9; 20:18.

206. See §3.1. In contrast is the proclamation of Deut 18:9 that Israel should not learn (למד) what the other peoples of the land do.

207. See Schmid, *Buchgestalten*, 81; and James Swetnam, “Why Was Jeremiah’s New Covenant New?” in *Studies on Prophecy: A Collection of Twelve Papers*, ed. Daniel Lys, VTSup 26 (Leiden: Brill, 1974), 113, who refers to the rabbinic interpretation. See also Otto, “Mose der Schreiber,” 471–72.

208. See Robinson, “Covenant,” 183, and on the formulation that God “writes” on the heart of humans, 195–96. In contrast, Fischer, *Jeremia*, 173, speaks here—quite cautiously—only of a “shifted accent.”

- (8) How can you say, "We are wise, and the *torah* of YHWH is with us!"
 See, in fact, the false stylus of the scribe has made it into lies.²⁰⁹
- (9) The wise will be very ashamed; they will be broken and taken.
 See, the word of YHWH they have rejected, so what wisdom do they have?

Scholarship has often underlined that the passage is close to Deuteronomistic thought.²¹⁰ The notion that the possession of the torah is a pledge of wisdom is a prominent Deuteronomistic theological idea.²¹¹ In the text it is juxtaposed with the "word of YHWH" (דבר־יהוה), which forms a contrast between the prophetic proclamation and a wisdom based on the torah of YHWH.²¹² As a result, Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic traditional material is digested in a twofold manner. First, the notion from Deut 4:5–6 that the Mosaic legal ordinances and judgments make the people of Israel into a wise and understanding people is adopted.²¹³ Central wisdom terms like חכמה ("wisdom") and בינה ("insight") refer to the people in Deut 4:5–6. This connection between the teaching of the law (חקים ומשפטים) and "being wise" is Deuteronomistic. Second, with the emphasis on the word of the prophet, Jer 8:8–9 stands in a tradition founded in Deut 18:9–22.

There is a dividing line set up in the "law of the prophets" in Deut 18:9–22 between verbal prophecy, on the one hand, and other forms of future telling such as sign readers, sorcerers, (snake) conjurers, and those seeking oracles, on the other.²¹⁴ The stress is placed especially on practices

209. On the reading see Maier, *Jeremia*, 298, with discussion in n. 135; and on the text-critical problems William L. Holladay, *Jeremiah 1: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah, Chapters 1–25*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986), 281.

210. Gunther Wanke, "Weisheit im Jeremiabuch," in *Weisheit ausserhalb der kanonischen Weisheitsschriften*, ed. Bernd Janowski, VWGTh 10 (Gütersloh: Gütersloher, 1996), 96; and Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 62–63.

211. Hermann J. Stipp, *Jeremia im Parteienstreit: Studien zur Textentwicklung von Jer 26,36–43 und 45 als Beitrag zur Geschichte Jeremias, seines Buches und jüdischer Parteien im 6. Jahrhundert*, BBB 82 (Frankfurt am Main: Hain, 1992), 11.

212. See Gunther Wanke, *Jeremia: Teilband 1; Jeremia 1,1–25,14*, ZBK 20.1 (Zurich: TVZ, 1995), 98; and Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 63.

213. On this see Perlitt, *Deuteronomium*, 312–13; and Eckart Otto, "Jeremia und die Tora: Ein nachexilischer Diskurs," in *Die Tora*, 548, who considers Deut 4:5–6 post-Deuteronomistic. See also Krüger who dates the text to the Persian period ("Law and Wisdom," 52).

214. On the structure of the text see Duane L. Christensen, *Deuteronomy 1:1–21:9*, 2nd ed., WBC 6A (Nashville: Nelson, 2001), 406. In the root כשף (here using the participle מכשף), a technical term for harmful magic appears; see Gunnel André, "כשף,"

that rest on human participation or the application of technical means, showing them to be unacceptable to YHWH.²¹⁵ These are all declared “abomination” (תועבה) with one stroke of the pen and contrasted with the Mosaic prophetic commission.²¹⁶ In the course of this declaration, practices are declared illegitimate that could by all means take place as commissioned by YHWH. One need only consider the harmful magic performed by Elisha in 2 Kgs 2:23–25. Elisha turns to the boys that mock him as a baldhead, looks at them, and “curses them in the name of YHWH” (יראם ויקללם בשם יהוה).²¹⁷ This understanding of the powers of “religious specialists” is prevented in Deut 18, which stresses the Mosaic commission and the formulation that YHWH would put his word (דבר) in the mouth of the prophet.²¹⁸ What remains is the understanding of the prophet as the mediator of God’s word.

The law of the prophets in Deut 18 has special significance because it has shaped the understanding of prophecy in the Old Testament in its present literary form. As a result the prophets appear largely as the proclaimers of God’s will, rather than the religious specialists who possess magical-mantic abilities attested frequently in the ancient Near East.²¹⁹ In Jer 8:8–9, which focuses on the prophetic word as well as the word of YHWH (8:9b), the texts ties in with a line of tradition that begins with the law of the prophets in Deut 18. The position in Jer 8:8–9 thereby adopts Deuteronomistic thinking, while at the same time taking a position

TDOT 7:360–66; and on the terms (esp. on the conjurer, the מנחש) Rüdiger Schmitt, *Magie im Alten Testament*, AOAT 313 (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2004), 110–11.

215. Udo Rüterswörden, *Von der politischen Gemeinschaft zur Gemeinde*, BBB 65 (Frankfurt am Main: Athenäum, 1987), 80; and Bernd U. Schipper, “Die ‘eherne Schlange’: Zur Religionsgeschichte und Theologie von Num 21,4–9,” ZAW 121 (2009): 380.

216. See the appropriate formulation by Otto, according to which the law of the prophets “domesticates” prophecy (*Das Deuteronomium im Pentateuch*, 123). The further literary issues of Deut 18 cannot be discussed here. The crucial point is that the line of tradition runs from Deuteronomy to the book of Jeremiah and not the reverse, and, e.g., Jer 1:9 and 29:15 rely on the law of the prophets; see Eckart Otto, “Prophetie im deuteronomistischen Deuteronomium,” in *Die Tora*, 267.

217. The formulation of the text in 2 Kgs 2:24 allows one to think of a curse by means of an evil look; see Schmitt, *Magie*, 288.

218. The verses belong to the Deuteronomistic expansion of the text (18:16–20); see Rüterswörden, *Gemeinschaft*, 80, who maps out a Deuteronomic core of the text.

219. Schipper, “Wissen,” 497–98.

contrary to the understanding of torah that is close to the Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic tradition.²²⁰

A glance at the text-critical issues of the text is necessary to illuminate this thesis. For as long as one follows the MT (supported by LXX) rather than the conjecture of *BHS* for 8:8b, then the scribes do not distort the torah with their stylus, as is often assumed, but the stylus instead turns itself against the scribes.²²¹ The task of the scribes (ספרים) makes them into liars.²²² The plural form should then be understood to implicate an entire profession that is criticized by Jeremiah (cf. 1 Kgs 4:3; 1 Chr 2:55; 2 Chr 34:13). Duhm already had in mind literate men who “deal with written torah.”²²³ These need not, as has previously been considered, be priests (Wilhelm Rudolph), royal advisors (Josef Schreiner), or even the Deuteronomists (Hermann Stipp).²²⁴ Because of the connection of ספרים and the torah, more likely in view are scribes, similar to the literati named in Ezra 7:6, 11.²²⁵

7:6a: This Ezra went up from Babylon and he was a scribe [ספר] skilled in the *torah* of Moses.

7:11: And now, this is the letter that king Artaxerxes gave to Ezra the priest, the scribe [הספר], a scribe [ספר] of the words of the commandments of YHWH and his statutes to Israel.

As a result, Jer 8:8 does not provide a general criticism of the connection between wisdom and torah, but merely a critique of wrongly understood torah. This false interpretation of torah contrasts with the “correctly understood *dabar*.”²²⁶ Presupposed is an understanding of the torah in Jer 8:8

220. So also Stipp, *Jeremia* 25–52, 11. The divergent treatment of the Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic tradition appears simultaneously here. This will be considered in more detail below.

221. For the *BHS* conjecture, see Maier, *Jeremia*, 298, esp. n. 135. For the scribes distorting torah, see Wanke, *Jeremia: Teilband 1*, 97; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 60; Fischer, *Jeremia*, 329–30 (with n. 8); and Lundbom, *Jeremiah* 1–20, 514.

222. So Maier, *Jeremia*, 300.

223. Duhm, *Jeremia*, 88 (“sich mit geschriebener Thora befassen”).

224. See the summary by Wanke, “Weisheit,” 96.

225. Sebastian Grätz, *Das Edikt des Artaxerxes: Eine Untersuchung zum religionspolitischen und historischen Umfeld von Esra 7,12–16*, BZAW 337 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2004), 107–8; Thomas Willi, *Juda – Jehud – Israel: Studien zum Selbstverständnis des Judentums in persischer Zeit*, FAT 12 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1995), 107–8; and Otto, “Jeremia,” 548.

226. Martin Klopfenstein, *Die Lüge nach dem Alten Testament: Ihr Begriff, ihre*

that already consists of a fixed written and therefore literarily extant entity.²²⁷ As a result it is difficult to consider this text arising from Jeremiah, which has often been the case since Duhm.²²⁸ It more likely stems from a postexilic author, which is also supported by the mention of the ספרים, the literati.²²⁹ The text offers a postexilic perspective in which the connection between wisdom and torah is proven decidedly false and contrasts with the word of YHWH. The wise and therefore those who think that they have understood the meaning of the torah are disgraced because the torah apparently means something different than what was understood by it in the wisdom tradition.

If one then connects this with Jer 31:34, it reveals an interesting similarity. Both texts oppose not the torah in general, but a certain form of instruction and interpretation. The “teaching” (למד *piel*) in 31:34a therefore appears on the same level as the occupation of the scribes, that is the professional interpreters in 8:8. According to Jer 8:8, the “torah of YHWH” (תורת יהוה) is not found among the professional torah interpreters and those practicing a form of scriptural interpretation following the Deuteronomomic-Deuteronomistic tradition that brings wisdom and torah close together.²³⁰ Instead, wisdom is of no more use (Jer 8:9), just as teaching (Jer 31:34) leads to nothing, for it is YHWH who establishes the possibility of torah observance by providing the person with a new heart. Thomas Krüger describes this appropriately as a kind of “therapeutic intervention”: YHWH himself becomes active so that the person becomes able to keep his commandments.²³¹ However, this form of operational measure has a specific importance that must be considered more closely. For the anthro-

Bedeutung und ihre Beurteilung (Zurich: Gotthelf-Verlag, 1964), 135 (“das recht verstandene *dabar*”).

227. See the excursus in Maier, *Jeremia*, 302–4; and Schniedewind, “Textualization,” 164.

228. See Duhm, *Jeremia*, 88–89; and Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 63. Differently Wanke, *Jeremia: Teilband 1*, 96.

229. See Maier, *Jeremia*, 306; and Bob Becking, *Ezra-Nehemiah*, HCOT (Leuven: Peeters, 2018), 104.

230. Perhaps it would concern scribal priests; see Otto, “Jeremia,” 548; and below §5.3.3 on the possible tradents of this literature.

231. Thomas Krüger, “Das menschliche Herz und die Weisung Gottes: Elemente einer Diskussion über Möglichkeiten und Grenzen der Tora-Rezeption im Alten Testament,” in Kratz and Krüger, *Rezeption und Auslegung*, 83: “therapeutischer Eingriff.”

pological category of the heart is connected with a theological category that is decisive for the context presented here.

Excursus: The Conception of the Heart

The heart (לב) in the Old Testament does not merely designate a human organ.²³² It instead concerns the center of the human person, “which directs and determines their feelings and desires, thoughts and actions from ‘inside.’”²³³ The Old Testament texts do not, however, provide a uniform conception of the heart. The term is instead used to distinguish various aspects of the person, such as, for example, the inside and the outside, reason and emotion, and also the moral, intellectual, or even emotional “central authority of the person.”²³⁴ Particularly in wisdom literature, the notion appears of the person being led by their heart. In, e.g., Prov 16:23, where the heart stands for the intellect, or in Prov 14:30, where reason and morals can check dangerous affects.²³⁵

A wise heart makes his mouth prudent
and it adds teaching upon his lips. (Prov 16:23)

A sound heart is life to the flesh,
but jealousy is rottenness to the bones. (Prov 14:30)

232. On the term and etymology see Fabry, “לב,” 7:400–401.

233. Krüger, “Das menschliche Herz,” 65–66 (“das ihre Gefühle und Wünsche, Gedanken und Handlungen von ‘innen’ heraus steuert und bestimmt”); see also Krüger, “Das ‘Herz’ in der alttestamentlichen Anthropologie” in *Anthropologische Aufbrüche: Alttestamentliche und interdisziplinäre Zugänge zur historischen Anthropologie*, ed. Andreas Wagner, FRLANT 232 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2009), 104.

234. Thomas Krüger, “Anthropologie,” 106 (“Zentralinstanz des Menschen”), and 109, raises this central issue in contrast to other attempts to understand the heart in the sense of the “integrated person” (Christian Frevel and Oda Wischmeyer, *Menschsein: Perspektiven des Alten und Neuen Testaments*, NEchtB Themen 11 [Würzburg: Echter, 2003], 33). See also Bernd Janowski, *Arguing with God: A Theological Anthropology of the Psalms*, trans. Armin Siedlecki (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2013), 156–59.

235. See Krüger, “Anthropologie,” 109–10, which provides orientation for the following overview.

The idea of the person guided by their heart also determines diverging theological conceptions in the Old Testament literature connected with the heart. This begins with the notion of the hardening of the human heart and extends to the question of the limits of the abilities of the heart. The notion of hardening can be found in Isa 6:9–10: YHWH commissions the prophet to harden the human heart, to stop up the ears, and to close the eyes so that the person will no longer have control over the perceptions of their senses and therefore what provides him with orientation in life and for action.²³⁶ The limits of the human heart are stressed in the well-known saying from Prov 16:9: “The heart of a person plans his way, but YHWH determines his steps.” What is here formulated as a type of description of reality has considerable theological implications in the Pentateuch and in prophetic literature. For it leads to the question of whether one can trust in their heart or not with regard to fulfilling the commands—or more plainly—the will of YHWH. Deuteronomy shapes the familiar formula that the person should love “with your whole heart and your whole soul” (בכל לבבך ובכל נפשך) (see Deut 6:5; 4:29; 10:2; and 11:13), a notion that one should “take to heart” the torah of YHWH, that is, that one can grasp it with human insight.²³⁷ The orientation of the heart toward YHWH means at the same time keeping his actions in the heart (Deut 4:9, 29; 6:6; 8:5) and making these into the guide for one’s own decisions.²³⁸ This presupposes that the human heart is in the position to put this insight into action.

Yet precisely this ability is doubted in other texts. A broad tradition in Old Testament literature stresses the limits of human perception and draws theological conclusions from this point. Examples for such a position can be found in the book of Proverbs.²³⁹ Texts such as Prov 14:12 or 16:25 challenge the contention that humans are able to recognize general (or objective) connections. In contrast, human perception reveals the limits of a concept of wisdom that is based on empirical observation:

There is [יש] a way (that seems) right before a man,

236. See Krüger, “Anthropologie,” 111; and on Isa 6:9–10 the overview in Jörg Barthel, *Prophetenwort und Geschichte: Die Jesajaüberlieferung in Jes 6–8 und 28–31*, FAT 19 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997), 88–93. In the text this is expressed through *hiphil* forms of the verbs שמן, כבד, and שעע; see Beuken, *Jesaja 1–12*, 176–77.

237. Fritz Stolz, “לב,” *TLOT* 2:640; and Fabry, “לב,” 7:444–45.

238. Krüger, “Das menschliche Herz,” 72.

239. The following paragraph is taken from Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 34–35.

but (at) its end are the ways of death. (14:12 = 16:25)

The expression “there is” (שׁי) points to a fact that calls into question a previously observed state of affairs (see also Prov 11:24; 12:18; 13:7; 20:15). Prov 14:12 emphasizes the limits of human perception. The way that seems right in the eyes of a man turns out as a wrong way.

Passages such as Prov 18:11; 10:15; or 15:33 reflect a line of thought that illustrates the transition from a concept of wisdom based on experience to a form of critical wisdom founded on the limits of human perception. Several proverbs emphasize these limits, noting that humans are often not able to make clear judgments about themselves, others, or particular situations. The main reason for this is the complex human psyche, which is described at various points in the book of Proverbs. Illness, frustrations, or hopelessness can make the human heart sick. According to Prov 13:12, “expectation that is deferred makes the heart ill.” Furthermore, the state of a person’s heart is known only to that person and is inscrutable to others, as Prov 14:10 states:

A heart knows the bitterness of its own life,
and (also) in its joy no stranger can share.

In short, the limits of human perception and the disturbance of the heart result in a redefinition of wisdom. Wisdom no longer consists simply of practical knowledge gained through empirical observation but is instead made accessible through God.

Such a divine dimension can also be found in prophetic literature. It develops a contrary position to the Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic ideal of “taking the torah to heart.” Observance of the torah increasingly becomes something that lies beyond human perception that YHWH alone must facilitate.²⁴⁰ Various actions on YHWH’s part are conceivable: (1) the occasional intervention in the human heart; (2) the renewal of the heart;

240. Interesting in this context is the notion of the “evil hearts” in Gen 6:5 (8:25); see Krüger, “Das menschliche Herz,” 66–67; and Krüger, “Anthropologie,” 113–14. This insight also appears in late Deuteronomistic additions to Deuteronomy such as, e.g., Deut 30:6. In this verse the renewal of the person is bound to YHWH’s action in the statement “YHWH, your God, will circumcise your heart”; see Matthias Köckert, *Leben in Gottes Gegenwart: Studien zum Verständnis des Gesetzes im Alten Testament*, FAT 43 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 69.

and (3) the complete replacement of the old heart by a new heart. The prophetic tradition supposes that the human can no longer fulfill YHWH's will with his heart. Instead, the dominant notion is that the human heart must be changed, that it is "rebellious" (סרר, Jer 5:23), "evil" (רע, Jer 3:17; 7:24; 11:8; 5:2), and "deceitful" (עקב, Jer 17:9). This change of heart takes place either through the planting of the torah into the heart or through the complete replacement of the heart. The first can be described somewhat more pointedly as an "implant," the later as a "transplant."²⁴¹ The first position appears in Jer 31:33, the latter in Ezek 11:19b, 20; and 36:26:

I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and give you a heart of flesh (), so that they follow my laws and keep my judgments. They will be my people, and I will be their God. (Ezek 11:19b–20)

I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit inside you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. (Ezek 36:26)

The overview of the various conceptions of the heart illustrate that Jer 31:33 presumes that the human heart is capable of improvement and must not be completely replaced. YHWH himself implants the torah in the heart. Such a procedure is necessary because of the corrupt and evil human heart. This is explicitly stressed in a third text of importance for Jer 31:33 in addition to Deut 4 and Jer 8. Jeremiah 17:1 states:²⁴²

The sin of Judah is written down with an iron stylus. It is inscribed with a diamond pen on the tablet of their heart and on the horns of their altar.

This situation is overcome in Jer 31 by YHWH's action. Jeremiah 32 ties in with this.²⁴³ In contrast to Jer 31, the emphasis is now placed on the

241. I am adopting the terms from Thomas Krüger: "Das menschliche Herz," 83–84 ("implantation" and "transplantation").

242. See Schmid, *Buchgestalten*, 68.

243. Schmid, *Buchgestalten*, 72, notes the meaningful reading sequence of the two passages.

fact that the covenant is not only “new” (חדש), but it is also an “eternal covenant” (ברית עולם):

I am concluding an eternal covenant with them that I will not turn away from them, but I will show them good. I will place fear of me in the heart so that they will not go away from me.

I will rejoice over them when I show them good. In my loyalty I will plant them in this land, with my whole heart and my whole soul. (32:40–41)

Both Jer 31 and 32 possess statements about the future that indicate the covenant between YHWH and his people as an object of eschatological hope.²⁴⁴ Observance of the will of YHWH will be established, in supplementation to Jer 31:33, not only through YHWH himself writing on the heart, but also through the “placing” (נָתַן) of fear of YHWH in the human heart.

Both texts, Jer 31 and 32, can be aligned with a discourse that circles around the question of whether a person can fulfill YHWH’s torah.²⁴⁵ In doing so Jer 31–32 is apparently also influenced by Deut 30:1–16*.²⁴⁶ Deuteronomy 30:6 stresses that the heart of the Israelites must be circumcised (מול) so that they can love YHWH “with the entire heart and entire soul.” The circumcision and thus YHWH’s action creates the precondition (in the text expressed through the infinitive לְאַהֲבָה, “to love”) for Israel being able to accomplish the requirement of Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic theology.²⁴⁷ Furthermore, both texts also connect the theme of relationship with YHWH with the theme of the land. According to Deut 30:5, the land already possessed by the fathers is once again given as a possession (cf. Jer 32:41).

This all has consequences for the interpretation of Prov 2 and the discourse on wisdom and torah. From the background of the previous

244. See Gustavo J. Nieto, “El quiebre de estructura propuesto por Jer 31,31–34,” *Revista Estudios Bíblicos* 58 (2000): 500–501; and on Jer 32 Gunther H. Wittenberg, “The Vision of Land in Jeremiah 32,” in *The Earth Story in the Psalms and the Prophets*, ed. Norman C. Habel, Earth Bible 4 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2001), 138.

245. This discourse already appears in the Pentateuch; see Krüger, “Das menschliche Herz,” 65–74; and generally: Eckart Otto, “Scribal Scholarship in the Formation of Torah and Prophets: A Postexilic Scribal Debate between Priestly Scholarship and Literary Prophecy—The Example of the Book of Jeremiah and Its Relation to the Pentateuch,” in Knoppers and Levinson, *Pentateuch as Torah*, 178–79.

246. Schmid, *Buchgestalten*, 72–73.

247. Krüger, “Das menschliche Herz,” 68.

conclusions, there is a thread that begins with the concept of learning and extends to the question of human ability to fulfill the torah of YHWH. In Prov 2:5 fear of YHWH becomes accessible to the one who observes the wisdom instruction. It is then—strictly speaking—the object of wisdom instruction and learning. However, Jer 31:34 directly opposes such an idea because now the acquisition of the fear of YHWH is attributed exclusively to YHWH and his action. This basic line accords with the treatment of the topic of land in Jer 32 and Prov 2. In the passage of Jeremiah, it will be YHWH himself who “plants” the people “in the land” (נטע בארץ).²⁴⁸ In Prov 2:21–22 those who observe the wisdom instruction remain living in the land. In one case this is exclusively an expectation of action by YHWH, while in the other it appears as if the person himself can achieve it, as long as he complies with the conception of the teaching—concretely the wisdom instruction of Prov 2.

This aspect of teaching and learning contains an interesting facet when including Ps 119. To begin with the lexicographic evidence, as in Jer 31, the word למד (“teach”) is used in the psalm, but in relation to YHWH himself. Of the thirteen attestations, nine of them refer to YHWH’s “teaching” (Ps 119:12, 26, 64, 66, 68, 108, 124, 135, 171).²⁴⁹ Especially interesting is the statement in Ps 119:99, which was already discussed above in a different context:

I have more insight than all my teachers,
for I contemplate your testimonies.

The verse articulates a contrast between the teachers’ (*piel* participle from למד) and the psalmist’s meditation on YHWH’s instructions. The other attestations of למד in Ps 119 illustrate that YHWH himself is reckoned as the one who gives the psalmist insight and, in doing so, torah. Through the fact that Ps 119 further defines the torah with wisdom terms, intensification takes place in which wisdom no longer appears as an independent entity. However, precisely this depiction is revealed in the texts analyzed

248. On the future orientation of this statement see Wittenberg, “Vision,” 141; and Dalit Rom-Shiloni, “The Prophecy for ‘Everlasting Covenant’ (Jeremiah XXXII 36–41): An Exilic Addition or a Deuteronomistic Redaction?,” VT 53 (2003): 206.

249. The remaining references are Ps 119:7, 71, 73, 99. Generally speaking there are ten attestations because Ps 119:73, “Grant me insight so that I may learn your commandments,” also relates the learning to YHWH.

from Jeremiah. A connection arises between Ps 119 and Jer 31–32 (8:8–9) that cannot be aligned with Prov 2. One is instead required to assign two groups of texts to different ways of thinking about the denotations of “torah” and “wisdom”—one with Ps 119, Jer 31–32 (8:8–9) and the other with Prov 2.

Both approaches lead to the question of whether one can fulfill the will of YHWH. According to Prov 2, fulfillment of YHWH’s will is possible by listening to the wisdom instruction characterized by two aspects: (1) the proximity of the commandments of YHWH, and (2) the interplay of human initiative and divine action. In contrast to this approach, other texts emphasize YHWH’s action and his revelation. This is the case in Ps 119, where “teach me” refers to YHWH and is contrasted with the psalmist’s human teachers. The same is true for Jer 8:8–9, which argues against a connection between wisdom and scribalism, contrasting it with the word of YHWH. This development, which makes the knowledge of YHWH and the possibility of following his will increasingly distant from human capability and understands it as a gift of YHWH, reaches its goal (and its climax) in the promise of the new covenant in Jer 31–32.

Finally, the fundamental opposition between Prov 2, on the one hand, and Ps 119 and Jer 31–32 as well as Jer 8:8–9, on the other, must be connected with a basic anthropological question: Can a person follow the torah by means of education, or is an intervention by YHWH necessary? Wisdom propagates the former, and the torah psalms tie into this, now making YHWH himself the teacher. In Jer 31, on the other hand, all teaching and learning are excluded: YHWH implants the torah in the heart. One could say that this is no longer a type of therapy, but rather open-heart surgery. Important in both cases is that Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic theology is taken up. There the torah appears as something that can be imparted—as long as it is connected with wisdom.

This leads to a further aspect that has only been hinted at so far in the exegesis: the conception of torah. Is the torah an extant written entity that can be interpreted by scribes and does it in this way lead to knowledge of God? Or is this very means of scribal interpretation impossible?²⁵⁰ Linked with this is the question of the degree to which the torah of Moses inscribed in the Pentateuch excludes future divine action. Deuteronomy

250. This has been mapped out by Otto, “Jeremia,” 549. See also Schniedewind, “Textualization,” 160.

31:9, 24 leaves no doubt that the torah was inscribed by Moses and therefore closed. As a result, what follows can only concern how this scripturally fixed divine will can be transmitted.²⁵¹

The question, which will be addressed later, allows one to surmise the dimensions that can be advanced when combining wisdom texts like those found in the book of Proverbs with current scholarly results on the formation of the Pentateuch and the concept of torah.²⁵² For the further exegesis of this chapter, however, it suffices in the first place to maintain that Prov 2 is apparently part of a discourse that plumbs the depths of the relationship of humans with YHWH and his torah through the adoption of or disassociation from central Deuteronomic-Deuteronomic theological terms. Here—evidently at the same time and in use of the same literary traditions—diametrically opposite answers are reached. This means that the question of the relationship between wisdom and torah cannot be separated from anthropological considerations and those concerning the general disposition of the human being.

3.3.2. Malachi 2 and the “Strange Woman”

Of similar importance are the connections between the passage on the strange woman in Prov 2 and prophetic literature. The detailed exegesis of Prov 2:16–19 has indicated that the “covenant of her God” in 2:17 likely refers to the covenant with YHWH.²⁵³ However, to what degree does this section on the strange woman also allude to the above discussion on the torah?

The analysis of the terms used in Prov 2 (especially 2:4) and in Deut 4:23, 31 and 2 Kgs 17:38 has demonstrated that Prov 2:17 does not have a foreign deity in mind, but rather the covenant with YHWH.²⁵⁴ André Robert already points to Mal 2 in his article from 1935, thereby articu-

251. Geert J. Venema, *Reading Scripture in the Old Testament: Deuteronomy 9–10, 31, 2 Kings 22–23, Jeremiah 36, Nehemiah 8, OTS 48* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 214–15; and Otto, “Scholarship,” 177–78.

252. See ch. 5 below.

253. The other variants discussed within scholarship are that the “covenant of her God” either (1) means a covenant with a deity besides YHWH, (2) is seen as the marital covenant, or (3) refers the covenant back to the covenant at Sinai and therefore to YHWH; see Hugenberg, *Marriage*, 297–302.

254. On this see §2.2.3 above.

lating a connection that more recent works on the topic tie into.²⁵⁵ The primary objects of discussion are the commonalities between Prov 2:16–17 and Mal 2:14. For a better understanding, the introductory verse 2:10 of the Malachi pericope is also cited:²⁵⁶

In order to save you from the strange woman, from the foreigner who has made her words smooth, who forsakes the companion of her youth [אלוף נעוריה], and the covenant of her God she has forgotten. (Prov 2:16–17)

Do we not all have one father? Did not one God create us? Why (then) are we faithless to one another, profaning the covenant of our ancestors? ... You ask why? Because YHWH was a witness between you and the wife of your youth [אשת נעורידך] to whom you have been faithless, though she is your associate and the wife of your covenant. (Mal 2:10, 14)

The often-identified commonalities consist of the mention of the “wife of your youth” (אשת נעורידך, Mal 2:14) compared with the “companion of her youth” (אלוף נעוריה, Prov 2:17), the mention of the covenant (ברית), as well as the terminological proximity between אלוף “companion” in Prov 2:17 and the word חברת (“associate”) in Mal 2:14.²⁵⁷

The question of whether there are commonalities that can be interpreted in the sense of a textual coherence must be answered from the backdrop of the overall character of the two texts. The section of Mal 2:10–16 divides into two units:²⁵⁸ the *theme* of the first unit (2:10–12) concerns the issue of mixed marriages, the theme of the second (2:13–16) is divorce.²⁵⁹ Within the structure of the passage, 2:10 formulates the statement that determines everything else: “Why then are we faith-

255. This is also the case for the work by Camp, *Wisdom*, 235, 269; see Robert, “Attaches,” 506–7.

256. Arndt Meinhold, *Maleachi*, BKAT 14.8 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2006), 173–14; and David L. Petersen, *Zechariah 9–14 and Malachi: A Commentary*, OTL (London: SCM, 1995), 194–97.

257. The two terms should be understood as synonymous; see Hugenberger, *Marriage*, 302. The *hapax legomenon* חברת is a feminine form of a noun חבר derived from חבר II; see on this Qoh 4:10a; and Song 1:7; 8:13; as well as Theodor Lescow, *Das Buch Maleachi: Texttheorie—Auslegung—Kanontheorie*, AzTh 75 (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1993), 99.

258. On the outline see Andrew E. Hill, *Malachi: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 25D (New York: Doubleday, 1998), 222.

259. See Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 271.

less to one another, profaning the covenant of our ancestors?”²⁶⁰ Malachi 2:14 ties in with this and formulates a rebuke of the addressees as well as providing a development of the underlying statement. The accusation is based on the fact that YHWH himself is a witness “between you and the wife of your youth.”

The text has long been seen as an interpretive crux, in which it was unclear both how the two sections relate to one another and the nature of the actual proclamation of the text.²⁶¹ There are voices that view the second part as secondary and attempts to locate two compositional layers in the entire section.²⁶² Regardless of how one adjudges the linguistic character of Mal 2, one must first observe the fact that 2:10–12 and 2:13–16 are definitely related to one another.²⁶³ Worthy of mention in support are the direct link in 2:13a (וְזֹאת שְׁנִית תַּעֲשׂוּ, “and this second you do”) that establishes a connection with what precedes, and the term בְּרִית (“covenant”) encountered in 2:10b and 2:14b. Both speak, first of all, against the literary separation of 2:10–12 from 2:13–16.

These are opposed by observations that point toward the compositional growth of the text. The mention in 2:10, 14 of the faithlessness to the “wife of the youth” involves a separate topic that is first elaborated by 2:11–13 to include the strange woman and the issue of mixed marriages. If one connects this with the previously mentioned compositional observations, then several factors speak in favor of separating 2:11–13 as a secondary

260. On the structure see Meinhold, *Maleachi*, 185.

261. See Markus P. Zehnder, “A Fresh Look at Malachi II 13–16,” *VT* 53 (2003): 224; and Hill, *Malachi*, 222, who already describes Mal 2:10–16 as a “‘notoriously difficult’ passage to interpret,” pointing to copious earlier literature. This can, however, be limited more precisely because the actual interpretive crux is present in 2:15; see Meinhold, *Maleachi*, 179; Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 270.

262. See also Herbert Donner, “Ein Vorschlag zum Verständnis von Mal 2,10–16,” in *Von Gott reden: Beiträge zur Theologie und Exegese des Alten Testaments; Festschrift für Siegfried Wagner zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Dieter Vieweger and Ernst-Joachim Waschke (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1995), 98, who differentiates between a poetic (2:10, 11a, 13aßb, 14, 16a) and a prosaic level (2:11b, 12, 13aa, 15, 16b). See also Otto Eissfeldt, *Einleitung in das Alte Testament unter Einschluss der Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen: Entstehungsgeschichte des Alten Testaments*, 4th ed. (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1976), 442, who already proposes seeing secondary additions in Mal 2.

263. It is to the credit of Zehnder, “Look,” 229–30, for having pointed this out.

addition.²⁶⁴ The basic inventory would then be reconstructed in such a way that the author addresses the faithlessness of Judean husbands toward the wives they married while young.²⁶⁵ This theme becomes secondary through the insertion of 2:11–13. The faithlessness of the addressees manifests itself—following the shift of emphasis—first in the mixed marriages, which are presented as jeopardizing the relationship with God.

The word “abomination” in 2:11 (תועבה) introduces a classic technical term from Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic tradition.²⁶⁶ Both aspects, the issue of mixed marriages and the faithlessness toward the (Judean) wife, refer back to 2:10 and therefore to the one God, the creator.²⁶⁷ This links up with the theological topic of the covenant (ברית). The misconduct in the form of faithlessness to the wife has consequences for the relationship with God, concretely for the covenant with YHWH.²⁶⁸ This articulates the second key term from the Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic tradition, for the formulation of the “covenant of our ancestors” in 2:10 leaves no doubt that the covenant between Israel and YHWH is in mind (cf. 4:31; 7:12; 8:18).²⁶⁹ YHWH himself is named as witness in 2:14, though in the present final form of the text this consideration relates to both themes and, therefore, also with the issue of mixed marriages.

When one considers the parallels between the Malachi passage and Prov 2 at this point, then one can first conclude that the closest parallel to the אשת נעורֶיךָ (“wife of your youth”) of Mal 2:14 does not appear in Prov 2:17, but instead in the passage on the strange woman in Prov 5:18b.²⁷⁰ However, the formulation in that verse is not linked to the theme of covenant. This only arises in the combination with the motif

264. Meinhold, *Maleachi*, 187. The consideration is certainly not new; it appears already in J. M. P. Smith’s commentary from the year 1912 (*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Malachi*, ICC [Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1912], 340); see also Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 271; and on the problem as a whole Erich Bosshard and Reinhard G. Kratz, “Maleachi im Zwölfprophetenbuch,” *BN* 52 (1990): 30–31, esp. n. 11.

265. Meinhold, *Maleachi*, 187. See also John J. Collins, *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age*, OTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1997), 126.

266. Hill, *Malachi*, 228; and Smith, *Malachi*, 49.

267. On the meaning of ברא see Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 273; and Hill, *Malachi*, 225.

268. Therefore, the covenant means the covenant with YHWH; see Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 274; in contrast (with a different view) Hugenberger, *Marriage*, 339–40.

269. Meinhold, *Maleachi*, 203; and Zehnder, “Look,” 258.

270. Bosshard and Kratz, “Maleachi,” 30 n. 11; and Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 117–18.

“wife/companion of youth” in Prov 2:17. A possible intertextual connection therefore runs along two strands: on the one hand through the formulation of Prov 5:18b and on the other through the theme of the covenant (ברית). Interesting here is that Prov 2:17 has a strange woman in mind. It therefore formulates an idea that is present in the final form of the text of Mal 2, that is, after the insertion of 2:11–13. Even if this does not at first provide much in the way of help for dating Prov 2, the reading of 2:17 presented here on the backdrop of Mal 2:10–16 does move the discussion one step forward.²⁷¹ The problem of 2:17, which, on the one hand, means a strange woman and, on the other, has consequences for her covenant with YHWH, is explained from the background of Mal 2, for the passage from Malachi addresses those Judeans that have left their wives in order to marry foreign women.²⁷² As a result the text draws near to the statements on the issue of mixed marriages in Ezra 9–10.

Sebastian Grätz has demonstrated that the term כְּתוּרָה “according to the torah” (Ezra 10:3) refers to the entity “torah” in order to legitimate a negative posture toward mixed marriages.²⁷³ The author of the Ezra narrative thereby refers generally to the torah without having a concrete law in mind, taking up a posture against the position that mixed marriages are legitimate. Although the term “faithless” (or rather betrayal, מַעַל), which serves as a technical term in Ezra 9:2, 4; 10:2, 6, 10; and Neh 1:8; 13:27 for the condemnation of mixed marriages, does not appear in Mal 2, one can compare the position of Mal 2 with that of Ezra 9–10.²⁷⁴ Both cases base a critique of mixed marriages on the torah and evaluate it as negative for the relationship with YHWH. Malachi goes one step further. It connects the

271. On the date of Mal 2 see Meinhold, *Maleachi*, 195, who places the insertion on the mixed marriages chronologically before Ezra and Nehemiah. One should, however, more likely date Mal 2 after Ezra and Nehemiah.

272. Zehnder, “Look,” 258, who does not think that the text makes a general proclamation against divorce but rather against cases where a Jewish wife is left in favor of a strange woman.

273. Sebastian Grätz, “The Second Temple and the Legal Status of the Torah: The Hermeneutics of the Torah in the Books of Ruth and Ezra,” in Knoppers and Levinson, *Pentateuch as Torah*, 276, who has mapped out how the reference here is made to the torah in general though it cannot mean a concrete law.

274. Different is Meinhold, *Maleachi*, 195, who excludes this very position.

issue of mixed marriages with the notion of breaking the torah, attested by the term “covenant.”²⁷⁵

This has consequences for the interpretation of Prov 2. The exegesis of the difficult statement of Prov 2:17 that the strange woman forgets the “covenant of her God” (ברית אלהיה) receives its deeper meaning from Mal 2. It concerns the covenant with YHWH and the relationship with the torah. This means that Prov 2 and the section of 2:16–19 allude not only to the theme of the strange woman in Prov 1–9 but also, in a second, rather indirect sense, to the question of mixed marriages and the statement from Mal 2 that in turn links up with Ezra 9–10.²⁷⁶

3.3.3. Eschatological Texts

The final thematic complex addressed in this chapter concerns a further aspect that Prov 2 shares with late prophetic texts: the contrast between the righteous and the wicked. In Prov 2 this idea is linked with the way metaphor, which is frequently encountered in prophetic literature. With regard to the contrast of the righteous and the wicked in the final two verses of Prov 2, Michel pointed to eschatological-apocalyptic thought. For this reason he separates out Prov 2:21–22 as a secondary supplement.²⁷⁷ In contrast, §2.2.1 of the present study has demonstrated that the verses are meaningfully integrated into the overall argument of the text and therefore can hardly be separated out as secondary. Nevertheless, Michel articulates the context for reading the two verses: the typical contrast between the righteous and the wicked of late scribal prophecy and the eschatological tradition.

The following discussion will present the former through examples from Third Isaiah and Ezekiel and the latter by means of Isa 11. It primarily concerns the investigation of the more precise temporal dimension of the text that was already considered through the comparison with Ps 37. To what degree can interplay between different textual traditions such as Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic ideas or wisdom terms be found?²⁷⁸

275. The connection between Prov 2 and Prov 5 will be considered in detail below, §4.1.1.

276. The fact that one can argue in precisely the opposite direction on the basis of the torah is attested by the book of Ruth, see Grätz, “Second Temple,” 283–84. On Ezra 9–10 see also Becking, *Ezra-Nehemiah*, 135–38.

277. Michel, “Proverbia 2,” 235–37. See also Whybray, *Wisdom*, 40.

278. Methodologically speaking, this means that the observations of those who

Starting with the first point of the contrast of the wicked and righteous, it must first be grasped that the terminology chosen in Prov 2:21–22—the opposition of the “wicked” (רשעים) and the “upright” (ישרים)—does not appear in this form in the prophetic literature.²⁷⁹ In addition to the seventy-eight attestations in Proverbs itself and eighty-two in the Psalms, the root רשע is used a meager forty-five times in prophecy.²⁸⁰ Especially the “righteous” (צדיק) appears as a counterpart to the wicked, that is, a word that virtually functions as the antonym to רשע (cf. Isa 3:10–11).²⁸¹ In Prov 2, the “upright” (ישרים) in 2:21 are equated with the “righteous” (צדיקים) in 2:20, so the juxtaposition of the רשע and the צדיק can serve as the starting point for the following examples from Isa 56–66 and the book of Ezekiel.²⁸² Both books converge in making the juxtaposition of the righteous or also the pious and the wicked or the sinner the subject of discussion.²⁸³ However, they formulate this in different ways, either through the highlighting of the light-darkness thematic or that of the way (of life).

identify Prov 2:21–22 as a secondary supplement will be adopted. However, they will be explained as synchronic, original features of the overall composition, drawing attention to the convergence and interplay of its constituent elements.

279. The plural ישרים appears in Hos 14:10 in relation to the way of YHWH, which is identified as “straight.”

280. The evidence is therefore broader than Helmer Ringgren, “רשע,” *TDOT* 14:3–7, leads one to believe when he says, “*rāšāʿ* appears remarkably seldom in prophetic literature.” The individual attestations are: Isa 3:11; 5:23; 11:4; 13:11; 14:5; 26:10; 48:22; 53:9; 55:7; 57:20–21; Jer 5:12; 12:1; 23:19; 25:31; 30:32; Ezek 3:18–19; 7:21; 13:22; 18:20–21, 23–24, 27; 21:8–9, 30, 34; 33:8–9, 11–12, 14–15, 19; Mic 6:10; Hab 1:4, 13; 3:13; Zeph 1:3; Mal 3:18, 21.

281. Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 235; Ringgren, “רשע,” 14:2–3. On the evidence of this contrast in Proverbs, see Robert B. Y. Scott, “Wise and Foolish, Righteous and Wicked,” in *Studies in the Religion of Ancient Israel*, ed. George W. Anderson et al., VTSup 23 (Leiden: Brill, 1972), 146–65.

282. On the entire range see Klaus Koenen, *Heil den Gerechten—Unheil des Sündern! Ein Beitrag zur Theologie der Prophetenbücher*, BZAW 229 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1994), 223–52. Previous scholarship has pointed especially to the similarity in the content between Prov 2 and Third Isaiah; see Michel, “Proverbia 2,” 237. The contrast between the righteous and the wicked connected with the terms צדיק and רשע appears within the Book of the Twelve in Mal 3:18; see Meinhold, *Maleachi*, 342, 379.

283. On the opposing terms see the still foundational study of Karl H. Fahlgren, *Šedāḳā nahe stehende und entgegengesetzte Begriffe im Alten Testament* (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1932), 1–77, 7–19 on חטאת.

In Third Isaiah the antithesis between the righteous and the sinner is connected with a series of subjects of import for Prov 2.²⁸⁴ It has the metaphor of the way, the dualism of “light-darkness,” and wisdom terminology. One can take Isa 57:1 as an example, which contains a combination of terms that are also encountered in Prov 2:²⁸⁵

The righteous [צדיק] perish, but there is no one who takes it to heart [שם על לב], and faithful men [אנשי חסד] are taken away; there is no one who is insightful [בין]; truly the righteous one is taken away by evil [רעה]. (Isa 57:1)

The terms צדיק and רעה, the verb בין, and the word חסד also appear in Prov 2 (see 2:5, 7, 8, 12). However, the assertion of the text is so different that one can hardly conclude an intertextual connection in the sense of a textual coherence. The accusation against the leaders of the people in Isa 57:1–2 addresses the death of the righteous, while Prov 2 promises a prosperous future for the righteous.²⁸⁶ At the same time, Isa 57:1 provides an initial glimpse into a topic that cannot be limited to individual texts but should be seen as characteristic of a particular period. The text connects to the theme of the righteous and the wicked in a way encountered similarly in Pss 34 and 37, but it does not link to the subject of the land.²⁸⁷ The same is the case for Isa 58:2, which declares that the people of God strive for knowledge concerning the way of YHWH:

They look for me day after day, and they strive for the knowledge about my ways [ודעת דרכי]; like a nation that does righteousness and does not abandon the judgments of its God, they ask me for righteous judgments and strive for God to be close to them. (Isa 58:2)

284. On possible parallel motifs between Third Isaiah and Prov 1–9 see Baumann, *Die Weisheitsgestalt*, 271–72 (for Prov 8–9), though the parallels mentioned there are in part rather unspecific.

285. On the verse see Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 56–66: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 19B (New York: Doubleday, 2003), 149–50.

286. Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 56–66*, 148, has the dead prophets in mind; while Franz Delitzsch, *Isaiah*, trans. James Martin, *Commentary on the Old Testament* 7 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1866–1891), 542, thinks more generally on the righteous/faithful. See also Odil H. Steck, *Studien zu Tritojesaja*, BZAW 203 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1991), 171.

287. This difference is overlooked by Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 56–66*, 150, when he highlights the connection to the two psalms.

Several terms appear in the verse that serve as key words in Prov 2: knowledge (דעת), the metaphor of the way (דרך), the term צדק, the judgment (משפט), and finally the verb עזב “abandon/forsake.” The formulation of abandoning the judgment of God (משפט אלהיו) points to a central topos of Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic tradition.²⁸⁸ Read in light of Isa 58:2, the statement of Prov 2:7, according to which YHWH protects the paths of justice and preserves the paths of his faithful, almost sounds like a confirmation of the promise from Third Isaiah. The statement there about those who hold fast to God is articulated in Prov 2 as YHWH’s action on behalf of the student of wisdom.

The distinction from the wicked is shaped in such a way in Isa 59 that it contains a second line of connection to Prov 2:²⁸⁹

The way [דרך] of peace they do not know,
and in their tracks there is no justice [משפט].
Their pathways they make crooked,
none who walks on them knows peace. (Isa 59:8)

The formula in 59:8bα is striking from the backdrop of Prov 2. The expression “their pathways they make crooked” (נתיבותיהם עקשו להם) bears similarity to the “crooked paths” of the wicked men in Prov 2:15 (“whose paths are crooked and who are devious in their own tracks”). Both Isa 59:8 and Prov 2:15 use the same word from the root עקש.²⁹⁰ In both cases it denotes incorrect action, which in the case of Prov 2:15 is directed against the community.²⁹¹

288. On this, see §3.1.

289. This is not the place to address the complex redaction history of Isa 56–66 (traditionally described as Third Isaiah). If one follows the model proposed by Steck, then one could assign the passages discussed here to the same literary level: Isa *56–59; 63:1–6 as a redactional level of the overall Isaianic return redaction (see Steck, *Tritojesaja*, 30–31; see also Reinhard G. Kratz, *Kyros im Deuterojesajabuch: Redaktionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zu Entstehung und Theologie von Jes 40–55*, FAT 1 [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1991], 206–16; and Steck, *Tritojesaja*, 160).

290. See Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 56–66*, 188, who refers to Prov 2:9, 15, 18; 4:11, 26; 5:6, 21. On the connection of עקש with the metaphor of the way, see also Prov 10:9; 11:20; 19:2; 22:5; 28:6, 18.

291. See Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 230; and for Isa 59:8 Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 56–66*, 186. On the range of evidence see also Isa 42:16 (unknown paths); 59:6 (wrong action); and Ps 101:4.

A further link between Isa 56–66 and Prov 2 consists of the connection of the promise of the land to the righteous. This thought, central for Prov 2:20–22, appears in Isa 60:²⁹²

And your people, they all are righteous,
they will possess the land forever. (Isa 60:21a)

The possession of the land (אֶרֶץ) is linked to the righteous. Salvation comes, as Klaus Koenen formulates, “only to the righteous; Yahweh will brutally destroy the sinners.”²⁹³ This destruction of the sinners marks the in-breaking of the time of salvation for the righteous. The eschatological theme is expanded further in Isa 65. Isaiah 65:8–9 and 65:11–12 articulate the opposition between those who cling to YHWH and those who abandon YHWH. The former will inherit/possess (יָרַשׁ) his mountains and live (שָׁכַן) in them, while the latter will be given over to the sword (65:12). Even though some similarity appears in the antithesis and the terms יָרַשׁ and שָׁכַן, this should not be overestimated.²⁹⁴ It instead concerns commonalities more in terms of the topic—the contrast of the wicked and righteous—than an intentional allusion suggesting the conclusion in the sense of a textual coherence. At the same time, terms appearing in Prov 2:21–22 are used in this context in an eschatological manner. From the background of the texts from Third Isaiah, 2:21–22 not only concern a present event, but a future one as well. However, through the structure of the sapiential instruction of Prov 2, this is embedded in a line of thought that emphasizes the present dimension rather than the eschatological one.

In this sense a passage from the book of Ezekiel is also interesting for the understanding of Prov 2 because it contains the connection of the righteous–wicked theme with the theme of covenant or law. In Ezek 18:19 the righteous is defined as one who walks in God’s ordinances:²⁹⁵

292. Koenen, *Heil*, 144–45.

293. Koenen, *Heil*, 234 (“nur zu den Gerechten; die Sünder wird Jahwe grausam vernichten”). See also Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 56–66*, 218.

294. The secondary literature has come to mention Isa 65:8, 9, 11, 12 in the same breath as Ps 37 in discussion of the tradition-historical background of Prov 2:21–22 (Michel, “Proverbia 2,” 237; Gemser, *Sprüche*, 27, with reference to Robert, “Attaches,” 63). However, the similarity to Isa 65 is much narrower than to Ps 37; on this see also §3.2.1 above.

295. See Bernard M. Levinson, “Du sollst nichts hinzufügen und nichts wegnehmen” (Dtn 13,1): Rechtsreform und Hermeneutik in der Hebräischen Bibel,” *ZThK*

He walks in my ordinances, and he observes my judgments by acting honestly—he is righteous, he will live, oracle of the Lord YHWH.

This declaration is part of the disputation oracle of Ezek 18:1–32 concerning the one who “is righteous and who practices justice and righteousness” (משפט וצדקה, 18:5).²⁹⁶ The statement is part of the subunit of 18:5–17 that presents the contrast between the righteous and the one who does injustice. This first appears without the term רשע, which then arises more often in the subsequent section (18:20, 21, 23, 24, 27).

The path of the righteous is then described with more detail by the various legal stipulations (18:10–13, 14–18). These are oriented toward the Deuteronomistic series of laws and the Decalogue.²⁹⁷ The language of 18:9 also ties in with the Holiness Legislation (Lev 19:15, 35), resulting in an entire series of references to nomistic tradition.²⁹⁸ In terms of its significance for Prov 2, this means that the contrast between the wicked and righteous in 2:21–22 not only appears as a theme in late prophetic texts, but in those locations it is also connected with a strong emphasis on the law. Righteousness manifests itself in a way of life that takes its orientation from the divine law.

An analysis of the eschatological texts and their importance for Prov 2 would be incomplete without taking into consideration one more text that represents a further important postexilic tradition: the promise of dominion of Isa 11.²⁹⁹ The text contains a series of central terms that are also encountered in Prov 2.³⁰⁰

103 (2006): 173; and Michel A. Lyons, *From Law to Prophecy: Ezekiel's Use of the Holiness Code*, LHBOTS 507 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2009), 157–58; and §1.2.2 above.

296. On the structure see Walter Zimmerli, *Ezekiel: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel, Chapters 1–24*, trans. Ronald E. Clements, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), 374–75 with discussion of earlier approaches; as well as Moshe Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 22 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983), 334–37.

297. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 375.

298. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*, 381; and Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20*, 330 with reference to Lev 26:3.

299. The text has a noteworthy history of reception and is cited in, e.g., the Dead Sea Scrolls: Isa 11:2, 4–5 in 1Q28b (1QSb) V, 21, 24–26; See Reinhard G. Kratz, “Innerbiblische Exegese und Redaktionsgeschichte im Lichte empirischer Evidenz,” in *Das Judentum im Zeitalter des zweiten Tempels*, FAT 42 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 136 n. 30.

300. Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 60; and Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 223 and n. 50.

The spirit of YHWH will rest on him,
 the spirit of wisdom [חכמה] and of insight [בינה],
 the spirit of counsel [עצה] and of strength [גבורה],
 the spirit of knowledge [דעת] and the fear of YHWH [יראת יהוה]. (Isa 11:2)

Isaiah 11:2 attests to the exact connection between the fear of YHWH and “knowledge” (דעת) that is encountered in Prov 2:5. Furthermore, in בינה (“insight”) and חכמה (“wisdom”), two of the key terms from Prov 2 (see 2:6) appear. Even if the commonalities cannot necessarily be interpreted in the sense of a textual coherence, the emphases of the two texts are still clear. Isaiah 11:2 attests that terms like חכמה, בינה, דעת, and also יראת יהוה can function as characteristics of the future ruler of salvation.³⁰¹ Even when it is primarily the image of an ideal ruler who possesses wisdom and insight that is in the background, the accumulation of the terms in Isa 11 serves to present the ruler as endowed with wisdom and to emphasize his special role.³⁰² The text ties in, on the one hand, with the earlier Davidic traditions, but, on the other, the dominion of the messiah is justified by God alone.³⁰³ It concerns a future event rather than something that could already be experienced in the present.

However, this is the precise starting point for Prov 2. While the words חכמה, דעת, and the term תבונה (“understanding”), which is related to the word בינה (“insight”), are brought into connection with YHWH, these qualities appear to be something that the student of wisdom himself can acquire. When 2:5 states that the student of wisdom “will understand” (בינה) the fear of YHWH, then in the end the attributes promised to the ruler in the end times already appear within reach in Prov 2 for the student of wisdom in the present.

301. Hans Wildberger, *Isaiah 1–12: A Commentary*, trans. Thomas H. Trapp, CC (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 467.

302. For the ideal ruler, see Bernhard Duhm, *Das Buch Jesaja*, 5th ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1968), 105; and Beuken, *Jesaja 1–12*, 309. For his special role, see Wildberger, *Isaiah 1–12*, 483.

303. Wolfgang Werner, “Jes 9,1–6 und Jes 11,1–9 im Horizont alttestamentlicher Messiaserwartung,” in *Studien zum Messiasbild im Alten Testament*, ed. Ursula Struppe, SBAB 6 (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1989), 266.

3.3.4. Summary

Summarizing the evidence, the contrast between the righteous and the wicked in Prov 2:21–22 ties in with a central topic of scribal prophecy. It also appears in the psalms, however, so just like the metaphor of “the way” in connection with wicked speech or wicked action, this theme is not limited to prophecy. However, the combination of the themes of good/evil, right way/wrong way, and light/darkness are significant for late prophetic literature, especially for Third Isaiah. Even though dependencies in the sense of clear citations could not be found, it is obvious that the antithesis from Prov 2:21–22 and also the section concerning the wicked men from 2:12–15 should be read in light of the background of the aforementioned texts.

This context helps to describe more precisely the general thrust of Prov 2 that was mapped out in the textual analysis. Proverbs 2 does not include the future-oriented aspect so characteristic of late prophetic texts, even though the final verses of Prov 2 definitely contain a future dimension when considered in light of Isa 56–66. As a result, it appears that two levels converge in the text: one is eschatological and futural and can be attached primarily to the terminology of 2:21–22; the second is oriented to the present and concerns the wisdom teaching as a whole. This also arises from the comparison with Ps 37. The possession of the land, which in that text is promised to a specific social group (the poor) for the future, appears in Prov 2 as a present event. To state it more precisely, Prov 2 concerns remaining in the land. This emphasis becomes even clearer when bringing in the promise of the ruler from Isa 11. Arising here is the promise that what Isa 11 links to the king in the end times is now achievable for everyone who follows the wisdom instruction. As a result, two aspects of the sapiential instruction of Prov 2 become clear through the juxtaposition with Isa 11: the first concerns the qualities of the wisdom ruler that one can experience in the present. The second consists of the transference of a royal privilege to the one following the wisdom instruction.

3.4. Conclusion: Proverbs 2 in the Context of Other Traditions

The preceding analysis has shown how the instruction of Prov 2 can be located in the context of other traditions. Important similarities appear to the Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic tradition, to late psalms with wisdom

themes, as well as to late-prophetic and eschatologically oriented texts. Among these, the allusions to the Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic tradition have a special significance. They give the instruction a nomistic color that can be found at both the beginning and the end. Both the first verse of Prov 2 with the term *מצות* and the theme of the land in 2:21–22 can be interpreted in light of Deuteronomy. However, locating the instruction of Prov 2 exclusively within the Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic context would be inadequate. Rather, the text cannot be aligned with a specific frame of reference. The language flickers in the sense that it opens up various fields of reference and artfully combines them with one another. This phenomenon arises in the first part of Prov 2 in the combination of wisdom terms with Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic language. However, the concluding verses of the second part (2:21–22) also connect an eschatological dimension with a present-oriented dimension.

The wisdom terms that dominate 2:1–11 partly belong to traditional wisdom language and partly to Deuteronomistic language. This arises in, for example, the expression of Prov 2:2b “the inclination of the heart.” It recalls a classic wisdom formulation for attentiveness, but in the present case it is tinted with Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic thought. There are further allusions in Prov 2: Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic language appears in the verb “abandon/forsake” (*עזב*) and in the aspect of the land in 2:21–22, yet there are none in *נצל*, *hiphil*, “in order to save,” the central infinitive in the second part of the instructional speech (2:12–22). As a result, while it appears that the basic framework of Prov 2 exhibits Deuteronomistic influence, the terminology of the sapiential instruction indicates that other threads are woven into this basic train of thought.

The analysis of the links demonstrates that Prov 2 presupposes Deut 4, 8, and 28. Regardless of the degree to which Deut 4 and 8 must be understood as participating in a discourse on the relationship between wisdom and torah, it is clear that Prov 2 is similar in content to Deut 8 and from this starting point adopts statements from Deut 4 and 28.³⁰⁴

The comparison with wisdom psalms results first in the similarity to Ps 37. Proverbs 2 and the psalm share the land theme, the approach to the wicked (expressed through the verb *כרת*), the term *חסידי* (*חסידים*,

304. For the relationship between wisdom and torah, see the preliminary remarks in §3.1; Braulik, “Weisheit,” 263–64 and the articles cited in n. 62 by Krüger (“Gesetz,” 173) with reflections on Deut 4.

“the loyal [one]”), as well as a series of further terminological relationships. In addition, the analysis helps not only to contextualize the literary technique encountered in Prov 2 but also to plumb the depths of the theological system of references in which the text can be located. It is the discourse concerning wisdom and torah. This alludes to Ps 37 and adopts a broad stance with regard to Pss 119 and 19. These two psalms (Pss 119, 19) can be categorized as part of a theological debate on the status of the torah and its relationship to wisdom. Apparently central to this discussion was the conception of the heart as a crucial aspect of anthropology. The question of the relationship of torah and wisdom can to a point be a first step in the consideration of human potentialities, concerning whether or not the heart can practice YHWH’s instructions by means of the person’s own mind.

The texts investigated in this context allow for the recognition of an antithesis. One side categorically excludes this human potential and concludes that only YHWH renders the observance of torah possible. The other side continues to maintain that human participation is possible. The analysis of late prophetic literature has in this case led to an interesting result for these texts while clearly grappling with central passages from Deuteronomy.

As a result, the announcement of the new covenant in Jer 31 connects not only with Jer 8 but also with Deut 6 and 30, which themselves are located in the contexts from the book of Jeremiah that explicitly take up positions against a wisdom interpretation of the torah. In light of the background provided by Jer 8:8 and also Jer 31, it is clear that Prov 2 exhibits not only a noteworthy point of view on the abilities of humanity but also a trust that this is all already feasible in the present. Even when the final verses of 2:21–22 are read in light of Third Isaiah to allude to a future dimension, Prov 2 is dominated by its interest in the present. The text proclaims that one can experience in the present what the late prophetic texts proclaim for the future. This declaration becomes just as clear in late prophetic literature through the adoption of the theme “salvation of the righteous, destruction for the wicked,” which is on display through the terminological similarity to Isa 11.

From the overall background of the texts addressed in this chapter, the sapiential instruction of Prov 2 acquires a deeper meaning. The text can be located within various fields of reference and appears to take part in a theological debate in the postexilic period, whether in prophecy, wisdom, or the Psalter. With regard to this debate, it can be concluded at this point

that this discourse took place by means of a shared method and also through the use of shared textual materials. In all cases a form of textual coherence emerges that is based in allusions, and in all cases this system of references bases itself especially on Deuteronomy.

Proverbs 2 in the Context of the Book of Proverbs

The previous analysis demonstrated that Prov 2 contains a number of references to texts outside the book of Proverbs. The sapiential instruction is part of a discourse concerning the relationship between wisdom and torah. It presents an understanding of wisdom that receives its deeper meaning against the backdrop of the Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic tradition. At the same time, Prov 2 is also in relationship with late prophetic texts and psalms. As a result, the understanding of wisdom used in Prov 2 takes on quite subtle Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic hues, or rather, it is defined on the basis of the law. The instruction by the wisdom teacher thereby draws near to the directive of YHWH, and therefore to his commandments. The wisdom terminology of Prov 2, and especially the themes addressed in the second part of the instruction, lead not only to the literature outside the book of Proverbs, but also to that within the book of Proverbs itself. To what degree is Prov 2 a text that—possibly even consciously—adopts themes from the extant wisdom collections and then reconstitutes them so that the chapter now has a literary function for the subsequent chapters?

This question links to the discussion of the place of Prov 2 within the first collection of the book of Proverbs (1–9). The commentators of the nineteenth century already recognized the connections between Prov 2 and the other instructions of Prov 1–7 and developed the thesis that Prov 2 is something of a summary for 1–9*.¹ However, such a thesis has considerable redaction-historical consequences, for it concerns not merely the relationship of a single sapiential instruction to other text traditions, but rather the composition and redaction of Prov 1–9 as a whole.

1. See Strack, *Die Sprüche*, 313, who describes the following instructions as “implementations” of the different parts of Prov 2; see also §1.1 above.

The following discussion will—in keeping with the approach of this book—first begin with a survey of the material and the field of references from Prov 2 within the book of Proverbs. The goal is both to establish the lines of connection of Prov 2 within the first collection of the book of Proverbs as well as to the other chapters of Proverbs (§4.1). In a second step, the literary evidence established through this method will be correlated with the theories of previous scholarship on the literary formation of Prov 1–9. In this respect, §4.2 first offers a brief overview of scholarship as the basis for the consideration of the redaction history of Prov 1–9 and its significance for the composition of the book of Proverbs.

4.1. Proverbs 2 in the Context of Proverbs 1–31

From a methodological perspective, the investigation of the connections between Prov 2 and the remaining chapters of the book of Proverbs must begin with the same questions as chapter 3 of the present book. Where are the central terms, where can distinctive subjects be recognized, and to what degree can references be identified that indicate literary dependence? This is not easy for Prov 2 and the other wisdom texts of the book of Proverbs because certain themes belong to the basic nature of sapiential thought. They are central topoi of wisdom literature, such as the contrast between the wise and the fool or the metaphor of the way.² At the same time, the detailed analysis must show how these themes are developed with specific terminology and where the presence of further lexical commonalities can be interpreted in the sense of a textual coherence.

4.1.1 References in Proverbs 2:1–4

Within the first section of Prov 2, verses 1–4, already the first half verse is striking. The address “my son” (בִּנְי) also appears in the other wisdom instructions of Prov 1–9, but it is always followed by an imperative in the sense of “do this” or “do not do that.”³ The formula is part of the call for attention. Therefore, it is a formal element of the wisdom instruction,

2. See Jürgen van Oorschot, “Der Gerechte und der Frevler im Buch der Sprüche,” *BZ* 42 (1998): 234–35, for further considerations on both tradition history and social history; and Scott, “Wise,” 146–65, with an overview of the material.

3. Scott, *Proverbs*, 37–38; and Overland, “Structure,” 71.

which will be considered in more depth.⁴ The formula can appear multiple times within an instruction (in the first instruction of 1:8–19 in 1:8, 10, 15; in the instruction of 2:1–11 in 2:1 and 11). However, it can also be limited to the beginning of the instruction (3:21; 4:10, 20; 5:1; 6:20; 7:1).⁵ Interesting with regard to Prov 2 are 4:10 and 7:1. A literal parallel to 2:1a appears in the phrase “accept my words” in 4:10. The expression *לקח אמרי* (“accept my words”) appears only in 2:1 and 4:10 within the entire book of Proverbs (as well as within the whole Old Testament).⁶ This is already a clear reference, yet the comparison with 7:1 points to a different level of connection. In Prov 7:1 there is almost an identical formulation to the one in Prov 2:1:⁷

Hear, my son, and <i>accept</i> my words, then (the) years of life will be many for you.	שמע בני וקח אמרי וירבו לך שנות חיים	4:10
<i>My son</i> , if you <i>accept my words</i> and <i>my commandments you store up with you</i> ,	בני אם תקח אמרי ומצותי תצפן אתך	2:1
<i>My son</i> , guard <i>my words</i> and <i>my commandments you store up with you</i> .	בני שמר אמרי ומצותי תצפן אתך	7:1

Prov 2:1 and 7:1 is a wonderful example for the aforementioned phenomenon of *textual coherence* in the sense of a citation. Disregarding the differences in syntax, in one case an imperative, in the other a conditional, 7:1 and 2:1 correspond apart from the verb in the first half of the verb. The verb (*לקח*, “to take, accept”) in 2:1 is, however, explained through the previously mentioned formula *לקח אמרי* (“accept my words”) in 4:10. One could therefore derive 2:1 completely from 7:1 and 4:10a. Striking here is that the instructions in Prov 7 and 4 contain the same two themes that serve to concretize the overall argument in Prov 2—the wicked men (4:10–19) and the strange woman (7:1–27). It is too early at this point to draw far-reaching conclusions, but the question does arise concerning the degree to which Prov 2 alludes to other chapters in Prov 1–9 through a

4. See §4.2.

5. See Overland, “Structure,” 79; and on Prov 3 Schäfer, *Die Poesie*, 76–77, who also accepts 3:21 as part of it as well. In the sapiential instruction of 5:1–23, the introductory imperative is taken up again by the *בנים* ועתה in 5:7.

6. Müller, *Proverbien* 1–9, 59.

7. Already Wildeboer, *Die Sprüche*, 6. See also Yoder, *Proverbs*, 24; and for detailed analysis Heim, *Poetic Imagination*, 78–82 (no. 6).

certain process of citation. In this case Prov 2 would turn out to be a text that presupposes various passages from Prov 1–9 in written form.

The identified similarity becomes more significant on the backdrop of the overall evidence in the book of Proverbs. While there are parallels to individual motifs from Prov 2:1–4, outside of Prov 1–9 there is no evidence for comparable citations of individual verses. An example for the first can be found in 23:12–15.⁸

(12) Apply your heart [לב] to discipline [מוסר]
and your ear [אזן] to knowledgeable words.

(13) Do not withhold discipline [מוסר] from a child,
if you beat him with the rod, he will not die.

(14) You beat him with a stick,
then you save [נצל *hiphil*] his life from realm of the Sheol/underworld
[שאול].

(15) My son, if your heart becomes wise,
my heart too will be glad.

In addition to the address “my son” (בני), which also appears outside of Prov 1–9 in 19:27; 23:15, 19, 26; 24:17; and 27:11, certain statements coincide. Proverbs 23:12 invites readers to direct their hearts to upbringing and the “ear” (אזן) to the words of “knowledge” (דעת). While there is no verbal parallel to Prov 2:2, there is similarity in the content of heart (לב) and ear (אזן). Both are objects of education and the words of knowledge should be turned to both of them.⁹ Along the same lines is the notion of the heart “becoming wise” in 23:15. In 23:19 this is concretized through the connection of being wise (חכם) with a heart (לב) that “leads your heart in the way” (ואשר בדרך לבך). In 23:14 the theme of the way is linked with deliverance from

8. The delimitation of 23:12–35 is certain with regard to what precedes it. See Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 389; and in contrast Fox, *Proverbs 10–31*, 733, who considers 23:12–24:22 a single unit. On the passage as whole, see also Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 15–31*, 246–47. On the question of a possible similarity in content between 23:13–14 and Ahiqar 81–82 see Nili Shupak, “The Instruction of Amenemope and Proverbs 22:17–24:22 from the Perspective of Contemporary Research,” in Troxel, *Seeking Out the Wisdom*, 214–15; and Fox, *Proverbs 10–31*, 767.

9. Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 15–31*, 251. Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 391, refers to 4:20–21; Ferdinand Hitzig, *Die Sprüche Salomo's* (Zurich: Orelli, 1858), 237, to the similarity between 23:14 and 3:27. In general see also Fox, *Proverbs 10–31*, 733–34, who, among others, also discusses the parallels to the Instruction of Amenemope; and Clifford, *Proverbs*, 212, with reference to 29:3.

the realm of the dead. This presents a parallel both in terms of content and terminology with the second part of Prov 2.¹⁰ The verb *hiphil* נצל (“to save”) is used in 2:12 and 2:15; the terms מות (“death”) and רפאים (“Rephaim”) in 2:18 introduce the world of the dead. These references illustrate that Prov 2 links up to a conception also encountered in other places in the book of Proverbs. However, there are no ongoing terminological matches that can be interpreted in the sense of a textual coherence.

This is different for the investigation of the references from Prov 2:2 to the collection of Prov 1–9:

By making your ear attentive to wisdom, inclining your heart to understanding,	להקשיב לחכמה אזנך תטה לבך לתבונה	2:2
My son, to my wisdom listen attentively, to my understanding incline your ear.	בני לחכמתי הקשיבה לתבונתי הט אזנך	5:1

Proverbs 2:2 and 5:1 not only offer comparable processes of thought, but they develop them with the same terminology. The expression “by making your ear attentive to wisdom” in 2:2a matches 5:1a “to my wisdom listen attentively.” Furthermore, the charge “(by) inclining your heart to understanding” in 2:2 is analogous to the formulation in 5:1b. Only two words differ: the addressee בני (“my son”) in 5:1a and the key term לב (“heart”) in 2:2. Following the classification established by Snell in his investigation on “twice-told proverbs,” what appears here is the repetition of a verse with one change in word order and two different words.¹¹ The difference in terms can, however, easily be explained. Because 5:1 marks the beginning of a sapiential instruction, the verse begins with בני (“my son”). On the other hand, because 2:2 carries a thought forward, the verb (an infinitive *hiphil* of קשב) comes at the beginning, and אזנך (“your ear”) introduces a new subject.¹² The ductus of the sapiential instruction and the development in 2:2 of the devotion to wisdom with ear and heart explain the language in 2:2.¹³

10. Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 15–31*, 252.

11. Snell, *Twice-Told Proverbs*, 37 (no. 1.2); and Heim, *Poetic Imagination*, 82–90 (no. 7).

12. Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 306–7, who notes several commonalities but not the parallel nature of the verses themselves.

13. See §2.2.2.

This means that the first two verses of Prov 2 can be traced back to the introductory verses of three instructions, according to the classical numbering, instructions six (4:10–19), eight (5:1–23), and ten (7:1–27).¹⁴ In addition to referring to 4:10 and 7:1, 2:1 cites the two themes that generally define the sapiential instructions as a whole: the wicked men and the strange woman.¹⁵

The evidence is more complex when one moves to 2:3. A verbal allusion appears here as well; however, it is not to one of the wisdom instructions from Prov 1–7, but rather to the speech of personified wisdom in Prov 8:1.¹⁶

Indeed, if to insight you <i>call</i> , to <i>understanding</i> you <i>raise</i> your voice	כי אם לבינה תקרא לתבונה תתן קולך	2:3
Does wisdom not <i>call</i> , and (does not) <i>understanding</i> <i>raise</i> her voice?	הלא חכמה תקרא ותבונה תתן קולה	8:1

The form *תקרא* in 2:3 must be interpreted as a second-person singular (“if you call”). The same consonantal and vowel order appears in 8:1, but through a different introduction as third-person feminine singular: “Does wisdom not call?” This is combined with a shift in emphasis. In one case wisdom is the subject (she herself calls), in the other the object (“if to insight you call”). The similarities are so close that a textual coherence must be assumed.¹⁷ The hypothesis arises that 2:3 refers to 8:1 and not the other way around. Thus, the analysis to this point of the first three verses allows for the conclusion of a conscious literary technique. Apparently Prov 2:1–3 alludes to the each of the first verses of other wisdom texts, whether it be one of the instructions in Prov 1–7 or that of personified wisdom in ch. 8. This evidence takes on significance from the fact that the wisdom poem of 8:1–36 is usually assigned to a different literary layer than the sapiential instructions in chapters 1–7.¹⁸ The same is the case for

14. Even though the thesis will be developed below that Prov 2 should be seen as a secondary addition to the other sapiential instructions in Prov 1–7, the classical numbering will be maintained here for the sake of clarity, see Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 46; Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 45–46; and Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 12–13.

15. See §4.1.5 below.

16. See also Snell, *Twice-Told Proverbs*, 40; and Heim, *Poetic Imagination*, 90–93 (no. 8).

17. For a different position see Loader, *Proverbs 1–9*, 114, who sees only general similarities with reference to 1:21 and 1:20.

18. See the overview of scholarship in §4.2.1.

wisdom's call in 1:21, which is also composed with the verbal form **תקרא**, such that a juxtaposition to the call of the student of wisdom arises in 2:3 in the flow of reading.¹⁹

From the background of the textual examples this far, the question arises as to whether 2:4 also refers to other sections of the book of Proverbs. Then the entire introduction of Prov 2 would connect to other chapters by means of citations. Consideration of the terminology shows that the “seeking” in 2:4 does point beyond Prov 2, but not to a specific chapter.²⁰ The verb **בקש** (*piel*) used in 2:4 does not arise elsewhere in chapters 1–9, but it appears all the more in chapters 10–31.²¹

The quite common root **בקש** within the Old Testament often denotes God as the one being sought after.²² In 14:6 it is the scoffer (**לץ**, see Ps 1:1) who seek wisdom without success. In 15:14 it is the heart of one with understanding, and in 18:15 the ear of the wise (**חכמים**) that seeks knowledge (**דעת**).²³ Within Prov 1–9 the seeking is instead expressed with **שחר** and not with **בקש** (see Prov 1:28b; 7:15b; and 8:17b).²⁴ The content and, therefore, the seeking for something also appears in Prov 1–9, but it is formulated differently in 2:4. Fitting with this is the fact that the object of the search, silver (**כסף**), is viewed negatively in Prov 1–9.

The seeking for “silver” (**כסף**) is without any parallel in the rest of the book of Proverbs. When Prov 2:4 equates the search for wisdom with the search for silver, this positive connotation of silver contradicts the other uses of **כסף** in Prov 1–9. In 3:13–14 it states that “wisdom” (**חכמה**) and “understanding” (**תבונה**) are better than silver and gold (see also 8:10, 19).²⁵

19. Perdue, *Proverbs*, 89; and Yoder, *Proverbs*, 25.

20. O'Dowd, *Proverbs*, 77, sees a link between 2:3 and 3:14, but only the term **כסף** (“silver”) is similar in both passages.

21. Prov 11:27; 14:6; 15:14; 17:9, 11, 19; 18:1, 15; 21:6; 23:35; 28:5; 29:10, 26.

22. See Wagner, “בקש,” 2:236–41.

23. On the interrelationships between Prov 15:14 and 14:33 see Ruth Scoralick, *Einzelspruch und Sammlung: Komposition im Buch der Sprichwörter Kapitel 10–15*, BZAW 232 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1995), 227–28; and on Prov 18:15 Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 81; and Andreas Scherer, *Das weise Wort und seine Wirkungen: Eine Untersuchung zur Komposition und Redaktion von Proverbia 10,1–22,16*, WMANT 83 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1999), 248–49.

24. Baumann, *Die Weisheitsgestalt*, 101. In all three cases seeking is connected with **מצא** as an expression of finding.

25. On the attestation in 7:20 (purse) see Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 381–82.

In this case Prov 2 places its own accent and offers a proclamation that is singular in this form within Proverbs.²⁶

For Prov 2:1–4 it can therefore be concluded that while, on the one hand, this section links up to the classic sapiential call to attention, on the other hand there are connecting lines that go beyond the ten instructions of Prov 1–7. They include the verbal agreement with the wisdom poem from 8:1 and the thematic similarity to passages from Prov 10–31 (in particular from the collections of 10:1–22:16 and 22:17–24:22).²⁷ The latter are, as the example from 2:4 shows, of a more general nature and are not on the level of concrete citations, which is the case with 2:1–3. Precisely the allusions in these verses raise the question of the degree to which the introduction of Prov 2 was formed from the background of other texts that belong to the sapiential instructions of Prov 1–7 as well as from chapter 8.

4.1.2. References in Proverbs 2:5–8

Unlike the case with 2:1–4, no citation-like references to other wisdom instructions can be found in 2:5–8. Some individual terms instead have parallels within Prov 1–9, while others anticipate Prov 10–31. The central term in 2:5, the “fear of YHWH” (יראת יהוה), is also encountered in the famous dictum in 1:7 and 9:10 of fear of YHWH being the beginning of wisdom.²⁸ The fear of YHWH is also mentioned in 10:27; 14:27; 15:33; 19:23; 22:4; and 31:30 and is connected with the theme of death (14:27) or

26. In Job 3:21 the topic is seeking the suffering of death like hidden treasure (with a very different formulation from the one in Prov 2:4b); so already Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 76; and Friedrich Seyring, “Die Abhängigkeit der Sprüche Salomonis Cap. I–IX von Hiob auf Grund des Sprachlichen und Realen,” (PhD diss., Universität Halle, 1889), 11, and 16, who mentions these parallels as the first ones on his list of linguistic similarities and on this basis constructs the wide-ranging thesis: “The author of Proverbs chs. 1–9 not only was familiar with the book of Job, but also made use of it” (6: “Der Verfasser der Sprüche Cap. 1–9 hat das Buch Hiob nicht nur gekannt, sondern auch benutzt.”).

27. On the introduction of the book of Proverbs see §4.2.1.

28. It concerns an almost literal citation that appears at two prominent places in the first collection of Proverbs. In Prov 1:7 it is the motto of the entire book; in Prov 9:10 it is located between the antithetically constructed speeches of the two women figures. One case has דעת, the other חכמה. See Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 13, and Bernhard Lang, *Frau Weisheit: Deutung einer biblischen Gestalt* (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1975), 118.

a successful life (19:23).²⁹ The parallelism in 2:5 with דעת אלהים (“knowledge of God”) is singular; the only somewhat distant parallel is present in 9:10, where the “knowledge of the holy” (דעת קדשים) is parallel to fear of YHWH.³⁰ From the evidence, 3:7 stands out with its charge to “fear YHWH and turn away from evil” (ירא את־יהוה וסור מרע). It is the only place within the instructions of Prov 1–7 that touches on the theme of the fear of YHWH.³¹ This already establishes a certain similarity between 3:7 and 2:5.

With regard to the position of chapter 2 within the ten instructions, Meinhold adopts the earlier thesis mentioned above of Prov 2 as a “table of contents” for the remaining nine sapiential instructions.³² One of the various parallels that Meinhold sees is between 2:5–8 and 3:1–12. He follows Strack, who attempts to connect 2:1–11 with 3:1–26.³³ A more detailed look at the references leads to the view that the situation is more complex than scholarly argumentation first suggests.

The topic of the instruction of 3:1–12 is the correct relationship with God developed in an introduction (3:1–4), in a main section (3:5–10), and in a conclusion (3:11–12).³⁴ Proverbs 3:5 articulates the proclamation that one should trust in YHWH. This is substantiated by the fear of YHWH (3:7), respect (3:9), and the “discipline of YHWH” (מוסר יהוה, 3:11). The phrase the fear of YHWH in 2:5 takes up technical terminology for the relationship with God within the framework of wisdom thought. However, it then develops it in a different manner. The statement that follows in Prov 2 that YHWH is the one who gives wisdom (2:6), and knowledge and insight come from his mouth, do not appear in chapter 3. Instead,

29. Interesting is the conception from Prov 15:33 that fear of God nurtures wisdom. See Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 262, who emphasizes the redactional function of the verse; and for the overall range of fear of YHWH in the book of Proverbs see Yoder, *Proverbs*, 6–8.

30. On the singular translation and the meaning of this statement see Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 332; Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 441, with further literature in n. 76.

31. יראת יהוה is also mentioned in the wisdom poems in Prov 1:29 as well as in 8:13.

32. See also O’Dowd, *Proverbs*, 76, who speaks of Prov 2 “as a summary or overview of the contexts in chapter 1–9.”

33. Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 43; and Strack, *Die Sprüche*, 313 and 315.

34. On the structure see Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 141–42; Schäfer, *Die Poesie*, 78–79; Müller, *Proverbien 1–9*, 155; and Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 124–25.

as will be shown below, the texts adopt Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic language.³⁵ There is even a qualitative difference made in 3:1–12 between human wisdom and YHWH, in whom alone one should trust (3:5):

- (5) Trust in YHWH with your whole heart,
but do not rely on your own insight [בינה].
(6) In all your ways [דרכים] acknowledge him.
and he will make your paths [ארחות] straight.

This difference is developed in 3:6 through the imagery of the way and the terms דרך (“way”) and ארה (“path”), which are also important for Prov 2.³⁶ In light of this, Meinhold is certainly correct in seeing that both 3:1–12 and 2:5–8 address “the right relationship with God.”³⁷ This is developed in both texts (Prov 2 and 3) through the qualitative difference between human and divine wisdom, though it receives a different emphasis in Prov 2 and 3. In Prov 2 one could almost say that fear of YHWH appears as a result, as a logical consequence of the search for wisdom. Proverbs 3 emphasizes the imperative character—also through the use of the term “discipline” (מוסר).³⁸

Beginning from here, an interesting line emerges that runs from chapter 1 through chapter 2 to Prov 3 describing the importance of the fear of YHWH. Within the overall horizon of Prov 1–9, chapter 1, with its language about the fear of YHWH as the beginning of wisdom in 1:7, formulates a thesis to which Prov 2 reacts—and in exactly the opposite direction. In Prov 1, fear of YHWH is the beginning of wisdom. In Prov 2, fear of YHWH is made accessible through listening to wisdom, and, on the basis of the conditional structure, it is a logical consequence resulting from orienting oneself to wisdom and seeking it.³⁹ Formulated more pointedly, in one case the fear of YHWH is the beginning of everything, while in the other it results from the search for wisdom. Proverbs 3 then returns to the conception from Prov 1. This shift of the accent will be important when investigating the redaction-historical place of Prov 2. However, one thing already becomes clear at this point: within the context of Prov 1–9,

35. See §5.1 below.

36. See §2.2 above.

37. Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 63 and 72.

38. See also Longman, *Proverbs*, 130–31.

39. On the particular didactics of Prov 2 see Fox, “Pedagogy,” 241–43.

the dominant understanding of the fear of YHWH is the one that is the foundation of 1:7 and receives further emphasis in 9:10.⁴⁰

Within the further terminology of 2:5–8 there are two important terms: “the upright” (ישרים) in 2:7 and the “paths of justice” in 2:8 (ארחות משפט). The group of the ישרים are also mentioned within Prov 1–9 in 3:32, which states that the upright are YHWH’s “(confident) counsel” (סוד).⁴¹ Outside of Prov 1–9, the word appears as a group of people in chapters 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 21, and often, whereby the term is most often used in a contrast, either as the antithesis to the “treacherous” (בגדים, 11:3, 6), the “wicked” (רשעים, 11:11; 12:6; 14:11; 15:8; see 21:18–19), the “fool” (איל, 12:15; 14:9), the “lazy” (עצל, 15:19), or the “dishonest man” (איש זור, 21:8).⁴² In the terminology of the way, the expression ארחות משפט (“paths of justice”) is remarkable. While the way metaphor is closely connected with sapiential thought, the formulation of the “paths of justice” (ארחות משפט) in 2:8 is interesting.⁴³ The genitive construction only otherwise appears in Proverbs in 17:23, in a section that speaks of failed discipline: The wicked (רשע) accept a bribe in order to pervert (נטה *hiphil*) the “paths of justice.”⁴⁴ The matter alludes to legal stipulations from the Pentateuch that address the perversion of justice in legal proceedings (Exod 23:2) or the acceptance of bribes (Deut 16:19, analogous to Prov 17:23).⁴⁵

4.1.3. References in Proverbs 2:9–11

The detailed analysis shows that 2:9–11 continues the line of thought from 2:5–8—in part through the use of its terminology—and cannot be

40. On the literary function of the theme “fear of YHWH” see Yoder, *Proverbs*, 6; and Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 180–81.

41. On the meaning of the concept in 3:31–35 see Schäfer, *Die Poesie*, 102–3; and Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 161.

42. The absolute appears in 16:17, which speaks of the “street of the upright”; see Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 273; and Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 193.

43. See the overview of the way metaphor in Zehnder, *Wegmetaphorik*, 385–401, with considerable evidence. It is surprising that he does not collate Prov 17:23 and 2:8, even though the formulations are identical (Zehnder, *Wegmetaphorik*, 390, Reference No. 301).

44. On this meaning for נטה *hiphil*. see Ringgren, “נטה,” 9:384–85. On Prov 17:21–28 see also Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 294; Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 15–31*, 61–62; and Frankenberg, *Die Sprüche*, 103–4.

45. Fox, *Proverbs 10–31*, 635; and Schipper, “Teach Them Diligently,” 24.

separated from them.⁴⁶ Two particular aspects are especially interesting with regard to possible lines of connection to Prov 1–31: the verb נָצַר (“to guard”) in 2:8 and 11 and the understanding of righteousness, law, and uprightness in 2:9.

The verb נָצַר is used within Prov 2 in a two-fold sense: in 2:8 in relation to YHWH, who guards, and in 2:11 related to insight, which itself guards the student of wisdom. Within Proverbs the verb is otherwise used to urge the student of wisdom to guard the instruction (in his heart, 3:1; see 3:21; 5:2 with דַּעַת, “knowledge”; as object, 6:20). An abstract noun as subject is relatively rare. In 13:6 “righteousness” (צִדְקָה) guards the “blameless way.”⁴⁷ In contrast to צִדְקָה in 2:5a, 2:5b names wickedness (רָשָׁעָה). Both appear as subjects of different verbs in 13:5 “like independent entities that themselves can take action.”⁴⁸ Quite similar is 20:28, where goodness and faithfulness guard the king. The verb is used with YHWH as subject in 22:12, where the eyes of YHWH guard knowledge (דַּעַת).

The commonalities with Prov 4 are insightful when viewed from the background of the previously mentioned texts. The verb נָצַר (“to guard”) is used in 4:6, 13, and 23. While the last two verses urge the student of wisdom to guard something (in 4:13 the מוֹסֵר, “discipline,” in 4:23 the לֵב, “heart”), 4:6 contains a similar statement to 2:11:

Do not forsake her, and she will keep you; love her, and she <i>will guard you</i> .	אל תעזבה ותשמרך אהבה ותצרך	4:6
Prudence will watch over you and understanding <i>will guard you</i> .	מזמה תשמר עליך תבונה תנצרכה	2:11

The statement of 4:6 refers to חִכְמָה (“wisdom”) and בִּינָה (“insight”) in 4:5.⁴⁹ The parallel to 2:11 not only consists of the two abstract nouns as the subjects of נָצַר (“to guard”) but also in the use of the verb שָׁמַר. Even if there is no citation present like in Prov 2:1 and 7:1 or 2:2 and 5:1, a specific con-

46. See §2.2.

47. On this translation for תָּם דֶּרֶךְ see Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 445. See also Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 217; and Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 546; and with a different suggestion Fox, *Proverbs 10–31*, 563 (“whose way is innocent”).

48. Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 219 (“wie selbständige Wesen, die ihrerseits handeln können”).

49. Already Toy, *Proverbs*, 87; and Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 106. See Clifford, *Proverbs*, 61; and Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 172.

nection does arise in this case between Prov 2 and 4 that goes considerably further than the relationships to other texts.⁵⁰

A still clearer case of textual coherence is present in 2:9, for the triad **צדק ומשפט ומישרים** appears verbatim in 1:3:⁵¹

To accept discipline that effects prudence: <i>righteousness and justice and uprightness.</i>	לקחת מוסר השכל צדק ומשפט ומישרים	1:3
then you will understand <i>righteousness and justice and uprightness</i> —every good track	אז תבין צדק ומשפט ומישרים כל מעגל טוב	2:9

The order of the terms **צדק**, **משפט**, and **מישרים** in this form is peculiar; in the entire Old Testament, it appears only in these two verses.⁵² On the backdrop of the already-discussed commonalities between 7:1 and 2:1; 5:1 and 2:2; as well as 8:1 and 2:3, it can be seen that a literary process becomes tangible in which specific word connections or entire (or also half) verses are adopted and embedded anew—in one case by the author of Prov 2 and in the other (to the degree that dependence in the other direction is conceivable) by the composer of chapter 1.⁵³ This literary procedure is characteristic for wisdom literature (see §1.3). In this context it is interesting that one element cannot be explained from 1:3—the “good track” (**מעגל טוב**). The word **מעגל** (“track”) is used in Proverbs in chapter 2; 4:11, 26; and 5:6, 21, although of the total of seven attestations, three of them occur in chapter 2 alone (2:9, 15, 18). The closest parallel for the construct chain **טוב מעגל** appears in 4:11, which speaks of the “tracks of uprightness” (**מעגלי ישר**).⁵⁴ YHWH leads “in the way of wisdom” (**בדרך חכמה**) and on the right path.⁵⁵

If one takes a step back at this point to summarize the preceding individual observations on the interrelationships between Prov 2 and the rest of the book of Proverbs, two qualitatively different types of references

50. Müller, *Proverbien* 1–9, 58–59 with a whole list of lexical similarities.

51. Perdue, *Proverbs*, 91; Yoder, *Proverbs*, 26; and O’Dowd, *Proverbs*, 77.

52. The word order **צדק ומשפט** also appears in Ps 89:15; 97:2 (in reverse order in Pss 119 and 121). See Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 54–55, 78–79.

53. See §4.3 below.

54. For the translation of Prov 4:11 see Schipper, *Proverbs* 1–15, 178.

55. On the relationships see Müller, *Proverbien* 1–9, 59, who comes to wide-reaching conclusions. On the similarity between 2:9 and 4:11b, see also Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 109–10.

appear: on the one hand, citations or citation-like allusions and, on the other, themes and formulations that can in part be attached to specific terms. The former exclusively concern Prov 1–9, while the latter appear both in 1–9 and also in the other collections of Proverbs, concretely in 10:1–22:16 and 22:17–24:22.

4.1.4. References in Proverbs 2:12–15

The second part of the sapiential instruction concretizes the general statements of the first part in relation to wicked men (2:12–15), the strange woman (2:16–19), and the fate of the righteous in contrast to that of the wicked (2:20–22). The detailed analysis already illustrates that with terms like the “saving” (נצל *hiphil*, 2:12, 16) and the word תהפכות (“perversities,” 2:12), the chapter uses expressions that are encountered multiple times in the book of Proverbs.⁵⁶ From the background of the thesis that Prov 2 is a “table of contents” for Prov 1–9, it must, however, be investigated to what degree the expressions of the sections of 2:12–15 and 2:16–19 reappear again within the first collection (chs. 1–9). Both Strack and Frankenberg attempt to connect 2:12–15 with 3:27–4:27 and 6:1–19, while Meinhold links 2:12–15 with 1:8–19 and 4:10–27.⁵⁷ Considered in light of the individual references, the commonalities between 2:12–15 and 1:8–19 appear quite generic. They consist merely of the theme “warning against wicked men.” The overall shape is fundamentally different, for 1:8–19 the main danger that the teacher of wisdom envisions for his students is depicted in a somewhat drastic manner: recklessly desiring to become rich.⁵⁸

In 1:10, there is the use of “sinners” (חטאים), which is a theological term that does not appear in 2:12–15.⁵⁹ In addition, none of the keywords from 2:12–15 appear in 1:8–19. Nevertheless, the basic idea, wicked men lead to the wrong path that leads to death, is the same. The mention of the term שאול (“Sheol/underworld”) in 1:12 hints at the semantic field of the second part of the wisdom instruction of chapter 2, which speaks of

56. See §2.2.3.

57. Strack, *Die Sprüche*, 315; Frankenberg, *Die Sprüche*, 3; and Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 43.

58. Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 52; and Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 92–94, who adopts an observation from Raymond van Leeuwen (“Proverbs,” *NIB* 5:114) to conceive of the group of addressees as youths. This was already proposed by Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 59.

59. On the meaning of חטאים see Klaus Koch, “חטא,” *TDOT* 4:311–16.

death (מות) and the רפאים (“Rephaim”) in relation to the strange woman (2:18).⁶⁰ The further shape of the instruction of chapter 1 is peculiar and distinguishes itself with regard to the lexemes from Prov 2. Therefore, the thesis of a connection between the two texts stands on rather weak footing. What is demonstrated is a certain similarity in content without literary dependence.

The same is the case for the connection postulated by Strack between 2:12–15 and 6:1–19.⁶¹ Already at first glance it can be seen that the terminological similarity is limited to the use of נצל *niphal* in 6:3, 5. The theme as well as its implementation and the style diverge from that of 2:12–15.⁶² Proverbs 6:1–19 presents different types of people, such as the careless person (6:1–5), the sluggard, (6:6–11), and the useless person (6:12–15). In 6:16–19 it shifts to a more general level, focusing on one’s relationship to God.⁶³ This is developed in the form of an animal comparison through the image of the ant (6:6) and with a numerical sequence (“there are six things YHWH hates,” 6:16a).⁶⁴ One must likely assume with previous scholarship on the book of Proverbs that 6:1–19 is a transitional piece in Prov 1–9 that is closer to chapters 10–22 than the other chapters of the first collection.⁶⁵

Compared to the debated connections to Prov 6, those with the instruction of 4:10–27 are more significant. A series of terminological commonalities can be found: the דרך רע (“way of evil”) in 2:12 matches the דרך רעים (“way of evil/evildoers”) in 4:14 as well as the דרך רשעים (“way of the wicked”) in 4:19. The two individual words דרך and רע also appear in 4:11, 14, 19, 26 (דרך), and in 4:14, 27 (רע); the word דבר (“word”) from 2:12 is used in 4:20. The “path” (ארח) from 2:13 appears in 4:14, 18, and עקש (“perverted”) and מעגל (“track,” 2:15) in 4:24 and 4:11.⁶⁶ Both texts develop a specific theme through the use of the same terms. At the same time, this means that lexemic commonalities between Prov 2 and Prov 4

60. On the meaning of Prov 1:12 see Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 16; Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 192; and Loader, *Proverbs 1–9*, 78.

61. Strack, *Die Sprüche*, 313 and 317–18.

62. Prov 6:1–19 shares some similarities with Prov 4:20–27 but is for stylistic reasons different from the ten instructions; see Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 218–20.

63. Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 218, van Leeuwen, “Proverbs,” 74–78; and Longman, *Proverbs*, 169–76.

64. See also §4.2.4 below; and Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 218–19.

65. Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 325; Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 210; and Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 107.

66. See also the list in Müller, *Proverbien 1–9*, 59, and the table below.

should not be overestimated. The topic of the warning against wicked men in combination with the way metaphor evokes a specific terminology.⁶⁷

4.1.5. References in Proverbs 2:16–19

The “strange woman” belongs to those themes that connect Prov 2 closely with Prov 1–9. Through the works by Maier and Hugenberg, the theme of the so-called strange woman (אִשָּׁה זָרָה) has been well investigated, so the following comments simply mention several basic topics.⁶⁸ In addition to 2:16–19, the strange woman is mentioned in 5:1–23; 6:20–35; and 7:1–27. The term אִשָּׁה זָרָה appears explicitly in 2:16; 5:3, 20; 6:24; and 7:5.⁶⁹ Of this evidence, most striking is the close relationship between 7:5 and 2:16:⁷⁰

<i>In order to keep you from the strange woman, from the foreigner, who has made her words smooth.</i>	לשמרך מאשה זרה מנכריה אמריח החליקה	7:5
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<i>In order to save you from the strange woman, from the foreigner, who has made her words smooth.</i>	להצילך מאשה זרה מנכריה אמריה החליקה	2:16
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It is clear that this is a literal citation in light of the introductory infinitive in 2:16 taken from the parallel construction of 2:12.⁷¹ A further, similar formulation appears in the passage on the strange woman in 6:24:

<i>In order to keep you from the evil woman, from the smoothness of the tongue of a foreigner.</i>	לשמרך מאשת רע מחלקת לשון נכריה	6:24
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67. At the same time, this provides the counterargument against the wide-reaching redaction-historical conclusions of Müller, *Proverbien 1–9*, 68–73.

68. See §2.2 above.

69. Maier, *Die “fremde Frau,”* 4.

70. Partially already in Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 241. See also Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 370; and for a detailed analysis Heim, who, however, provides just as little illustration in *Poetic Imagination*, 94–104 (set 9).

71. This is already highlighted by Hitzig, *Die Sprüche*, 17, with the concise formulation “verse 16 returns to 7:5.” (“der 16. Vers kehrt C. 7,5 zurück”).

With לשמרך (“to keep you”) the same verbal form is used as in 7:5. Furthermore, the content matches—one should be kept from the “foreigner” (נכריה).⁷² In 7:5 she “makes smooth” the talk; in 6:24 one is warned about the “smoothness of the tongue” of the foreign woman.⁷³ A remarkable network of connections appears, but those between Prov 2 and Prov 7 have a different quality than those with chapter 6. In the concluding 7:27, there is a formulation that again matches a verse from Prov 2:

The ways of Sheol are <i>her house</i> , going down <i>to</i> the chambers of <i>death</i> .	דרכי שאול ביתה ירדות אל חדרי מות	7:27
Surely, <i>her house</i> leads (down) <i>to death</i> and to the Rephaim, her tracks.	כי שחה אל מות ביתה ואל רפאים מעגלתיה	2:18

The formulation in 7:27 contains the same theme as 2:18.⁷⁴ Furthermore, the terms מות (“death”) and ביתה (“her house”) match. Noteworthy here is the meaning of ביתה. The detailed exegesis has indicated that the mention of the “house” in 2:18 is quite idiosyncratic and creates problems in its context.⁷⁵ However, in 7:27 the mention of בית makes sense. The house introduced is the house of the woman who looks through her window (7:6), out of which she presses forth (7:11). This house is contrasted in the chapter’s thought process with the house of the man (7:19).⁷⁶ To what degree, then, does this mean that the arbitrary formulation from 2:18 alludes to the keyword “house” from Prov 7? Can the difficult construction in 2:18 finally be explained by means of a textual coherence? The conjecture is difficult to disregard because the connections to chapter 7 are so strong.⁷⁷ Therefore, one must consider that the author of Prov 2 was familiar with Prov 7. The line of dependence does not run from Prov 2 to Prov 7. Quite to the contrary, Prov 2 relies on Prov 7 and recalls the presupposed section

72. Finally, the similarity between 6:24 and 7:5 is stronger than that between 6:24 and 2:16, contra Snell, *Twice-Told Proverbs*, 40.

73. Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 69–70, who also refers to 5:3.

74. Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 118; and the overview of research (Gemser, Loretz) in Loader, *Proverbs 1–9*, 129.

75. See §2.2.3 above.

76. See Toy, *Proverbs*, 154; Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 124–25; and Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 248.

77. So already Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 26.

for the reader about the strange woman by means of a citation of its central verses. For in 7:1, 5, 27, the central verses of chapter 7 are cited:

Proverbs 7	Proverbs 2
(1) My son, keep my words, and store up my commandments with you.	(1) My son, if you accept my words, and my commandments you store up with you.
(5) in order to keep you from the strange woman, from the foreigner, who has made her words smooth.	(16) in order to save you from the strange woman, from the foreigner, who has made her words smooth,
(27) The ways of Sheol are her house, going down to the chambers of death.	(18) surely, her house leads (down) to death and to the Rephaim, her tracks.

The thought process matches, but its arrangement is different. While Prov 7 offers a clear statement of the content, Prov 2:16–19 contains a more complex structure consisting of the “companion of youth,” the “covenant of her God” (2:17), and the emphasis on the “paths of life” (2:19).⁷⁸ From the background of Prov 7, however, this is filled with life: what still appears abstract in Prov 2 is substantiated in Prov 7.

This is also demonstrated by bringing in the other texts on the strange woman in Prov 1–9. The section on the strange woman in Prov 2 appears to presuppose the other instructions on the topic and to allude to them through certain keywords. In the sapiential instruction on the strange woman in chapter 5, this is connected with the concept of the “path of life” (אֶרֶץ חַיִּים). Proverbs 5:1–23 speaks of the “strange woman” (זֹרָה 5:3), whose mouth is smooth (חֶלֶק), and her paths lead to death.⁷⁹

- (5) Her feet go down to death [מוֹת],
her steps lead to Sheol [שְׁאוֹל].
- (6) The path of life [אֶרֶץ חַיִּים] she does not keep,
her tracks deviate—she does not know (it).

78. Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 252–62, with an overview on the different interpretations.
79. Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 308; and Yoder, *Proverbs*, 26, who notes the connection between 5:3 and 2:16–19. See also Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 130–31; and Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 69–70. On the translation see Maier, *Die “fremde Frau,”* 110; Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 99; and the analysis by Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 192–93.

With the “path of life” in 5:6 (אֶרֶץ חַיִּים), the same key term appears as in 2:19, although in 5:6 it is singular and in 2:19 plural.⁸⁰ The conception of the way to death matches (in both cases מוֹת). Also interesting with regard to 2:16–19 is 5:18. In contrast to the student of wisdom, there it states: “May your spring be blessed, and rejoice in⁸¹ the wife of your youth.” An intriguing parallel is present with the “wife of your youth” (אִשְׁתִּי נְעוּרַי) to the “companion of her youth” (אֱלֹוֶף נְעוּרֶיהָ) in 2:17. The word נְעוּרִים only appears in these two verses in the book of Proverbs, so a connection of key words can be assumed.⁸² This is interesting in the sense that the analysis of tradition-historical relationships has just shown that the phrase “companion of her youth” in 2:17 alludes to YHWH (see Job 31:18). If one takes this reference seriously, then it raises the question of whether the same literary process already demonstrated for the central wisdom terms in 2:1 is also tangible here. That is, terms that have a quasi neutral, nontheological meaning in wisdom literature are given theological hues through intertextual references. A sapiential and a theological field of reference are thus consciously intertwined.

This is also the case for the references with the remaining sections on the strange woman in Prov 1–9. Central aspects of the instruction from 6:20–35 and the speech of Lady Folly in 9:13–18 appear in 2:15–19. In 6:24 there is also talk of the “smoothness of the tongue” (the noun חִלְקָה) of the strange woman, and it mentions the “way of life” (דֶּרֶךְ חַיִּים).⁸³ In the speech by Lady Folly (אִשְׁתִּי כַסְלִיּוֹת) in 9:13–18, the way terminology reappears (9:15, “who makes their paths straight,” הַמִּישְׁרִים אֲרַחֲוֹתָם), as does the conception that those who follow her are in the Underworld.⁸⁴

But he does not know that the Rephaim are there,
those called by her are in the depths of Sheol. (9:18)

80. Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 310 and 104–5 (with an overview of the topic).

81. On the text-critical problem of this verse see Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 194.

82. Further attestations are Job 13:36 and 31:18. On Prov 5:18 see Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 202, who also refers to Mal 2:14 (see also Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 321). See §3.3.3 above.

83. Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 352; Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 69–70; and Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 230–31.

84. Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 443–46; and Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 158–59.

From this background, it becomes clear that what is actually new in the section on the strange woman in Prov 2:15–19 is the statement in 2:17. It equates abandonment of the companion of her youth with forgetting the covenant with her God. The other motifs, including the individual formulations, are explained by the texts on the strange woman in Prov 1–9. Even though the topic of the strange woman extends beyond Prov 1–9, and parallels to individual motifs from Prov 2:16–19 are present in Prov 10–22, the combination of these motifs is only encountered in the passages on the strange woman in Prov 5, 6, and 7.⁸⁵ What is striking here is that the statements in 2:16–19 (except for 2:17) are derived from the complex of motifs of the strange woman, whereby a special similarity to chapter 7 (and with some limits to ch. 5) is apparent. The terminological matches support the assumption that 2:16 is taken from 7:5 and 2:18 from 7:27, and the passage is enriched by 5:1–23 and 6:20–35. In doing so, a literary process appears in which individual verses—in chapter 7 it is the thematic key verses—are cited and recontextualized.

4.1.6. References in Proverbs 2:20–22

Before looking closer into the literary technique itself, a short investigation of the concluding verses 2:20–22 must take place.

The section 2:20–22 is determined by the antithesis between the righteous (צדיק) and the wicked (רשע). As the contextual analysis has shown, this antithesis is quite close to Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic tradition.⁸⁶ The terminology points to the book of Proverbs, and even beyond Prov 1–9. The group of the righteous is also mentioned in 14:19, and the wicked in, for example, 15:3. In both cases, the righteous and the wicked are connected with the “good” (טובים), who are mentioned in 2:20, too.⁸⁷

The “treacherous” (בגדים) from 2:22 can be found in an interesting paragraph from Prov 11. According to 11:3 righteousness rescues from

85. The notion that the mouth of the foreign woman (פי זרות) is a grave appears in 22:14. Proverbs 15:24 articulates the contrast between the “path of life” (ארח חיים) and Sheol. Quite similar is 12:28, where it states that the path of righteousness (ארח צדקה) leads to life, and the way (דרך) of the rebellious to death (מות); Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 247. On the Rephaim as the fate of those who stray from the right path (21:16), see §2.2.3 above; and Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 355.

86. See also Longman, *Proverbs*, 125; and O’Dowd, *Proverbs*, 81.

87. Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 120.

death.⁸⁸ With respect to the overall message, 11:3–8 shares interesting similarities with 2:20–22. The composition on the individual and the social dimensions of sapiential knowledge in Prov 11 uses the central term of “the upright” (ישרים) in 11:3.⁸⁹ This term is also encountered in 2:21. In contrast to 2:21, where this group is promised life in the land, their wealth (חזון) does not help them at all in 11:3–8; instead it is righteousness that rescues from death.

- (3) The blamelessness of the upright [ישרים] guides them,
but the crookedness of the treacherous [בגדים] destroys them.
- (4) Wealth is of no use on the day of wrath,
but righteousness delivers from death.
- (5) The righteousness of the blameless person makes his way straight,
but by his wickedness a wicked person falls.

Proverbs 11:5 makes this thought concrete through the antithesis of the terms תמים (“the blameless person”) and רשע (“the wicked person”). The two terms are used in 2:21–22 in order to describe the contrast between the one who follows the wisdom teaching and the one who does not and is destroyed.⁹⁰ The line of thought is continued in 11:6, which emphasizes that “the righteousness of the upright” (צדק ישרים) rescues.⁹¹

The connections with 11:3–5 illustrate the emphasis of 2:20–22. While every kind of wealth is negated in Prov 11:4, the promise of remaining in the land applies to the student of wisdom in Prov 2. This is expressed by means of the verb שכן (“to dwell”), which results in an interesting connection to the final verse of chapter 1. In 1:33 it states: “But one who listens to me will dwell [שען] securely and calmly, without dread of disaster.”⁹² At the same time, the connection to 11:4 underlines the eschatological echo

88. Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 216. The second half of 12:28 is difficult. See the solutions proposed by Fox, *Proverbs 10–31*, 560; and Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 543–44.

89. For the subject of Prov 11, see Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 389; and Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 186.

90. See Fox, *Proverbs 10–31*, 532, with further evidence.

91. Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 487; Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 232–33.

92. So already Friedrich W. C. Umbreit in the year 1826 (*Philologisch-kritischer und philosophischer Commentar über die Sprueche Salomo's* [Heidelberg: Mohr, 1826], 13 and 20).

worked out through the tradition-historical analysis of Prov 2:21–22.⁹³ For the formulation of the “day of wrath” (יום עברה) in 11:4 bears clear eschatological features when viewed in light of prophetic texts (Zech 1:15), even though it could designate “any day of disaster.”⁹⁴

4.1.7. Summary

The investigated material attests both to connections between Prov 2 and other texts from Prov 1–9 and to other contexts throughout the book of Proverbs. These relationships are partially evoked by certain themes, but they are sometimes so specific that one must reckon with the possibility of textual dependence. The former is demonstrated for the book of Proverbs as a whole. Proverbs 2 adopts both the language and the figurative world of the broader wisdom tradition.⁹⁵ For example, the fundamental contrast between the righteous and the wicked connected with the topic of death and the way of life appears in 11:3–8. There are central terms that link the passage with 2:20–22. Furthermore, the conception from 2:1 appears in 23:12–35, the key term of the “upright” (ישרים) multiple times in 10:1–22:16, and the theme of the strange woman in 16:18–20. The commonalities sometimes go beyond mere thematic similarity and involve characteristic terminology.

Methodologically, terminological or at least thematic agreements are necessary to propose a connection between two texts. This concerns the thesis expressed by Freedman of a connection between Prov 2 and the chapter on the “woman of strength” in 31:10–31.⁹⁶ The commonality is limited to the formal structure—in one case a nonalphabetic acrostic and in the other an acrostic in which every verse begins with a different letter of the Hebrew alphabet (31:10–31). Regardless of the fact that Prov 2 does not, strictly speaking, evince an acrostic structure (even though the text is

93. See §3.3.3 above.

94. Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 187 (see Isa 10:3; Ezek 7:19–20; Zeph 1:14–18). This means that Prov 11:4 is tinted in the same way as Prov 2:21–22; see Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 421.

95. This is also the case for the terms found in Prov 4. Müller (*Proverbien 1–9*, 58–59) has collected these and concludes on this basis that there is a specific dependency relationship between Prov 2 and 4. However, the terms could simply serve as quantitative evidence that do not exhibit the same quality of the relationships demonstrated in connection to Prov 5, 7, and 8.

96. Freedman, “Proverbs,” 47.

oriented by the twenty-two letters), there are no similarities in content or themes between Prov 2 and Prov 31.

In contrast to the thematic similarities between 2:1–22 and Prov 10–31, those within Prov 1–9 are of a much different nature. What appears is not only shared themes, but also coined formulations and citations of individual verses:

2:1	ומצותי תצפן אתך אמרי	בני אם תקח
7:1	ומצותי תצפן אתך אמרי	בני שמר
4:10a	אמרי	שמע בני וקח
2:2	תטה לבך לתבונה	להקשיב לחכמה אזנך
5:1	לתבונתי הט אזנך	בנ לחכמתי הקשיבה
4:20	לאמרי הט אזנך	בני לדברי הקשיבה
2:3	לתבונה תתן קולך	כי אם לבניה תקרא
8:1	ותבונה תתן קולה	הלא חכמה תקרא
2:9	צדק ומשפט ומישרים כל מעגל טוב	אז תבין
1:3	צדק ומשפט ומישרים	לקחת מוסר השכל
2:16	מנכריה אמריה החליקה	להצילך מאשה זרה
7:5	מנכריה אמריה החליקה	לשמרך מאשה זרה
2:18	ואל רפאים מעגלתי	כי שחה אל מות ביתה
7:27	ירדות אל חדרי מות	דרכי שאול ביתה

This diagram illustrates the two dimensions of the phenomenon of textual coherence: a characteristic connection of words and a citation from other texts. The former primarily concerns chapter 4, the latter chapters 5 and 7. The fact that one case concerns more quantitative evidence and the other qualitative is already illustrated in 2:1, which matches 7:1 but contains the phrase *לקח אמרי* (“accept my words”) from 4:10a. Proverbs 2:2 adopts the formulation from 5:1 with the transposition of the words, thereby applying a literary feature common throughout the book of Proverbs.⁹⁷ In contrast, while there is also terminological similarity with 4:20, the verse itself is

97. See Snell, *Twice-Told Proverbs*, 15–22; and ch. 1 of this work (“inverted quotation”); and Heim, *Poetic Imagination*, 84–88.

closer to 5:1 than 2:2. The two verses are identical except for the noun (in 5:1 חכמה [wisdom] and תבונה [understanding], in 4:20 אמר [saying] and דבר [word]).⁹⁸ A terminological similarity can also be found between 2:9 and 1:3. The singular connection in the Old Testament of the phrase צדק ומשפט ומישרים (righteousness and justice and uprightness) links the two texts with one another.

In contrast to these terminological similarities, the relationships to chapter 7 are striking. The overview shows that Prov 2 adopts central verses from chapter 7 that provide a structure for the section on the strange woman in 2:16–19, which is then shaped further through recourse to the instructions in 6:20–35 and 5:1–23.

Also striking is the citation of individual verses in Prov 2:1–3. Reference is made to two instructions (Prov 7 and 5) and to the speech of personified wisdom in Prov 8. The fact that in each case the first verse of the chapter is cited can hardly be coincidental. The question instead arises about the degree to which an intentional reference is present. This is also the case for the terminological similarity demonstrated between 2:9 and 1:3. Both would have considerable redaction-historical consequences, requiring modification of both the thesis of Prov 2 as the table of contents for the instructions of Prov 1–9 and the theory on the relationship between the instructions and the introduction to the book of Proverbs, Prov 1:1–7.

As a result, the opening question concerning the place of Prov 2 within Prov 1–9 becomes the focal point; if Prov 2 is more than a table of contents for the sapiential instructions of Prov 1–7*, then the question concerning the formation of Prov 1–9 becomes unavoidable. However, this cannot be separated from the compositional history of the book of Proverbs as a whole.

4.2. On the Composition of Proverbs 1–9 in the Context of the Book of Proverbs

Before presenting a theory on the composition of Prov 1–9, it is necessary to review the state of scholarship.

98. In contrast, the commonality with 4:21 concerns only the theme and not significant terminology, which is the reason why this relationship is not represented in the list.

4.2.1. Previous Approaches to the Redaction History

The question of the redaction history of the book of Proverbs reaches back to the early stages of historical-critical scholarship on the Old Testament.⁹⁹ Johann Gottfried Eichhorn was the first to separate chapters 1–9 from the rest of the book of Proverbs in volume 5 of his *Introduction to the Old Testament* from the year 1824. He considers Prov 1–9 “an independent small writing,” but he assumed that there was a single author that composed the chapters.¹⁰⁰ Eichhorn developed this idea on the foundation of a fixed date of the book of Proverbs. He was convinced that “the proverbs of the entire book are old.”¹⁰¹ A different position was developed by Wilhelm Vatke in 1835, who dated Proverbs and Job in the fifth century BCE.¹⁰² On the basis of the numerous repetitions in Prov 1–9 as well as the formal and also content-related differences between different sections, Ernst Bertheau argued in his commentary on Proverbs, “that in this part we are not presented with a work resulting from a single gush, but rather a collection of warnings by various writers of proverbs.”¹⁰³ This opened the door for further literary-critical investigations on Prov 1–9 and different redaction-critical

99. A detailed overview of scholarship cannot be provided at this point. For this see the presentation by Schäfer (*Poesie*, 255 and 269); Müller (*Proverbien 1–9*, 1–20); the broad “Survey of Modern Study” by R. Norman Whybray (this is the subtitle of his book on Proverbs from 1995: *The Book of Proverbs: A Survey of Modern Study*, History of Interpretation Series 1 [Leiden: Brill, 1995]); and Katherine J. Dell, “The Interpretation of Proverbs in the Nineteenth Century,” in *From Modernism to Post-modernism, the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries: Part 1, The Nineteenth Century, a Century of Modernism and Historicism*, vol. 3 of *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament: The History of its Interpretation*, ed. Magne Sæbo (Berlin: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012), 603–24.

100. Johann G. Eichhorn, *Einleitung ins Alte Testament*, 4th ed. (Göttingen: Rosenbusch, 1824), 5:89 (§63.2 “eine eigene kleine Sammlung”). Eichhorn also supposes that the author (he speaks of the “compiler”) “wanted to prepare for the subsequent sections” with this first section of the book of Proverbs (5:580).

101. Smend, “Wisdom in Nineteenth-Century Scholarship,” 259 with reference to the third edition of Eichhorn’s *Einleitung*, 518.

102. Smend, “Wisdom in Nineteenth-Century Scholarship,” 259. The main argument was “Aramaizing tendencies” in the book of Proverbs, see Katherine J. Dell, *The Book of Proverbs in Social and Theological Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 608.

103. Ernst Bertheau, *Die Sprüche Salomo’s*, 2nd ed., KEH 7 (Leipzig: Weidmann, 1883), xxii (“dass uns in diesem Theile kein aus einem Guss entstandenes Werk vorliegt, sondern eine Sammlung von Ermahnungen verschiedener Spruchdichter”).

models. Franz Hitzig followed Bertheau in the year 1858 in considering Prov 1–9 as composite, but he only separated out a few passages (3:22–26; 6:1–19; 8:4–12, 14–16; 9:7–10), viewing the rest to have arisen as a meaningfully composed text by a single author.¹⁰⁴ Parallel to this, the thesis of the uniformity of Prov 1–9 continued to be advocated. In his commentary on Proverbs from the year 1873, Delitzsch argues that Prov 1–9 is the work of a “gifted author,” whose style is based “on the Solomonic proverbs.” Delitzsch emphasizes that Prov 1–9 was composed primarily on the backdrop of 10:1–22:16, formulating a thesis that continues to be represented today.¹⁰⁵

A somewhat different model can be found in the introduction to the Old Testament by Steuernagel from the year 1912. He only separates out 2:5–8 and 9:7–10 as secondary and assumes a single author for the rest. This author, however, draws on the already extant collections of proverbs. One of Steuernagel’s arguments was repeatedly adopted in later scholarship: the different notions of the wisdom terms. Steuernagel postulates “purely natural contemplations of intelligence” in the individual exhortations, while “the overall conception of wisdom on the part of the author is of an essentially religious nature.”¹⁰⁶ In his wake interpreters often differentiated between a theological and a nontheological wisdom, making this the criterion for literary-critical decisions.¹⁰⁷ In the end, a specific notion of the development of sapiential thought plays a role in this view. One assumes that first there was a kind of nontheological experiential wisdom that was later theologized.¹⁰⁸ In the genesis of the book of Proverbs, this was implemented such that the collection of proverbs in 10:1–22:16 are considered early and Prov 1–9 late.

104. Hitzig, *Die Sprüche*, 3.

105. All citations are from Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 34. The full wording is: “The gifted author of the introduction (i.1–ix.) has formed his style, without being an altogether slavish imitator, on the Solomonic proverbs.” See also Baumann, *Die Weisheitsgestalt*, 264, who thinks that the chapters “did not exist as an independent book but functioned as an introduction to the book of Proverbs.”

106. Carl Steuernagel, *Lehrbuch der Einleitung in das Alte Testament: Mit einem Anhang über die Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1912), 684–85 (“rein natürliche Klugheitserwägungen” and “der allgemeine Weisheitsbegriff des Verfassers wesentlich religiöser Art ist”).

107. This is the case, e.g., for the scholarship on Prov 2. See §1.2 above.

108. E.g., Leo G. Perdue, *The Sword and the Stylus: An Introduction to Wisdom in the Age of Empires* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 86–87, with a short overview of scholarship.

This thesis was also applied to the origins of Prov 1–9. In his monograph *Wisdom in Proverbs* from the year 1965, Whybray develops a layered model for the first collection of the book of Proverbs that distinguishes between the actual wisdom instructions and compositional additions. The first is nontheological and reflects a profane kind of wisdom; the latter documents a theologization of wisdom.¹⁰⁹ Whybray brought an argument into the discussion that continues to receive attention today. He suggested a form-critical analogy between the instruction in Prov 1–9 and Egyptian wisdom instructions.¹¹⁰ Whybray's literary-critical method, which separates out passages that in his opinion do not fit within what he reconstructs as ten wisdom teachings, has met with diverse criticism. However, his thesis on the differentiation between the sapiential instructions and the other sections in Prov 1–9 has become established.¹¹¹ The question is instead whether the connections between the instructions and the other passages in the present final text of Prov 1–9 are meaningful or not. In his study from the year 1972, Bernhard Lang describes the chapters as an "unsystematically compiled piece of scribal literature without a methodical structure, without conceptual unity, and without a progression in content."¹¹² This sentence is often cited and serves as a paradigmatic example in scholarship of a position that rejects any systematic structure for Prov 1–9 and from which one should at all costs distance themselves.¹¹³ Like Whybray and McKane,

109. Whybray, *Wisdom*, 72–76; and his own overview of scholarship, Whybray, *Survey*, 64–65.

110. Whybray, *Wisdom*, 53–54. See also McKane, *Proverbs*, 51–109, who argues similarly; and Kayatz, *Studien*, 17–24.

111. This was also based on the fact that, among others, the study published in 1965 by Kayatz, *Studien*, independently from Whybray, came to very similar results; see Whybray, *Survey*, 65; and on the issues as a whole the history of scholarship in Scott L. Harris, *Proverbs 1–9: A Study of Inner-Biblical Interpretation*, SBLDS 150 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995), 7–21. Whybray himself has since modified his approach, but he still reckons with extensive editing in the ten wisdom instructions: Whybray, *Composition*, 26.

112. Lang, *Lehrrede*, 28 (ein "unsystematisch kompliziertes Stück Schulliteratur ohne planvollen Aufbau, ohne gedankliche Einheit und ohne inhaltlichen Fortschritt").

113. Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 322; Müller, *Proverbien 1–9*, 11; Schäfer, *Die Poesie*, 258. In contrast, Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 3–4, presents Lang's position as correct; see also Baumann, *Die Weisheitsgestalt*, 251–52.

Lang also argues from the basis of Egyptian comparative material. He simply starts with a different text source.

While Whybray and McKane draw parallels from the classic Egyptian life instructions, such as the Instruction of Ptahhotep, of Amenemhet, of Cheti, or of Amenemope, with the instructions in Prov 1–9, Lang uses the demotic Instruction of Khasheshonqi.¹¹⁴ Based on the thesis by Stephen R. K. Glanville from 1955 that the Instruction of Khasheshonqi has “no orderly organisation” and its implementation is quite random, Lang posits the same for Prov 1–9.¹¹⁵ Here he follows a thesis by Werner Fuss, who believes he identifies an “accumulative” style in the book of Sirach, in the combination of different sources and pieces.¹¹⁶ Lang does not posit a completely random structure for Prov 1–9, but rather a specific form of late wisdom texts that—according to his thesis—maintain an accumulative style.¹¹⁷ Brunner, who studied the Egyptian material, describes the Ramesside-period scribal literature as follows:

As a rule the teachers compiled them, often from memory, from the anthologies handed down. For them it depends neither on the depth of the thought nor on the disciplined nature of the execution. One is instead given the impression that the master required a certain treatment and then rummaged around in his memory or in his old papers until he had collected enough material. The sections are joined together arbitrarily: exhortations to diligence, praise of civil service, and derision of the other professions.¹¹⁸

114. Lang, *Lehrrede*, 27. The two demotic instructions of the Papyrus Insinger and Khasheshonqi are also mentioned by Whybray (*Wisdom*, 53); however, he ultimately supports his argument with the classical life instructions, which deviate considerably from the demotic texts; see Quack, *Einführung*, 111.

115. Stephen R. K. Glanville, *The Instructions of ‘Onchsheshonqy’* (*British Museum Papyrus 10508*), Catalogue of Demotic Papyri in the British Museum 2.1 (London: British Museum, 1955), xiii. See also Lang, *Lehrrede*, 26.

116. Werner Fuss, “Tradition und Komposition im Buche Sirach,” (PhD diss., Universität Tübingen 1963), 281.

117. Lang, *Lehrrede*, 28, with reference to the Ramesside scribal texts.

118. Hellmut Brunner, *Altägyptische Erziehung*, 2nd ed. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1991), 17–18 (“In der Regel haben Lehrer diese Texte, wohl oft aus dem Gedächtnis, aus überlieferten Anthologien für die Schüler zusammengestellt. Dabei kommt es ihnen weder auf Gedankentiefe noch auf Konsequenz der Ausführung an; vielmehr gewinnt man den Eindruck, daß der Meister einen gewissen Umgang für die Aufgaben brauchte und nun in seinem Gedächtnis oder auch in seinen alten Papieren

This is the exact argument that one encounters in Whybray, McKane, or Kayatz. Lang differentiates ten instructions located in 1:8–19; 2:1–22; 3:1–12, 21–35; 4:1–9, 10–19, 20–27; 5:1–23; 6:20–35; and 7:1–27.¹¹⁹

Lang's position does not differ significantly from the classic one. However, he begins on a different level in that he postulates a specific literary form for the present final form of Prov 1–9 that he also believes is found in the Egyptian texts. In the end, there is a double reference to the Egyptian wisdom texts: to the instructions of life, which are classified as an analogous genre to the sapiential instructions of Prov 1–9; and to the scribal literature that forms a type of florilegium consisting of scribal and wisdom literature. The former has often been presented in the scholarship of the past thirty years, the latter hardly at all.¹²⁰ Before engaging the comparative question concerning possible analogous texts from ancient Egyptian literature, several notes on the current state of scholarly discussion on Prov 1–9 are necessary.

In the end, Lang's thesis of interpreting Prov 1–9 as exhibiting an accumulative style has not become established.¹²¹ Instead the attempt has been made to work out a system on the level of the final text. In his commentary on Proverbs from the year 1984, Plöger formulates an approach that is then adopted in 1991 by Meinhold and has met with considerable approval: Proverbs 2 is to be read as something like a table of contents for Prov 1–9, and one should differentiate between the instructions and certain transitional pieces. What Plöger describes concisely and in a cursory manner, Meinhold presents in more detail.¹²² He distinguishes between ten instructions, four wisdom poems, and two what he calls "transitional

kramte, bis er genügend Stoff beisammen hatte. Willkürlich werden die Teile aneinandergefügt: Ermahnungen zum Fleiß; Lob des Beamtenstandes und Spott über die anderen Berufe.").

119. Lang, *Lehrrede*, 29; in addition to the overview of scholarship in Harris, *Proverbs 1–9*, 10–15 (on Kayatz) and 15–21 (on McKane); as well as the overview of literature in Whybray, *Composition*, 12–13 and nn. 4–5.

120. The sole advocate in recent scholarship that has engaged with the Ramesside scribal literature is Müller (*Proverbien 1–9*, 286–87). Overland, on the other hand, discusses the Instruction of Amenemope in his unpublished dissertation from 1988 (excursus "Amenemope and Structure in Proverbs," in "Structure," 329–53).

121. Lang's thesis was adopted by Whybray, who clearly sets himself apart from the positions of Meinhold and Plöger (Whybray, *Composition*, 28).

122. Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 4–7; in contrast to Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 43–47, with a table on p. 46, which provides a detailed overview of the structure of Prov 1–9.

pieces” (3:13–20; 6:1–19). Proverbs 2 articulates the instructional program that is then developed in the following material.¹²³ As such, for Meinhold, Prov 1–9 proves itself to be an “artful composition” with a “thoughtful structure.”¹²⁴

Meinhold’s position forms the background for the current outlines by Fox, Baumann, A. Müller, Maier, and Schäfer.¹²⁵ They all begin with the question of the formation of Prov 1–9. Fox follows Meinhold in that he also specifies ten wisdom instructions and certain transitional pieces (“interludes”).¹²⁶ Unlike Meinhold, however, he does not differentiate between the transitional pieces and the wisdom poems, but between the ten instructions, the interludes, smaller insertions, and LXX additions.¹²⁷ The following schematic results:

Meinhold (1991)			Fox (2000)			
Instruction	Wisdom poem	Transitional pieces	Ten Lectures	Interludes	Minor insertions	LXX additions
1:8–19			1:8–19			
1:20–33			1:20–33			
2:1–22			2:1–22			
3:1–12			3:1–12		3:3a	3:16a, 22a
3:13–20			3:13–20			
3:21–35			3:21–35			
4:1–9			4:1–9			

123. See also O’Dowd, *Proverbs*, 76, and van Leeuwen, “Proverbs,” 42.

124. Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 43 (“kunstvolle Komposition” and “durchdachten Aufbau”); see Meinhold, “Vierfaches: Strukturprinzip und Häufigkeitsfigur in Prov 1–9,” *BN* 33 (1985): 56.

125. The modifications made by Whybray to his position will not be discussed here, for these fall far short of the explanatory model provided by Meinhold; see Whybray, *Composition*, 26–27.

126. This is again adopted by Waltke in his commentary on Proverbs (*Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 11 and n. 6). However, Waltke takes 3:13–20 as part of the instruction from 3:21–35 rather than as a transitional piece.

127. Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 323–24.

4:10–19	4:10–19	
4:20–27	4:20–27*	4:27a, 27b
5:1–23	5:1–23	
6:1–19	6:1–19	6:8a–8c, 11a
6:20–35	6:20–35	
7:1–27	7:1–27	7:1
8:1–36	8:1–36	8:21a
9:1–6	9:1–6, 11, 13–18	9:10a, 12a–12c, 18a–d
9:7–12		
9:13–18		

The table shows that both approaches agree on the essential points. The differences between the models only consist in the fact that Fox separates out more strongly on a text-critical basis, and the sections estimated as transitional pieces and sapiential instructions are located on a single level, that is, he reckons with one less redactional step. He posts a basic text that is then expanded through a further step, after which only small additions follow. Fox outlines the redactional history of Prov 1–9 as follows:

The present essay argues that there is a considerable cohesiveness in Prov 1–9, but it is not the result of single authorship. The authorship was, in a sense, collective, the work, perhaps, of several generations. The process described here is not simply the assembling of earlier texts by a later redactor, but a process of growth, in which later authors read, learned from, and elaborated the themes of the earlier texts.¹²⁸

A comparison of the argument by Fox with that of Lang shows that, in the end, Fox's perspective is not very different from Lang's. It is just that he does not assume a single author, but rather a process that extended over generations. The ten instructions, called "lectures" by Fox, form the starting point, which are conceived as an introduction for chapters 10–29

128. Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 323.

arising from a single author.¹²⁹ The five interludes—described as “poems” by Fox—were eventually added by various authors, which was also the case for the smaller insertions.¹³⁰

A brief look at three more recent commentaries shows that the general distinction between “sapiential instructions”, whether called “lectures” (Waltke), “lessons” (Loader), or “admonitions” (O’Dowd), and “wisdom poems,” sometimes also called “interludes” (Waltke, O’Dowd) is important for the understanding of the formal structure of Prov 1–9. All three scholars separate the title and prologue of the book in 1:1–7 from the following chapters but develop different models. Waltke, for example, identifies three units of different length within Prov 1–9: The title and preamble (1:1–7), the prologue (1:8–8:36), and the epilogue (9:1–18).¹³¹ Loader, in contrast to previous research, takes 6:1–19 as poem and not as interlude and 3:27–35 as poem and not as lecture.¹³² O’Dowd, however, reads 4:10–27 as a unit (in his counting the “sixth admonition”) and not as two instructions as most other scholars do.¹³³

Waltke (2004)			Loader (2014)		O’Dowd (2017)
Ten lectures	Interludes	Frame	Ten lessons	Poems	Admonitions Interludes
		1:1–7			
1:8–19			1:8–19		1:8–19
	1:20–33			1:20–33	1:20–33
2:1–22			2:1–22		2:1–22
3:1–12			3:1–12		3:1–12
			3:13–26		3:13–20

129. See Fox, *Proverbs 10–31*, 930–31, where he concretizes the perspective developed in part 1 of his commentary and arrives at precise statements on the redaction history of the book of Proverbs. The idea that Prov 1–9 forms an introduction to Prov 10–31 can already be found in Delitzsch’s commentary; see Smend, “Wisdom in Nineteenth-Century Scholarship,” 262.

130. Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 323.

131. Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 10–13.

132. Loader, *Proverbs 1–9*, 8.

133. O’Dowd, *Proverbs*, 30.

3:13–35	3:27–35	3:21–35
4:1–9	4:1–9	4:1–9
4:10–19	4:10–19	4:10–27
4:20–27	4:20–27	
5:1–23	5:1–23	5:1–23
6:1–19 (1–5, 6–11, 12–19)	6:1–19	6:1–19
6:20–35	6:20–35	6:20–35
7:1–27	7:1–27	7:1–27
8:1–36 9:1–18	8:1–36	8:1–36
	9:1–18	9:1–18

The most detailed theories on the literary formation of Prov 1–9 are not found in commentaries but in studies on the subject itself. In German scholarship the works of Baumann (1996), Schäfer (1999), and Müller (2000) are influential, while the studies of Étienne-Noël Bassoumboul (2008) and Bálint Károly Zabán (2012) provided new theories in the international discussion.

Baumann modifies Meinhold's thesis at two points. Unlike him, she does not consider 9:13–18 a wisdom poem, for there is no speech "by or about the figure of wisdom."¹³⁴ She also adds the instruction of 3:1–12 to the sections separated out by Meinhold (and also by Fox) as transitional pieces. In the same way, she does not separate out 9:7–12, but attaches it to 9:1–6, 13–18.¹³⁵ Proverbs 9 would function as the transition to chapters 10–22 and be viewed as a later addition. Baumann also determines the transitional piece of 6:1–19 to have this role. The section is without parallels to Prov 1–9 but contains numerous commonalities

134. Baumann, *Die Weisheitsgestalt*, 254 ("von oder über die Weisheitsgestalt").

135. Baumann, *Die Weisheitsgestalt*, 254–56. This suggestion makes much more sense with regard to 3:13–20 than the one proposed by Waltke to designate the verse as the beginning of an instruction that extends from 3:13–35 (*Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 11). The opening formula of the instruction does not appear in 3:13, so the very element that identifies the only formal connection to the wisdom instruction is missing.

with 10–31.¹³⁶ Both texts, 6:1–19 and 9:7–12 are, therefore, “shaped on the backdrop of earlier speeches of admonition” and were only inserted into Prov 1–9 quite late.¹³⁷ The same is the case for 1:1–7. Therefore, Baumann maps out a core that stretches from 1:8–8:36 (without 6:1–19), consisting of ten instructions and two speeches by the wisdom figure. In the course of its combination to chapters 10–31, this core was supplemented in the front (1:1–7) and at the end (ch. 9), as well as by 6:1–19.¹³⁸ Like Fox, Baumann assumes that the instructions were not originally independent, but they were instead composed with chapters 10–31 in view, having more of a literary function than a concrete *Sitz im Leben*.¹³⁹ According to Baumann, the transitional pieces were inserted during the connection of the instructions to chapters 10–31. Yet such a process would indicate that the sapiential instructions were originally independent and were first connected with chapters 10–31 in a second step. In the course of this process, then, the transitional and framing pieces of 1:1–7; 6:1–19; and 9 were inserted.

Contrary to Meinhold and Baumann, the studies by Schäfer and A. Müller offer the most wide-reaching innovations. The two come to contrasting conclusions, but they still concur in their rejection of the previous composition-historical theory of ten wisdom instructions with possible transitional pieces or additions. In his Tübingen dissertation “Die Poesie der Weisen,” Schäfer proposes twelve instructional poems and reckons with a theologizing redactional layer of revision.¹⁴⁰ Schäfer also categorizes parts of chapters 8 and 9 among the instructional poems in contrast to previous scholarship, counting 3:1–35* as the only wisdom instruction. He separates out all mentions of YHWH and theologizing parts as redactional.¹⁴¹ What results for Prov 1–9 is the following redaction history.

136. The warning against providing surety for others (6:1–15) appears in 22:26–27. The depiction of the sluggard (6:6–11) matches 24:30–34; see Baumann, *Die Weisheitsgestalt*, 256; and §4.2.6 below.

137. Baumann, *Die Weisheitsgestalt*, 256 (“auf dem Hintergrund älterer Mahnreden gestaltet”).

138. See the table of results in Baumann, *Die Weisheitsgestalt*, 258.

139. See also Baumann, *Die Weisheitsgestalt*, 259–66.

140. Schäfer, *Die Poesie*, 259–60.

141. Following Meinhold, the section of 6:1–19 is viewed as a transitional piece; see Schäfer, *Die Poesie*, 251–52.

The first step is formed by the twelve instructional poems together with the introduction (Prov 1:1–4, 6), which probably existed as an independent writing. This corpus of texts was expanded through three layers of editing, first by the transitional pieces (3:13–18, 27–30; 6:1–2, 6–11, 12–15, 27–35; 9:7–9, 12), then by a theological reinterpretation in which the wisdom poem of 8:1–4, 22–35* as well as different additions were inserted, among them also 2:5–9, 16–19. In formal terms, this level of redaction is marked by the use of the Tetragram. The final redactional stage then inserted individual commentating additions like, for example, 1:5; 22ab, b; or 4:7; 5:7, 14, 27 into the text.¹⁴²

Like Schäfer, Müller also reckons with a complicated history of redaction.¹⁴³ Müller reconstructs the earliest core of Prov 1–9 as a wisdom instruction that, in addition to 4:1–27 [5:21–22] also included 6:1–1, and therefore was a section that attests to the interrelationship with Prov 10–31 that scholarship previously considered redactional.¹⁴⁴ This basic inventory was expanded by 2:1–4, 9–15, 20. The main portion of Prov 1–9 is ascribed to a “formative redaction” that comprised 1:7–33*; 2:5–8, 16–19; 3:13–18, 21–35; 4:1–9; 5:1–13, 20; 6:20–35; 7:1–27; and 8:1–21, 32–36. In addition are later expansions like an “allegorical examination” (among others 9:1–6, 13–18), further additions that arise from the “group of the pious” (among others 1:29–30; 6:33; 9:10), and “various expansions.”¹⁴⁵ Belonging to the final group is also 2:21–22, which Müller separates out from chapter 2 as an “apocalyptic supplement” following his teacher Michel.¹⁴⁶

A unique approach was developed by Bassoumboul. Through analysis of Prov 1–3, he finds three distinct units: the prologue of the book of Proverbs in Prov 1:1–7, a literary discourse on wisdom in 1:8–2:22 characterized by different microunits (“micro-unité littéraire”), and an equally masterful composition in 3:1–35.¹⁴⁷ By taking 1:8–2:22 as

142. For an overview of the redaction history, see Schäfer, *Die Poesie*, 263–65 and 272–93 (with a schematic presentation and translation of the text).

143. Müller ties in with the observations by his teacher Michel, who attempts to recognize various redactional layers in Prov 2, making the text into a “document of the history of wisdom” (Michel, “Proverbia 2,” 243).

144. Müller, *Proverbien 1–9*, 301–2.

145. On the overview of the redaction history of Prov 1–9 as a whole, see Müller, *Proverbien 1–9*, 321.

146. Michel, “Proverbia 2,” 236–38; Müller, *Proverbien 1–9*, 67–68.

147. Étienne-Noël Bassoumboul, *Des sagesse à la sagesse: Étude de l'unité sapientielle en Pr 1–9*, CahRB 69 (Paris: Gabalda, 2008), 181.

a single distinct unit and not as three different parts as most scholars argue, Bassoumboul presents a new perspective that, however, depends on the literary evidence itself. Even though one could argue that 1:8–2:22 contains a sophisticated discourse on wisdom, Prov 1:8–19, 20–33; and 2:1–22 seem too different in terms of subject and literary form to be taken as one single unit.

In contrast to Bassoumboul, Zabán takes the three speeches of personified wisdom in 1:20–33, 8:1–36; and 9:1–6 as point of departure. Following an idea of Patrick W. Skehan, who argued in an article from 1947 that “seven columns of Wisdom House” can be found in Prov 1–9, Zabán finds a “pillar function” of the three aforementioned poems within Prov 1–9.¹⁴⁸ Proverbs 1:20–33; 8:1–36; and 9:1–6 should be seen as a “significant part of the instructions of Prov 1–9 and are closely connected to their literary context.”¹⁴⁹ This can be seen in poetic imagery as a “unifying element of structure.” The different chapters of Prov 1–9 are connected by three different types of imagery: “path imagery,” “house imagery,” and “treasure imagery.”¹⁵⁰

Summarizing the overview of scholarship results in a horizon of five problems:

1. To what degree can the thesis of the ten instructions be maintained in the sense that there was a composition that comprised all of the instructions and was patterned after the genre of Egyptian life instruction?
2. How can the relationship between the instructions and the so-called transitional pieces or interludes be determined? This also includes the passages within Prov 1–9 that are often separated out as secondary (the wisdom poems, included Prov 8; the sections of 6:1–19; 3:13–20; and ch. 9).
3. How can the relationship between chapters 1–9 and 10–31 be described because individual chapters from the first collection clearly link up with the themes and formulations from chapters 10–31? Does this mean that the ten instructions from Prov 1–9*

148. Skehan, “Seven Columns,” 190–98.

149. Bálint Károly Zabán, *The Pillar Function of the Speeches of Wisdom: Proverbs 1:20–33, 8:1–36 and 9:1–6 in the Structural Framework of Proverbs 1–9*, BZAW 429 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2012), 230.

150. Zabán, *Pillar Function*, 230–34.

were originally composed in light of 10–31, or is it an independent corpus?

4. To what degree is it possible to demonstrate that the final redaction of Prov 1–9 is a meaningful composition, and what importance does Prov 2 play within it?
5. Finally, there is one aspect that must be taken into account to which the works on Prov 1–9 only allude in part: the connection of the framing parts in Prov 1 and 9 with chapters 30–31, especially the role of the woman, whether it be Lady Wisdom, the strange woman, or the woman of valor from Prov 31:10–31.¹⁵¹

This articulated horizon will be treated in the following in a manner that begins with the question of the genre of the sapiential instruction, and on this basis investigates the redaction history of Prov 1–9 and the place of Prov 2 within it.

4.2.2. The Ten Instructions and the Egyptian Instructions for Life

An important starting point for the determination of the composition history of Prov 1–9 is the thesis of the ten instructions. The conception of the sapiential instruction goes back to Otto Eissfeldt and was brought to special attention by Lang.¹⁵² Its basis is both in the content and form, characterized by three shared features within the instructions of Prov 1–9: (1) the address to the student with the call to hear (“my son”); (2) the main section with the actual instruction (often in imperative form); and (3) the conclusion with indications of the consequences for wise or foolish behavior.¹⁵³ These features already appear in Baumgartner’s investigation on the literary genres in the Wisdom of Jesus Sirach from the

151. Müller, *Proverbien 1–9*, 317; Whybray, *Composition*, 159–62; and Camp, *Wisdom*, 186–91, who draws special attention to the similarities of the description of the woman.

152. Otto Eissfeldt, *Der Maschal im Alten Testament*, BZAW 24 (Giessen: Töpelmann, 1913), 36–37 n. 12; Lang, *Lehrrede*, 29; and the overview in Achim Müller, “Lehrgedicht,” *Das wissenschaftliche Bibellexikon im Internet*, 2007, <https://tinyurl.com/SBL2647a>.

153. Lang, *Lehrrede*, 31–34; Whybray, *Composition*, 13; and Whybray, *Wisdom*, 34–35. In contrast, Kayatz, *Studien*, 76–77, starts from a comparison of Egyptian instruction with Prov 8 and 1:20–33.

year 1914.¹⁵⁴ Baumgartner ascribes texts like Sir 2:1–18; 3:1–16; and 6:5–17 to the genre of the “instructional poem,” using a term that has come to stand for the overall genre of the instruction and the proverbial poem.¹⁵⁵ In continuation of the previous discussion developed by Baumgartner, Lang, and others,¹⁵⁶ Müller specifies the following formal and content related characteristics:

- (1) The instructional speech concerns an instruction addressed to the students that (2) is marked explicitly as an address, (3) exhibits a three-part structure of a proemium, main body, and conclusion. (4) In its proemium it contains the call to listen or pay attention in addition to the addressees. (5) It comprises reasoned admonitions (appeals) in the main body. And (6) it shapes the conclusion as a “verdict/saying/aphorism.”¹⁵⁷

This structure can be demonstrated best among the ten instructions from Prov 1–7.¹⁵⁸ As comparative texts one can mention the instructional poems in Jesus Sirach and the Elihu speeches in the book of Job, as well as extrabiblical Egyptian instructions for life. Whybray, Christa Kayatz, and McKane point to the Instructions of Ptahhotep, Any, Amenemope, and Merikare, all of which are attributed to the genre of the *sb3j.t*.¹⁵⁹ A closer

154. Walter Baumgartner, “Die literarischen Gattungen in der Weisheit des Jesus Sirach,” ZAW 34 (1914): 163.

155. Baumgartner, “Gattungen,” 161–98. On its use as an overarching genre see Müller, “Lehrgedicht.”

156. The thesis of McKane must be mentioned in this context. Kayatz draws on it to postulate an international form of the “Instruction,” encountered both in Egyptian and also in Assyrian texts; see McKane, *Proverbs*, 6–8; and the critiques by Scott, *Proverbs*, 15–21; and Weeks, *Instruction*, 10 n. 15.

157. Müller, “Lehrgedicht”; and Müller, “Formgeschichte und Textgrammatik am Beispiel der alttestamentlichen ‘Lehrrede’ in Prov 1–9,” in *Studien zur hebräischen Grammatik*, ed. Andreas Wagner, OBO 156 (Fribourg: Presses Universitaires; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1997), 90: “(1) Es handelt sich bei der Lehrrede um eine an den Schüler adressierte Lehre, die (2) explizit als Anrede markiert ist, (3) eine dreiteilige Struktur aufweist mit Proömium, Hauptteil und Schluss, (4) bei der das Proömium neben dem Adressaten in der Regel die Aufforderung zum Hören oder zur Aufmerksamkeit beinhaltet, (5) der Hauptteil begründete Mahnungen (Appell) enthält und (6) der Schluss als ‘Wahrspruch/Gnome/Sentenz’ gestaltet ist.”

158. See Whybray, *Composition*, 15, who underlines that Prov 2 stands out for its lack of an imperative style.

159. Whybray, *Wisdom*, 53–54; Kayatz, *Studien*, 17–24; McKane, *Proverbs*, 51–109.

look at the texts provides a quite complex picture. Data both internal and external to the Old Testament do not yield a uniform textual genre with a comparable structure, outside of the differentiation between introduction, body, and conclusion also found in classical rhetoric, or the rather general call for attention.¹⁶⁰

Lang already notes that the formal similarity between the sapiential instructions in the book of Proverbs and the Egyptian wisdom instruction is rather limited.¹⁶¹ In addition, the conception of “instruction for life” (*sb3j.t*) itself is multifaceted. The determination appears in the instructions of Ptahhotep, Any, Amenemhet, Cheti, and often, as well as in the royal instruction to officials (Amarna period) and in a divine speech. In addition is the Onomasticon of Amenope, which begins like an Egyptian wisdom instruction but then contains an encyclopedic list extending from the names of individual deities to certain natural phenomena, beverages, and parts of buildings.¹⁶² Given this evidence, Nili Shupak correctly finds the *sb3j.t* is “a literary genre covering a variety of compositions, which differ from each other in form and content but all share a common aim—to transmit knowledge.”¹⁶³

The *sb3j.t* concerns the transmission of knowledge generally administered through the passing on of certain knowledge and instruction by a knowledgeable person to an un- or rather less-knowledgeable one, often to someone from a younger generation.¹⁶⁴ This means that one must be cautious with broad theses on a genre of the *sb3j.t*. It seems instead that the textual pragmatics are central—knowledge should be transmitted—rather than a concrete formula for a certain genre that then will be filled with content.

This can be demonstrated by means of the classical Egyptian instructions for life. The connection between the texts consists of the articulated

160. On this three-part structure see Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 23; and Schäfer, *Die Poesie*, 252. For criticism of the thesis of a uniform structure for the Egyptian texts see Weeks, *Instruction*, 10–11.

161. Lang, *Lehrrede*, 27.

162. Alan H. Gardiner, *Ancient Egyptian Onomastica* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1947), 1*, and Bernd U. Schipper, “Israel und Ägypten: Erkenntnisse und Perspektiven,” *TLZ* 134 (2009): 1159.

163. Nili Shupak, *Where Can Wisdom Be Found? The Sage’s Language in the Bible and in Ancient Egyptian Literature*, OBO 130 (Fribourg: Presses Universitaires; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993), 32.

164. This was convincingly mapped out in Weeks, *Instruction*, 30.

textual pragmatics, which themselves are established through the introductions of the instructions.

Instruction of Ptahhotep¹⁶⁵

- (42) Beginning with the verses of well-formed speech,
- (43) which were formulated by the prince and count ...
- (47) as instruction [*sb3j.t*] for the ignorant in knowledge
- (48) and in the norms of well-formed speech,
- (49) as profit for him who listens,
- (50) as woe for him who does not pay attention to it.

Instruction of a Man for His Son¹⁶⁶

- (1.1) Beginning of the instruction [*sb3j.t*] that a man composed for his son.
- (2) Hear my speech, do not disregard my words. Do not turn your heart away from what I have said to you.

Instruction of Any¹⁶⁷

- (B 15.1) [See, I am telling you these] useful suggestions that should be important within your heart.
- (15.2) Follow them, so that it will go well with you and that all evil will be distant from you.¹⁶⁸

Instruction of Amenemope¹⁶⁹

- Beginning of the instruction [*sb3j.t*] for life,
- (III, 9) Incline your ear; hear what will be said,
- (10) Apply your heart to their understanding.
- (11) It is useful to apply your heart to them,
- (12) harmful it will be for those who do not pay attention to them.

The texts begin—except for the Instruction of Any—with the classic formula “Beginning of the instruction/teaching [*sb3j.t*].” This formula is

165. P.Prise 5, 6–8, (ed. Ernest A. W. Budge, *Facsimiles of Egyptian Hieratic Papyri in the British Museum I* [London: British Museum, 1910], xxxiv–xxxviii); see Junge, *Die Lehre Ptahhoteps*, 189, which the translation follows.

166. Text edition: Fischer-Elfert, *Lehre*, 24, which is followed in the translation.

167. Cited according to manuscript B, see Quack, *Die Lehren des Ani*, 84–86, with transcription and translation.

168. The same statement appears again in Any B 18:4–5; see Quack, *Die Lehren des Ani*, 99.

169. Text edition: Laisney, *Enseignement*, 46–47, with detailed commentary.

continued by a call to attention that emphasizes the usefulness for one's own life or through general statements on the meaning of wisdom. This is connected to the idea that knowledge can be passed from one generation to the next. The introduction to the Instruction of Ptahhotep, for example, begins with a reference to Ptahhotep's old age. Ptahhotep petitions the pharaoh with a request that his son be allowed to take his place and that Ptahhotep may instruct him in the "ways of the ancestors" (AEL 1:6)³. The instruction is presented as fatherly teaching, similar to the Instruction of a Man to His Son. However, it would be mistaken to think of an actual situation in which an aging father teaches his son. Rather, this is a literary topos based in the conception of wisdom itself as "the sum of all human knowledge necessary for a life in society."¹⁷⁰ This knowledge is based on life experience and is conveyed from a standpoint that has life as a whole in view. Following the logic of this topos, the speaker and addressee must belong to different generations. In short, educational knowledge is presented as literature that is passed to the following generation as timeless advice.¹⁷¹

In terms of form and genre, the texts do not, however, attest to a generic formulation, even though they can be structured into an introduction, body, and conclusion. This has the following meaning for the ten sapiential instructions of Prov 1–7.¹⁷²

The points of comparison with the Egyptian instructions consist of the introductions of the texts, the call to attention, as well as the previously mentioned pragmatics: knowledge is to be transmitted. This takes place in a formal structure that unfolds the "gap in competency" between the

170. Jan Assmann, "Weisheit, Schrift und Literatur im alten Ägypten," in *Weisheit: Archäologie der literarischen Kommunikation III*, ed. Aleida Assmann (Munich: Fink, 1991), 480 ("die Summe des für ein Leben in der Gesellschaft notwendigen Wissens vom Menschen").

171. See also Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 14.

172. A detailed investigation of the genre of Egyptian instruction for life cannot be undertaken at this point. This is also the case for the Old Testament texts that are generally classified as belonging to the genre of instructions. An important point would be a form-historical investigation that consults not only the sapiential instructions from Prov 1–7, but also passages from the Elihu speeches (Job 33–35) and material from the book of Sirach. Then, in a second step, the relationship of this form to the instructions in Deuteronomy that scholarship has previously noted in the context of Prov 2 would need to be tested; see Gemser, *Sprüche*, 25; and Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 58. See also an initial attempt in Weeks, *Instruction*, 1–32.

wisdom teacher and wisdom student in the image of fatherly instruction. In this sense there is a similarity between the Israelite sapiential instruction and the Egyptian one; however, this cannot be interpreted in the sense of dependence. It should rather be treated on a structurally and functionally analogous level. The degree to which this also concerns the historical location of the instructions is debated in present scholarship.

Stuart Weeks recently expressed doubt that the Egyptian instructions for life (“*Lebenslehren*”) were conceived as school texts. While he notes that the texts were used in the school or rather in an educational setting from the New Kingdom onward, this deviates from their original function. In reliance on Egyptological literature from the 1980s and 1990s, he designates them as *belles lettres*, that is, as texts that can be investigated with regard to their relationships to other texts but do not exhibit a specific *Sitz im Leben*.¹⁷³ Weeks is correct that the wisdom instructions from the Middle Kingdom and early New Kingdom display an elevated literary level. He ties in with the scholarship on literary studies within Egyptology (R. Parkinson, J. Baines, J. Assmann), which takes up the paradigms of Russian constructivism and was especially interested in a text’s setting within literature. However, the question is the degree to which the Egyptian texts were really detached from a situation setting (“*situationsabstrakt*”) as the advocates of this scholarly position surmise.¹⁷⁴ For example, Assmann has since moved away from such a radical position and concedes that texts have social-historical locations, or, to express it in classical terminology, a *Sitz im Leben*.¹⁷⁵ This connects with the second inquiry for Weeks. The thesis that the wisdom instructions were not originally used in the schools is explained by the fact that no material before the New Kingdom has yet been found that attests to such a use. In the end, this argument is made on the basis of the state of the sources, which can be changed by each exca-

173. Weeks, *Instruction*, 30–31. Weeks refers especially to the works of his Egyptologist teacher Richard Parkinson; see Weeks, *Instruction*, 16, nn. 29–30; 17 nn. 32–33.

174. This is the well-known formulation by Jan Assmann, “Der literarische Text im Alten Ägypten,” *OLZ* 69 (1974): 126; and Assman, “Kulturelle und literarische Texte,” in *Ancient Egyptian Literature: History and Forms*, ed. Antonio Loprieno, PAe 10 (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 62, esp. n. 24.

175. Assmann, “Kulturelle und literarische Texte,” 61. See also my own overview of scholarship: Bernd U. Schipper, *Die Erzählung des Wenamun: Ein Literaturwerk im Spannungsfeld von Politik, Geschichte und Religion*, OBO 209 (Fribourg: Presses Universitaires; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2005), 223–37.

vation. This is on concrete display in the recently published results of the excavation in the rock necropolis in Assiut. In a tomb from the Eleventh Dynasty, graffiti was found in which later visitors of the tomb cited the beginnings of life instructions as well as the Hymn to the Nile and the Prophecy of Neferti.¹⁷⁶ This process, apparently showing how the beginnings of texts were memorized, speaks in favor of the existence of schools, and in this case already for the time before the New Kingdom.

4.2.3. On the Structure and Context of the Ten Instructions

When one considers the ten instructions of Prov 1–9 on the backdrop, then it allows for the recognition of a specific literary form. This is—similar to the Egyptian wisdom instructions—characterized by the respective introduction yet not by a comparable concluding formulation.

A concluding formula in the sense of “such is” appears in the third instruction (3:12), as well as in the seventh, ninth, and tenth ones (5:21–23; 6:34–35; 7:26–27, in all cases introduced by כִּי). A concluding proverb can be found in the fourth instruction (3:35 “The wise will inherit honor”) as well as in the sixth one (4:18–19 with an antithetical formulation: righteous-wicked). The fifth and seventh instruction do not contain a proper concluding formulation (4:8–9 continues the topic from 4:4–7; 4:27 that of 4:23–26).¹⁷⁷

The formal element that connects the sapiential instructions is, therefore, the call to attention at the beginning. It appears in two different forms in the instructions of Prov 1–7:¹⁷⁸ one is the call to hear (1:8; 4:1; 4:10;

176. Ursula Verhoeven, “Von der ‘Loyalistischen Lehre’ zur ‘Lehre des Kairsu,’” ZÄS 136 (2009): 88. It concerns the beginnings of Hymn to the Nile, the Instruction of Amenemhet I, the Instruction of Chety, the Instruction of a Man for His Son, the Loyalist Instruction, and the Prophecy of Neferti. On the date of the evidence and the consequences for the so-called Loyalist Instruction, see Verhoeven, “Von der ‘Loyalistischen Lehre,’” 97. On the importance of the citations of the beginnings of the instructional texts see §4.2.4 below.

177. See Müller, “Lehrgedicht,” with a detailed outline of 4:10–19.

178. The attention formula is often described as an “introductory instructional formula” or a “call to attention.” The first goes back to Hans W. Wolff, *Hosea: Dodekapropheton*, 2nd ed., BKAT 14.1 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1964), 122–23. See also Ludwig Köhler, *Deuterocjesaja (Jesaja 40–55) stilkritisch untersucht*, BZAW 37 (Giessen: Töpelmann, 1923), 110–13: “Zweizeugenruf”; the latter appears in Diethard Römheld, *Die Weisheitslehre im Alten Orient: Elemente einer*

5:1); the other is the admonition to observe the command of the teacher or rather to maintain wise behavior (3:1, 21; 4:20; 6:20; 7:1).¹⁷⁹ The first is formed with the verbs שמע “hear,” אָזַן *hiphil* “listen,” קָשַׁב *hiphil* “be attentive,” or the construction אָזַן נָטָה “incline the ear.” The latter is constructed with the verbs נָצַר “guard” or שָׁמַר “keep.” Müller already notes that the rhetorical function of the introduction of a speech is only given in the first case, while the second formulation contains the admonition to keep what is spoken and therefore presupposes the instruction itself.¹⁸⁰ Müller does not devote further attention to this point, but it carries considerable consequences for the context of the sapiential instructions. In light of their introductions, apparently there are some instructions that presuppose others. This is demonstrated when one places the first verses of the different instructions together in a table:¹⁸¹

Hear, my son, the discipline of your father, and do not reject the <i>torah</i> of your mother!	שמע בני מוסר אביך ואל תטש תורת אמך	1:8
My son, do not forget my <i>torah</i> , and let your heart guard my commandments!	בני תורתי אל תשכח ומצותי יצר לבך	3:1
My son, may these not depart from your eyes, guard competence and prudence!	בני אל ילזו מעיניך נצר תשיה ומזמה	3:21
Hear, sons, the discipline of a father, and be attentive to understand insight!	שמעו בנים מוסר אב והקשיבו לדעת בינה	4:1
Hear, my son and accept my words, then (the) years of life will be many for you!	שמע בני וקח אמרי וירבו לך שנות חיים	4:10
My son, to my words listen attentively, to my sayings incline your ear!	בני לדברי הקשיבה לאמרי הט אזנך	4:20
My son, to my wisdom listen attentively, to my understanding incline your ear!	בני לחכמתי הקשיבה לתבונתי הט אזנך	5:1

Formgeschichte, BN.B 4 (Munich: Görg, 1989), 13. See also Christoph Hardmeier, *Texttheorie und biblische Exegese*, BevT 79 (Munich: Kaiser, 1978), 303.

179. Müller, *Proverbien 1–9*, 292, and Whybray, *Composition*, 13.

180. Müller, *Proverbien 1–9*, 292.

181. From the background of the previous insights on Prov 2, this instruction will not initially be considered, and only in a second step will it be investigated with regard to how it fits in the context of the other sapiential instructions.

Guard, my son, the commandment of your father, and do not reject the <i>torah</i> of your mother!	נצר בני מצות אביך ואל תטש תורת אמך	6:20
My son, keep my words, and store up my commandments with you!	בני שמר אמרי ומצותי תצפן אתך	7:1

When looking closer at the nine introductions, a whole series of attestations appear.¹⁸² The first instruction begins with the call to attention, “Hear, my son, the discipline of your father, and do not reject the *torah* of your mother!” (1:8). The introduction of the instruction of 3:1 ties in with this by adopting the keyword *torah* (תורה): In 1:8 it appears in the second half of the verse, in 3:1 in the first. The introduction of 3:21 “My son, may these not depart from your eyes” itself refers to 3:1. From the content and also the grammar, the plural ילזו picks up on the terms תורה (*torah*) and מצות (“commandments”) from 3:1. In 3:21 this is continued with the formulation “guard competence and prudence,” which reaches back through the verb נצר (“to guard”) to 3:1b. This means that the grammatical structure repeatedly viewed as complicated in 3:21 receives its meaning from the connection between the first verses of the different instructions. The plural ילזו (“may they depart”), whose subject is unclear, refers to the terms תורה and מצות from 3:1.¹⁸³

The formulation “Hear, sons, the discipline of a father” in 4:1 refers back to 1:8a, but the expression from 1:8a is plural in 4:1a.¹⁸⁴ Proverbs 4:1b adds another thought with the phrase from 1:8a: “And be attentive to understand insight.” This idea is taken up in 4:10, in which the words should be accepted, naming an initial positive use: “then the years of life will be many for you.” The noun “words” אמר from 4:10a is repeated again in 4:20b and combined with a formulation encountered in 5:1. The statement “My son, to my words listen attentively, to my sayings incline your ear!” from 4:20 corresponds to 5:1: “My son, to my wisdom listen atten-

182. Yoder, *Proverbs*, 11; and Schäfer, *Die Poesie*, 78, who in n. 298 notes the similarities between 1:8–9; 6:20–21; and 3:1–2.

183. Already Frankenberg, *Die Sprüche*, 33, indicates that it is difficult to take the two nouns from 3:21b as the subject for 21a. Toy attempts to resolve the problem by transposing two half verses and begins with 21b (Toy, *Proverbs*, 73). See Schäfer, *Die Poesie*, 97, who discusses various proposed solutions that do not have the previously mentioned connection in view.

184. Schäfer, *Die Poesie*, 105; and Yoder, *Proverbs*, 11.

tively, to my insight incline your ear.”¹⁸⁵ Only the words דבר and אִמֵּר in 4:20 are replaced by חכמה (“wisdom”) and תבונה (“understanding”) in 5:1. In 6:20 the formulation from 3:1 is alluded to, and the half-sentence from 1:8b is adopted verbatim: “Guard, my son, the commandment of your father, and do not reject the *torah* of your mother.”¹⁸⁶ Proverbs 7:1 adopts the מצוֹת (“commandments”) from 6:20 and ties in with the אִמֵּר (“word”) from 4:10, 20.¹⁸⁷ The “storing up the commandments” (the verb צָפַן) simultaneously alludes to 3:1, where it states that one should keep these in the heart.

The relationships and intertwining between the nine instructional openings point to a meaningful structure of instructional opening formulas.¹⁸⁸ However, one aspect stands out. The introduction verse of the first instruction in Prov 1:8 is the only one where both parts of the verse are similar with other introduction verses. 1:8a follows 4:1, and 1:8b is nearly identical to 6:20b. At the current state of the investigation it is too early to draw further conclusion from this, but the evidence could point to a later date for Prov 1:8–19 in comparison with the other instructions. It would be possible to argue that 1:8 was composed on the backdrop of the other instructions.¹⁸⁹

Apart from this redaction-critical question, the opening verses of the nine instructions display a meaningful alternation of the two formal elements. (1) the call to attention (“hear”) and (2) the admonition to guard what is spoken supersede one another as follows. The sequence of introduction verses opens with a call to attention (1:8), followed by two calls to guard the instruction (3:1; 3:21) a fourfold call to attention (4:1, 10, 20; 5:1), and at the end there is the call to guard what has taken place in the two previous instructions (6:20; 7:1). Corresponding with the intention of the two opening formulas, the sequence of the instructional introductions opens with the call to attention and ends with the injunction to keep the instruction that has taken place. A dynamic is achieved through the doubling of the elements, which places the focus on the imperative call to

185. This observation appears already in Frankenberg, *Die Sprüche*, 41. See also Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 306: “The typical introductory address ... and the admonitions ... repeat the introductory admonition of the preceding lecture (4:20).”

186. Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 228; and Clifford, *Proverbs*, 80.

187. See the chart in Müller, *Proverbien 1–9*, 120.

188. For the following see also Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 50.

189. For this see §4.3 below.

attention, an element that also marks the Egyptian wisdom instructions.¹⁹⁰ A line of thought unfolds by means of this formal structure according to which father and mother give discipline (מוסר) and *torah*, and the wisdom student should not forget *torah* and guard the commandments in their heart. Proverbs 4:1 starts again with a citation from 1:8 and specifies the education to the extent that one becomes familiar with insight. Proverbs 4:10 expands this to the span of one's life, which articulates the first concrete benefit in the sequence of the introductions. Proverbs 4:20 and 5:1 continue with almost identical formulations, while 6:20 introduces the conclusion. It picks up on 1:8, introducing the conclusion that ends in 7:1 with the hiding of the commandments in the sense of internalization of the previously mentioned instructions. All of the opening formulas are linked to one another through the בני "my son" (in each case in singular except the plural in 4:1).¹⁹¹ Even if there is no development of thought in the sense that the formulations of the instructions' openings do not uniformly develop a topic, the similarities and relationships are still noteworthy. But how should this evidence be interpreted, if one does not consider the commonalities coincidental?¹⁹²

The background of the detailed observations and the reflections on Egyptian wisdom instructions suggests the hypothesis that the sapiential instructions go back to an author who formed them by means of the opening formula of the instructions. The nine instructions therefore turn out to be a unity, for they all begin with an instructional opening formula that results from the use of the call to guard the words, or rather the teaching arising from the very context of the instructions. This is substantiated in various manners by the sapiential instructions. The instructions begin with the wicked, and then in chapters 5–7 the strange woman is introduced.¹⁹³

The first instruction begins with the warning against wicked men that are identified as sinners (חטאים). Following 1:12, the men's behav-

190. These elements are a single call to attention, followed by the double call to guard, and then a fourfold call to attention, followed by the double call to guard.

191. Strack, *Die Sprüche*, 322.

192. Although a considerable amount of literature has appeared on Prov 1–9, previous scholarship has, as far as I know, not investigated this connection. For initial attempts in this direction, see the works by Yoder and Schäfer mentioned in n. 182.

193. Baumann, *Die Weisheitsgestalt*, 259.

ior leads to death. With the mention of the netherworld, Sheol, a term is encountered that also appears in the passages on the strange woman.¹⁹⁴ At the same time, the central terms דרך (“way,” 1:15) and ארח (“path,” 1:19) introduce the theme of the way.¹⁹⁵ This way thematic is taken up in the instruction of 3:1–12, where it is, however, connected to the relationship with YHWH. The statement from Prov 3:4: “Then you will find favor and good repute in the eyes of God and people” can then even be taken as the motto for the sapiential instructions. Emphasized in 3:5–12 is the relationship with YHWH, whom one trusts (3:5) and whom one should fear (3:7).

The instruction from 3:21–35 concretizes behavior toward other people. When competence and prudence are guarded (3:21), then the student of wisdom can sleep in peace (3:24b: “When you lie down, your sleep will be pleasant”) and must not fear the horror of “destruction of the wicked” (3:25).¹⁹⁶ The instruction of 4:1–9 emphasizes the importance of the wisdom that is passed from one generation to the next. By quoting the teaching of the grandfather (4:4–9), the idea of an almost personified form of wisdom (חכמה) comes to the fore.¹⁹⁷ Proverbs 4:10–19 connects with this in the sense that the “way of wisdom” in 4:11 is the direction given for the student of wisdom, to which the praise of wisdom in 4:1–9 alludes. The way thematic is formed here in relation to the wicked men, again recalling the theme of the first instruction (1:8–19). Proverbs 4:20–27 underlines the importance of the words of the instructor and develops the idea of a sapiential teaching of the body (heart, mouth, lips, eyes, eyelids, and feet: 4:23–26).¹⁹⁸ What follows is the first sapiential instruction concerning the strange woman (5:1–23), the theme that defines the subsequent two instructions (6:20–35; and 7:1–27). These are very detailed in terms

194. Maier, *Die “fremde Frau,”* 119–20 and 209.

195. Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 193 and 196; and on the topic as a whole, Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 52–54.

196. Müller, *Proverbien 1–9*, 169, describes the text as “ethical instruction,” referring to the inner connection between 3:21–26 and 27–35; this was overlooked by Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 39 and 41. See also Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 82–83, who conceives of 3:21–35 as a single instruction.

197. Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 165.

198. The sapiential instruction does not contain the topic of the “warning against that kind of wicked men” that Meinhold attempts to give it (*Die Sprüche*, 96); see Baumann, *Die Weisheitsgestalt*, 257.

of their configuration and much more elaborate than the first instructions with their rich imagery.¹⁹⁹

Therefore, in the sequence of the nine instructions, a thoroughly meaningful structure can be recognized that leads from a connection of wisdom to YHWH, to the praise of wisdom itself, and to the concretization of the “way,” whether it be in relation to the wicked men or in relation to the strange woman.²⁰⁰ This speaks in favor of the nine wisdom instructions in Prov 1–9* going back to one hand.²⁰¹ They are linked with one another through the opening formulas of the instructions such that they result in a meaningful sequence. However, there is no recurrent theme in the sense that a topic is unfolded at the beginning and then repeatedly developed. The instructions are instead marked by the fact that while they contain a line of thinking, it is shaped in various ways.

4.2.4. Proverbs 2 as the Table of Contents of the Instructions

Proverbs 2 was deliberately excluded from the analysis of the sapiential instructions, for the previous exegesis demonstrated that the instruction of Prov 2 differs in two ways from the other instructions. The text is (1) formulated in a conditional rather than imperative style, and (2) it contains many themes rather than just one. As a third argument, Prov 2 refers to the wisdom poem of Prov 8. This leads to the question of whether the citation in the first line of the instruction was a conscious decision, which would indicate that Prov 2 presupposes the entirety of the other instructions.

2:1	ומצותי תצפן אתך	אמרי	בני אם תקח
7:1	ומצותי תצפן אתך	אמרי	בני שמר
2:2	תטה לבך לתבונה	לחכמה אזנך	להקשיב
5:1	לתבונתי הט אזנך	קשיבה	בני לחכמתי

199. Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 237 and 252.

200. See also Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 12–13, whose concentric structure comes across as somewhat forced.

201. So also Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 12, with a discussion of the approach taken by Fox, who rejects this very idea.

2:3	לתבונה תתן קולך	תקרא	כי אם לבניה
8:1	ותבונה תתן קולה	תקרא	הלא חכמה

This overview receives its deeper sense in light of the phenomenon of textual coherence, developed in §1.3.3 of the present study. The material discussed there provides evidence on how texts were learned and memorized. As can be seen in Papyrus Anastasi I, especially the beginnings of wisdom instruction, the so-called incipit verses, were important. Evidently there was a method of reading in which the wisdom instructions were learned by means of the beginnings or rather their first lines. It was important to know the context of such verses and to memorize them, as is expressed by the phrase “to put it in your heart” in Papyrus Anastasi 11, 8.²⁰² It is precisely this literary technique that can be found in Egyptian wisdom literature from the Late period (Twenty-Fifth and Twenty-Sixth Dynasties).

This method is the key for the interpretation of the literary evidence mentioned above. For then the relationships between Prov 2 and the other texts would be interpreted as indicating that the author of the instruction of chapter 2 used a method of reading in which wisdom instructions are learned by means of the beginnings of their chapters, the incipit verses. The citations in Prov 2:1–3 would then be understood as referring to the entire instruction, and at the same time, this would form the background for reading Prov 2.²⁰³ This understanding presupposes an educational system in which the author as well as the reader of a text were familiar with a certain canon of texts. It also means that these texts were written for a rather small circle of literati that was familiar with the literature and could recognize the allusions or rather insertions of other texts. This would also provide an explanation for the frequent observation in secondary literature that Prov 2 is hardly concrete.²⁰⁴ Proverbs 2 presupposes the other instructions as a whole such that the effect of the chapter only unfolds on the backdrop of the nine sapiential instructions. Put in short, Prov 2 can

202. Fischer-Elfert, *Streitschrift*, 97 with n. 8 (*ḥtj-ḥr.jb*).

203. At this point it becomes clear how the model of “textual coherence” applied in the present work differentiates from previous approaches of “innerbiblical exegesis.” It concerns allusions to entire texts that can be contained in single verses.

204. Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 29; Whybray, *Composition*, 16; Yoder, *Proverbs*, 29.

be so devoid of images and concretizations because the other instructions in chapters 1–7 provide the concretization.

Three things stand out from these relationships: Proverbs 2 (1) only makes explicit reference to two of the remaining nine instructions in its introduction, (2) cites them in a different order (first Prov 7, then Prov 5), and with 8:1 extends beyond the corpus of the nine instructions. Every attempt to make this different order into a redaction-historical criterion must pay attention to the fact that the literary evidence could also be explained by the close relationship to Prov 7:

2:1	ומצותי תצפן אתך	אמרי	בני אם תקח
7:1	ומצותי תצפן אתך	אמרי	בני שמר
2:2	תטה לבך לתבונה	לחכמה אזנך	להקשיב
5:1	לתבונתי הט אזנך	קשיבה	בני לחכמתי
2:3	לתבונה תתן קולך	תקרא	כי אם לבינה
8:1	ותבונה תתן קולה	תקרא	הלא חכמה
2:16	מנכריה אמריה החליקה	מאשה זרה	להצילך
7:5	מנכריה אמריה החליקה	מאשה זרה	להצילך
2:18	ואל רפאים מעגלתי	מות ביתה	כי שחה אל
7:27	ירדות אל חדרי מות	ביתה	דרכי שאול

One gets the impression that the author of Prov 2 wrote his instruction after reading Prov 7, the last one of the nine instructions. This explains the different order, the citation of 7:1 in the first verse of Prov 2, and the close relationship between chapters 2 and 7.

Such importance for Prov 7 is confirmed by an attestation from Qumran. The (probably non-Essene) text 4Q184, also known as “The Wiles of the Wicked Woman,” shows strong connections to Prov 7 and underscores its importance. The text describes a feminine figure who presents a danger for the pious man.²⁰⁵ The text carries this out by means of an entire

205. David J. Harrington, “Two Early Jewish Approaches to Wisdom: Sirach and Qumran Sapiential Work A,” in *The Wisdom Texts from Qumran and the Development of Sapiential Thought: Studies in Wisdom at Qumran and Its Relationship to Sapiential Thought in the Ancient Near East, the Hebrew Bible, Ancient Judaism, and the New Tes-*

series of references linked with the both the verbal and thematic description of the strange woman in Prov 7. Examples are the woman's seductive speech (Prov 7:5, 21: חלק; see 4Q184, line 17: חלקות), her appearance at the city squares (Prov 7:12: ברחבות; see 4Q184, line 12: ברוחבות), and also the word ערש ("bed, camp") in Prov 7:16 and 4Q184, line 5.²⁰⁶ Analogous to the observed method in Prov 2 are the statements adopted from Prov 7 that are supplemented by other texts on the strange woman such as in 4Q184, lines 10–11 by Prov 5:5.²⁰⁷

But what is the significance of this evidence for the question of the composition of Prov 1–9 as a whole, especially when 2:3 refers to the wisdom poem of 8:1? Does this mean that one must envision a process in which the author of Prov 2 possibly had the nine sapiential instructions lying before him, inspiring him to compose his own instruction by using key verses from Prov 7 and references, including to Prov 8?

4.2.5. The Poems on Personified Wisdom in Proverbs 1:20–33; 3:13–20; 8:1–36; and the Nine Instructions

The aforementioned question can only be answered by an analysis of the other passages of Prov 1–9.²⁰⁸ Starting with Prov 8, which is quoted in 2:3, the question arises as to whether the chapter was written in the same breath as the instructions of Prov 1:8–7:27* or whether it presupposes the nine instructions. The question can only be answered by looking at the

tament, ed. Charlotte Hempel, Armin Lange, and Hermann Lichtenberger, BETL 159 (Leuven: Peeters, 2002), 34 is quite cautious. Armin Lange, "Die Weisheitstexte aus Qumran: Eine Einleitung," in Hempel, Lange, and Lichtenberger, *Wisdom Texts*, 10 and n. 43, on the other hand, rules out the possibility of Essene origins.

206. Scott C. Jones, "Wisdom's Pedagogy: A Comparison of Proverbs VII and 4Q184," *VT* 52 (2003): 76. See also Sidnie White Crawford, "Lady Wisdom and Dame Folly at Qumran," *DSD* 5 (1998): 360, who describes 4Q184 as "a pastiche of allusions to Proverbs 1–9." See also Bernd U. Schipper, "Von der 'fremden Frau' zu 'Frau Torheit': Metaphern in Prov 1–9 und in 4Q184," in *The Metaphorical Use of Language in Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature*, ed. Markus Witte and Sven Behnke, DCLY (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2015), 233–56.

207. This is somewhat lost in the analysis by Jones on the pedagogy of Prov 7 and 4Q184. See, on the other hand, Joseph M. Baumgarten, "On the Nature of the Seductress in 4Q184," *RevQ* 15 (1991–1992): 138.

208. Prov 1:1–7, 20–33; 3:13–20; 6:1–19; 8:1–36; 9:1–18.

connections between Prov 8 and the nine instructions and to the other two poems on personified wisdom in 1:20–33; and 3:13–20.

Already at first glance it becomes clear that Prov 8 shares only minor similarities with the nine instructions.²⁰⁹ Apart from the rather general subject of inclining to the teaching authority (the teacher or wisdom herself) or listening to it (שמע) in 8:6; and 4:1, 10, the only significant connection can be found in 8:32:²¹⁰

<i>But now, sons, listen to me!</i> Blessed are those who keep my way.	ועתה בנים שמעו־לי ואשרי דרכי ישמרו	8:32
<i>But now, sons, listen to me!</i> And give heed to <i>the words of my mouth</i> .	ועתה בנים שמעו־לי והקשיבו לאמרי־פי	7:24
<i>But now, sons, listen to me!</i> And do not turn aside from <i>the words of my mouth</i> .	ועתה בנים שמעו־לי ואל־תסורו מאמרי־פי	5:7

The formula *ועתה בנים שמעו־לי* (“but now, sons, listen to me”) appears verbatim in 8:32a; 7:24a; and 5:7a. In all three passages, *ועתה* (“but/and now”) and the imperative *שמעו־לי* (“listen to me”) have an intensifying function and introduce a new subunit.²¹¹ It is interesting how this phrase is continued in each passage: Proverbs 7:24b has a parallel expression (“and give heed to the words of my mouth”), while 8:32 continues with a blessing formula (“blessed are those who keep my ways”). The expression in 7:24b agrees almost verbatim with that in 5:7b. The two verses are identical apart from the verbs in the second half of each verse. 7:24b contains an adhortative of *קשב* *hiphil* (“to give heed”), while 5:7b contains a vetitive of the verb *סור* *qal* (“to turn aside, depart”). The two statements have the same meaning, only 7:24b is formulated positively while 5:7b is formulated negatively.²¹² Thus, 7:24 and 5:7 are much closer to each other than 8:32. It looks as if the author of Prov 8 used a coined phrase from the corpus of the instructions, probably alluding to the last instruction in Prov 7.

209. Baumann, *Die Weisheitsgestalt*, 249; and Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 404–5.

210. For a detailed analysis see Heim, *Poetic Imagination*, 141–48 (set 17).

211. See also Wildeboer, *Die Sprüche*, 14.

212. For this paragraph see Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 204.

In contrast to the few connections to the nine instructions in 1:8–7:27*, the similarities between Prov 8 and the two other poems on personified wisdom are on a different level. A number of shared terms can be found in Prov 8:1–36 and 1:20–33.²¹³

- ♦ “to call aloud” (רַנֵּן, 1:20a; 8:3)
- ♦ “raising one’s voice” (גִּתָּן קוֹל, 1:20b; 8:1)
- ♦ the location “at the head” and near the gate (1:21; 8:2–3)
- ♦ the address to the “inexperienced” (פֶּתְאִים) and “fools” (כְּסִילִים) in 1:22; and 8:5.
- ♦ the motif of the disregard for or spurning of instruction (פָּרַע; cf. 1:25; and 8:33)
- ♦ the verbs for seeking (שָׁחַר II) and finding (מָצָא) in 1:28; and 8:17
- ♦ the root בָּחַר (“to choose,” 1:29; 8:10, 19; *niph'al* in the latter)
- ♦ the notion that wisdom gives “advice” (עָצָה, 1:30; 8:14)
- ♦ the statement that good comes to the one who “listens” (שָׁמַע) to wisdom (1:33; 8:34, each with לִי “to me”)

Alongside these connections is an interesting shift in perspective that can be illustrated by comparing 1:28b and 8:17b. Both verses contain the rarely attested, complex verb form יִמְצְאוּנִי (“they will find me”). In contrast to the statement in 8:17 that the one who seeks wisdom also finds it, 1:28 emphasizes: “Then they will call me, but I will not answer, they will seek me but not find me.”

As has often been noted, here wisdom speaks in the voice of prophecy, addressing those who remain on the path of folly despite knowing better.²¹⁴ Proverbs 1:20–33 derives its urgency from Prov 8, where—in the eyes of the author of 1:20–33—everything has already been said. Thus, taking the evidence together, one can conclude that the poem on personified wisdom in 1:20–33 presupposes 8:1–36.²¹⁵

A similar close connection with Prov 8 can be found in 3:13–20. A series of terms appears that are only encountered at these two texts in Prov 1–9:

213. For the following overview see Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 88–89; and the detailed exegesis in Baumann, *Die Weisheitsgestalt*, 178–96.

214. See, e.g., Gregor Reichenbach, *Gültige Verbindungen: Eine Untersuchung zur kanonischen Bedeutung der innerbiblischen Traditionsbezüge in Sprüche 1–9*, ABIG 37 (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2011), 228–82 (ch. 6).

215. Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 56.

- ♦ the finding of wisdom (מצא = 8:9b, 17b, 35a = 3:13a)
- ♦ the comparison with valuables (8:10–11, 19 [gold, silver, precious stones] = 3:14 with the rare term חרוץ like in 8:10, 19)
- ♦ The praise of her ways (8:20, 32 = 3:17)
- ♦ the gift of riches and honor through wisdom (8:18 = 3:16 עשר)

This includes two close verbal similarities in 3:14 // 8:19 and 3:15 // 8:11:

For her earnings are <i>better than</i> earnings of <i>silver</i> , and <i>better than fine gold</i> is her yield.	כי טוב סחרה מסחר־כסף ומחרוץ תבואתה	3:14
My fruit is <i>better than fine gold</i> , even gold, and my yield <i>than</i> choice <i>silver</i> .	טוב פריי מחרוץ ומפז ותבואתי מכסף נבחר	8:19

Setting aside the different order of the terms in 3:14 and 8:19, similarities include (1) the “better-than” construction, (2) the terms כסף (“silver”) and חרוץ (“fine gold”), and (3) the rare word תבואה (“yield”). Apart from differences, both texts draw the same conclusion: the value of wisdom exceeds everything else that is regarded as valuable.²¹⁶

A similar statement can be found in two passages that correspond to each other almost word-for-word:²¹⁷

She is more precious <i>than pearls</i> , <i>and all your desirable things cannot equal her</i> .	יקרה היא מפנינים וכל־חפציד לא ישוֹבה	3:15
For wisdom is better <i>than pearls</i> , <i>and all desirable things cannot equal her</i> .	כי־טובה חכמה מפנינים וכל־חפצים לא ישוֹבה	8:11

The second half of each verse is identical apart from the second-person masculine singular suffix on the word חפצים (“desirable things”). In the first half of each verse, the term “pearls” (פנינים) and the comparative מן occur in each verse, although the beginning of each phrase is different. Both phrases articulate that wisdom’s value is incomparable to material things.²¹⁸

An important thematic connection between Prov 8 and the section of 3:13–20 is present in 3:19–20:

216. Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 142.

217. Heim, *Poetic Imagination*, 121–26 (set 13).

218. See also Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 143.

- (19) By wisdom YHWH founded the earth,
by understanding he established the heavens,
(20) By his knowledge, primeval waters burst open,
and clouds drip dew.

Within the entire book of Proverbs, 3:19–20 is the only place outside of Prov 8 that alludes to the creation of the world.²¹⁹ However, the two verses in chapter 3 place the accent differently than Prov 8. In Prov 8:22–31 wisdom is the mediator. She is present at the creation of the world and appears on a level between YHWH and humanity.²²⁰ Defined in this way, the wisdom figure mentioned in Prov 8 displays knowledge about the world order that includes both the cosmic as well as the human order. In Prov 3:19 wisdom instead clearly appears as an asset, or rather an ability.²²¹

The verses allude to creation through the triad of heavens (3:19b), earth (3:19a), and primeval water (3:20). Proverbs 3:19–20 name the fundamental elements of ancient Near Eastern cosmology. As a result, the conception here is not something like a partial aspect, but rather creation as a whole.²²² In the center is YHWH's creational action, which stands close to Ps 104:24 and Job 38:37.²²³ However, what importance is wisdom accorded? The question is decided through the interpretation of *בַּחֲכָמָה* in 3:19a. When one starts with Ernst Jenni in seeing “*b* with an abstract notion,” which characterizes the means with verbs of creation, then *חֲכָמָה* here would not be a personal entity.²²⁴ It would denote the skillful knowledge of the creation or an “asset or an ability.”²²⁵ Wisdom appears as a

219. The references in Prov 14:31; 17:5; and 22:2 (see 29:13) do not make statements about the creation of the world. They instead draw ethical conclusions from humanity's created nature; see Thomas Krüger, “Gott als Schöpfer der Armen im Proverbienbuch,” in *Weisheit und Schöpfung: Festschrift für James Alfred Loader zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Stefan Fischer and Marianne Grohmann, Wiener Alttestamentliche Studien 7 (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 2010), 169–78.

220. Baumann, *Die Weisheitsgestalt*, 151 and 250. On wisdom's mediating role in Prov 8 see Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 147, and Hitzig, *Die Sprüche*, 76.

221. On the following see Schipper, “Wissen,” 503.

222. Schäfer, *Die Poesie*, 86; different is Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 37.

223. Baumann, *Die Weisheitsgestalt*, 237–38.

224. Ernst Jenni, *Die hebräischen Präpositionen, Band 1: Die Präposition Beth* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1992), 142.

225. With Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 81; against Baumann, *Die Weisheitsgestalt*, 238.

“constructive principle” rather than personal as it is in Prov 8, even though the personal nature of wisdom is certainly heard in Prov 3:19–20.²²⁶

Even though Prov 3:13–20 as a text about personified wisdom is different than the poem of wisdom of Prov 8, literary evidence itself supports the assumption that the former was written on the backdrop of the latter. There is a direct verbal or thematic match in Prov 8 for every verse of 3:13–20 except 3:18.²²⁷ With regard to the redactional place of the three poems on personified wisdom in Prov 1–9, this means that one should differentiate between two levels, Prov 8 on the one hand and Prov 1:20–33 and 3:13–20 on the other. If one takes the similarity between 8:32 and 7:24 (5:7) as an intentional quotation, one would conclude that Prov 8 was written on the backdrop of the sapiential instructions. In addition, the similarities between Prov 8 and 1:20–33 and 3:13–20 lead to the conclusion that Prov 8 is the primary text for the two passages on personified wisdom in Prov 1 and 3.

This result leads to the conclusion that one should distinguish between three layers in the redaction history of Prov 1–9: the corpus of the instructions in 1:8–7:27*, the lengthy poem of personified wisdom in Prov 8, and the two poems depending on it in 1:20–33 and 3:13–20. At the beginning there were the nine instructions existing as an independent entity. It was then expanded at the beginning, end, and in the middle. A redactor placed Prov 2 at the front and added Prov 8. A second redactor composed the two texts in 1:20–33 and 3:13–20 on the backdrop of the lengthy poem of personified wisdom in Prov 8. At the same time, he masterfully placed the interlude in 3:13–20 in its literary context. The text displays connections to the instruction in 3:1–12 as well as to 3:21–35. This is the reason why some scholars connect 3:13–20 either to the third instruction (3:1–12) or to the fourth (3:21–35).²²⁸

The interesting point is that so far only a few connections to the remaining chapters of the book of Proverbs, especially to the so-called proverbial wisdom in Prov 10–22 can be found. The following analysis will

226. The constructive principle is according to the formulation by Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology, Volume 1: The Theology of Israel's Historical Traditions*, trans. David M. G. Stalker (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 461. On the personal nature, see Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 81–82.

227. Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 79, who highlights especially the similarities to 3:13, 14–15, 18.

228. E.g., Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 255; and Loader, *Proverbs 1–9*, 165.

show, however, that this changes significantly if one brings the remaining passages of Prov 1–9, the interlude in 6:1–19, and the frame in 1:1–7 and 9:1–18 into view. In short, as can be seen with Prov 2:3 and 8:1 and will be demonstrated with Prov 6:1–19, verses attested twice in the book of Proverbs (often called “twice-told proverbs”) have redaction-historical significance.²²⁹

4.2.6. The Interlude in 6:1–19 and Proverbs 10–31

Proverbs 6:1–19 presents different types of people. The passage can be divided into four subsections, each with its own theme.²³⁰ Proverbs 6:1–5 addresses the topic of the careless, 6:6–11 the lazy, 6:12–15 the scoundrel, and 6:16–19 the “model of depravity.” All four themes are closely connected with Prov 10–31. The theme of the careless is described, for example, through providing surety, which is also encountered in 11:15; 17:18; 20:16 (= 27:13); and 22:26–27.²³¹

For the three other themes, close parallels from Prov 10–31 can be found: 6:6–11 articulate the theme of the sluggard, mentioned nowhere else in Prov 1–9, but rather in 10:4–5, 26; 12:11, 24, 27, among others. The image of the ant in 6:6–8 appears otherwise in Proverbs only in 30:25.²³²

It secures its food in summer, gathering its nourishment at harvest time.	תכין בקיץ לחמה אגרה בקציר מאכלה	6:8
The ants, not a strong people, they secure their food in summer.	הנמלים עם לא עז ויכינו בקיץ לחמם	30:25

229. The investigation of this phenomenon for the entire book of Proverbs must be the object for another study. See the material evidence in the study by Snell, *Twice-Told Proverbs*.

230. On the outline see Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 108; Gemser, *Sprüche*, 37; Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 114; and Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 60–61. On the other hand, Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 328, subdivides it into only three sections (6:1–5, 6–11, 12–19), but he assumes that the final subsection consists of the combination of two originally independent strophes (6:12–15 + 16–19), so in the end he also arrives at four sections.

231. This is the consensus of scholarship; see Meinhold, *Sprüche*, 109; Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 213; and Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 331.

232. Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 217; Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 119; Snell, *Twice-Told Proverbs*, 49; and Heim, *Poetic Imagination*, 149–61 (set 18).

The close connection between these two passages is reinforced by the word נמלה (“ant”) in 6:6. The phrase תבין בקיץ לחמה (“it secures its food in summer”) in 6:8 corresponds verbatim to 30:25b apart from the different form of the verb. Both verses describe how the ant secures its food “in summer” (קיץ). Another parallel appears in 6:10–11.²³³

<i>A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest.</i>	מעט שנות מעט תנומות מעט חבק ידים לשכב	6:10
<i>A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest.</i>	מעט שנות מעט תנומות מעט חבק ידים לשכב	24:33
<i>And poverty comes like a vagrant, and your lack like a man of the shield.</i> ²³⁴	ובא כמהלך ראשך ומחסריך כאיש מגן	6:11
<i>And poverty comes like a vagrant, and your lack like a man of the shield.</i>	ובא מתהלך רישך מגן ומחסריך כאיש	24:34

This is the only example in the whole book of Proverbs where two successive verses are cited verbatim.²³⁵ The wisdom proverb from 24:33 is adopted exactly in 6:10. The same is the case for 24:34 in 6:11. Within Prov 24, 24:33–34 belong to the unit 24:30–34, which addresses the theme of the sluggard (24:30a).²³⁶

The passage on the useless person in 6:12–15 also shares terminology with a chapter from Prov 10–31.²³⁷

Who <i>squints his eyes</i> , scratches with his feet, gives signs with his fingers.	ברגלו מלל בעינו קרץ באצבעתיו מרה	6:13
Who winks (with) <i>his eyes</i> , plans perversities, who <i>purses</i> his lips (and) has carried out evil.	תהפכות לחשב עיניו עצה רעה כלה שפתיו קרץ	16:30

233. So already Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 183–84; see also Snell, *Twice-Told Proverbs*, 36; and Heim, *Poetic Imagination*, 161–67 (set 19).

234. On the translation of איש מגן and its meaning, see Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 228–30.

235. See the list in Snell, *Twice-Told Proverbs*, 35–59.

236. On the delimitation of 24:30–34, see Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 411; and Longman, *Proverbs*, 434–44.

237. Heim, *Poetic Imagination*, 166–74 (set 20).

<p>—<i>perversities</i> are in his heart—, who forges evil at all times, (and) who <i>sends out strife</i>.</p>	<p>רע חרש בלבו תהפכות ישלח מדנים בכל־עת</p>	6:14
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<p>A man of <i>perversities</i> will <i>send out strife</i>, and a slanderer cuts off a friend.</p>	<p>מדון ישלח תהפכות איש אלוף מפריד ונרגן</p>	16:28
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Even though we do not have verbal citations as in 6:10–11 and 24:33–34, the similarities do not seem accidental. Rather, the author of 6:1–19 intentionally drew on chapter 16 both thematically and through the use of particular keywords. Proverbs 6:13 takes up the negative motif of “squinting one’s eyes” (קרץ עינים) from 16:30, but expresses it differently (using קרץ, “to squint,” instead of עצה, “to wink,” as in 16:30).²³⁸ The verb קרץ (“to press together, squint”) appears in 16:30 with reference to the lips.²³⁹ In all cases a form of perverted communication is described.²⁴⁰

A similar connection both in terms of keywords and also a coined phrase can be found in 6:15:

<p>Therefore his <i>misfortune</i> will come <i>suddenly</i>; <i>in a moment he is crushed, and there is no healing</i>.</p>	<p>אידו יבוא פתאם על־כן מרפא ואין ישבר פתע</p>	6:15
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<p>For their <i>misfortune</i> will arise <i>suddenly</i>, and the calamity of both of them—who knows?</p>	<p>אידם יקום כִּי־פתאם יודע מי שניהם ופיד</p>	24:22
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<p>A man of corrections, who makes (his) neck stiff, <i>in a moment he is crushed, and there is no healing</i>.</p>	<p>מקשה־ערף תוכחות איש מרפא ואין ישבר פתע</p>	29:1
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Proverbs 6:15 is a combination of half verses from two different texts. Proverbs 6:15b is a quotation of 29:1b, and 6:15a draws on expressions from 24:22a.²⁴¹ These are the introductory and concluding verses of two different collections. Considering that 29:1 and 24:22 belong to different sections of the book of Proverbs, it is most likely that Prov 6:1–19 was written later in order to connect chapters 1–9* with chapters 10–29. This

238. Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 343.

239. On the range of attestations and meaning, see DCH 7:329–30, s.v. “קרץ.” See also Prov 10:10; Ps 35:19.

240. For further details see Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 230–31.

241. Snell, *Twice-Told Proverbs*, 42, 49; Schipper, “Phenomenon of ‘Textual Coherence,’” 118; and Heim, *Poetic Imagination*, 174–81 (no. 21).

can also be seen in 6:19, which refers to 14:5 (and thus to the so-called Solomonic collection in 10:1–22:16).

Similarities to Prov 10–31 can also be found for the final part of Prov 6:1–19. The section on the paragon of depravity (6:16–19) is shaped formally into a numerical proverb. Such a graduated numerical proverb appears only in one other passage of the book: Prov 30:15–33, the very section to which 6:6 alludes. A verbal similarity can be found 6:19 and 14:5:²⁴²

One who <i>blows</i> out lies (as a) false <i>witness</i> and spreads strife among brothers.	יפיח כזבום עד שקר ומשלח מדינים בין אחים	6:19
A trustworthy witness does not <i>lie</i> , but a <i>lying witness blows out falsehoods</i> .	עד אמונים לא יכזב ויפיח כזבים עד שקר	14:5

Proverbs 6:19a quotes 14:5b verbatim but develops a different idea. Unlike in 14:5, the author of 6:1–19 does not set up a contrast between two types of witnesses but instead focuses on a person who brings strife to the community or to a family.²⁴³ The public nature of the action is emphasized by the verb פוּח *hiphil*, which means “to blast, blow.”²⁴⁴

Drawing together the literary evidence, similarities to Prov 10–31 can be found for each passage of Prov 6:1–19. At the same time, there is thematic interweaving between 6:1–19 and the nine instructions from Prov 1:8–7:27*.²⁴⁵ The clearest is present in the theme of the wicked men. This is treated, if one includes 4:1–9, in eight texts: 1:10–14; 2:12–15; 3:21–35; 4:1–9, 10–19, 20–27; 5:21–23; and finally 6:1–19.²⁴⁶ Although 6:1–19 disrupts the coherent content of the instructions concerning the strange woman in chapters 5, 6, and 7, the piece fits well after the instructions of 5:1–23.²⁴⁷ Hitzig already pointed out the verbal and thematic commonalities between 6:1–5 and the end of chapter 5.²⁴⁸ Proverbs 6 links up with the somewhat unwieldy end of the eighth instruction in 5:21–23, which

242. Heim, *Poetic Imagination*, 181–87 (set 22).

243. Snell, *Twice-Told Proverbs*, 42. Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 115.

244. Friedrich V. Reiterer, “פוּח,” *TDOT* 11:504–8.

245. E.g., Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 133–35, who mentions a whole series of references, but under closer inspection they are hardly appropriate as support for the thesis that Prov 6:1–19 comes from the same author as the sapiential instructions (see Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 114).

246. This connection was convincingly mapped out by Meinhold, *Sprüche*, 109.

247. This is emphasized by Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 62.

248. Hitzig, *Die Sprüche*, 47. Even though Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 134–35 argues, “the

speaks of the wicked. If one reads 6:1–19 in sequence with 5:1–23, then the section comes off as an illustration of the “greatness of his folly” mentioned in 5:23.²⁴⁹

This is important in two ways for the redactional place of 6:1–19. The verbatim citations invariably concern passages from outside of Prov 1–9, while there are only thematic allusions and connections of keywords with the other sections of Prov 1–9. The thematic allusions concern the topic of the wicked men, while the keywords are linked to 5:1–23. This indicates that the section of 6:1–19, in agreement with previous scholarship, should be identified as a redactional addition that was later inserted between the eighth and ninth instruction.²⁵⁰ This addition was to emphasize the theme of the foolish men more strongly and to establish a transition to the following parts of the book of Proverbs. The citation-like allusions clearly show that 6:1–19 not only presupposes the sections of 10:1–22:16 and 22:17–24:22 of the book of Proverbs, but also the collection of 24:23–34 and chapter 30.²⁵¹ However, to what degree does this mean that the connection between Prov 1–9* and the rest of the book of Proverbs was first realized within the framework of the overall redaction of the book and that 6:1–19 was inserted by this redaction of the book?

4.2.7. The Frame in 1:1–7 and 9:1–18 within the Book of Proverbs

The aforementioned question must be answered by an evaluation of the frame of the first part of the book of Proverbs, Prov 1–9. If one begins with chapter 9, then the first verse already indicates a comparable situation with 6:1–19. There is a literary parallel to a passage of Prov 10–22:²⁵²

points of contact are not prominent,” there is a form of thematic interweaving that could hardly be coincidental. Differently Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 226, who follows Delitzsch.

249. Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 108. See also Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 328, who speaks of an “appendix to the father’s Lecture 8.”

250. Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 324; Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*; Clifford, *Proverbs*, 72–73; Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 62.

251. On 24:23–34 as a separate unit see Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 409; and Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 5.

252. Snell, *Twice-Told Proverbs*, 45; Heim, *Poetic Imagination*, 192–201 (set 24). The similarity to 24:3, on the other hand, is not as close, though it too mentions the building of the house and wisdom; see Maier, *Die “fremde Frau,”* 229.

<i>Wisdom has built her house; she has hewn her seven pillars.</i>	חכמות בנתה ביתה חצבה עמודיה שבעה	9:1
<i>The wisdom of women has built her house, but folly tears it down with her hands.</i>	חכמות נשים בנתה ביתה ואולת בידיה תחרסנו	14:1

The first halves of the verses exhibit clear similarities.²⁵³ Omitted from 9:1 is only the further description of wisdom as “the wisdom of women” in 14:1 (חכמות נשים).²⁵⁴ In חכמות there is the same sequence of consonants but with a different vocalization: one is in a genitive construction, while the other is used as an absolute.²⁵⁵ If the direction of dependence is to be conceived as 9:1 referring to 14:1 and not the reverse, then this would be an indication that the framing chapter 9 is also formed upon the backdrop of the so-called proverbial wisdom in Prov 10–22.²⁵⁶ Furthermore, if one reads 9:1 on the backdrop of 14:1, the characteristic contrast between wisdom and folly is hidden already in the first verse of Prov 9.

The chapter itself divides into three parts, of which the first (9:1–6) and the last (9:13–18) portray two contrasting female figures.²⁵⁷ In the first it is Lady Wisdom, in the second Dame Folly. Both appear on the heights (9:3, 14) in order to announce their message from there to those passing by. The messages, which each follow an introduction (9:1–3; 9:13–15), are identical:

<i>Whoever is inexperienced, turn aside here. To the one who lacks sense she speaks.</i>	מי פתי יסר הנה חסר לב אמרה לו	9:4
<i>Whoever is inexperienced, turn aside here, and to the one who lacks sense she speaks.</i>	מי פתי יסר הנה וחסר לב ואמרה לו	9:16

253. Already seen by Hitzig, *Die Sprüche*, 82; see Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 431; Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 297; and Yoder, *Proverbs*, 104.

254. However, it likely concerns a later addition; see Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 166; and Maier, *Die “fremde Frau,”* 229.

255. The plural חכמות is also used in Prov 1:20; see Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 197, esp. n. 1; and Maier, *Die “fremde Frau,”* 217.

256. Frankenberg, *Die Sprüche*, 61, already saw ch. 9 as an “introduction to the following, chs. 10ff” (“eine Einleitung zum folgenden CA. 10ff.”); see also Clifford, *Proverbs*, 102.

257. Maier, *Die “fremde Frau,”* 217; Baumann, *Die Weisheitsgestalt*, 200; Clifford, *Proverbs*, 101; Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 150–51 with a presentation of the structure.

The phrase “Whoever is inexperienced” has a different accent in each of the wisdom poems.²⁵⁸ In the first it refers to “Lady Wisdom,” who has built her house (9:1) and calls out (9:3). In the second it refers to “Dame Folly” (9:13), who also calls out (9:15). An antithesis is established between the calls of wisdom and folly by means of the direct speech that marks the content of the respective addresses.²⁵⁹ As a result it does not appear that one of the female figures is placed above the other. Rather than superordinating one of the female figures above the other, the direct speech in 9:4 and 9:16 indicates that the two women are located on the same level.

Interesting for the connection with Prov 10–31 is the second part of Prov 9. Similar to 6:1–19, Prov 9:7–12 contains sayings that anticipate the proverbial wisdom of Prov 10–31: Prov 9:7 is a declarative proverb containing synonymous parallelism; 9:8 is an admonition with an antithetic parallelism; 9:9 is an admonition containing synonymous parallelism; 9:10 is a synonymous declarative proverb; and 9:11 is the justification of an admonition, thus connecting back to 9:8 and 9:9. Finally, 9:12 is a declarative proverb, constructed by two antithetic conditional clauses.²⁶⁰ Through its stylistic variation, this interlude looks ahead to the proverbial wisdom in chapters 10–22.

The double focus of Prov 9 as a transition piece from the first part of the book of Proverbs to its second part can be seen in the connection of the chapter to Prov 1–8. In its present form, Prov 9:1–18 presupposes the corpus of the instructions, the wisdom poem of Prov 8, and Prov 2 as the “table of contents” introducing Prov 3–8.

The death imagery from 2:18–19; 5:5; and 7:26–27 is encountered in 9:18.²⁶¹ The theme of “life” and the way of “insight” (בִּינָה) from 9:6 takes up 2:3 and 2:18. Analogous to Prov 2, the imagery of the way plays a central role in the speeches of Lady Wisdom (9:1–6, דֶּרֶךְ) and Dame Folly (9:13–18).²⁶² The formulation in 9:15 “those who make their paths straight” (הַמִּישְׁרִים)

258. Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 328, 337.

259. Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 106; Yoder, *Proverbs*, 103; Clifford, *Proverbs*, 103, who stresses that the invitations from the two feminine figures are not constructed with exact symmetry.

260. Magne Sæbø, *Sprüche*, ATD 16 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011), 141; Schäfer, *Die Poesie*, 243; and Loader, *Proverbs 1–9*, 379–80.

261. Maier, *Die “fremde Frau,”* 217; Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 446; and already Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 205–7.

262. See the list of the terms in Maier, *Die “fremde Frau,”* 219.

אֲרָחוֹת) links to the central terms אֶרֶץ and יִשְׂרָאֵל from Prov 2.²⁶³ In addition there are allusions to the other first-person speeches by wisdom as well as the theme of the strange woman. Wisdom also appears in public squares in 1:20 and 8:1–3 (see 9:3, 14), and the key word פְּתָאִים (“the inexperienced”) from 9:4, 6 can also be found in 8:5. Individual lexemic relationships occur in 9:13–18 with the instruction on the strange woman in Prov 7.²⁶⁴ Like this woman, Dame Folly is “restless” (הַמִּיָּה, 9:13; cf. 7:11). As in chapter 7, her actions target the person who “passes by” (עֹבֵר, 9:15; cf. 7:8), and as in 7:27, the house of the seductive woman is connected directly to Sheol (שְׁאוֹל; cf. 9:18). In addition, the imagery of eating and drinking has erotic overtones (9:17; cf. 7:18; 5:15), even if, unlike in chapter 7, sexual themes are not dominant in Prov 9:13–18. Rather, Dame Folly represents a path that is diametrically opposed to the way of wisdom. While the way of wisdom leads to life (9:6), the way of Dame Folly leads to death (9:18). These connections to the subject of the strange woman are underlined in the Septuagint, which adds four verses that emulate 5:15–17 and 6:25 after 9:18.²⁶⁵

The previously mentioned literary connections indicate that the anti-thetically designed passages on Lady Wisdom and Dame Folly in 9:1–6 and 9:13–18 were formed not only on the backdrop of Prov 10–31, but also presuppose Prov 1–8*. Among the relationships to the first collection, those to Prov 2 and to the other first-person speeches of wisdom are especially striking.²⁶⁶ Verbatim citations from Prov 1–8 do not appear in the two sections. This is significant because the remaining section of chapter 9, 9:7–12, offers such literal citations.

The section contains individual proverbs that could also stand alone and that as a consequence of the small formal proverbs “in a small space” refer to Prov 10–29.²⁶⁷ Proverbs 9:7–12 apparently has quite a similar liter-

263. See §2.2 above.

264. See the list in Maier, *Die “fremde Frau,”* 230; and van Leeuwen, “Proverbs,” 100–101.

265. Tan Nam Hoon, *Foreignness*, 130–32.

266. The tradition-historical relationships with other Hebrew Bible texts cannot be investigated at this juncture. See Maier, *Die “fremde Frau,”* 227–28, who draws attention to the similarities in terminology and content between the banquet scene of 9:1–6 and Isa 65:11–15.

267. Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 167; and Yoder, *Proverbs*, 103. The textual history also points to this sequence of the smallest units. One Hebrew manuscript (Kennicott, no. 166) does not include 9:9–10, and another (no. 45) omits 9:10–12 (Plöger, *Sprüche*

ary function to 6:1–19. Especially striking are the literal parallels to two texts from Prov 1–9: in 9:11 to 4:10; and in 9:10 to 1:7:

For through me your days will be many, and <i>years of life</i> will be added <i>for you</i> .	כי בי ירבו ימֵיך מות ויוסיפו לך שנות חיים	9:11
Hear, my son, and accept my words; then (the) <i>years of life</i> will be many <i>for you</i> .	שמע בני וקח אמרי וירבו לך שנות חיים	4:10

The idea that years of life will be added is found in both verses. The verbs in the second half of each verse differ (רבה, “to be many,” in 4:10; and יסף, “to add,” in 9:11), with 9:11 taking up the verb יסף (“to add”) from 9:9. Whoever becomes wise and adds learning will also have years added to one’s life. Here, the third-person masculine plural should be understood as an impersonal subject; precisely who gives years of life to the wisdom student is not explicitly stated.²⁶⁸ The connection to 4:10 is yet another case in which the opening verse of an instruction is cited. Unlike 9:1 and 14:1, it is not a quotation of a half verse but only of a particular expression.²⁶⁹

Also of interest are the commonalities with Prov 1. These concern diverse terminological similarities as well as the statement from 9:8–9 that the wise and just can further the teaching of others through his instruction (1:5).²⁷⁰ The closest parallel is with 9:10, which adopts the motto of the book from 1:7:

<i>The beginning of wisdom is the fear of YHWH,</i> and knowledge of the holy is insight.	תחלת חכמה יראת יהוה ודעת קדשים בינה	9:10
<i>Fear of YHWH is the beginning of knowledge.</i> (but) fools despise wisdom and discipline.	יראת יהוה ראשית דעת חכמה ומוסר אוילים בזו	1:7

Salomos, 104). See also Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 156, with a diagram of the structure (9:7–9, 10–12).

268. For understanding the 3mp as impersonal, see Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 203; Schäfer, *Die Poesie*, 233 n. 923; and Müller, *Proverbien 1–9*, 253 n. 2.

269. Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 334.

270. Maier, *Die “fremde Frau,”* 218; Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 440–41; and Hitzig, *Die Sprüche*, 85–86.

Proverbs 9:10a cites the motto of the book of Proverbs (1:7) and is identical with 1:7a except for its use of a different term for “beginning” (ראשית in 1:7; תחלה in 9:10).²⁷¹ The basic consideration and the formula of the fear of God as the beginning of wisdom (in 9:10 חכמה, in 1:7 דעת) match.²⁷² Through the use of the formulation “knowledge of the holy” (דעת קדשים) in 9:10, a further relationship is established. The rare expression “knowledge of the holy” occurs again in Prov 30:3, where the suppliant states that he has not learned wisdom and has not attained “knowledge of the holy” (דעת קדשים). In light of the uniqueness of this expression, some sort of connection between 9:10 and 30:3 must be assumed. Another connection is with 2:5, which refers to “knowledge of God” (דעת אלהים). In 2:5, this expression stands in parallel with the fear of YHWH (יראת יהוה).²⁷³

When one considers that 9:10 forms not only the center of the transitional piece of 9:7–12 but also of chapter 9 in its present form, then these relationships with chapters 1 and 30 can hardly be coincidental.²⁷⁴ Instead two lines appear to be extracted here that extend to the beginning and the end of the book of Proverbs.

When one brings together the evidence sketched out so far, then three results can be concluded for Prov 9. The chapter evokes the impression of compositional growth (9:7–12), but all three sections (9:1–6, 7–12, 13–18) show relationships with Prov 1–8* and 10–29, and in the case of 9:7–12 also with Prov 30.²⁷⁵ However, the forms of the relationships allow for the recognition of two different orientations. (1) The sections of 9:1–6 and 9:13–18 contain verbal allusions to Prov 10–29 and thematic ones to 1–8; (2) 9:7–12 on the other hand have thematic and verbal relationships in both directions and therefore to the entire book of Proverbs.

With regard to the connections with Prov 1–8*, especially striking are the relationships to the thematic complex of the strange woman as well as to the speeches of personified wisdom and to Prov 2. The con-

271. Sæbø, *Sprüche*, 140; and Heim, who also refers to 15:33 (*Poetic Imagination*, 51–61 [set 1]).

272. This was already noted by Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 203, and has since been repeatedly recognized.

273. Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 332.

274. See also Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 162, who speaks of “formal-content lines of reference” (“formal-inhaltlichen Bezugslinien”).

275. The verses 9:7–12 are often seen as a secondary insertion in ch. 9: see Gemser, *Sprüche*, 51; McKane, *Proverbs*, 359; Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 104–6; Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 155–58; Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 306–7.

trast between Lady Wisdom and Dame Lady Folly in 9:1–6 and 9:13–18 must be read in light of the poems on personified wisdom in 1:20–33 and 8:1–36. However, the idea of personified wisdom is first linked to the theme of the strange woman in chapter 9. She no longer appears as a “strange woman” (אִשֶּׁה זָרָה), but rather as “Dame Folly.” Therefore, she is a personification of the behavior and ideas that the strange woman in Prov 1–9 represents.²⁷⁶ As a result, Prov 9—reading the chapter on the backdrop of Prov 2—takes up and intensifies the antithesis from chapter 2 with its contrast of the two ways.

As a result, a change takes place in the conception of wisdom. While Wisdom in Prov 2 is related to YHWH, she appears on her own in the first wisdom poem of chapter 9 and is juxtaposed antithetically to the likewise independently acting Dame Folly. A tendency appears to describe wisdom and folly as independent, in each case efficacious entities, thereby establishing a contrast picked up by the wisdom texts from Qumran. A development becomes recognizable in which the strange woman first poses a threat to the student of wisdom and not to wisdom itself. Then the two move onto the same plane, where personified wisdom and personified folly act in the same manner (Prov 9).

As a whole the analysis indicates that Prov 9 is a later addition to the first collection. The text should probably be assigned to the latest redactional level of the book of Proverbs. The relationships to chapter 1 show that this also concerns the first chapter of the book of Proverbs, including the motto in 1:7.

4.3. Conclusion: Proverbs 2 and the Composition of Proverbs 1–9

The analysis of the connections between Prov 2 and the other texts of the book of Proverbs have led to a twofold result. From a methodological perspective, several examples of textual coherence were found, such as explicit relationships to written texts in the form of specific citations. Especially the introduction in 2:1–3 refers back to two different text genres: the instructions in chapters 1–7* and the wisdom poem in chapter 8. The reference to the instructions concurrently signifies the two themes of the second part of Prov 2: the wicked men and the strange woman. The two themes serve to concretize the instructions in Prov 1–7. As a result, Prov 2:1–3

276. Maier, *Die “fremde Frau,”* 249.

stakes out a rather broad horizon that presupposes an entire series of other texts. The author of the instruction apparently applied a literary operation that was at home in the education setting. Wisdom instructions would be memorized by means of the beginnings of the chapters. The relationships to the introductory verses from other texts in Prov 1–8 are, therefore, to be understood not only in the sense of textual coherence but also in the sense that chapter 2 would call these texts to mind for the reader.

This illustrates the shortcomings of the thesis of Prov 2 as a table of contents. The text offers something like reading instructions whose actual intention remains to be presented in detail. Proverbs 2 develops a specific understanding of wisdom as the key for the other instructions in Prov 1–7* as well as the wisdom poem from Prov 8. This can be seen if one looks for the thematic connections:²⁷⁷

Proverbs 2

1–4	Learning wisdom means orienting oneself toward sapiential instruction	4:1–9
5–8	YHWH gives wisdom (the human–divine relationship)	3:1–12
9–11	Whoever has learned wisdom will be protected...	3:21–35 (cf. 4:20–27)
12–15	(1) from the evil men	4:10–19 (1:8–19)
16–19	(2) from the strange woman	5:1–23; 6:20–35; 7:1–27
20–22	Antithesis between the righteous and the wicked (two ways)	(cf. 4:10–19, 20–27)

On the one hand, Prov 2 addresses the subjects of the following instructions, but these subjects do not follow the same order as the instructions in chapters 3–7. Rather, the author of chapter 2 arranged these themes to fit his own argument. In so doing, he evened out certain thematic imbalances within the eight instructions. Thus the sections on the wicked men (2:12–15) and the strange woman (2:16–19) both consist of four verses, even though these two themes are not treated in equal detail in chapters 3–7. While the evildoers are mentioned only in the instruction in 4:10–19 (see also the allusion to them in 4:20–27), the strange woman is the sub-

277. The following paragraph is taken from Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 52–53.

ject of three extensive instructions (Prov 5–7). It seems that the author of chapter 2 adjusted this imbalance by quoting the opening verses of two different instructions on the strange woman (5:1; 7:1). In light of the additional connections to Prov 7 (2:16 // 7:5; 2:18 // 7:27), it seems that the instructions on the strange woman are of particular importance in Prov 2.

This becomes even clearer in light of the literary connection to Prov 8:1 in 2:3. By alluding to two instructions on the strange woman (7:1; 5:1) as well as to the speech of Lady Wisdom in chapter 8, the first three verses of chapter 2 set up a contrast that is redactionally significant: the invitation of the strange woman versus that of personified wisdom. This contrast in 2:1–3 corresponds to the contrast between the instructions on the strange woman in chapters 5–7 and the wisdom poem in chapter 8. By adding the (likely originally independent) wisdom poem in chapter 8 to the corpus of the eight instructions (chs. 3–7), the author of chapter 2 set up a contrast between the strange woman and Lady Wisdom, which is taken up by the (redactional) chapter of Prov 9. This contrast also results in an idea that acquires deeper meaning in light of the eight instructions in Prov 3–7*.

When bringing the insights into the composition of Prov 1–9 together, three basic literary stages can be differentiated.

(1) The starting point is formed by the corpus of instructions ([1:8–19]; 3:1–12; 4:1–9, 10–19, 20–27; 5:1–23; 6:20–35; 7:1–27), which were compiled by one author. He created a connection through the instructions' opening formulae, in each case by using the first verse to reference the previous instruction. The author thereby tied in a form of the sapiential instruction that is also found in Egyptian instructions for life. Their starting point is the introduction of the sapiential instruction that unfolds in three rhetorical steps (introduction—main body—conclusion). A connection is established on the basis of the introductory verses in the nine instructions of Prov 1–7* that create an instructional discourse in the same manner as was seen in Egyptian scribal texts. Specific texts are outlined for the student of wisdom to work through. This discourse of the instructions probably existed as an independent text corpus and was not composed with Prov 10–31 in mind.

A question of its own is whether the first instruction, Prov 1:8–19, was originally part of the corpus of instructions.²⁷⁸ The passage on the evildoers and their deceptive speech is closely connected with the first chapter of

278. For a more detailed argument, see Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 73–76, 84–85.

the book of Proverbs. It forms a masterful unit together with the prologue of the book of Proverbs in 1:1–7 and the poem on personified wisdom in 1:20–33. The composite nature of Prov 1:8–19 can already be seen from its beginning. Proverbs 1:8 is the only introductory verse of an instruction that can be fully explained by quotations from other introductory verses: Proverbs 1:8a matches 4:1a, and 1:8b is identical with 6:20b. The different horizon of Prov 1:8–19 is marked by connections to Prov 16:29, the world of the psalms, and a nearly exact citation of Isa 59:7 in Prov 1:16. In sum, a number of arguments lead to the conclusion that the instruction of Prov 1:8–19 is a later addition and should not be seen as part of the original corpus of the instructions. Thus, one should rather speak of eight instructions in 3:1–7:27.

(2) The next stage within the formation of the first collection of the book of Proverbs is Prov 2. The direct citations provide evidence that Prov 2 was composed on the backdrop of chapters 3–7. The chapter presents something like an introduction to the instructions, in that it combines these originally open discourses with a specific understanding of wisdom. Wisdom comes from YHWH; it comes from his mouth. According to Prov 2, three factors can help one toward a life that pleases YHWH: (1) the instruction of the wisdom teacher, (2) adopting it and striving toward it on the part of the student of wisdom, as well as (3) YHWH's action.²⁷⁹ Comparing this with Prov 8's declaration that wisdom acts independently casts light on both the difference and the further development of the thought. Various understandings of wisdom appear in Prov 3–8* that are connected with one another through the placement of Prov 2 at the beginning. As a result, this adopted the (likely previously independent) wisdom poem of Prov 8 and made a connection in content with 3:13–20. The redaction thereby established a thematic link to Prov 8 that has the effect of a continuation of the previous instructions in its immediate literary context (specifically, of 3:1–12 in 3:13–20).

(3) It appears that the next step within the redaction of Prov 1–9 was the expansion of the corpus of 2:1–8:36* at its beginning and end, in addition to the supplementation of certain passages. This concerns the following sections: 6:1–19; 9:1–18; and chapter 1 with 1:1–7, 8–19, and 20–33. These sections have different functions and are themselves in vari-

279. Fox, "Pedagogy," 242, with reference to the medieval commentary on the book of Proverbs by Sa'adia Gaon, which has a similar emphasis.

ous relationships with one another. Yet, one may conclude that not all of them can be assigned to one redactional hand. A number of arguments support the assumption that Prov 1:1–7, 6:1–19, and 9:7–12 should be connected with the final redaction of the book of Proverbs itself.²⁸⁰

There are clear connections between 6:1–19 and the corpus of proverbs of Prov 10–22. At the same time, Prov 9 refers back to Prov 1 but also forward to Prov 30. This illustrates that this redaction linked the corpus of Prov 3–8* introduced by Prov 2 with the rest of the book of Proverbs.

The composition of Prov 1 is important for the function of Prov 2. Initial indication of this arises from the previously mentioned literary reference in 1:3 to 2:9. The author of chapter 1 apparently adopted the triad צדק ומשפט ומישרים (“righteousness and justice and uprightness”) in 2:9, but placed the accent differently on the basis of the first half of the verse (לקחת מוסר השכל, “to accept discipline that effects prudence”). The word “discipline” (מוסר), which does not appear in Prov 2, is placed in front of the other terms. The word מוסר appears as a quasi-keyword in the context of Prov 1. It is used four times in the first eight verses alone (Prov 1:2, 3, 7, 8).²⁸¹ The wisdom poem of 1:20–33 was also created in the course of this operation.²⁸² The wisdom figure herself, named explicitly in 1:20–33 and in chapter 9, moves into focus through this introduction. This results in a shift in emphasis. It begins with the motto in Prov 1:7 and concludes with the overall composition of chapter 1 and its significance for chapter 2. The motto in 1:7, “The fear of YHWH is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline,” contrasts with the fear of YHWH in 2:5. There, the fear of YHWH results from obedience to the wisdom instruction. In one case, the fear of YHWH stands at the beginning of cognition; in the other, a type of wisdom (חכמה) that holds it possible to understand with the heart, from which the fear of YHWH then results. Beginning with 1:7, the remainder of chapter 1 reads like a counterposition to Prov 2 according to which “wisdom” is incomprehensible. In chapter 1 the student of wisdom sees himself as subject to great dangers (1:8–19, the wicked men), and wisdom as a separate entity (1:20–33). Fol-

280. Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 58–59.

281. See the overall range of evidence in *HALOT* 1:557, s.v. “מוֹסֵר”; and Gesenius, *Handwörterbuch*, s.v. “מוֹסֵר,” 644.

282. Different is Baumann, *Die Weisheitsgestalt*, 257–58, who identifies the core of Prov 1–9 as the ten wisdom instructions and the two speeches of personified wisdom (1:8–8:36).

lowing this interpretation, the speech of the scoffers (לצים) and the fools (בסילים) in 1:22 as well as those by the fools (אוילים) in 1:7b serve as a counter to the assertion of chapter 2, according to which acquisition of wisdom is quite possible and a life in accordance with the will of YHWH can be realized.²⁸³ This matches with the contrast between the call of wisdom in 1:21 and the call of the student of wisdom in 2:3 for insight (in each case תקרא).²⁸⁴ Through the composition of chapter 1 and the aforementioned themes, Prov 2 appears to be an explication of the preceding section. The instruction of chapter 2 no longer has the effect of an introduction to the subsequent sapiential instructions. It is instead an unfolding of the topic of the wicked men (1:8–19) along with the final verse of the first chapter, in which personified wisdom says: “But the one who listens to me will dwell [שכן] in security and in peace, without dread of disaster” (1:33).²⁸⁵ The topic of dwelling is taken up in Prov 2:21, again with the verb שכן.²⁸⁶

The programmatic character of Prov 2 is considerably reduced as a result. The composition of the instruction of 1:8–19 is therefore part of a redactional operation that consciously moves Prov 2 to the second position in order to establish a different understanding for wisdom. This is achieved by highlighting the theme of the wicked man.

Chapter 9 was also created in this redactional process with its sharp contrast between personified wisdom and Dame Folly. A thematic thread appears that highlights the limits of wisdom by contrasting it to an equal power—Dame Folly. The analysis of the interrelationships has shown that Prov 9 exhibits connections to Prov 30–31, such that there is no problem in combining both texts and with them the final redaction of Prov 1–9 with the book of Proverbs as a whole.²⁸⁷

283. The three terms have different semantics, but they uniformly refer to the “fools,” who resist better knowledge against the ideals of wisdom; see Fox, *Proverbs* 1–9, 40–41; Gesenius, *Handwörterbuch*, s.vv. “אִילִי,” 23; “בְּסִילִי,” 561; “לִץ,” 614.

284. Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 72.

285. Umbreit, in his interpretation of Proverbs from 1826, already emphasizes that ch. 2 appears as a “new exhortation to wisdom” from the background of ch. 1 (*Commentar*, 14).

286. Toy, *Proverbs*, 29.

287. In an article from 1948, Patrick W. Skehan was one of the first to point out the connection between ch. 9 and chs. 30–31 (“A Single Editor for the Whole Book of Proverbs,” *CBQ* 10 [1948]: 115–30). It also comprises references between the “woman of strength” in 31:10–31 and Prov 8, see Camp, *Wisdom*, 186; Christine Roy Yoder, *Wisdom as a Woman of Substance: A Socioeconomic Reading of Proverbs 1–9 and*

This introduces a broader scope of inquiry as a result. The aforementioned aspects move the focus to the question of the final redaction of the book of Proverbs and the parameters of the content that take effect in this redaction. The preceding analysis of Prov 1–9 cannot be separated from considerations of content. However, to what degree can this be attached to the topic recognized as important for Prov 2: the connection to Deuteronomy? When connecting the results of this chapter with the discussion in previous scholarship on Proverbs and Deuteronomy, the analysis of the intention of the aforementioned redactional layers becomes important. To what degree do specific passages of the book of Proverbs refer to the book of Deuteronomy, and did this affect the literary formation of Proverbs?

31:10–31, BZAW 304 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2001), 102–3; and the table in Fox, *Proverbs 10–31*, 908–9.

The Hermeneutics of Torah: Deuteronomy and Proverbs

The present investigation began with an analysis of Prov 2 and moved to insights on the entanglement of this chapter with other traditions and to questions on the redaction and composition of the book of Proverbs as a whole. The results have shown on one hand that Prov 2 exhibits clear links to Prov 1–9, and these often go beyond the frequent attempt to align the text with the so-called ten instructions. The chapter is also connected with the poem of personified wisdom in Prov 8 and the entire introduction in chapter 1. On the other hand, Prov 2 contains allusions to texts outside of the book of Proverbs and especially from the book of Deuteronomy. The following discussion will combine these two perspectives, taking up the links to Deuteronomy and connecting them with the question of the composition and redaction of the book of Proverbs. This begins with the term *torah* (§5.1), before investigating the allusions and references to Deuteronomy that appear in the book of Proverbs (§5.2) and then moving to questions concerning redaction and composition history (§5.3).

5.1. “Torah” in the Postexilic Period

The tradition-historical analysis has shown that the book of Deuteronomy is of considerable importance for the interpretation of the instructions in Prov 1–7 in general and Prov 2 in particular. As already shown by scholars in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the references to *torah* (תורה) in 1:8; 3:1; 4:2; 6:20, 23; 7:2 and to Deuteronomistic tradition in Prov 2 point to a deeper dimension of the

sapiential instruction.¹ Before analyzing the reception of Deuteronomy in the book of Proverbs, the meaning of *torah* (תורה) in the postexilic period must be clarified.

An initial hint can be found in the Psalms. In Pss 119 and 19, which share similarities with Prov 2 and 8, *torah* refers to the divine law but without mentioning exactly what this means. In the postexilic period, *torah* (תורה) is a multifaceted term that can refer to both a dynamic concept and a fixed entity.² Both aspects can be illustrated by Ps 1.³

(1) Blessed is the one who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked [רשעים], nor stand in the way of sinners [חטאים], nor sit in the assembly of scoffers [לצים], (2) but has his delight at the torah of YHWH [תורת יהוה] (and) meditates [הגה] upon it day and night.

The psalm displays wisdom terminology such as the “way” imagery and the terms רשעים (“wicked”) and לצים (“scoffers”). The expression of 1:2, that one delights (חפץ) in the torah of YHWH and should meditate upon it (הגה), emphasizes both the emotional and cognitive sides.⁴ Both aspects, the outer, aiming at intellectual engagement with torah, and the inner, making it into a matter of the heart, presuppose a written torah. These are the two features connected with the term “torah” in the postexilic period—a fixed entity in the sense of the (available written) law and a rather dynamic concept related to the way of life as a whole.⁵

1. For scholars in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, see Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 35; Kuenen, *Godsdienst*, 456; and the overview in Smend, “Wisdom in Nineteenth-Century Scholarship,” 262–63.

2. This is emphasized for Ps 119 by Arnold, “Die Einladung,” 402–4.

3. On the psalm’s double torah statement with its emotional and cognitive sides, see Bernd Janowski, “Wie ein Baum an Wasserkanälen: Psalm 1 als Tor zum Psalter,” in *Sieben Augen auf einem Stein* (Sach 3,9): *Festschrift für Ina Willi-Plein zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Friedhelm Hartenstein and Michael Pietsch (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2007), 126–27. The reference of the text to the way of life as a whole is alluded to in the לא יקמו of 1:5 and is further amplified in the LXX: “they do not rise up (from the dead)” (οὐκ ἀναστήσονται); see Holger Gzella, *Lebenszeit und Ewigkeit: Studien zur Eschatologie des Septuaginta-Psalter*, BBB 143 (Berlin: Philo, 2002), 262.

4. Commentators agree with regard to Ps 1’s double statement; see Reinhard G. Kratz, “Die Tora Davids: Psalm 1 und die doxologische Fünfteilung des Psalters,” in *Das Judentum im Zeitalter des Zweiten Tempels*, FAT 42 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 282–83, and Janowski, “Baum,” 126–29.

5. See Jürgen Ebach, “Freude an der Tora,” *BK* 55 (2000): 3, who speaks of an

5.1.1. The Term תורה

Recent scholarship demonstrates that this dynamic dimension is already located in the term *torah*, תורה.⁶ The word is derived from the root ירה III and is rendered “upbringing, education” or “teaching, instruction.”⁷ As Thomas Willi has mapped out, both the noun and the underlying verb emphasize, “not a condition that has been obtained, a state aspired to, but rather a process.”⁸ Torah designates something dynamic that relates to the way (of life) of the individual.⁹ On the other side, in Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic literature, the term *torah* refers to the law in general or to certain texts, including parenetic passages, individual laws, blessings, and curses (Deut 5-26; 28; 32).¹⁰ Coming from such a narrow definition, the term *torah* is connected in Deuteronomistic literature with national, historical, and covenantal ideas.¹¹ This definition of torah differs markedly from the earlier understanding, which combined torah with an arcane priestly wisdom.¹²

“incorporation” (“Einverleibung”) of torah and thereby mentions an essential characteristic of Ps 1.

6. The word is attested 220 times in the Old Testament and is usually used in the singular (the plural only appears 22x). Most attestations appear in the historical texts (DtrH and ChrH, over 40x), followed by Ps 119 (alone 25x), Deuteronomy (22x), Leviticus (16x), Proverbs (13x), Isaiah (12x), Jeremiah (11x), Numbers (10x), and Ezekiel (7x); see Liedke, “תורה,” 3:1415; and Félix García López, “תורה,” *TDOT* 15:611.

7. Gunnar Östborn, *Tōrā in the Old Testament: A Semantic Study* (Lund: Ohlson, 1945), 4–22; Thomas Willi, “Leviten, Priester und Kult in vorhellenistischer Zeit: Die chronistische Optik in ihrem geschichtlichen Kontext,” in *Gemeinde ohne Tempel—Community without Temple: Zur Substituierung und Transformation des Jerusalemer Tempels und seines Kults im Alten Testament, antiken Judentum und frühen Christentum*, ed. Beate Ego, Armin Lange, and Peter Pilhofer, WUNT 118 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999), 95; Liedke, “תורה,” 3:1415–16; García López, “תורה,” 15:611–12; and the overview in Maier, *Jeremia*, 302.

8. Willi, “Leviten,” 95 (“nicht auf einem zu erreichenden Zustand, auf einer erstrebten Befindlichkeit, sondern auf einem Vorgang”).

9. See also Patrick D. Miller, *The Way of the Lord: Essays in Old Testament Theology*, FAT 39 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 255–56, 288: “Torah is always more than just the rules.”

10. For this see Jean-Pierre Sonnet, *The Book within the Book: Writing in Deuteronomy*, BibInt 14 (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 156–58.

11. Schipper, “Afterword,” 314.

12. This was the thesis of Joachim Begrich in the year 1936, who considers torah to have “originally belonged *only to the priests*” (“ursprünglich *nur den Priestern* zuge-

The connection to the priests instead illustrates an important aspect for the conception of torah in the postexilic period: the dissemination of torah, that is, teaching.¹³ Because, if the torah should apply to one's own way of life, it must be taught. The saying for Levi in the Blessing of Moses (Deut 33:10) states that the Levites will teach (יִרֶה) the rules and torah. The connection between מִשְׁפָּטִים and תּוֹרָה indicates that the text is Deuteronomistic and therefore hardly able to attest to an ancient connection between priests and torah.¹⁴ It instead marks the understanding of torah as a written entity interpreted by a group of specialists, in this case, by the priests.¹⁵

A connection between torah and the priests can also be found in Mic 3:11 and Jer 18:18. Micah 3:11 is a later addition to the book of Micah.¹⁶ The text accuses the priests of teaching “for pay” (יִרֶה בַּמַּחִיר).¹⁷ This statement is a criticism of the misuse of the priestly office in a prophecy of judgment.¹⁸ A similar connection between priests and torah is attested in Jer 18:18. The text mentions three occupational groups, each with different competencies: the prophet, who gives the word (דָּבָר); the sage, who gives

hört” (Begriff, “Die priesterliche Tora,” in *Gesammelte Studien zum Alten Testament*, TB 21 [Munich: Kaiser, 1964], 233, emphasis original).

13. Scholars have often pointed here to the verbal instruction by father and mother in the Proverbs (Liedke, “תּוֹרָה,” 3:1416–17; Östborn, *Tōrā*, 115), but the texts named (Prov 1:8; 6:20; 31:26 [mother]; 4:1–8; 7:2; 13:14 [father]) all belong to the postexilic discourse on torah; see §5.2.3 below. For Prov 13:14 see Brown, “Reexamination,” 255–56; and Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 452.

14. Stefan Beyerle, *Der Mosesegen im Deuteronomium: Eine text-, kompositions- und formkritische Studie zu Deuteronomium 33*, BZAW 250 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1997), 128, “probably a (late-) Dtr redactional layer,” and on the difference between basic and redactional layer, 130. See, however, Liedke, “תּוֹרָה,” 3:1417, who considers the Levi saying to be “perhaps the oldest instance” of the connection between torah and priest.

15. See also the dictum of Wolff that “torah” in Hos 4:6 no longer means individual instructions but the “entire proclamation of Yahweh’s will, which is already fixed in writing” (*Hosea*, 176–77).

16. Wöhrle, *Sammlungen*, 153; García López, “תּוֹרָה,” 15:155; and Björn Corzilius, *Michas Rätsel: Eine Untersuchung zur Kompositionsgeschichte des Michabuches*, BZAW 483 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2016).

17. Wilhelm Rudolph, *Micha—Nahum—Habakuk—Zephania*, KAT 13.3 (Gütersloh: Mohn, 1975), 69–70.

18. Jörg Jeremias, *Die Propheten Joel, Obadja, Jona, Micha*, ATD 24.3 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007), 165–66, does not consider the text redactional; see, conversely, Wöhrle, *Sammlungen*, 153; and García López, “תּוֹרָה,” 15:609–39.

counsel (עצה); and the priest, who is responsible for torah.¹⁹ Like Ezek 7:26 the passage in Jer 18:18 has in mind verbal instruction by the priest.²⁰ In light of the connection between Jer 18:18 and the so-called law of the prophets in Deut 18, Jer 18:18 should be dated to the postexilic period.²¹

A written torah is instead presupposed by the previously mentioned text of Jer 8:8:

How can you say, “We are wise, and the torah of YHWH is with us!” See, in fact, the false stylus of the scribe [ספרים] has made it into lies.

The formulation in 8:8b of the lying stylus of the scribe should be understood to mean that the occupation of the scribes makes them into liars. It concerns the interpretation of writings, which is also indicated by the use of the term ספרים.²² In this respect, Bernhard Duhm can be followed in assuming that Jer 8:8 has literate men in mind who “focus on written torah.”²³

The notion of an available, comprehensive, written torah is fundamental in the framing texts of Deuteronomy. “Torah” appears there with the sense of a legal provision or commandments.²⁴ Formulations such as דברי התורה הזאת (“the words of this torah”) in Deut 27:26 and ספר התורה הזאת (“the book of this torah”) in 28:61 presuppose an understanding of torah in which תורה no longer designates individual legal stipulations. It instead “is to be understood as an abstraction of the comprehensive divine will.”²⁵

19. Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 124; and Fischer, *Jeremia*, 585–86.

20. Maier, *Jeremia*, 308; Liedke, “תורה,” 3:1418–19; for Ezek 7:26, Hannes Bezzel, *Die Konfessionen Jeremias: Eine redaktionsgeschichtliche Studie*, BZAW 378 (Berlin, de Gruyter, 2007), 203–4.

21. On the law of the prophet, see above §3.3.1. On the date of Jer 18:18 see Maier, *Jeremia*, 309–10.

22. See §3.3.1; and Maier, *Jeremia*, 300.

23. Duhm, *Jeremia*, 88.

24. Apart from three places (Deut 17:11, 18, 19) the word תורה only appears in the frame sections of Deuteronomy (Deut 1:5; 4:8, 44; 27:3, 8, 26; 28:58, 61; 29:20, 28; 30:10; 31:9, 11, 12, 24, 26; 32:46); see Georg Braulik, “Die Ausdrücke für ‘Gesetz’ im Buch Deuteronomium,” in *Studien zur Theologie*, 36–37.

25. Maier, *Jeremia*, 303 (“als Abstraktion des umfassenden Gotteswillens zu verstehen ist”). See Frank Crüsemann, *Die Tora: Theologie und Sozialgeschichte des alttestamentlichen Gesetzes*, 3rd ed. (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2005), 8; and Veijola, “Thora,” 81.

It is well known that “torah” in the sense of a written entity forms a norm by which the kings of Israel and Judah were measured (1 Kgs 2:3; 2 Kgs 10:41; 14:6; 17:13, 34, 37).²⁶ Following the logic of the narrative context in the framing pieces of the books of Kings, this norm matches the book discovered in the temple under Josiah (2 Kgs 22:8).²⁷ This fiction not only completes the change in Israelite religion from a cult religion into a book religion, but it also introduces the torah as a fixed entity.²⁸ This forms the foundation for later conceptions like, for example, the formulations in the books of Chronicles of “the book of YHWH’s torah” (2 Chr 17:9; 34:14; Neh 9:13), “the book of Moses” (2 Chr 25:4; 35:12; Neh 9:3), or even “the book of the covenant” (2 Chr 34:30).²⁹

5.1.2. The Interpretation of Torah

Connecting the idea of a written torah with Willi’s definition of torah as a “living exchange” and as “education that is oriented toward praxis ... and to be implemented in action,” then the aspect of the interpretation of the torah moves into focus.³⁰ The fact that interpretations of “torah” can be quite different has been known for a long time and has been elucidated numerous times in recent scholarship.³¹ Michael Konkel, for example, in his analysis of the second vision of the temple (Ezek 40–48) traces how the promulgation of pentateuchal law is taken up and creatively developed.

26. Liedke, “תּוֹרָה,” 3:1421; and Moshe Greenberg, “Three Conceptions of Torah in Hebrew Scriptures,” in *Die Hebräische Bibel und ihre zweifache Nachgeschichte: Festschrift für Rolf Rendtorff zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Erhard Blum, Christian Macholz, and Ekkehard W. Stegemann (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2000), 367.

27. Classically formulated by Martin Noth, *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien: Die sammelnden und bearbeitenden Geschichtswerke im Alten Testament*, 3rd ed. (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1967), 86 n. 2. See also García López, “תּוֹרָה,” 15:617–21.

28. On the change to a book religion, see the stimulating reflections by Jean-Louis Ska, “From History Writing to Literary Building: The End of History and the Birth of the Book,” in Knoppers and Levinson, *Pentateuch as Torah*, 151 (esp. on 2 Kgs 22).

29. Ulrich Kellermann, “Anmerkungen zum Verständnis der Tora in den chronistischen Schriften,” *BN* 42 (1988): 50 with further evidence.

30. Willi, “Leviten,” 100–101 (“lebendigen Austausch” and “Bildung, die auf Praxis ausgerichtet ist ... und in Handlung umgesetzt werden will”).

31. On this see the introductory considerations by Gary N. Knoppers and Bernard M. Levinson (“How, When, Where, and Why Did the Pentateuch Become the Torah?,” in Knoppers and Levinson, *Pentateuch as Torah*, 1–19).

In the prescriptions for the priests in Ezek 44:17–31, what appears is a “creative reinterpretation and expansion of the legislation for priests of the Pentateuch.”³² This update of priestly legal texts is connected with an intensification of the role of the Zadokites and therefore with a special group.³³ This example, to which others could be added, illuminates two points: first, the updating and critical reinterpretation of the torah in the sense of a written *Vorlage*; and second, the assignment to specific groups of tradents.³⁴

One can illustrate this situation through the positions of the books of Ezra and Ruth on the topic of the mixed marriages. The call in Ezra 10:3 to make a covenant with God and to send away all foreign wives and children is based on the expression כְּתוּרָה (“according to *torah*”). However, even when torah is used in the argument, there is not a single law in the entire Pentateuch that prescribes this action.³⁵ The expression כְּתוּרָה should instead be understood as the reference to an available written tradition that is known to agree with the chosen adaptation of the topic and therefore with the concrete interpretation.³⁶ In contrast, the reference to

32. Michael Konkel, *Architektur des Heiligen: Studien zur zweiten Tempelvision Ezechiels (Ez 40–48)*, BBB 129 (Berlin: Philo, 2001), 324 (“kreative Neuinterpretation und Erweiterung der Priestergesetzgebung des Pentateuch”).

33. This is, e.g., the aim of the prohibition on the mixing of priests and laity, formulated in the shape of marriage provisions in Ezek 44:22, in the end for the maintenance of the purity of the Zadokite lineage; see Konkel, *Architektur*, 322. This emphasis is also found in Thilo Alexander Rudnig’s study on Ezek 40–48, which was formed independently of Konkel’s work. See Rudnig, *Heilig und profan: Redaktionskritische Studien zu Ez 40–48*, BZAW 287 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2000), 302, and the comparison of the two approaches in Michael Konkel, “Die Gola von 597 und die Priester: Zu einem Buch von Thilo Alexander Rudnig,” ZAR 8 (2002): 382.

34. Joachim Schaper, “Rereading the Law: Inner-Biblical Exegesis of Divine Oracles in Ezekiel 44 and Isaiah 56,” in *Recht und Ethik im Alten Testament: Beiträge des Symposiums “Das Alte Testament und die Kultur der Moderne” anlässlich des 100. Geburtstags Gerhard von Rads (1901–1971), Heidelberg, 18.–21. Oktober 2001*, ed. Bernard M. Levinson and Eckart Otto, ATM 13 (Münster: LIT, 2004) 125–144 (among others on Deut 23:2–9 and Ezek 44:6–9); and Nicholas H. F. Tai, *Prophetie als Schriftauslegung in Sach 9–14: Traditions- und kompositionsgeschichtliche Studien*, CThM 17 (Stuttgart: Calwer, 1996), 30–32 (on Deut 23:2–9; Zech 9:6a; and Ezek 47:22–23). For the term “Tradents” see Carr, *Writing on the Tablet of the Heart*, 147.

35. Joseph Blenkinsopp, *The Pentateuch: An Introduction to the First Five Books of the Bible*, ABRL (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 58; Grätz, “Second Temple,” 273–74.

36. This has been noted by Sebastian Grätz: “Second Temple,” 273–77 (esp. 276).

torah in the book of Ruth serves exactly the opposite goal. The masterfully composed narrative alludes to the community stipulation in Deut 23:4–7, but it applies the text in a specific direction. Georg Braulik has suggested reading the book of Ruth as a “counter-story” to the community stipulation.³⁷ The position of the book of Ruth does not link directly to Deut 23. It instead bases its position more on the general wisdom proposition that God (and the community) should honor a person according to their deeds.

This means that the author of Ruth found it appropriate to demonstrate an alternative to a clear law written in the Torah by going back to another common tradition in Israel, which may have been as popular or authoritative as the torah in the time of the author.³⁸

This development is important in two respects. The first concerns the understanding and the treatment of torah in the postexilic period. The second has to do with the juxtaposition of different traditions and divergent interpretive situations. The example attests not only to different interpretations of torah but also to the existence of (at least) one tradition besides the Torah that was apparently viewed as equally valuable to it. Combining this insight with the observation of the tradents for the book of Ezekiel—the priests—illustrates a context that is important for the question of interest here: the relationship between wisdom, scriptural interpretation, and torah, since the final form of Deuteronomy names two groups of tradents for the dissemination of torah: the parents and the priests.

Fundamental for the conception of Deuteronomy is the notion that the era of God’s revelation to Israel ends with Moses’ death. Deuteronomy 34:10–12 accordingly marks the end of an entire epoch at the death of Moses by calling Moses the prophet without comparison. Deuteronomy 34:9 qualifies the time of Moses “as the time of God’s commandments or, in theological terms, the era of revelation.”³⁹ Deuteronomy 34:10 con-

See also Willi, “Leviten,” 86–87, “For the Chronicler it concerns the comparative particle ו and the comparability in general. The reference is the scripture as a unity and whole, not a particular reference or textual passage” (emphasis original).

37. Georg Braulik, “The Book of Ruth as Intra-Biblical Critique on the Deuteronomistic Law” *AcT* 19 (1999): 3.

38. Grätz, “Second Temple,” 281.

39. Christian Frevel, “Ein vielsagender Abschied: Exegetische Blicke auf den Tod des Mose in Dtn 34,10–12,” *BZ* 45 (2001): 224 (“als Zeit der Gebote Gottes oder theologischer gesprochen als Offenbarungszeit”). See also Eckart Otto, “Das postdeuteronomistische Deuteronomium als integrierender Schlussstein des Pentateuch,” in *Die*

nects with this by means of the expression “never again will a prophet like Moses appear.” This statement makes it unmistakably clear that the era of revelation has come to an end. This notion is connected with the depiction of Moses as a scribe. As Exod 24:3–8 illustrates, he transcribes the will of God, resulting in something like a line of succession: “The divine tradition passes from God to Moses, and then from Moses to the scroll.”⁴⁰ The task of disseminating the Torah is incumbent upon the priests according to Deut 31. In Deut 31:9 Moses not only “writes down this *torah*” (כתב את התורה הזאת), but “gives” (נתן) it to the priests, concretely “to the sons of Levi.”⁴¹

This idea is developed within the literary history of the book of Deuteronomy in Deut 4.⁴² Moses appears there as a scribe who interprets the Torah in continuation of Exod 24:12. In its interpreted form, the Torah belongs to the people in Deut 4 and is, therefore, passed on from one generation to the next.⁴³ “The Torah is given to Israel so that they would continually call it to mind, learn it, and pass it on to the coming generations.”⁴⁴ This provides significant meaning for the formulation in Deut 4:9 that the people should not let it “out of its mind its whole life long” and “proclaim it to their children and grandchildren,” for this identifies the teaching by one generation of the next in the terms of Moses’s scriptural interpretation. The people should interpret the Torah in the same way as Moses. Connected with this is the theological location of wisdom. Wisdom appears in the horizon of Deut 4 and 8 as the basis for

deuteronomistischen Geschichtswerke: Redaktions und religionsgeschichtliche Perspektiven zur “Deuteronomismus”-Diskussion in Tora und Vorderen Propheten, ed. Markus Witte, BZAW 365 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2006), 102–10; and Otto, “Die Tora als Buch,” in *Die Tora*, 580 (with almost exactly the same formulation).

40. Knoppers and Levinson, “How, When, Where,” 12. See also Schniedewind, “Textualization,” 156–57; and on Moses as teacher of torah, Karin Finsterbusch, *Weisung für Israel: Studien zu religiösem Lehren und Lernen im Deuteronomium und seinem Umfeld*, FAT 44 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 306.

41. Otto, “Das postdeuteronomistische Deuteronomium,” 120.

42. For the literary history of Deuteronomy see the overview in Jan Christian Gertz et al., eds., *Handbook of the Old Testament: An Introduction to the Literature, Religion and History of the Old Testament* (London: T&T Clark, 2012), 309–12.

43. Eckart Otto, “Mose, der erste Schriftgelehrte: Deuteronomium 1,5 im Narrativ des Pentateuch,” in *Die Tora*, 488–89.

44. Veijola, “Thora,” 82–83 (“Die Thora wird Israel gegeben, damit sie ständig vergewärtigt, gelernt und den nachkommenden Generationen weitergegeben würde”).

the interpretation of the available written torah. It appears in Deut 4 as divine wisdom that can—legitimately—interpret torah.⁴⁵

See, I have taught you laws and rules [חֻקִּים וּמִשְׁפָּטִים], that YHWH my God has commanded me to do so in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. You shall guard and do them, for that will be your wisdom [חִכְמָה] and your insight [בִּינָה] in the eyes of the nations who will hear all these laws [חֻקִּים] and say: Surely this great nation is a wise and discerning people. (4:5–6)

The Torah, here called “laws and rules” rules (חֻקִּים וּמִשְׁפָּטִים) is seen as the wisdom of Israel, not only by the people of Israel themselves but also by foreign nations. This late redactional chapter of the book of Deuteronomy makes a connection between wisdom and torah that subordinates wisdom to the divine law.

Beginning from this “didactically oriented understanding of torah,” the prophetic texts previously discussed now appear in a different light.⁴⁶ With regard to the formulation in Jer 8:8 that the lying stylus of the scribes is itself directed against this understanding, the passage in Jer 8 appears as a general criticism of a sapiential exegesis of the Torah.⁴⁷ A contrast between wisdom and prophecy becomes clear in the prophetic circle traced back to Jeremiah. It accuses the wisdom interpreters of the Torah as misunderstanding their trade.⁴⁸ The Torah cannot be interpreted in this manner. Instead, what is needed—according to the prophetic position—is new, ongoing revelation from YHWH. This position can also be found in texts such as the promise of the future salvific ruler in Isa 11 or the new covenant in Jer 31:31–33. In all cases sapiential categories are part of a distinct new action by God, whether with regard to a future ruler (Isa 11) or the relationship between God and humans (Jer 31).⁴⁹

45. On the conception of “divine wisdom” in Deut 4, see Greenberg, “Conceptions,” 375.

46. Veijola, “Thora,” 83 (“didaktisch orientierten Thoraverständnis”). See also Krüger, “Interpretation,” 94, who correctly states that “‘scribal interpretation’ in Deut 4 is not only practiced but (at least to some extent) also justified in terms of ‘revelation theology.’”

47. See §3.3.1 above; and Schniedewind, “Textualization,” 164–65.

48. This presupposes the transfer of “Mosaic role models” to Jeremiah; see Maier, *Jeremiah*, 371.

49. For Isa 11 see §3.3.3; and for Jer 31:31–33, §3.3.1.

In the prophetic literature a theological issue concerning the hermeneutics of YHWH's revelation becomes palpable. The basic question was whether there might be prophetically mediated revelation from YHWH after the death of Moses and therefore also new intervention by God in the future.⁵⁰ This question concerning the theology of revelation articulates—according to the texts discussed here—a theological discourse that can roughly be split into two positions. On one side is the conception found in late prophetic texts that there is continuous revelation from YHWH. On the other side is a circle that understands themselves as interpreters of a literarily fixed Torah.⁵¹

The second group, the exegetes, should be further separated into (at least) two groups: sapiential and priestly. The first group grounds its legitimacy in a close connection between wisdom and torah. According to redactional passages of Deuteronomy such as Deut 4 or 8, its legitimacy is based on the derivation of wisdom from God himself. As a result, the wisdom teacher takes the place of Moses, whom the book of Deuteronomy calls the first scribe. Thus, the people of Israel will be mindful of the Torah their whole lives and pass it on to the next generation (Deut 6 // 11).⁵²

In contrast was a form of torah interpretation that can be located in priestly circles (Deut 31:9) and that administers and interprets the written book in Moses's succession. This position also traces itself back to Moses just as much as the wisdom circle did in alignment with Deut 4. But this position is critical of a sapiential approach to the Torah. This can be seen in Deut 30:11–14.⁵³

Yes, this commandment [המצוה הזאת] that I am commanding you today: it is not too wonderful for you and not too distant. It is not in the heavens so that you must say: "Who will ascend for us into the heavens and bring it for us so that we may hear it, so that we (can) do it?" And it is not across the sea, so that you must say: "Who will cross the sea and bring it for us so that we may hear it, so that we (can) do it?" Rather, the word

50. This has been shown in detail by Otto ("Jeremia," 558; and Otto, "Scholarship," 178–79).

51. However, one should not conceive of these groups as uniform, as the example of the Zadokites and Ezek 40–48 shows. On the possible tradents see §5.3.3; and Knoppers and Levinson, "How, When, Where," 3.

52. For Deut 6 and 11 see below §5.2.1.

53. For the following paragraph see Schipper, "Der Dekalog im Sprüchebuch," 296–97.

[הדבר] is close [קרוב] to you, quite, in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it.

Deuteronomy 30:11–14 has little in common with the rest of Deuteronomy on a terminological level, yet it still shows itself by means of its content to be a meaningful part of the book.⁵⁴ The passage presents a further development of Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic commandment theology by describing the divine word as “near.” In Deut 4:7, God himself is said to be “near.” As is the case in Deut 30:14, the adjective קרוב is used.⁵⁵ This declaration is underlined by a twofold contrast. God’s word is neither in the heavens nor across the sea. Sapiential thought carries on the latter as seen, for example, in Job 28:21–22 and Qoh 7:23–24.⁵⁶ A critique of sapiential thought appears in Deut 30:11–14 and belongs as part of the further development of Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic theology. While the divine law might appear as Israel’s “wisdom” (חכמה) and “insight” (בינה) in the eyes of the nations according to the emphasis of Deut 4:6, it cannot be defined in terms of sapiential thought.⁵⁷ It is instead presupposed that the law comes from God, for one cannot live without God (Deut 8:3).

Summarizing the evidence so far, each of the three different positions employs a different hermeneutic but does so by using a similar literary technique. Whether arguing (1) for divinely appointed wisdom, (2) for the idea of exegesis of the sealed Torah, or (3) whether expecting new revelations by YHWH, all strategies of legitimation deploy the literary procedure of *scribal interpretation*.

When connecting this result with the question of a hermeneutic of torah in the book of Proverbs, it becomes clear that different aspects converge. First of all, there is the question of the human ability to follow the will of God. The excursus on the heart in §3.3 above has demonstrated that the postexilic scribes (literati) referred to divergent positions that range from the idea of the human heart’s potential for improvement (the position of wisdom) to the need for YHWH’s intervention (placing the Torah in the heart, Jer 31–32), and to the complete replacement of the

54. On the terminology, see Aurelius, “Heilsgegenwart,” 15.

55. Köckert, *Leben*, 52; and on the connection between Deut 30:11–14 and 4:5–8 see Aurelius, “Heilsgegenwart,” 24–25.

56. Aurelius, “Heilsgegenwart,” 18–19.

57. On Deut 4 see Krüger, “Law and Wisdom,” 35–54.

heart (YHWH gives a new heart, Ezek 11).⁵⁸ Concurrently connected with this issue is a proclamation concerning the efficacy of torah instruction, as well as of human teaching and learning. The divine will, fixed in the law, can be transmitted from one generation to the other (Deut 6 // 11). Finally, in the following analysis of the reception of torah in Proverbs, one must also analyze the extent to which a position such as Deut 4 (a combination of wisdom and torah) or Deut 30 (a critique of Deut 4) can be found. In short, the question investigated below is as follows: To what degree are different conceptions of the relationship between wisdom and torah found in the book of Proverbs, and what does it mean for the literary history of the book?

5.2. The Reception of Deuteronomy in the Book of Proverbs

The following analysis begins with Prov 1–9 and then proceeds to the texts often described as appendices to the book of Proverbs. It will show that a particular form of reception of Deuteronomy as torah cannot be limited to the sapiential instructions of chapters 1–7; it also appears at the end of the book of Proverbs in chapters 28 and 30.

5.2.1. Proverbs 3, 6, and 7

Three texts within Prov 1–7 are important for the present discussion: the oft-mentioned section 6:20–35 that Fishbane considers a prime example of innerbiblical interpretation of torah in the sense of Deuteronomy; the instruction in 3:1–12; and the instruction in 7:1–27.⁵⁹

The instruction from chapter 3 addresses the relationship with God.⁶⁰ Following the introduction (3:1–4) are imperatival declarations that urge

58. See §3.3.1 above.

59. See Fishbane, “Torah and Tradition,” 284, who draws a connection from Deut 5:6–18 and 6:4–9 to Prov 6:20–35. The similarities have often been noticed; see Robert, “Attaches,” (1935), 356; Buchanan, “Midrashim,” 238; and Schäfer, *Die Poesie*, 268. On the other hand, Lang attempts to see topoi in the similarities “that always recur in the literature” (“die in der Literatur immer wiederkehren”); Lang, *Lehrrede*, 57–58.

60. The connection of the introduction of the instruction of Prov 3 with the torah thematic has rarely been emphasized in recent literature. Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 142–48, suppresses it, as does Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 32–33, and already McKane, *Proverbs*, 46–48. In contrast, the reference to Deut 6 appears already in Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 86; and more recently in O’Dowd, *Proverbs*, 85–86; and Longman, *Proverbs*, 131.

students of wisdom to orient themselves toward YHWH and not to trust in their own wisdom. This basic consideration is shaped into various expressions:⁶¹ the formula “trust in YHWH” in 3:5a (בטח), “fear YHWH” in 3:7b (ירא), “honor YHWH” in 3:9a (כבד), and the expression from 3:11 not to “reject” (קוץ) “the discipline of YHWH” (מוסר יהוה). This line of thought leads to the declaration that YHWH rebukes those whom he loves “like a father the son that he is fond of” (3:12). The last formulation refers to a conception that is also attested in Deuteronomy: that YHWH disciplines Israel “as a father disciplines his son.”⁶² The statement is formed with the verb יסר in Deut 8:5.⁶³ The root יסר is also the basis for the noun מוסר (“discipline”) that is used in Prov 3:11, where it refers to YHWH.⁶⁴

A further relationship between Prov 3 and Deut 8 is present in Deut 8:6: “Guard the commandments of YHWH, your God, walk in his ways, and fear him.” The verse adopts a central consideration of Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic theology and develops it with the classic terminology of “guarding” (שמר) the commandments, the “way” terminology, and the “fear” (ירא) of YHWH. All three statements reappear in Prov 3. The guarding of the commandments (מצות) is emphasized in 3:1 (expressed there with the verb נצר), the fear of YHWH is mentioned in 3:7, and the “way” thematic appears in 3:6, which states that one should “acknowledge” (ידע) God in all ways so that he will level the path. The sapiential instruction of chapter 3 therefore comes very close, as is already the case with Prov 2, to the basic line of thought of Deut 8:5–6.⁶⁵ This makes the statement of Prov 3:5 even more surprising:

Trust in YHWH with all your heart,
but do not rely on your own insight.

This is the only verse in the book of Proverbs that connects a term for wisdom with the second-person singular suffix. Every other location with

61. Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 72–77; Gemser, *Sprüche*, 27; and Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 124–25.

62. E.g., Deut 1:31; and Veijola, *Das fünfte Buch Mose*, 221.

63. See also Brown, “Reexamination,” 266.

64. Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 152.

65. See §3.1.1 above.

a suffix relates it either to the teacher of wisdom or to wisdom itself.⁶⁶ This lays specific emphasis on the contrast in 3:5 between “your insight” (בִּינְתָךְ) and trusting in YHWH.

Trusting “with all your heart” (בְּכָל-לֵבְךָ) appears in Prov 3 in the context of further statements about the human heart: One should guard the commandments in the heart (3:1b) and write “loyalty and faithfulness” (חֶסֶד וְאֵמֶת) “upon the tablet of the heart” (עַל לֹחַ לֵבְךָ) in 3:3c.⁶⁷ The formulation of “writing [verb כָּתַב] on the heart” appears in the passage of the new covenant in Jer 31:33, where YHWH writes his torah on Israel’s heart.⁶⁸ The analysis of Jer 31–32 in §3.3.1 in the present work demonstrates that the expression in 31:33 refers back to Jer 17:1. In the face of the people’s sins, YHWH now plants the Torah in the human heart in order to make it possible to follow YHWH’s will.

Also instructive is the word לֹחַ used in Prov 3:3c. It not only designates the tablet on which one can write (Isa 30:8; Hab 2:2), but also the tablets of the covenant.⁶⁹ In this context the formulation חֶסֶד וְאֵמֶת in Prov 3:3a is interesting.

The hendiadys is attested twenty-three times in the Old Testament and is difficult to interpret within the context of Prov 3.⁷⁰ Does it signify the goodness of God, or does it have in mind a human quality, something like “love and truth,” as some commentators suggest?⁷¹ The word combination

66. Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 148.

67. This part of the verse is often viewed as secondary on the basis of the same formulation in 7:3 and its omission in Vaticanus and Sinaiticus; however, the two imperative clauses are a combination from 6:21 and 7:3 and establish the connection to 3:1. See Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 32; Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 145–46, who view the part of the verse as original in contrast with Clifford, *Proverbs*, 50; and Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 236, who eliminate it. In addition to the MT, the phrase is also attested in Vulg., Targ., and Syriac.

68. See §3.3.1 above.

69. See Exod 24:12; 27:8; 31:18; 32:15–16, 19; 34:1, 4, 28–29; Deut 4:13; 5:22; 9:9–11, 15; and often; on the range of evidence see HALOT 1:522–23, 497, s.v. “לֹחַ”; and Gesenius, *Handwörterbuch*, s.v. “לֹחַ,” 601–2.

70. Gordon R. Clark, *The Word Hesed in the Hebrew Bible*, JSOTSup 157 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 235; and Diethelm Michel, “hæsæd wæ’æmæt,” in Wagner, *Studien zur hebräischen Grammatik*, 79, who does not, however, assume a hendiadys, but rather a word sequence.

71. For the goodness of God, see Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 144, who otherwise rejects a connection with the covenant thematic. For a human quality, see Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 72; so also Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 241. See also the excursus in

appears numerous times in Proverbs (Prov 3:3; 14:22; 16:5; 20:28). At the same time, the formulation in Prov 20:28, according to which **חסד ואמת** “guard” (נצר) the king, refers to a meaning within royal ideology.⁷² This also appears in the Psalms (see Ps 61:8).⁷³ In Ps 89:15 the terminological pair is connected with the divine throne.⁷⁴ As a result, the expression has a religious dimension from the start, and the distinction made in scholarship between the religious and human dimension is not meaningful. The terms are concerned with the “parameters in the vicinity of YHWH(’s throne),” which are transferred to the divine king and in which religious and ethical dimensions interact.⁷⁵

A religious dimension of the formulation **חסד ואמת** is confirmed by the overall meaning of Prov 3. The statement of 3:3, that “loyalty and faithfulness” will not abandon the student of wisdom (verb **עזב**), is reasonable against the background of 3:5. That verse emphasizes the contrast between human and divine wisdom and opposes the inadequacy of human knowledge with the individual relationship with God.

The conception of Prov 3 becomes even clearer when viewed in light of Prov 6 and 7. The connection of the three texts has often been noted, for all three—though also in different ways—make reference to the Shema in Deut 6.

Proverbs 3	Proverbs 6	Proverbs 7
1 בני תורת אל תשכח	20 נצר בני מצות אבִיךָ	1 בני שמר אמרי
ומצותי יצר לבך	ואל תטש תורת אמך	ומצותי תצפן אתך
2 כי ארך ימים	21 קשרם על לבך תמיד	2 שמר מצותי וחיה
ושנות חיים	ענדם על גרגרתך	ותורתי כאישון עיניך
ושלום יוסיפו לך	22 בהתהלךך תנחה אתך	3 קשרם על אצבעתיך
3 חסד ואמת אל יעזובך	בשכבך תשמר עליך	כתבם על לוח לבך
קשרם על גרגרותיך	והקיצות היא תשיחך	4 אמר לחכמה אחתי את

Schäfer, *Die Poesie*, 81–84, with detailed reflections on the meaning of the hendiadys connection.

72. On Prov 20:28 see Hans-Jürgen Zobel, “חסד,” *TDOT* 5:50–51.

73. See also Ps 43:4 and Hartenstein, *Das Angesicht*, 180 n. 107.

74. Müller, *Jahwe*, 248 with references to the divine kingdom.

75. Hartenstein, *Das Angesicht*, 209 (“Wirkgrößen in der [Thron-]Umgebung JHWHs”).

ומדע לבינה תקרא	23	כי נר מצוה ותורה אור	כתבם על לוח לבך
לשמרך מאשה זרה	24	לשמרך מאשת רע	בעיני אלהים ואדם
מנבריה אמריה החליקה		מחלקת לשון נבריה	5 בטח אל יהוה בכל לבך
			ואל בינתך אל תשען

The following discussion will first compile the similarities between Prov 3:1–5, 6:20–24, and 7:1–5 and then investigate the references to the passages in Deut 6:6–9 and 11:18–21 about the words of YHWH to be written as memorials on the forehead, hand, and door:⁷⁶

Proverbs 3:1–5	Proverbs 6:20–24	Proverbs 7:1–5
1 My son, do not forget my <i>torah</i> , and let your heart guard my commandments,	20 Guard, my son, the commandment of your father, and do not reject the <i>torah</i> of your mother.	1 My son, guard my words and store up my commandments with you.
2 for length of days, and years of life and well-being they will add for you,	21 Bind them always to your heart, wrap them around your neck.	2 Keep my commandments, and you will live, and my <i>torah</i> like the apple of your eye.
3 loyalty and faithfulness should not leave you,	22 When you (then) walk around, it will guide you,	3 Bind them on your fingers,

76. On the following see Bernd U. Schipper, "Das Proverbienbuch und die Tora-tradition," *ZTK* 108 (2011): 383. A comparable table can be found in Maier, *Jeremia*, 153–54, and Georg Braulik, "Das Deuteronomium und die Bücher Ijob, Sprichwörter, Rut," in *Studien zum Deuteronomium und seiner Nachgeschichte*, SBAB 33 (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 2001), 245–46 (§2.2.1). The connection is not new and has often been noted; see Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 86; Robert, "Attaches," 51; McKane, *Proverbs*, 291; Müller, *Proverbien* 1–9, 122–23; Brown, "Reexamination," 276.

bind them around your neck,	when you lie down, it will watch over you,	write them upon the tablet of your heart.
write them on the tablet of your heart,	and when you awake, it will speak to you.	4 Say to wisdom: "You are my sister,"
4 then you will find favor and good repute in the eyes of God and people.	23 For the command- ment is a lamp, and the <i>torah</i> a light, and the corrections of discipline the way of life,	and call insight a relative,
5 Trust in YHWH with all your heart, but do not rely on your own insight.	24 to keep you from the woman of evil, from the smoothness of the tongue of a foreigner.	5 to keep you from the strange woman, from the foreigner who has made her words smooth.

The concept of torah is central in all three introductions. Furthermore, there is also the idea that one should bind the commandments "upon the heart" (6:21), "write them on the tablet of one's heart" (literally in 3:3 and 7:3), or twist them around the neck (3:3; 6:21). The aim of the introductions of the three instructions is a successful life: the root חיה ("to live") appears in 3:2, 6:23, and 7:2.

Deuteronomy 6		Deuteronomy 11	
והיו הדברים האלה	6	ושמתם את דברי אלה	18
אשר אנכי מצוך היום על לבבך		על לבבכם ועל נפשכם	
ושננתם לבניך ודברת בם	7	וקשרתם אתם לאות על ידכם	
בשבתך בביתך ובלכתך בדרך		והיו לטוטפת בין עיניכם	
ובשכבך ובקומך		ולמדתם אתם את בניכם לדבר בם	19
וקשרתם לאות על ירך	8	בשבתך בביתך ובלכתך בדרך	
והיו לטטפת בין עיניך		ובשכבך ובקומך	
וכתבתם על מזוזות ביתך ובשעריך	9	וכתבתם על מזוזות ביתך ובשעריך	20

למען ירבו ימיכם וימי בניכם על האדמה 21

אשר נשבע יהוה לאבותיכם לתת להם

כימי השמים על הארץ

When comparing the three instructions with Deut 6 and 11, a number of similarities appear.⁷⁷ The verbs קשר “bind, wrap around” and כתב על “write upon” match, as does the word לבב (“heart”). The combination of קשר and כתב only appears within the Old Testament in Deut 6: 8; 11:18; and Prov 3:3; 7:3.⁷⁸ This speaks in favor of the Proverbs texts referring back to the passages in Deuteronomy, though only the central terms and not entire verses or half verses are cited.⁷⁹ Through this reference torah and the commandments of the wisdom teacher or the father and mother move close to YHWH’s commandments. In Deut 6 and 11, the “commandments and statutes” of YHWH should be imparted to the people of Israel. In this respect the texts of Proverbs continue a form of instruction that appears in Deut 6. The children are instructed by the parents (Deut 6:7; 11:18) in order to pass on what Moses had imparted (6:1; 11:18). Even though the instruction is still given by father and mother, the references by Prov 3, 6, and 7 to the didactic concept of Deuteronomy provide the sapiential instruction with nomistic garb.⁸⁰

This shared reference is highlighted differently in the three wisdom texts. Proverbs 3 refers back to Deut 8:6 in its arrangement and is completely bound by the topic of instruction by YHWH, which in comparison renders all human wisdom obsolete. Proverbs 7, on the other hand, continues the summons to “keep my commandments” from 7:2 in a different manner. Proverbs 7:4 states: “say to wisdom: You are my sister, and call insight a relative.” While 3:5 even warns against trusting in one’s own

77. For a more detailed analysis see Bernd U. Schipper, “When Wisdom Is Not Enough! The Discourse on Wisdom and Torah and the Composition of the Book of Proverbs,” in Schipper and Teeter, *Wisdom and Torah*, 58–62.

78. Braulik, “Das Deuteronomium,” 246. In Prov 6:21–23 the verb ענך is used; see Maier, *Jeremia*, 155.

79. Maier, *Jeremia*, 155; see also Müller, *Proverbien* 1–9, 124, who instead argues that the “literal allusions” are not that strong, and he therefore reaches a different conclusion.

80. For this position see Longman, *Proverbs*, 131; O’Dowd, *Proverbs*, 90–91; Schipper, “When Wisdom Is Not Enough,” 57–63.

“insight” (בינה), Prov 7:4 views wisdom as a family member.⁸¹ Through the words “torah” (תורה) and “commandments” (מצות) in 7:1–2, Prov 7 even refers to Deuteronomy and with this to the divine law: The importance of wisdom itself is undisputable. Wisdom has intrinsic value as long as it is recognized as divine wisdom. As such it can—according to 7:5—protect from the “strange woman.” The reference to Deut 6 and 11 serves to introduce understandings of חכמה and בינה that are defined by YHWH’s commandments and his torah. However, wisdom is still accorded its own intrinsic value. Wisdom is designated as “sister” (אחות) and “relative” (מדע) and therefore points ahead to Prov 8 with its self-presentation of personified wisdom.⁸²

In contrast to Prov 3 and Prov 7, the instruction of chapter 6 develops the concept of a kind of torah wisdom. While the text speaks of מצות (“commandments”) and תורה (“torah”), it does not mention any central wisdom term. It instead contains מוסר (“discipline”), which does not appear in Prov 3 or 7. This term should rather be understood in the sense of normative instruction, and it does not stand for the open conception of wisdom in combination with “wisdom” (חכמה) or “insight” (בינה).⁸³ As a result, the instruction does not strictly contain any statements about wisdom but rather about תורה and מצוה. While these are related to father and mother (6:20), when viewed against the backdrop of Deuteronomy, they receive nomistic coloring.⁸⁴ The “leading,” “waking,” and “speaking” in 6:22 have the whole life in view. Comparable statements only appear in the Old Testament for YHWH himself, whether in view of his people (Exod 13:17 and elsewhere) or in relation to individuals (Gen 24:27; see Ps 139:10).⁸⁵ Central are Deut 6:7 and 11:19, for they make comparable statements concerning the divine words (דברים).⁸⁶

81. On Prov 7:4 see Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 369–70; Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 157–58.

82. On the meaning of מדע, see Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 262.

83. On the meaning of מוסר, see Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 34–35. For the differentiation between an “imperative instruction” and an “indicative instruction,” see Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 28.

84. O’Dowd, *Proverbs*, 138–45; Braulik, “Das Deuteronomium,” 251 n. 159, according to whom Prov 6:20 links up with the legal terminology in Deuteronomy with מצוה and תורה and “completely appropriately” adopts the דברי from Deut 11:18.

85. Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 117.

86. See Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 351–52; and Clifford, *Proverbs*, 80, both of whom mention the parallels but do not render it productive for their exegesis of

Deut 6:7: You should repeat them to your sons. You should speak of them when you sit at home [ישב], when you go on the street [הלך], when you lay down to sleep [שכב], and when you rise up [קום].

Deut 11:19: You should teach them to your sons by speaking of them when you sit at home [ישב], when you go on the street [הלך], when you lay down to sleep [שכב], and when you rise up [קום].

Prov 6:22: When you go [הלך], it will guide you. When you lie down [שכב], it will watch over you, and when you awake [קיץ *hiphil*], it will speak to you.

The triad of “going,” “lying,” and “waking up” is shaped through the use of the identical verbs הלך and שכב. However, the teaching aspect from Deut 6, in which Israel itself should pass on the Torah of YHWH to the next generation, receives a different accent. In Prov 6 it is the Torah of YHWH that performs this. The lying down and being woken up should be understood as a merism that comprises the entire human life.⁸⁷

Fitting with this is the fact that the entity of torah in 6:21, again analogous to Deut 6:6 and 11:18, should be bound around the neck. The same verb קשר “bind” appears that is used as in Deut 11:18 and 6:8.⁸⁸ The formulation alludes to the use of an amulet that could be worn on different parts of the body, here on the human heart.⁸⁹ This emphasis on the “totality of the torah” that comprises all of life is strengthened in the following verse (6:23).⁹⁰ Here the מצוה is described as a lamp and the תורה as a light. Keeping with the alignment of the text, no genuine wisdom terms like חכמה, תבונה, or בינה are used, but rather the term for disci-

Prov 6:20–24. On the other hand, see McKane, *Proverbs*, 226–27; and Schäfer, *Die Poesie*, 179–80.

87. Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 118.

88. It also appears in Prov 3:3; and 7:3; see Schipper, “Das Proverbienbuch,” 384.

89. Christian Herrmann, *Ägyptische Amulette aus Palästina/Israel: Mit einem Ausblick auf ihre Rezeption durch das Alte Testament*, OBO 138 (Fribourg: Presses Universitaires; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1994), 88–89, with reference to Isa 3:18–21; and Angelika Berlejung, “Zeichen der Verbundenheit und Medien der Erinnerung: Zur Religionsgeschichte und Theologie von Dtn 6,6–9 und verwandten Texten,” in *Ex Oriente Lux, Studien zur Theologie des Alten Testaments: Festschrift für Rüdiger Lux zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Angelika Berlejung and Raik Heckl, ABIG 39 (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2012), 133–51.

90. Maier, *Die “fremde Frau,”* 157.

pline (מוסר) and the word “correction” (תוכחת).⁹¹ The statement in 6:23 is, however, noteworthy in still another regard. The combination of תורה and מצוה with a metaphor of light is also encountered in Ps 119:105.⁹² In that verse the divine word (דבר) is a lamp and a light on the path of the one praying:

Prov 6:23: For the commandment [מצוה] is a lamp [נר], and the *torah* [תורה] a light [אור], and the corrections of discipline the way of life.

Ps 119:105: A lamp [נר] for my feet is your word [דבר] and a light [אור] for my path.

Both the metaphor of the light and the sequence of the words נר and אור match Prov 6:23.⁹³ The first term means artificial light, the second one is natural light; both make orientation by day and by night possible.⁹⁴ Something quite similar is stated about YHWH in Exod 13:21, who goes ahead in the pillar of cloud in order to “lead the way” (לנחתם הדרך) for Israel and by night in order to “provide light” (להאיר) for Israel.⁹⁵

This means that Prov 6:20–23 contains an understanding of torah in which it now has taken on these attributes, which are commonly accorded to wisdom. As in Ps 119, these reach into all of life. A form of torah wisdom appears in which the form of wisdom has melded with torah so that proclamations that could be made about wisdom now apply to torah. This is concretized in the text by means of a theme that is also encountered in Prov 7.

In both 6:24 and 7:5, the issue is protection from the strange woman (verb שמר). It shows that one and the same reference text (Deut 11/6) could be used differently.⁹⁶ In one case wisdom is accorded its own intrin-

91. See 1:23, 25, 30. Within Prov 1–9 it is otherwise only used in 3:11; however, it is attested numerous times in the proverbial wisdom: Prov 10:17; 12:1; 13:18; 15:5, 10, 31–32; 27:5; 29:1; see HALOT 2:1698, s.v. “תוכחת.”

92. This has already been highlighted by Deissler, *Psalm 119*, 205; critical, on the other hand, is Müller, *Proverbien 1–9*, 125.

93. Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 118; and Grund, “*Die Himmel*,” 232–33. In contrast, the similarity to Ps 19:9 is clearly more limited. Agreement is only found in the notion that the commandments of YHWH have a luminous power and could serve as a light.

94. Braulik, “Das Deuteronomium,” 253.

95. Braulik, “Das Deuteronomium,” 251.

96. There are several arguments in favor of viewing Deut 11 as the referent text

sic claim (Prov 7), while in the other torah appears in sapiential garb (Prov 6). This difference is also tangible in the implementation of the theme of the strange woman, for here as well Prov 6 connects to the Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic tradition. Proverbs 6 draws far more extensively from the texts of Deuteronomy than Prov 3 or 7.⁹⁷

Fishbane had already suggested that Prov 6:20–35 refers to the Decalogue in Deut 5.⁹⁸ It alludes to three commandments: the prohibition on coveting a neighbor's wife, the prohibition on stealing, and the prohibition on adultery. The verb “covet” (חמד) in 6:25 adopts a central term of the Decalogue (see Exod 20:17; Deut 5:21).⁹⁹ While in that case the desire relates to visual stimuli, Prov 6 addresses seduction through words.¹⁰⁰ The composer of the instruction in Proverbs ties in with the prohibition in the Decalogue, but focuses it on its own topic: The speech of the strange woman that is dangerous for the student of wisdom. It concerns temptation through words and therefore an intellectual danger rather than an emotional-sensual one.¹⁰¹ An intensification of the prohibition from the Decalogue also appears in the discussion of stealing in 6:30–31. Proverbs 6:31 articulates the punishment for being caught stealing as the restoration of what was stolen sevenfold (ישלם שבעתים). The proclamation's form is singular, without any parallel in the legal texts.¹⁰²

for Prov 6, for the line of reasoning is more similar than it is to Deut 6. The call in Prov 6:20–21 to keep the commands of the father and to “bind” them upon the heart matches the order of Deut 11:18 to learn the words by heart (18a) and to “bind” them to one's arm (18b), while in Deut 6 the parenesis of 6:7 is inserted; see Braulik, “Das Deuteronomium,” 247–48.

97. This is clear from the formulation of the re-presentation of torah in 6:22; see Braulik, “Das Deuteronomium,” 248; for the following, Schipper, “Teach Them Diligently,” 25–28.

98. Fishbane, “Torah and Tradition,” 284, who later became more cautious, however; see Fishbane, *Interpretation*, 288 and n. 20.

99. Christl Maier, “‘Begehre nicht ihre Schönheit in deinem Herzen’ (Prov 6.25): Eine Aktualisierung des Ehebruchsverbotes aus persischer Zeit,” *BibInt* 5 (1997): 46–62.

100. The connection between covetousness and visual stimuli also appears in Matt 5:28. See Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 118; and Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 151–52.

101. This difference can be seen when comparing 6:20–35 with 7:1–27, where the emotional-sexual aspect is emphasized.

102. The highest rate of reimbursement is fivefold in Exod 21:37 (in Luke 19:8 it is fourfold); see Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 120.

The reference in 6:30 to the prohibition on stealing in Deut 5:19 (Exod 20:15) is connected here with the prohibition on adultery (Deut 5:18; Exod 20:14) and serves to illustrate it.¹⁰³ This becomes clear through the verb מצא ("to find") in 6:30a. The verb is used in Deut 22:22 for the discovery of the adulterer; it accordingly also refers to adultery in 6:30.¹⁰⁴ This is underscored through the term נאף in 6:32, which can be considered the technical term for adultery.¹⁰⁵ Surveying the remaining regulations for adultery in the Old Testament, it is noteworthy that adultery is usually sanctioned with the death penalty (Lev 20: 10).¹⁰⁶ In Prov 6:32 the death penalty is not mentioned, but a sapiential category is used: the one who commits adultery is a person "who lacks sense" (חסר-לב), that is, someone without sapiential knowledge.¹⁰⁷

What appears in the instruction of Prov 6:20–35 is not simply a citation of the Decalogue tradition, but rather the setting of an accent that connects two things with one another: the topic of the strange woman and the prohibition of adultery, stealing, and covetousness. The two are intensified in Prov 6 through the contrast between the benefit of torah and the dangerous speech of the strange woman. The question is which word one will orient oneself toward—the word of God, which is expressed in the Decalogue and the Shema, or the word of the strange woman. There is also a second point: Braulik notes that Prov 6:20–35 offers a connection between the Shema and the Decalogue that has tradition-historical consequences. The text can be seen as a "precursor of an instructional tradition" through its allusion to Deut 6:6–9 (11:18–21) and the Decalogue. It connects the "Hear Israel" and the Decalogue—admittedly in the textual order of Deuteronomy—and is attested later as put into writing in the

103. Fishbane, "Torah and Tradition," 284; and Maier, *Die "fremde Frau,"* 161, also attempt to see the mention of father and mother in Prov 6:20 as an allusion to the commandment on honoring one's parents, but apart from the mention of the parents, there are no further similarities in language or content; see Braulik, "Das Deuteronomium," 254 n. 180.

104. Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 120–21.

105. See Hos 3:1; 4:13–14; Prov 30:20; Schäfer, *Die Poesie*, 267; and Maier, *Die "fremde Frau,"* 146.

106. Eckart Otto, "Zur Stellung der Frau in den ältesten Rechtstexten des Alten Testaments (Exodus 20,14; 22, 15f.)," in *Kontinuum und Proprium: Studien zur Sozial- und Rechtsgeschichte des Alten Orients und des Alten Testaments*, OBC 8 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1996), 290–91; and Maier, *Die "fremde Frau,"* 148–49.

107. Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 39–40; and Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 248.

Nash Papyrus.¹⁰⁸ The divergent order in Prov 6—first the Shema, then the Decalogue—thus results from the content itself: the foundational statement comes first, then concrete application follows.

When summing up the evidence so far, a clear picture emerges. The Shema in Deut 6 is cited three times in Prov 1–9 but with different emphases each time. In Prov 3 the topic connects to the discourse on the capabilities of the human heart. A contrast is articulated between one's own insight and the wisdom of YHWH, which is surprising within a sapiential instruction. In Prov 7 the statement from Deut 6 links to the presentation of personified wisdom, which appears as an independent entity despite its determination by torah. In contrast, Prov 6 presents the concept of a sapiential torah where only torah and commandments, and not wisdom, can help the wisdom student avoid the seductive speech of the strange woman. In sum, the three texts illustrate that a reception of torah in the sense of the book of Deuteronomy can be defined in various ways in the wisdom instructions of Prov 1–7. In one case it appears as an entity that still makes provision for an independent (though determined by torah) wisdom (Prov 7). In another, sapientialized torah renders wisdom almost superfluous; torah appears as the better wisdom (Prov 6). In the third case the reference to Deut 6 // 11 is the point of departure for a concept where the “fear of YHWH” and the relationship to God is contrasted to sapiential thought.

This juxtaposition of different hermeneutics of torah has consequences for interpreting the corpus of ten instructions in Prov 1–9. A main characteristic of Proverbs itself can already be seen in the instructions: wisdom can take very different (and sometimes competing) forms that often stand alongside each other. This characteristic of discursive wisdom is connected to a didactic ideal. By presenting different approaches, the student of wisdom should be led to deeper understanding.¹⁰⁹

If it is correct that Prov 3–7 forms the original corpus of the wisdom instructions, then this corpus would be framed by two instructions that allude to Deut 6 // 11 but present different approaches (Prov 3 and 7). Such discursive wisdom, placing different aspects side by side, can also be found when comparing Prov 3 and 4. Whereas the first underlines the importance of the relationship to God, the latter highlights the benefits of an indepen-

108. Braulik, “Das Deuteronomium,” 258 (“Vorstufe einer Lehrtradition”); Maier, *Die “fremde Frau,”* 175.

109. For this see Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 54.

dent wisdom tradition that can be passed from one generation to the next.¹¹⁰ On the level of the instructions in Prov 3–7, it appears as though different concepts are placed side-by-side without arguing for one particular position.

The following investigation of the reception of Deuteronomy in the book of Proverbs will show that this changed significantly during the composition and redaction of the book; first by the combination of the instructions with the poem on personified wisdom (Prov 8) through Prov 2, and second by placing Prov 2–8 within the framework of the other parts of the book of Proverbs.

5.2.2. The Personified Wisdom of Proverbs 8

Given that Prov 2 not only serves as a table of contents of the corpus of the instructions of Prov 3–7 but also combines them with Prov 8, the question arises as to whether the famous poem on personified wisdom can also be connected with a reception of torah in the sense of Deuteronomy within the book of Proverbs.

Previous scholarship has highlighted the commonalities between Prov 8 and the book of Sirach as well as Ps 19 more than with torah traditions.¹¹¹ The following analysis opens with a short presentation of the structure and intention of Prov 8, moving then to the similarities with Ps 19, evaluating them with regard to the relation of Prov 8 to the torah tradition.

The thirty-six verses of Prov 8 can be subdivided into a short introduction (8:1–3) and the actual wisdom instruction (8:4–36), which itself comprises three sections (8:4–11, 12–21, 22–31). At the end, conclusions are drawn by wisdom itself (8:32–36).¹¹² One specific point is already mentioned in the introduction that presents a personified Wisdom. Wisdom “calls out” (קרא). According to the difficult text in 8:2–3, she stands at an elevated point close to the city gate.¹¹³ She deliv-

110. For a more detailed discussion see Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 137 and 174.

111. An important evaluation of the subject can be found in Grund, “*Die Himmel*,” 239–41 (with tables on the key words and attestations of the motifs on p. 241 [table 4]).

112. On the structure see Gemser, *Sprüche*, 45; Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 87; Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 267 and 291–92; and Loader, *Proverbs 1–9*, 321.

113. The problem in 8:2 lies in the combination of “peak” or rather “beginning” (ראש) and “heights” (מרומים), which only appears here in the Old Testament. Proverbs 8:3 mentions the city gates (שערים), but it is unclear how 8:2 fits with this (“at the

ers her speech from this location, addressing both those who already orient their lives by wisdom and also those who have not yet done so:¹¹⁴ the unexperienced (פתאים) and the fools (בסילים, 8:4–5).¹¹⁵ The speech and the authoritative speaker—personified Wisdom—are first described in 8:6–11 and further expanded in 8:13–14. They are marked primarily by two elements: the attributes listed in 8:6–9 and 13–14, and the comparison with precious materials in 8:10–11. Especially striking among the attributes are אמת (“truth,” 8:7a), צדק (“righteousness,” 8:8a), and ישרים (“uprightness,” 8:6b), as well as עצה (“advice”), בינה (“insight”), and גבורה (“strength”) in 8:14. The latter qualities match the description of the offspring of David in the promise of a ruler in Isa 11. In that passage, 11:2, 4–5, the judging by the future salvific ruler is described with the use of the same terms.¹¹⁶

One essential feature of Prov 8 already becomes clear at this point. Personified Wisdom claims for herself authority that is in competition with other theological conceptions of the postexilic period—in the present case the promise of a ruler from Isa 11.¹¹⁷ This competition takes place through the terminological allusions to other texts, by transferring their statements, which have previously been used in other contexts, to the figure of Wisdom.

A further example of this phenomenon is the formulation ותועבת שפתי רשע in 8:7b “wickedness is the abomination of my lips.” This alludes to the formula תועבת יהוה, which appears often in Deuteronomy and also in Proverbs (often with YHWH or the king as the subject).¹¹⁸ These two aspects together accord the speech of the Wisdom figure the highest and

peak of the heights, on the way, standing between the paths”). On the discussion (and translation), see Baumann, *Die Weisheitsgestalt*, 68–70; Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 144–45; Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 295–96.

114. In Prov 1:20–21 Wisdom is localized in the city through the mention of alleys and squares; in Prov 9:3 Wisdom’s banquet is “on the heights of the city”; see Baumann, *Weisheitsgestalt*, 71; and Yoder, *Wisdom*, 74.

115. On the terms see Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 395–96; and Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 267–68.

116. On this connection see the detailed argumentation by Baumann, *Weisheitsgestalt*, 79, and the further parallels she mentions; Baumann, *Weisheitsgestalt*, 92–98; as well as Gemser, *Sprüche*, 47; Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 90; and Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 149–50.

117. On Isa 11 see §3.3.3 above.

118. See Deut 7:25; 12:31; 17:1; 18:12; 22:5; 23:19; 25:16; 27:15; and Prov 3:32;

virtually divine authority. This authority is shown to be especially valuable once again in 8:10–11 through the comparison with silver, gold, and coral. This makes use of expressions also encountered elsewhere in the book of Proverbs.¹¹⁹ Wisdom's speech, which has authority and value, is enhanced further in the section 8:12–21. This already becomes clear in the introductory *אני חכמה* ("I, Wisdom") in 8:12a. The formulation not only marks a break in the text; it also ties in with YHWH's frequently attested self-presentation (*אני יהוה*).¹²⁰ As a result, Wisdom appears as a gift of God in 8:12–14, on the one hand, while, on the other, it moves quite close to YHWH himself in 8:15–16 and 17.¹²¹

This close connection of personified Wisdom to YHWH is illustrated in 8:22–31 on the creation of the world. The section, itself bearing features of a cosmology, emphasizes Wisdom's special place as a mediator between God and humans.¹²² She is clearly superior to humanity, alone through her presence at YHWH's creation of the world. In focus is less the aspect of Wisdom's cocreation, so often investigated in scholarship, than on the special knowledge that results from this presence at creation.¹²³ This is established through different references and allusions to other texts, especially to Gen 1.¹²⁴ The first creations are wisdom and heaven, which are especially close to God as positively connoted spheres. What then follows in a second step—thus separate from the first sphere—is the lower world

11:1, 20; 12:22; 15:8, 9, 26; 16:5; 17:15; 20:10, 33; and Baumann, *Weisheitsgestalt*, 80; and Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 147.

119. Prov 16:16; 2:4; 3:14–15; Job 28:15–18. On the topic, see also above, §2.2.2 (on Prov 2:4).

120. Gen 15:7; 28:13; Exod 6:2, 6–8, 29; 7:5, 17; 8:18; 10:2; 12:12; 14:4, 18; 15:26; 16:12; Lev 11:44–45; 18:2, 4–6, 21, 30; Deut 29:5; see Anja A. Diesel, *'Ich bin Jahwe': Der Aufstieg der Ich-bin-Jahwe-Aussage zum Schlüsselwort des alttestamentlichen Monotheismus*, WMANT 110 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2006), 388–89.

121. Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 149; Loader, *Proverbs 1–9*, 333–34; Baumann, *Weisheitsgestalt*, 100–101.

122. Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 91–95, with discussion of previous approaches; Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 412–13.

123. This has been convincingly mapped out by Baumann, *Weisheitsgestalt*, 151.

124. The similarity between Prov 8:22–31 and Gen 1:1–2:4a was already noted in 1914 by Jastrow; see Michaela Bauks and Gerlinde Baumann, "Im Anfang war...?" Gen 1,1ff und Prov 8,22–31 im Vergleich," *BN* 71 (1994): 24–52; Braulik, "Das Deuteronomium," 258. The "not yet" statements in 8:24–26 then again also refer to Gen 2:4b; see Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 154.

described in the text with the term תהום (“deep,” 8:24, 27b).¹²⁵ The claims of Wisdom unfolded in the text in the end lead to the statement:¹²⁶

(34) Blessed is the person who listens to me,
by watching at my gates day by day,
by guarding the doorposts of my entryways!
(35) For the one who finds me has found life
and has attained favor from YHWH;
(36) but the one who fails me injures himself;
all who hate me love death.

These verses bundle the statements made earlier and intensify them, similar to the concluding verses of 21–22 in Prov 2, into the alternative of “life or death.” While this Wisdom speech previously had a positive accent, what arises from the normative claim of Wisdom is a categorical alternative: Whoever orients themselves toward wisdom finds their life; whoever does not goes toward death.

The close similarity of Prov 8:5 to Deut 30:15–20 has often been emphasized.¹²⁷ In the center is the notion of finding life in contrast to death. This antithesis is formulated in Deut 30:15 and is then connected in 30:16 with the commandments, ordinances, and statutes of YHWH. Whoever observes them and “walks in his ways” (ללכת בדרכיו) will “live” (חיה, 30:16). In contrast, whoever does not do so will die. This is expressed in 30:19 by the antithesis “life and death” (החיים והמות, see also 30:15). Given that this idea is an important aspect of Deuteronomistic theology (see Deut 28:1–19), it has significant implications for understanding Prov 8.¹²⁸ By connecting life and death to obedience to her instruction, in 8:35–36 personified Wisdom takes on the role of the divine torah—God’s

125. Baumann, *Die Weisheitsgestalt*, 128. Baumann attempts to see an allusion already here to the underworld in the sense of Sheol, which is connected with the theme of the strange woman in Prov 1–9. This appears somewhat bold in light of the fact that the specific terminology like death, Rephaim, or Sheol of the strange woman passage do not appear in Prov 8.

126. For text-critical questions in 8:34–35 see Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 284.

127. So already Weinfeld, *Deuteronomic School*, 308; see also Braulik, “Das Deuteronomium,” 258; Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 161.

128. For life and death as an important aspect of Deuteronomistic theology, see Hermann Spieckermann, *Gottes Liebe zu Israel: Studien zur Theologie des Alten Testaments*, FAT 33 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 170–72.

commandments and statutes—in Deuteronom(ist)ic theology. Here, it is not torah but wisdom that is the decisive authority for directing one's life before God. This claim is underlined by the formulation of 8:36. A person “does violence to his life” (חַמַּס נַפְשׁוֹ) if he does not orient himself toward personified Wisdom. In Ezek 22:36 and Zeph 3:4, the same formula is related to torah such that sinning against wisdom in Prov 8:36 becomes similar to sinning against YHWH and his torah.¹²⁹

A connection between wisdom and torah can also be found in texts that presuppose Prov 8. The claim made in Prov 8 apparently could not remain unchallenged.¹³⁰ A response took place such that the attributes claimed by Wisdom in Prov 8 were now transferred to torah. This is attested by Pss 119 and 19, which both link with Prov 8 in a noteworthy manner.¹³¹ Starting with the earlier of the two psalms, Psalm 119 presents torah in a way that is similar to the characterization of personified Wisdom in Prov 8:

1. The expression “gold and fine gold” appears in both texts. In Prov 8:19 Wisdom states, “my fruit is better than gold and fine gold.” In Ps 119:127 the psalmist says, “I love the torah more than gold and more than fine gold.” The quite infrequent word פָּז (“fine gold”) is identical, while the synonyms זָהָב and חֶרֶץ are used for “gold.”¹³²
2. The formula “have delight in” (derived from שָׁעָה) with an abstract object appears in Prov 8:30–31 (referring to wisdom) and multiple times in Ps 119 (vv. 16, 24, 47, 70, 77, 92, 143, 177).
3. The root “love” אָהַב in relation to torah or wisdom is used in Prov 8:17 and in Ps 119:47, 48, 97, 113, 119, 127.¹³³
4. In addition are further terms that can be compiled in the following summary:¹³⁴
 - ◆ אֱמֶת (“truth”): Prov 8:7; Ps 119:43, 142, 151, 160
 - ◆ אֶרֶץ (“path”): Prov 8:20; Ps 119:9, 15, 101, 104, 128

129. Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 161.

130. On the history of reception, see the overview in Clifford, *Proverbs*, 98–99; and McKane, *Proverbs*, 70; see also Gemser, *Sprüche*, 47, who notes the similarity between Prov 8 and Sir 1 and 24 (see §5.4 below).

131. The following overviews are taken from Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 290–91.

132. The word appears a total of nine times in the Old Testament: Job 28:17; Pss 19:11; 21:4; 119:127; Prov 8:19; Song 5:11, 15; Isa 13:12; and Lam 4:2. It is interesting that the formulation מִפְּז וּמִזָּהָב from Ps 119:127 is also encountered in Ps 19:11.

133. See also Prov 4:6 (referring to wisdom).

134. See Freedman, *Psalms 119*, 89 n. 1.

- ◆ אשרי ("happy"): Prov 8:32, 34; Ps 119:1, 2
- ◆ דרך ("way"): Prov 8:2, 13, 22, 32; Ps 119:1, 3, 5, 14, 26–27, 29–30, 32–33, 37, 59, 168
- ◆ כסף ("silver"): Prov 8:10, 19; Ps 119:72
- ◆ מעולם ("from eternity"): Prov 8:23; Ps 119:52
- ◆ כסיל ("silver") Prov 8:5; Ps 119:130
- ◆ צדק ("righteous"): Prov 8:8, 15–16; Ps 119:7, 62, 75, 106, 121, 123, 138, 142, 144, 160
- ◆ שמר ("keep"): Prov 8:32; Ps 119:4–5, 8–9, 17, 34, 44, 55, 57, 60, 63, 67, 101, 106, 134, 136, 146, 158, 167–68

Overall, thirteen terms coincide, including specific word combinations. Taken together, the evidence indicates that Ps 119 presupposes the wisdom poem of Prov 8.¹³⁵ In this respect, the decisive difference between the two passages gains even more weight: whereas Ps 119:1 states, "Blessed are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the torah of YHWH," in Prov 8:32 Wisdom says, "Blessed are those who keep [שמר] my ways." What relates to personified Wisdom in Prov 8 is now connected to the divine torah.

A comparable picture can be found in Ps 19. Here, too, the qualities that are ascribed to Wisdom in Prov 8 are applied to torah.¹³⁶

Proverbs 8	Psalms 19
Statements about Wisdom and her words: 8:7: "truth" (אמת) 8:8: "in righteousness" (בצדק) 8:9: "straight" (ישר)	Statements about torah: 19:10a: "truth" (אמת) 19:10b: "righteous" (צדק <i>qal</i>) 19:9: "straight" (ישר)
8:13: the "fear of YHWH" (יראת יהוה)	19:10a: the "fear of YHWH" (יראת יהוה)
Effects: 8:14: "insight" (בִּינָה) 8:18: "wealth" (הוֹן); v. 21: "treasure, treasury" (אוצר).	Effects: 19:8a: "it gives life" (מְשִׁיבַת נֶפֶשׁ) 19:8b: "it makes one wise" (חִכְם <i>hiphil</i>)
8:19a: "better than gold (חרוץ) and fine gold (פז).")	19:11: "more desirable than gold (זהב) and much fine gold (פז)."

135. Reynolds, *Torah*, 51.

136. See the analysis of Grund, "*Die Himmel*," 241, upon which the following table is based.

This overview shows several similarities. The descriptions of Wisdom in Prov 8:7–9 are applied to torah in Ps 19:8–11. Moreover, both texts emphasize the fear of YHWH and the life of wisdom and fullness (in Prov 8:18: wealth) that it brings.

Altogether, the evidence presented above indicates that the authority that Prov 8 claims for wisdom was later applied to torah. Although torah appears in Pss 19 and 119 in sapiential garb, both psalms deal with the word of God written down in the Torah, which leaves no room for an independent wisdom. If the aforementioned applications of attributes of torah (Deut 30) to personified Wisdom (Prov 8:35–36) are added to this, then a three-stage process emerges: (1) That which originally described torah in Deut 30 was (2) applied to personified Wisdom in Prov 8, which was so closely associated with YHWH that there was no room left for an independent concept of torah, before (3) the attributes of personified Wisdom were “inverted” and applied to the sapientially conceived torah in Pss 19 and 119.

The previous analysis also has consequences on the understanding of Prov 1–9. Proverbs 8 offers a conception that contrasts contrapuntally with the subordination of wisdom to torah in Prov 6. Not only are there several references to Deuteronomy in the first collection of the book of Proverbs, as Delitzsch and others argued in the nineteenth century, but there are also different articulations of the relationship between wisdom and torah. In the process, Prov 8 goes the furthest: on the one hand, it alludes to the book of Deuteronomy (Deut 30), while, on the other, it attributes to wisdom qualities that are claimed by torah. This stands in sharp contrast to the sapiential torah presented in Prov 6:20–35. While wisdom is absorbed by torah in that text, Prov 8 presents wisdom in a form that leaves no space for an independent torah. Personified Wisdom is so close to YHWH and so crucial for humans that no room is left for something else that could be placed between God and humankind.

Before evaluating this evidence for the redaction history of Prov 1–9, it is necessary to look at the remaining important texts for the topic of “wisdom and torah” in the book of Proverbs: Prov 13, Prov 28, and the words of Agur in Prov 30.

5.2.3. Proverbs 13 and the Concept of Nomistic Wisdom

At first glance the proverbial wisdom of Prov 13 does not relate to the subject of wisdom and torah since this chapter contains no references to

Deuteronomy.¹³⁷ However, looking at Prov 13 on the backdrop of Prov 6:20–35, the chapter becomes quite interesting. In short, Prov 13 develops the concept of a nomistic wisdom that stands in sharp contrast to the sapiential torah of Prov 6:20–35.

Proverbs 13 is a masterful composition that can be called a sapiential instruction in the garb of proverbial wisdom.¹³⁸ It employs a concept of education based on discipline (מוסר), which was described in the previous chapters of Prov 10–22 as foundational for understanding the sapiential antithesis (12:1). Proverbs 13 starts with a verse that resembles terminology of the ten instructions in Prov 1–9:

A wise son—discipline [מוסר] of the father,
but a scoffer has not listened to reproof [גערה]. (13:1)

The terms “son,” “father,” “discipline,” and “to hear” connect to the introductory verses of the ten instructions in Prov 1–7 (cf. esp. 1:8; 4:1).¹³⁹ However, 13:1 goes much further in its use of the word גערה, which in wisdom literature (Prov 13:1, 8; 17:10; Qoh 7:5) has the meaning of “rebuke” or “reproof.”¹⁴⁰ With regard to the subject of wisdom and torah, the proverbial instruction of Prov 13 receives its special importance through 13:13–14:

(13) One who despises a word will be impounded by it,
but one who fears a commandment will be repaid.
(14) The torah of the wise person is a fountain of life
for avoiding the snares of death.

Apart from 10:8 and 19:16, 13:13 is the only verse within the proverbial wisdom that refers to the “commandment” (מצוה). If one adds to this the expression תורה חכם (“the torah of the wise person”) in 13:14, one might argue that the triad “word,” “commandment,” and “torah” in 13:13–14 refers to a concept of wisdom that is determined by divine law.¹⁴¹ One argument for such an interpretation is the statement in 13:13b that one

137. The following section draws on Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 437–60.

138. Whybray, *Composition*, 99, who speaks of a “single instruction.”

139. Sæbø, *Sprüche*, 194.

140. André Caquot, “גער,” *TDOT* 3:49–53.

141. Thus already Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 278–79; and Toy, *Proverbs*, 269. See also van Leeuwen, “Proverbs,” 132.

should “fear” (ירא) the commandment. According to Deuteronomy, one must fear (ירא) YHWH by observing the commandments (Deut 5:29; 6:2; 8:6; 13:4; 17:19; 28:58).¹⁴²

At the same time, however, chapter 13 does not refer explicitly to YHWH. It is the only chapter in Prov 10:1–22:16 that does not mention YHWH (in contrast, see 10:3, 22, 27, 29; 11:1, 20; 12:22; 14:2, 26, 27; 15:3, 8, 9, 11, 16, 25, 26, 29, 33; 16:2–7; 17:3, 15; 18:10; 19:3, 17, 21, 23; 20:10, 12). Instead, Prov 13 focuses on sapiential education, encapsulated in the concept of “discipline” (13:1), and the role of wisdom teachers (“the wise,” 13:20). This evidence is an initial hint that statements in 13:13–14 should be interpreted differently. A second hint can be found in 14:27. It is one of the “twice-told proverbs” in which one verse matches another with only one difference:¹⁴³

13:14	The torah of the wise person <i>is a fountain of life for avoiding the snares of death.</i>	תורת חכם מקור חיים לסור ממקשי מות
14:27	The fear of YHWH <i>is a fountain of life, for avoiding the snares of death.</i>	יראת יהוה מקור חיים לסור ממקשי מות

The two verses differ only in their beginnings. In 14:27 the fear of YHWH is the fountain of life, while in 13:14 it is the torah of the wise person. The parallelism of the two statements indicates that the torah of the wise person can be equated with the fear of YHWH and vice versa.¹⁴⁴ This has significant implications for the interpretation of 13:14. Which can be described as a source of life: the wise person’s teaching or one’s relationship to YHWH, expressed as יראת יהוה (“the fear of YHWH”)?

The metaphors give 13:14 an existential dimension. The verse describes not simply occasional success in life but instead a fundamental approach that is provided by the torah of the wise person. By placing this “torah of the wise” (תורת חכם, 13:14) on the same level as the fear of YHWH, the verse underlines the authoritativeness of the knowledge conveyed by the wisdom teacher. Through its stark contrast with wickedness (רשעה, 13:6) and injustice (בלא משפט, 13:23), torah wisdom is characterized as the only correct way of life. Only the skills acquired through discipline can lead to happiness and wealth, which is important to many different aspects of life.

142. Of the eight occurrences of the verb ירא (“to fear”) in the book of Proverbs, four relate to the fear of YHWH (Prov 3:7; 14:2; 24:21; 31:30).

143. Heim, *Poetic Imagination*, 353–58 (no. 51).

144. This basic idea is found already in Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 565.

In this respect, the torah wisdom of chapter 13 need not refer explicitly to YHWH since it is itself a “fountain of life” (13:14).

Gathering the evidence together, the proverbial instruction of Prov 13 develops the idea of nomistic wisdom. The wisdom teacher’s instruction is described as authoritative torah without pointing to divine law. Whereas Prov 6:20–35 subordinates wisdom to torah, in Prov 13 the sapiential teaching is presented as the better “torah.” An instruction of life is presented without referring to Deuteronomy that can be learned by the student who follows the advice of the wisdom teacher. This idea is phrased paradigmatically in 13:20a: “Walk with the wise and become wise!” The following evaluation of Prov 28 and 30 will show that the final chapters of the book of Proverbs significantly challenge such remarkable trust in the benefits of sapiential education.

5.2.4. On Justice and Torah: Proverbs 28

Fishbane promotes the thesis that Prov 28:4–5, 9 was the only text in Proverbs in which torah “may have a covenantal sense.”¹⁴⁵ Proverbs 28 is seen in recent scholarship as a single thematic unit with Prov 29. The unit is largely structured by the contrast between the righteous and the wicked.¹⁴⁶ The two chapters comprise five structured sayings (28:1, 12, 28; 29:16, 27) and four thematic units (28:2–11, 13–27; 29:1–15; 17–26).¹⁴⁷ These are furnished with dramaturgical content. Section 1 (28:2–11) addresses the relationship to torah, section 2 (28:13–27) the divine relationship, and section 3 (29:1–15) the topic of upbringing and leadership. Section 4 (29:17–26) changes to the question of the relationship with God. The unit

145. The title of this section is adopted from van Leeuwen, “Proverbs,” 234. Fishbane, *Interpretation*, 288 n. 2. A “pious emotion” (‘fromme Gemüthsstimmung’) was already seen by Hitzig, *Die Sprüche*, 292 in ch. 28. In contrast, Strack, *Die Sprüche*, 90, highlights that torah here first means the teaching of the parents or the wisdom teacher. “But it should not be separated from the wisdom given by God, the ‘law’” (“Sie ist aber nicht zu trennen von der durch Gott gegebenen Weisung, dem ‘Gesetze’”). On this also see the overview in Clifford, *Proverbs*, 243–44.

146. The two chapters are part of the so-called second Solomonic collection (Prov 25–29), which is divided into two subcollections (25–27 + 28–29); Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 339; and Perdue, *Proverbs*, 229.

147. Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 464–65; van Leeuwen, “Proverbs,” 234; and Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 15–31*, 404–5. On the structure see also Douglas Finkbeiner, “An Analysis of the Structure of Proverbs 28 and 29,” *CBTJ* 11.2 (1995): 1–14.

concerns three levels that converge with one another: upbringing, the relationship with God, and authority. In the center is Yahwistic piety, which is already echoed in the presentation of those who seek YHWH (28:5b). It marks the overarching subject of the section of chapters 28–29, which offers a kind of summarizing judgment of the societal reality within the horizon of faith in YHWH.¹⁴⁸

The first section is especially interesting for the question of the conception of torah. Proverbs 28:2–11 address the standard for leadership, having especially the rich and their relationship with the poor in view. The considerations lead in 28:11 to the statement that a rich person may consider himself wise (חכם), but the poor person (designated here as דל) sees through him if he has insight (root בִּין). In the development of the thought of 28:2–11, the verb בִּין takes on the function of a key word. It is used in 28:2, 5, 7, 11, both in the frame (28:2, 11) as well as in the middle verses (28:5, 7).¹⁴⁹ Further key words of the section are “torah” (28:4, 7, 9) and the contrast “rich-poor/low” (28:3, 6, 8, 11).¹⁵⁰ All three key words are connected with one another and illustrate the general thrust of the content of the text. It concerns the juxtaposition of poor and rich and the wisdom category of understanding, which is tied to torah. This can be seen in the torah verses of the section, 28:2–11.¹⁵¹

(4) Those who forsake torah [תורה] praise the wicked,
but those who observe/keep torah [תורה] strive against them.

(7) A discerning son guards torah [תורה],
but one who engages with profligates brings shame to his father.

(9) One who turn his ear from hearing torah [תורה],
even his prayer can (only) be an abomination.

148. Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 367. See also Yoder, *Proverbs*, 264.

149. This was mapped out by Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 466. See also Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 230–31.

150. Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 369; O'Dowd, *Proverbs*, 375; Ricardo Tavares, *Eine königliche Weisheitslehre? Exegetische Analyse von Sprüche 28–29 und Vergleich mit den ägyptischen Lehren Merikaras und Amenemhats*, OBO 234 (Fribourg: Presses Universitaires; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007), 58.

151. For the parallel structure of 28:2–6 and 28:7–11 see Heim, *Poetic Imagination*, 442; O'Dowd, *Proverbs*, 375.

The contrast between correct and false leadership, which is the topic of 28:2–3, appears defined by the torah.¹⁵² The text does not have the king in view—he is not mentioned—but rather the officials (28:2b: שרים) and the rich, wealthy man.¹⁵³ Striking here is that the wisdom themes of the contrast between the righteous and the wicked as well as the theme of “the way” are not only combined with the contrast of poor/rich but are also aimed at the norm of torah.

The verb בין illustrates this. Having knowledge or insight is related to torah in every case. The sometimes controversial question in scholarship concerning what kind of torah is meant here—a “secular” wisdom one or a theological one—can be answered from the background of the overall imprint of the verse.¹⁵⁴ The juxtaposition of “torah” in 28:4 and “seeking YHWH” in 28:5 leads to the understanding that the תורה is related to YHWH. Whoever holds to this torah, who, as the result of a wisdom process of understanding, internalizes it, that person is a “discerning son” (בן מבין, 28:7) and a just wealthy person who gives to the poor (28:8). This religious dimension is highlighted once more in 28:9 through the contrast of hearing the torah and praying (תפלה). The expression of the ear that hears ties in with the classic wisdom saying on attentiveness. It places torah in a category of equal value to wisdom. The statement that prayer (תפלה) does not help those who do not adhere to torah pushes the understanding of torah in this section toward torah piety. The forcefulness of this concern is especially underlined by the classification of the prayer as “abomination” (תועבה) in 28:9. As a result of the context of Prov 28:2–11, the תועבה sounds like the תועבת יהוה; it concerns transgression against YHWH.¹⁵⁵

152. The central topic of 28:2–6 for Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 15–31*, 408.

153. This alone speaks against the often mentioned thesis that Prov 28–29 should be seen as “royal wisdom instructions” (U. Skladny, B. V. Malchow, S.-P. Liew, D. Finkbeiner). On this see the summaries of the history of scholarship by Fox, *Proverbs 10–31*, 817–18; and Tavares, *Weisheitslehre*, 1–5, who suggests, in analogy with the Egyptian instructions (Merikare, Amenemhet), seeing both aspects (royal and common) linked with one another.

154. The question is considered open by Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 468; Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 370 (however, on 371 he instead has parental teaching in mind); Clifford, *Proverbs*, 243–44. Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 332 instead thinks of the law; so also van Leeuwen, “Proverbs,” 237; Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 15–31*, 409.

155. Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 371; Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 15–31*, 414; Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 334, with reference to the Syriac.

Proverbs 28:8 is of interest with regard to the understanding of torah in Prov 28. It contains a conception that clearly links to the Mosaic law:¹⁵⁶

Whoever increases his wealth through interest and surcharge,
he gathers it for one who is gracious to the poor. (28:8)

Taking interest and surcharges is forbidden among those belonging to Israel according to Exod 22:24; Lev 25:6–7; and Deut 23:20, though it is permitted with foreigners (Deut 23:21). This manner of making a profit was quite widespread in the postexilic period.¹⁵⁷ It stands to reason that this could be understood as a further development of the prohibition against the backdrop of postexilic practice. It would therefore be a case of scribal exegesis, or rather updating, which was customary for the postexilic period.¹⁵⁸

The following can be concluded for the understanding of torah (תורה) in Prov 28:2–11: torah is presented in such a way that it takes the place of wisdom. The term תורה has, if one follows Fishbane's formulation, "covenant-theological" importance, for orientation toward torah has consequences for the relationship with YHWH. In this regard it is important that the word תורה appears in Prov 28:4, 7, 9; and in 29:18 in the absolute form, "without specifying whose teaching it is."¹⁵⁹

When looking at Prov 28 and 29 as a whole, the concept of torah is not only combined with the subject of justice, but it also takes a position that is surprising within a sapiential book: divine torah moves into the foreground, while wisdom recedes into the background. In this respect Prov 28 presents exactly the contrary to Prov 13. Whereas the latter develops the idea of a nomistic wisdom that can be called torah, Prov 28 argues for a divine torah claiming for itself the qualities normally attributed to wisdom.

5.2.5. Proverbs 30 and the Limits of Wisdom

The tendency of ascribing wisdom's qualities to a divine torah as seen in Prov 28 appears explicitly in Prov 30. The Sayings of Agur presents a per-

156. O'Dowd, *Proverbs*, 376.

157. Ezek 18:8, 13; Ps 15:5; Neh 5:7; see also Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 470; Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 371; O'Dowd, *Proverbs*, 376; Longman, *Proverbs*, 490.

158. On this, see the example of the mixed marriage problematic in §5.1.2.

159. Van Leeuwen, "Proverbs," 234.

spective that seems strange at first glance for the book of Proverbs but acquires deeper meaning in light of the literary discourse on wisdom and torah. Proverbs 30 offers a series of problems beginning with the demarcation of the verses, moving to the meaning of the Hebrew terms in 30:1c, 30:1d, and extending to the question of textual unity. Some commentators attempt to see a separate unit in 30:1–9 that yields a clear thought process disrupted by 30:10–14, while still others subdivide the section into 30:1–4 and 30:5–7, as well as 30:7–9 as additions or view 30:1–3, 4, 5–6, 7–9 as separate components.¹⁶⁰ Raymond van Leeuwen, however, notes that subdividing according to modern literary-critical criteria is difficult: he describes the text as an “anthological poem.”¹⁶¹ The pericope refers to various traditions and must be understood as a scribal work. One should therefore be cautious about drawing literary-critical and redaction-historical conclusions with criteria such as “meaningful structure” or “stylistic breaks.” Rather, subdividing the thirty-three verses of Prov 30 suggests a need to begin from the textual history, for this offers a rather interesting starting point: the Septuagint draws a line of separation between 30:14 and 30:15 and places the first part (30:1–14) before and the second part (30:15–33) after 24:23–34.¹⁶²

Following the Septuagint on a break between 30:14 and 30:15, then 30:1–14 become a section with a clear theme: the unreliability of human wisdom. This is already echoed in the names of 30:1. The twice mentioned לִיאֲתִיאל in 30:1c and the use of וָאֶכַל can also be interpreted as a verbal clause: “I am weak, oh God, I am weak, oh God, and I am exhausted.”¹⁶³ In this case 30:1 would already hint at the “before I die” (בְּטֶרֶם אָמוּת) from 30:7, so someone speaks here about the sum of his life and the experiences

160. See Fox, *Proverbs 10–31*, 851; Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 36–37; McKane, *Proverbs*, 176; Clifford, *Proverbs*, 257.

161. Van Leeuwen, “Proverbs,” 251.

162. On this see the overview in Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 15–31*, 4.

163. In this case *lā’itī’ēl* (instead of MT *lā’itī’ēl*) as well as *wā’ēkel* (MT *wā’ukāl*) would be vocalized. The textual problems are, however, so major that it is difficult to opt for a single solution. Therefore, McKane, *Proverbs*, 258 and 664–65, and Scott, *Proverbs*, 175, are in favor of a derivation from the Aramaic (“there is no God; there is no God, and I can [know nothing]”). On the issue as a whole, see Fox, *Proverbs 10–31*, 853–54, with further suggestions and discussion of the evidence from the Septuagint, which supports the solution preferred here. See also Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 15–31*, 454–55; Fox, *Textual Commentary*, 380.

he has had.¹⁶⁴ In this light, the actual message does not leave anything to misunderstanding. Proverbs 30:2–3 states:

(2) Surely, I am more a beast than a man,
and I do not have the insight [בינה] of a human being;
(3) and I have not learned [למד] wisdom [חכמה],
nor have I knowledge of the Holy One [דעת קדשים].

The verse sounds almost like a negation of what Prov 2 invokes. While in that chapter one can call to בינה (“insight”) and orient his ear to חכמה (“wisdom”) in order to find fear of YHWH and the knowledge of God, the author of 30:1–14 precludes this. He compares himself more with an animal that possesses no human wisdom and appears as something of a *homo sapiens ignorans*.¹⁶⁵ The context of insight and learning wisdom in order to acquire knowledge of the Holy One almost seems like an allusion to Prov 2:1–5. The formulation דעת קדשים (“knowledge of the Holy One”) corresponds to the דעת אלהים (“knowledge of God”) in 2:5, parallel to the fear of YHWH.¹⁶⁶ Therefore, with drastic words 30:2–3 negates what 2:1–5 promises to the student of wisdom. It indicates a great chasm between human wisdom and God himself, who continues in 30:4–6 with an allusion to conceptions of creation:¹⁶⁷

164. See Gen 27:4; 45:28; and Fox, *Proverbs 10–31*, 853.

165. The word בער is used a total of five times in the OT, two of them in Proverbs (12:1; 30:2). It has the basic meaning “beast,” but it can also designate an ignoramus; see Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 39 (“ignoramus”) with reference to Ps 49:11 (cf. Ps 73:22 and 49:11); as well as on the etymology HALOT 1:145–46, s.v. “בער”; Gesenius, *Handwörterbuch*, s.v. “בער,” 165 “viehisch, unkultiviert sein” (“beastly, uncultivated”). On the *homo sapiens ignorans*, see Grund, “Die Himmel,” 284 n. 17; Ruben Zimmermann, “Homo Sapiens Ignorans: Hiob 28 als Bestandteil der ursprünglichen Hiobdichtung,” *BN 74* (1994): 99–100.

166. See Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 15–31*, 470; and §3.2 above. Interesting here and in 9:10 is the plural קדשים. Can it be understood with the medieval commentators in the sense of an abstract plural (“a plural of majesty”; Fox, *Proverbs 10–31*, 855), or does it concern an actual plural corresponding to the קהל קדשים in Ps 89:6 and the סוד קדשים in Ps 89:8, which would mean that one should translate here with “the holy ones”? The expression דעת קדשים only appears within the Old Testament in Prov 9:4 and 30:3. On the basis of the parallelism in 9:10 to יראת יהוה, the singular meaning is more likely, so this is called for in the following (so also the commentators: Frankenberg, *Die Sprüche*, 63 and 160; Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 497; Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 354; Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 15–31*, 470).

167. Antonius H. J. Gunneweg, “Weisheit, Prophetie und Kanonformel: Erwä-

- (4) Who has gone up to heaven and come down?
 Who has gathered the wind in the hollow of his hands?
 Who has wrapped up the water in a cloak?
 Who has established all the ends of the earth?
 What is his name, and what is the name of his son?
 Surely you know (it)!
- (5) Every word of God is purified.
 He is a shield for those who take refuge in him.
- (6) Do not add to his words,
 lest he convict you, and you will be proved a liar.

The rhetorical questions from 30:4 all aim toward the same answer: no one.¹⁶⁸ This answer cannot be “YHWH.” On the contrary, the nature of the questions, which is similar to YHWH’s speech from the whirlwind in Job 38, emphasizes the very inadequacy of human knowledge.¹⁶⁹ It is tempting to relate it to the thought of the father (mother) and the son behind 30:4e, which is foundational according to Deut 4. Proverbs 30:4 forms a point of contrast to one person teaching the torah to another and the passing on of wisdom by the “father” or rather the “mother” (see 4:1; 6:20). This “human” word is now contrasted not with YHWH himself, but instead with the divine word (אמרת אלוה), which is reckoned as “purified” (30:5 passive participle צרופה).¹⁷⁰ A comparable statement appears in Ps 119:140, which describes the word of God by means of the same verbal form as “pure and refined.”¹⁷¹ This simultaneously lays out the direction

gungen zu Proverbia 30,1–9,” in Hausmann and Zobel, *Alttestamentlicher Glaube*, 253–60.

168. With Fox, *Proverbs 10–31*, 865; Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 15–31*, 471; Gunneweg, “Weisheit,” 255; and Gerald T. Sheppard, *Wisdom as a Hermeneutical Construct: A Study in the Sapientializing of the Old Testament*, BZAW 151 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1980), 91, who notes the connection between Ps 30:3–4; Deut 30:12–13; and Bar 3:29–30.

169. See Job 38:5, 6, 25, 37, 41; and Isa 41:2, 4; 45:21. YHWH alone cannot have been meant simply from the fact that the question considers “his son” in the formulation. Skehan, *Studies*, 42–43, has Israel in mind (so also Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 15–31*, 474); Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 275–76, the son of God; Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 498, a heavenly being (Ps 29:1; 82:6) or the sons of God (Job 2:1).

170. The rare term אלוה is used here, which is a singularity within Proverbs; see HALOT 1:53, s.v. “אלוה”; Gesenius, *Handwörterbuch*, s.v. “אלוה,” 61.

171. Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 15–31*, 476; and O’Dowd, *Proverbs*, 405.

for interpretation. The word of God is the focus; it is a shield for those “who take refuge in him” (Prov 30:5).

It is well known that 30:5 adopts formulations from Ps 18:30.¹⁷² However, when reading the passage against the backdrop of Prov 2, these words virtually counteract the sapiential instruction from chapter 2.¹⁷³ Proverbs 30:5b connects with the expression of 2:6’s formulation of the shield (מגן): YHWH stores up prudence for the upright like a shield (מגן) for those walking blamelessly, that is, for those who follow the instruction. Proverbs 30:5 transforms this thought so that the word of God can function as a shield for the one who subordinates himself unconditionally, negating his own knowledge.¹⁷⁴ Also belonging to this is that one cannot add anything to the word of God. The formulation in 30:6 ties in with the canonical formula of Deut 4:2a and 13:1b, as has often been noted, which prohibits omissions as well as additions.¹⁷⁵ The mention of such omissions is unnecessary in Prov 30 because the text has wisdom speculations in mind.¹⁷⁶ Wisdom instruction itself appears as erroneous. This statement carries the line of thought from 30:1–2 forward: now at the end of his life, the speaker criticizes and describes (כֹּזֵב *niphal*) all wisdom and learned speculation as deceptive.¹⁷⁷ Through the virtual citation of the canon formula of Deut 4:2, the text refers to a position against every “distortion of authoritative tradition through one’s own wisdom.”¹⁷⁸

On display here is a conception in which the step toward “torah wisdom” has already been completed. The authoritative tradition as such is already present, and the word of God can no longer be grasped with human wisdom. What is already suggested in Job 28 and then carried further in Bar 3–4 finds a corollary here.¹⁷⁹ Therefore, it is not surprising that

172. See Ps 18:30aβb (הוא לכל החסידים בן) in contrast to Prov 30:5 (כל אמרת אלוה צרופה מן הוא לחסידים בן). So already Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 278.

173. For this see O’Dowd, *Proverbs*, 403.

174. Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 15–31*, 476–77.

175. Here also is a citation-like allusion: Deut 4:2a (לא תספו על הדבר) and Prov 30:6 (אל תוסף על דבריו). See Gunneweg, “Weisheit,” 257, who already noted that Prov 30:6 contains only “half of the canon formula.”

176. So also Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 499.

177. On the significance of כֹּזֵב see also Job 24:25; 34:6; Ps 78:36.

178. Grund, “*Die Himmel*,” 284 (“Verfälschung der autoritativen Tradition durch eigene Weisheit[en]”).

179. Sheppard, *Wisdom*, 91; and Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 15–31*, 466–67. It is interesting that Bar 3 again alludes to Deut 30, therefore to the text also cited in Prov

the line of thinking changes into the speaker's prayer (30:7–9); it is the only prayer in the entire book of Proverbs.¹⁸⁰

(7) Two things I ask of you;
do not withhold (them) from me before I die.
(8) A deceit and lie keep far away from me.
Poverty or riches do not give me.
Provide me my quota of food,
(9) lest I become sated and dissemble and I say, "Who is YHWH?"
and lest I become poor and steal [גנב], and misuse the name of my God
[שם אלהי].

The prayer in the form of a numerical proverb aims toward a godly life that is supported by sufficient means of subsistence—not too little and not too much. The consideration of 30:8 that poverty and wealth (ראש ועשר) equally lead away from God reflects a form of piety that differs substantially from the piety of the poor in Ps 37.¹⁸¹ The connection between the formal independent prayer and the subsequent verses of 30:10–14 is established through the references to the Decalogue.¹⁸² The "name of God" (שם אלהים) in 30:9d alludes to the third commandment ("you shall not take the name of YHWH your God in vain," Exod 20:7; Deut 5:11). In 30:9a the key word גנב ("to steal") refers to the eighth commandment ("you shall not steal," Exod 20:15; Deut 5:19). Furthermore, the wording in 30:11 ("a generation—they curse their fathers and do not bless their mothers") can be connected to the fifth commandment ("honor your father and your mother," Exod 20:12; Deut 5:16). Combining the allusions to the Decalogue with the other references to Deuteronomy demonstrates that the different parts of Prov 30:1–14 are guided by these references. The text makes statements first about the relationship with God (first of all to the word of God in 30:1–6, then to God himself in 30:7–9) in order then to address relationships with one's fellow people (30:10–14).

Viewing the text as a whole, the Sayings of Agur in Prov 30 lead beyond what was known from the texts investigated so far from the book of Prov-

30 (Bar 3:29–30 = Deut 30:12–13; see Sheppard, *Wisdom*, 90; Odil H. Steck, *Das apokryphe Baruchbuch: Studien zu Rezeption und Konzentration "kanonischer" Überlieferung*, FRLANT 160 [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993], 133).

180. Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 499.

181. See §3.2.1 above.

182. Schipper, "Der Dekalog im Sprüchebuch," 293.

erbs with regard to wisdom and torah. Proverbs 30 emphatically highlights the limits of wisdom, and it therefore points to an understanding of torah like the one found in Ps 119.¹⁸³ Unlike Ps 119, however, instead of positive praise of torah, wisdom is drastically reduced and thereby stripped of all theological dimensions. This is the case for Prov 2, in which the student of wisdom is accorded the very thing that Prov 30 denies him, but also for the other texts that refer to torah. On the synchronic level, Prov 30 continues the statements from Prov 28. There torah has taken over the function classically assigned to wisdom. Both texts argue for the same position but are simply shaped differently. Teaching in the sense of the Deuteronomistic-Deuteronomistic tradition by one generation to the next has reached its limit. The teaching of the Book of Proverbs is now contrasted with a completely different teaching, one that amounts to declaring the bankruptcy of wisdom thought.¹⁸⁴

5.2.6. Summary

The previous analysis has presented different receptions of Deuteronomy in the book of Proverbs. All texts point to a hermeneutic of torah, though this is carried out in various ways. The spectrum stretches from a connection between wisdom and torah to the replacement of one by the other. The extreme positions are marked by Prov 8 and Prov 30. Whereas the former (Prov 8) attributes divine qualities to wisdom, the latter denies any possibility of knowledge (Prov 30). A similar contrast can be found between Prov 6:20–35 and Prov 13. Even though the proverbial instruction of Prov 13 does not strictly deal with passages from Deuteronomy, it presents “torah” as the torah of the wise with normative authority. While the instruction on the strange woman in Prov 6 argues for a sapiential torah, Prov 13 presents a quite contrary nomistic wisdom.

The juxtaposition between different notions of wisdom and torah can also be found in the instructions of Prov 3–7*. Proverbs 3:1–12, on the one hand, presents a sharp contrast between a nomistically colored

183. Fox, *Proverbs 10–31*, 861; Grund, “*Die Himmel*,” 284.

184. This is also why the teaching is characterized—somewhat cryptically—as the “Words of Agur” (דברי אגור). It concerns the otherness of the instruction. In the midrashim it is harmonized through a reference to Solomon. See Burton L. Visotzky, *The Midrash on Proverbs*, Yale Judaica Series 27 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 117; on the question as a whole, see Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 15–31*, 465 n. 89.

wisdom and “trusting in one owns insight,” while Prov 7, on the other hand, tries to combine a teaching defined by allusions to Deut 6 // 11 with a rather personified wisdom. In short, the discourse surrounding torah and wisdom, with its rather divergent positions, is already tangible within the first collection of Proverbs. This has implications for the understanding of the other depictions of wisdom and torah in the book of Proverbs because the different positions can already be found in Prov 3–7, whether the sapiential torah (Prov 6), the fundamental critique on human insight in light of torah (Prov 3), or the concept of a normative wisdom (Prov 8).

It is remarkable that these different positions were developed in conversation with the book of Deuteronomy. All of the texts investigated (apart from Prov 13) make reference to passages from Deuteronomy. These allusions and references include the framing texts from Deuteronomistic parenesis such as Deut 6:6–9 and 11:18–21, in addition to later passages such as Deut 4; 8; and 30:15–20.¹⁸⁵ Constituting a separate case are references to the Decalogue in Prov 6 and 30. Both texts allude to Deut 5 by means of a similar literary technique—allusions and key words—but reach contrary positions.¹⁸⁶ While Prov 6:20–35 presents a concept in which keeping the divine will—that is, the commandments—can be taught to the next generation, Prov 30 declares this as something that cannot be learned by humans but only requested from God. In the Sayings of Agur, the prayer takes the place of the sapiential instruction because all teaching (למד) is useless. In short, Prov 6 and 30 present two different concepts of wisdom and torah: on the one hand is the idea of a sapiential torah that touches all areas of life, and on the other hand is the fundamental difference between human knowledge and the divine torah. This is exemplified in Prov 30 by a citation of the canon formula from Deut 4. The expression of Prov 30: 6, “Do not add to his words, lest he convict you, and you will be proved a liar,” turns against every form of torah interpretation and, therefore, against its mediation from one generation to the next, which is foundational in Deut 4 and 6 and presupposed in Prov 3, 6, and 7. Proverbs 30 thereby offers a concluding point in an argument originating in the contrast between divine and human wisdom, intensifying it continually until the point at which one is incapable of grasping God’s commandments and his wisdom.

185. Braulik, “Das Deuteronomium,” 256.

186. For the following see also Schipper, “Teach Them Diligently,” 30.

5.3. The Composition of the Book of Proverbs and the Sapientialization of Torah

The insight into the different positions on wisdom and torah raises the question of the composition and redaction of the book of Proverbs. To what degree does the book of Proverbs in its various versions participate in this discourse and thus become accorded with a development whose end comes in the form of sapientializing torah, or in other words, a “theologized wisdom in a nomistic garb”?¹⁸⁷

The previous analysis has identified three primary stages in the composition of Prov 1–9 that are connected to the formation of the book as a whole. (1) At the beginning was the corpus of eight instructions (3:1–7:27*). (2) These instructions were given an introduction in chapter 2 and an “appendix” in chapter 8. (3) Proverbs 1 was placed before chapter 2, connecting to chapters 9 and 30–31. It is likely that the interludes in 3:13–20 and 6:1–19 were also added at this stage.¹⁸⁸

Already on the level of the eight instructions, a characteristic element can be found that is important for understanding both the composition of the book of Proverbs and the interplay of different notions on wisdom and torah. Proverbs 3–7* starts with a general definition of wisdom before YHWH and toward others (Prov 3) and becomes increasingly specific, ending in three instructions on the strange woman (Prov 5–7). The combination of Prov 3 and Prov 4 forms a distinctive connection between two different concepts of wisdom. Whereas chapter 3 closely connects sapiential learning with YHWH, chapter 4 reflects the idea that people are capable of grasping sapiential instruction with their own heart, mouth, and hands. In chapter 3, human insight (בִּינָה) stands in tension with wisdom that comes from YHWH (3:5), while chapter 4 valorizes human understanding (4:20–27), making any reference to YHWH superfluous. Thus, already the oldest reconstructable literary core of Prov 1–9 contains a form of discursive wisdom that brings different models of sapiential thought into dialogue with each other.¹⁸⁹

187. On the term see Grund, *Die Himmel*, 344; and Hartmut Gese, “Die Weisheit, der Menschensohn und die Anfänge der Christologie als konsequente Entfaltung der biblischen Theologie,” in *Alttestamentliche Studien* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1991), 234–35.

188. For the following see Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 51.

189. Markus Saur defined this discursive character as the foundational moment

The connection between the instructions of Prov 3–7—as demonstrated in the detailed analysis—is established through the superscriptions, which are connected through a didactic element. In keeping with the mnemonic techniques documented in the Egyptian wisdom texts of learning wisdom literature with the aid of the beginnings of chapters (the so-called incipit verses), the chapter superscriptions of the instructions provided a technique to help with learning. The eight instructions in Prov 3–7 thereby articulate a range of positions, especially with the different passages on the strange woman in Prov 5–7, and do not provide fixed answers. The *Sitz im Leben* for this form of instruction appears to be the school, or the education of a group of scribes (literati).¹⁹⁰ Such a “school setting” fits nicely with the *Sitz im Leben* of ancient Near Eastern wisdom texts and can be connected with the aforementioned passages of Deuteronomy.¹⁹¹ The didactic concept from Deut 6 // 11 includes both: the instruction of children and grandchildren (see also Deut 4:9), and the idea that the covenant people can write (6:6–9).¹⁹² In this regard, Delitzsch is correct with the summary in his commentary from 1873 for Prov 1–9:

Generally, the poetry of this writer has its hidden roots in the older writings. Who does not hear, to mention only one thing, in i. 7–ix. an echo of the old שמע (hear), Deut vi. 4–9, cf. xi. 18–21? The whole poetry of this writer savours of the Book of Deuteronomy.¹⁹³

The references to Deuteronomy show that the instructions in Prov 3–7 can be assigned to a discourse that links with certain texts from Deuteronomy. It is indebted to a paradigm founded upon Deut 4, which traces Israel’s instruction back to Moses.¹⁹⁴ He appears as a scribe who interprets torah. The professional interpreters of the Torah emulate Moses and are indebted to a conception of wisdom in which wisdom is closely connected with the divine law. Accompanying this is the differentiation between (divine) wisdom and human wisdom. The latter does not help in acquiring knowl-

of wisdom thought (Saur, “Sapientia discursiva: Die alttestamentliche Weisheit als theologischer Diskurs,” ZAW 123 [2011]: 236–49).

190. Stuart Weeks, *Early Israelite Wisdom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 123–56.

191. For this see Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 24.

192. Otto, “Mose der Schreiber,” 471.

193. Delitzsch, *Proverbs*, 35.

194. See also Finsterbusch, *Weisung*, 306.

edge of God and fearing YHWH, which Prov 3 emphasizes. This virtual juxtaposition of Prov 3 and Prov 6 illustrates that the aforementioned discourse in Prov 3–7 is characterized by an additional point. This discourse includes not only two distinct positions at its beginning in Prov 3 and 4; it also presents a conceptual openness that is fundamental for the understanding of the corpus of the eight instructions through the variegated use of Deut 6 // 11 in the introductions of Prov 3, 6, and 7. They form a sort of intellectual discourse within which students of wisdom should locate themselves. As can be seen in the three warnings concerning the strange woman, whether one defines wisdom on the foundation of Deuteronomy (Prov 6) in connection with a sapiential personification (Prov 7) or without allusion to Deut 6 // 11 (Prov 5), the main point is the need to withstand the seductive speech of the strange woman.

The redactional history of the book of Proverbs should be imagined in such a way that focuses this conceptual openness into different attempts. This concerns a development in which distinct concepts of wisdom, which were previously still considered open, assume increasingly normative character. This takes place in close connection with the discourse on wisdom and torah and the theological question of the benefits of a sapientially grounded worldview in contrast to the theological concept of a divine law revealed by YHWH himself.

5.3.1. From Proverbs 2 to the Final Form of the Book of Proverbs

When looking from the corpus of the eight instructions in Prov 3–7 to the composition of the book of Proverbs as a whole, Prov 2 as well as the framing chapters Prov 1 and 9 assume an important role in the formation of the book. Apart from the question of the literary history of the so-called Solomonic wisdom in Prov 10–22 and 25–29 or the Egyptianized chapters of 22:17–24:22, the final form of the book of Proverbs is clearly connected to the redactional history of Prov 1–9.¹⁹⁵

A first step within this development is marked by Prov 2. The text was formed against the background of the eight instructions in Prov 3–7 and takes up a position that appears especially in Prov 7. While wisdom is of divine origin, it cannot be grasped by humans as an independent entity. Determined in this way, wisdom has an integrity of its own and

195. For this see Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 36–40.

can, as seen in Prov 7, appear as a companion and sister. By taking up the themes of the instructions and placing them in a specific order, the author of Prov 2 provides a guide for reading. Beginning with the notion in Prov 2 that humans can grasp divine wisdom (2:1–4), the evil men (2:12–15) and the foreign woman (2:16–19) no longer pose any threat. They cannot affect those who orient their lives toward wisdom that comes from YHWH (2:5–11).¹⁹⁶

The text develops a remarkable self-confidence that acquires deeper meaning through contrast with two traditions: Isa 11 and the texts that expect the acquisition of the land in the future. The tradition-historical analysis above has shown that the attributes Isa 11 connects with the future salvific ruler are related to the students of wisdom themselves in Prov 2. Connected with this is the theme of the possession of the land, not as a future event but as the continuation of an existing state. Accompanying this concept is the notion that a person is able to fulfill the will of YHWH with their heart.¹⁹⁷ By taking this position, Prov 2 contradicts the late prophetic tradition of the “new heart”: what Jer 31 or Ezek 11 connect to YHWH’s future action is reckoned as possible for humans in the present in Prov 2.¹⁹⁸

On the level of the sapiential instructions, the author of Prov 2 arrives at this effect through the inclusion of Prov 8. By means of the integration of the speech of personified wisdom, the author of Prov 2 provides a clear counterweight to Prov 6. Precisely this fact might have been the reason for the integration of Prov 8 into the corpus: Prov 2 offers a line of argumentation with a position that should not be contradicted by the following discourse of the eight instructions in Prov 3–7. The author accomplishes this by attaching the presumably independent poem of Prov 8 to the instructions. This took place in practical terms through the formation of an introduction referencing the the different parts: in 2:1 to the instruction

196. Starting from this point, Jewish commentators from the Middle Ages see the situation described in Prov 2 as the result of a longer road and comprehensive examination of wisdom. Sa’adia Gaon emphasizes that it does not concern an automatism but instead is the reward first obtained after all kinds of exertion and effort when reaching the goal. See Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 67.

197. This profile has consequences for the question of the possible tradents of Prov 2. See §5.3.3 below.

198. Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 133–34.

of 7:1, in 2:2 to 5:1, in 2:3 to the speech of personified wisdom (8:1), and finally in 2:4 to classic sapiential thought.

The received form of Prov 1–9 shows that scribal discussion continued within the section even after the insertion of Prov 2 as a hermeneutical key to Prov 3–8. Instead, by stressing the antithesis between two female figures—the strange woman and Lady Wisdom—a concept of wisdom was developed that downplayed the idea of a divine instruction and focused on the fear of YHWH and on “discipline” (מוסר).

This thematic shift can be connected to the redaction history of Prov 1–9 and the different literary layers in Prov 1. Whereas the introduction in 1:1–7 and the interlude in 9:7–12 are closely connected, the wisdom poem in 1:20–33 is linked to the interlude in 3:13–20 and to chapter 8. This points to a two-stage redaction in the outer frame of chapters 1–9.¹⁹⁹

The first stage constructed a contrast between the instruction in 1:8–19 and the wisdom poem in 1:20–33, added the interlude in 3:13–20, and wrote the base layer of Prov 9, which contrasts Lady Wisdom (9:1–6) and Dame Folly (9:13–18). The intention of this redaction can easily be seen at Prov 9. Because of the contrast between 9:1–6 and 9:13–18, “wisdom” appears as one voice among others, in this case alongside Dame Folly. The parallelism of the statements, especially the same wording in 9:4 and 9:16, serves to relativize the figure of wisdom in order to blaze a trail for an understanding of torah that takes precedence over wisdom. This concern for the minimization of the concept of wisdom is achieved in Prov 9 by taking up the topic of the strange woman from Prov 5–7. While this woman can be neutralized in the instructions of chapters 3–7 (and therefore also in Prov 2), the woman is valorized in an almost fatal manner through the juxtaposition of the calls of Lady Wisdom and Dame Folly in chapter 9. This can be illustrated by pursuing the further development of this topos through the Septuagint of Proverbs and the reception in the Dead Sea Scrolls. Proverbs 9 provides an allegorization of wisdom that is taken up in the Septuagint of Proverbs (9:18a–d) and then reaches its apex in the Wiles of the Wicked Woman (4Q184).²⁰⁰

The redactional passages in 1:8–19, 20–33; 3:13–20; and 9:1–6, 13–18 paved the way for the final redaction in Prov 1–9. This redaction has the

199. For a more detailed argumentation see Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 55–59.

200. See Cook, *Septuagint*, 131–32; Matthew Goff, “Hellish Females: The Strange Woman of Septuagint Proverbs and 4QWiles of the Wicked Woman (4Q184),” *JSJ* 39 (2008): 20–45; see also §4.1.4 above.

book of Proverbs as a whole in view, as can be seen in the interlude Prov 6:1–19. An overview of the connections shows that the chapter draws on all subsequent parts of the book of Proverbs:²⁰¹

Literary connection	Collection within the book of Proverbs
6:19 = 14:5	10:1–22:16
6:13–14 = 16:28, 30	
6:15a = 24:22	22:17–24:22
6:10–11 = 24:33–34	24:23–34
6:15b = 29:1	25:1–29:27
6:8 = 30:25	30:1–31:31

The verses to which the section alludes are either the opening or closing verses of distinct units or chapters. Thus, as in 2:1–3, the allusions in 6:1–19 seem to employ a mnemotechnique whereby the incipit verses have the entire units or chapters in view. This means that the interlude in 6:1–19 not only presupposes the book of Proverbs in its entirety but also establishes a connection between chapters 1–9 and chapters 10–31 in a significant way.

The function of the interlude in 9:7–12 becomes clearer in light of Prov 6:1–19. The interlude is also characterized by individual proverbs that are joined into short units.²⁰² However, whereas 6:1–19 alludes to texts in the proverbial wisdom and beyond, 9:7–12 has both Prov 10–22 and the corpus of instructions in Prov 1–7 as its literary horizon. For example, 9:11 quotes 4:10, the opening verse of the fourth instruction (the sixth in the traditional numbering), which suggests once again that the entire instruction is in view.

The similarities between Prov 9:7–12 and Prov 1 shed further light on the nature of this final level of redaction. These similarities include shared terminology as well as the statement in 9:8–9 that a wise and righteous person can add to the instruction of others (1:5).²⁰³ The closest parallel is found in 9:10, which takes up the motto of the book of Proverbs from 1:7.

201. See also the detailed arguments in Schipper, “Phenomenon of ‘Textual Coherence,’” 116–18.

202. Fuhs, *Sprichwörter*, 167; Yoder, *Proverbs*, 103.

203. See already Hitzig, *Die Sprüche*, 85–86.

Both texts declare the “fear of YHWH” (יראת יהוה) as the beginning of “wisdom” (9:10) or “knowledge” (1:7).

The accent, marked by the prologue of the book of Proverbs in 1:1–7, becomes clear in comparison with Prov 2.²⁰⁴ The aforementioned terminological similarity (צדק ומשפט ומישרים) prompts the following observation: whereas in chapter 2 seeking wisdom is the point of departure for gaining understanding (בין) in the fear of YHWH (2:5), in 1:1–7 the fear of YHWH is the beginning of everything. It seems that this distinction was made quite intentionally through the allusion in 1:3 to 2:9. Whereas 2:9—which has a parallel structure to 2:5 (אז תבין, “then you will understand”)—refers to understanding through “righteousness and justice and uprightness” (צדק ומשפט ומישרים), 1:3 connects these three terms to the concept of “discipline.” The three terms משפט (“righteousness”), צדק (“justice”), and מישרים (“uprightness”) are used in 1:3 in apposition to “discipline that gives understanding” (מוסר השכל), which is to be acquired (לקח) by the student of wisdom. In this respect, the approach of Prov 1:1–7 is diametrically opposed to that of chapter 2. Whereas the fear of YHWH in Prov 2 results from the wisdom student’s act of seeking, in 1:7 it is the basis for all learning and teaching. What is described in Prov 2 (under the influence of Prov 7) as wisdom that comes from God is cast in pragmatic terms in the prologue of 1:1–7. Here, wisdom is closely connected to the concept of theologically grounded instruction, based on the relationship to God, expressed in the “fear of YHWH” (1:7).

The final chapters of the book of Proverbs are closely connected to this development. The analysis presented above (ch. 4) demonstrates that there are a series of interconnections between Prov 1, 9, and 30–31. Proverbs 30 and 31 themselves presuppose Prov 25–29, a unit recognizable for its special understanding of torah.²⁰⁵ The analysis of Prov 28 has shown that the subject of wisdom and torah is addressed there in a manner quite similar to Prov 6: Torah is the better wisdom. The understanding of torah in Prov 28 moves in the direction of torah piety through the statement that prayer (תפלה) does not help the one that does not revere torah. The text is therefore close to Ps 119. Given that Prov 28:2–11 also alludes to the Pentateuch, torah appears here as a category that supersedes wisdom and now constitutes the relationship with God.

204. The following section draws on Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 58.

205. Fox, *Proverbs 10–31*, 849; Waltke, *Proverbs: Chapters 15–31*, 26–27; Meinhold, *Die Sprüche*, 26.

The same is true for Prov 30. The famous Sayings of Agur highlight the limits of wisdom thought in an astonishing manner for a wisdom text. Humans virtually cannot understand wisdom and are instead like an uncultivated animal. In a certain sense, Prov 30 adopts the thought unfolded in Prov 28 but carries it further in a way that emphasizes the basic problem of wisdom rather than, for example, the capability of torah. The text argues against the notion that a person can fulfill the will of YHWH through insight and knowledge. This has consequences for the section on the Woman of Strength in Prov 31:10–31, which concludes the book of Proverbs. It has often been underlined that the passage exhibits terminological similarities to Prov 8.²⁰⁶ While the Woman of Strength is described with attributes that are used for the characterization of Lady Wisdom in Prov 8, these are hardly interpretable in such a way that the woman in Prov 31 is described in a super-elevated manner and that her wisdom should be identified as virtually superhuman.²⁰⁷ Instead, Prov 31:10–31 should be linked to the argumentation in Prov 28 and 30. It attempts not to upgrade the Woman of Strength but rather to downgrade Lady Wisdom. From the background of the emphasis on the limited nature of human wisdom, the attributes of Lady Wisdom in Prov 31 appear as solely human categories. The claim formulated in Prov 8 is not held by the author of Prov 31. He instead shows it to be completely mistaken: in the end, wisdom is only a human category without any divine or superhuman dimensions.

What is often described as a parenthesis around the book of Proverbs consisting of Lady Wisdom (ch. 1) and the Woman of Strength (ch. 31) therefore has a function in the determination of the relationship between wisdom and torah.²⁰⁸ It ultimately maintains that torah has the upper hand, so to speak, for wisdom is a human category and not a divine or superhuman category that could help with special knowledge of God.

206. Jutta Hausmann, "Beobachtungen zu Spr 31,10-31," in Hausmann and Zobel, *Alttestamentlicher Glaube*, 265–66; Yoder, *Wisdom*, 91–93.

207. But this is the view of Hausmann, "Beobachtungen," 263–66; critical of this is Fox, *Proverbs 10–31*, 908.

208. Camp, *Wisdom*, 186.

5.3.2. The Reception of Deuteronomy and the Sapientialization of Torah

The previous considerations have shown that the interplay between wisdom and torah began with certain texts in Deuteronomy and from there found its way into the book of Proverbs and other texts. With regard to later literature, in a study from the year 1980, Gerald T. Sheppard proposed the theory that wisdom became a “hermeneutical construct” in the late postexilic period:

Wisdom became a theological category associated with an understanding of canon which formed a perspective from which to interpret Torah and prophetic traditions. In this sense wisdom became a hermeneutical construct for interpreting sacred Scripture.²⁰⁹

Sheppard develops this thesis on the basis of Sir 24 and Bar 3:9–4:4. The results of the last three decades of research instead illustrate that a “sapiential interpretation” can be found prior to Sirach. Wisdom already becomes a theological category in Deut 4:5–8. This passage is one of the latest additions to the book of Deuteronomy, written at a time when other wisdom texts already existed. Against this backdrop, it is remarkable that Deut 4 records the transformation of Deuteronomic law in the direction of sapiential life instruction within Deuteronomy itself.²¹⁰ This passage, which is the only text in the Pentateuch that explicitly relates torah and wisdom, makes torah available to the nations as life instruction.²¹¹

From Deut 4 there is only a short distance back to the discussion on wisdom and Deuteronomy. The introduction of the present book mentioned the thesis of Weinfeld as well as its wide reception in scholarship on Proverbs.²¹² However, as Rofé already mentioned in 1974, the book of Deuteronomy can hardly be treated as a single unit, as Weinfeld does.²¹³ Braulik has posed the interesting thesis that the wisdom terms in Deuteronomy should be understood as something of a “hermeneutical construct.” They serve—according to Braulik—as a “hermeneutic for the

209. Sheppard, *Wisdom*, 13.

210. Krüger, “Law and Wisdom,” 43.

211. Schipper, “Afterword,” 313.

212. See §1.2.

213. Rofé, review of *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic School*, 221–30.

leading offices of the people, furthermore as torah and obedience to it.”²¹⁴ The texts of Deuteronomy—and especially the redactional passages—would then themselves constitute part of a discourse concerning the relationship between torah and wisdom.²¹⁵ In this respect, the question of the meaning of torah in Proverbs and of wisdom in Deuteronomy receives a new dimension.²¹⁶ There is a twofold piece of evidence for this. On the one hand, there are close connections between proverbial wisdom in Prov 10–29 and the legal parts of Deuteronomy. Passages like Deut 19:19 and 24:7 or Prov 15:10 and 19:18 share the same worldview, which believes in a world order determined by the act-consequence nexus.²¹⁷ On the other hand, similarities between the later passages in the book of Proverbs and the redactional chapters in Deuteronomy relate both to a discourse on wisdom and torah that shaped the literature of the Second Temple period.

214. Braulik, “Weisheit,” 264 (“Hermeneutik der Leitungsämtler des Volkes, ferner der Tora und des Gehorsams ihr gegenüber”).

215. This remains the case even if one does not accept Braulik’s “hermeneutical construct.” See also §5.3 below on the approach taken by Sheppard, to whom Braulik refers (Braulik, “Weisheit,” 264). The date of Deut 4 must also be discussed in this context. On this see the enlightening considerations of Adrian Schenker, “Was führte zur Übersetzung der Tora ins Griechische? Dtn 4,2–8 und Platon (Brief VII,3261–b),” in *Die Septuaginta: Texte, Theologien, Einflüsse; 2. Internationale Fachtagung veranstaltet von Septuaginta Deutsch (LXX.D), Wuppertal 23.–27. Juli 2008*, ed. Martin Karrer and Wolfgang Kraus, WUNT 252 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 34, who notes the close relationship between Plato’s Seventh Letter and Deut 4:6–8. Criticism of Weinfeld does not change the fact that the commonalities in content definitely exist between passages of Deuteronomy and Proverbs; see, e.g., the study by Ryan O’Dowd, *The Wisdom of Torah: Epistemology in Deuteronomy and the Wisdom Literature*, FRLANT 225 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2009), which is problematic in terms of methodology (see Udo Rüterswörden, review of *The Wisdom of Torah*, by Ryan O’Dowd, *TLZ* 135 [2010]: 301–2) but indicates a possible way forward. See also the earlier works of Jean Malfroy, “Sagesse et loi dans le Deuteronome,” *VT* 15 (1965): 50–51 (with a list of wisdom terms in Deuteronomy); also Calum M. Carmichael, “Deuteronomic Laws, Wisdom and Historical Traditions,” *JSS* 12 (1967): 200–201, who notes the correlation between legal texts and wisdom thought. On the latter see also Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Wisdom and Law in the Old Testament: The Ordering of Life in Israel and Early Judaism*, 2nd ed., OBS (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 84.

216. The similarities between the two texts were seen already in the Jewish tradition. For example, Prov 6:22 is mentioned in the interpretation of Deut 6:7 in Sifre, 34.74b; see Buchanan, “Midrashim,” 233.

217. On this see Schipper, “Teach Them Diligently,” 31.

In this respect, Sirach and Baruch take up a “‘hermeneutical construct’ from wisdom texts” that reaches back to redactional passages of the book of Deuteronomy.²¹⁸ Connected with this is a second aspect that Grund notes in her analysis of Ps 19: the “sapientialization” of torah—its infiltration into wisdom combined with the assumption of the functions of wisdom by the torah.²¹⁹

Against the background of the results of the present study, further differentiation of this notion is necessary. In short, three different conceptions of wisdom can be found. On one hand, (1) is a conception that defines wisdom in light of Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic tradition. Starting from the call to instruction in Deut 6 // 11 and the Deuteronomistic didactic concept, wisdom appears as a life instruction that is transferable from one generation to the next. Wisdom becomes a hermeneutical key to torah that can be learned and lived like torah with the aid of wisdom texts such as Prov 2 and Prov 7.

In contrast, there is also a concept (2) in which wisdom appears as a personified category that can take the place of torah. It no longer concerns the interpretation of torah but rather its replacement. This position appears in Prov 8, where wisdom itself now receives quasi-divine significance and, as cosmic wisdom, moves so close to YHWH that there is no longer space for an independent torah. This conception cannot be grasped with the paradigm of a hermeneutics of torah because torah is not the focus but rather a wisdom that competes with torah.²²⁰ Related to this concept is the idea of a nomistic wisdom with authoritative character as found in Prov 13.

A third position (3) appears in Ps 19 and Ps 119. Here torah itself appears in wisdom garb. It has adopted the attributes of wisdom and attempts to take its place. Within the book of Proverbs this position appears in Prov 6 and to some extent also in Prov 28. The detailed analysis

218. Braulik, “Weisheit,” 265 (“ein ‘hermeneutisches Konstrukt’ von Weisheitstexten”). On Deut 4:6–8 see also the reflections by Schenker, “Übersetzung,” 34.

219. Grund, “Die Himmel,” 344.

220. See Menahem Kister, “Wisdom Literature and Its Relation to Other Genres: From Ben Sira to Mysteries,” in *Sapiential Perspectives: Wisdom Literature in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls; Proceedings of the Sixth International Symposium of the Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature, 20–22 May, 2001*, ed. John J. Collins, STDJ 51 (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 17–19, who demonstrates such a torahization in Qumran texts, without, however, using the term itself.

has shown that Prov 6 ties in with Deut 6 just like Prov 7, but this form of exegesis of torah does not lead to a hermeneutic in the same sense as Prov 2. It instead presents an understanding of torah that takes the place of wisdom. A “sapientialization of torah” thus becomes tangible in Prov 6. Against the background of Deut 6 // 11, torah now appears in the garb of wisdom instruction, which concurs with the classical concept of wisdom.

In a similar way, Prov 28–30 blazes a trail for a sapientialization of torah from two different sides—in one case through the emphasis on the torah (Prov 28), and on the other through a fundamental criticism of abilities of wisdom (Prov 30). For the book of Proverbs, this means that the prominent voices on the level of the final redaction do not define wisdom in the sense of Prov 2 or even Prov 8, but instead subordinate it to torah. This accords with a theologization of wisdom that places the relationship to God, the “fear of YHWH,” before all learning (Prov 1:7). In this respect the critical wisdom of Agur in Prov 30 echoes the motto of the book in 1:7 since the real benefits of sapiential education can only be achieved in one’s own relationship to God, whether in the fear of YHWH (1:7) or in prayer (30:7–9). In this respect the theological determination of wisdom in the motto of the book of Proverbs (1:7) is not far away from the sapientialization of torah in Prov 28 and the strict reduction of all wisdom’s theological claims (Prov 8) to an everyday wisdom in Prov 31.

The detailed analysis has shown that this discourse surrounding wisdom and torah has a deeper meaning. Strictly speaking, the aforementioned debate is linked with two theological subjects: (1) the human disposition and (2) the theology of revelation. Starting with the first, the main question is whether people can understand God’s will with their own intellectual capabilities and carry it out with the (human) means available to them. The prophetic texts consulted provide a negative answer, pointing instead in the direction of the conception of a new heart from YHWH that must be activated (Jer 31:31). The position coming from wisdom, on the other hand, sees the very possibility for humans to understand torah with the help of wisdom. This position can be found, for example, in Prov 4:20–27. There the life of the student of wisdom now appears as the result of a sapiential teaching on the body: the human being is evaluated from head to toe based on a concept of wisdom in 4:20–27 in which the heart drives human behavior.²²¹

221. Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15*, 184.

The second question concerns the theology of revelation. Should torah be seen in the sense of Deut 34 as the final and sealed will of God such that no further revelations can follow? This conception, which appears in Deuteronomy and in the theological notion that the period of divine revelation is confined to the Mosaic period, contrasts with the prophetic hope of YHWH's future action. Recognizable as the outcome is the opposition between wisdom and prophetic thought, which is deposited in part through the use of the same terminology. The qualities that are accessible in Prov 2 or by following the instruction are presented in Isa 11 as connected to a future revelation of God and as exclusive to the ruler bringing salvation.

In sum, there are different possibilities for defining the relationship between wisdom and torah. The oft-mentioned sapientialization of torah is only one (prominent) possibility among others that is directed against a concept in which wisdom itself has torah qualities (Prov 8).

5.3.3. The Question of Dating and the Tradents of the Discourse on Wisdom and Torah

When it comes to dating the book of Proverbs, it is worthwhile to start with a brief look into the history of research. For the scholars of the nineteenth century, it was unquestioned that the book of Proverbs had to be dated in the postexilic period. In his commentary from 1847, Bertheau, for example, argued that the book of Proverbs "often corresponds down to the smallest details with the book of Jesus Sirach."²²² Similarly, in his 1898 commentary, Frankenberg regarded the book of Proverbs as a natural part of biblical wisdom literature as a whole: "The book of Proverbs is a product of wisdom literature, to which some of the Psalms, Job, Ecclesiastes, and particularly the book of Sirach ... also belong."²²³ Frankenberg situated the book of Proverbs in the context of canonical and deuterocanonical wisdom literature, which led him to the following conclusion regarding its formation:

222. See Bertheau, *Die Sprüche Salomo's*, xlii ("vielfach auf das allergeaueste mit dem Buche des Jesus Sirach übereinstimmt").

223. Frankenberg, *Die Sprüche*, 6 ("Das Buch der Sprüche ist ein Produkt der Weisheitsliteratur, in deren weiten Kreis ein Teil der Psalmen, Job, Ecclesiastes und speziell das Buch J. Sirach ... gehören").

The literature of *hokhmah* belongs squarely in the postexilic period, since it was only then that the historical conditions for its development existed. It presupposes the law with its teaching—established as an unshakable truth through the experience of the exile—that God has decreed life for those who heed his commandments and death for those who transgress them.²²⁴

As for the relationship between biblical wisdom literature and the other theological traditions of ancient Israel, Frankenberg wrote:

There is no mention of Israel's relationship to YHWH or of YHWH's stance toward idols and other such questions, which remained open up to and after the exile. These circumstances are not discussed at all; they are implicitly presupposed and are the firm basis for all thought and feeling.²²⁵

The tradition-historical analysis of Prov 2 and the evaluation of the composition and redaction of the book of Proverbs in the previous chapters of this study has shown that the book of Proverbs must be placed in the Second Temple period. It was written on the basis of other literature, especially Deuteronomic/Deuteronomic texts but also Psalms and prophetic literature. This raises the question of which scribal circles are connected with the book and its parts. What can be said about scribes and literati in Persian-period Jerusalem, given that most of the literature of this time was written there?²²⁶

Joseph Blenkinsopp, for example, has conjectured two different groups, the priesthood and a rather independent group that was responsi-

224. Frankenberg, *Die Sprüche*, 6 (“Die Literatur der Chokmah gehört ganz der nachexilischen Zeit an, da erst in dieser die histor. Bedingungen zu ihrer Entstehung gegeben sind; ihre Voraussetzung ist das Gesetz mit seiner durch die Erfahrung des Exiles zur unerschütterlichen Wahrheit gewordenen Lehre, dass Gott auf die Erfüllung seiner Gebote Leben, auf ihre Übertretung Tod gesetzt hat”).

225. Frankenberg, *Die Sprüche*, 6 (“Von Israels Verhältnis zu Jahwe und von Jahwe's Stellung zu den Götzen und andren Fragen dieser Art, die bis in's Exil und nach dem Exil offen waren, ist keine Rede: diese Verhältnisse werden gar nicht diskutiert, sie sind die stillschweigende Voraussetzung und festliegende Basis alles Denkens und Empfindens”).

226. It is an interesting question if literature from the Hebrew Bible also was written in the diaspora communities in Babylon and Egypt, or in connection with the YHWH sanctuary of Mount Gerizim. See Bernd U. Schipper, *A Concise History of Ancient Israel*. CrStHB 11 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2019), 91–92.

ble for the interpretation of the law. It would concern “legal specialists” or rather “a class of professional legal experts,” that formed a separate group within the temple personnel.²²⁷ Blenkinsopp differentiates between the law scribes and the actual priesthood, with the former group emerging from the Levitical scribes.²²⁸ On the other hand, Stuart Weeks, in his work on wisdom literature argued that different scribal groups should not be distinguished from one another, as it could have been one and the same scribes who composed books such as Deuteronomy or Proverbs.²²⁹

Weeks’s thesis illustrates the problem of identifying the tradents of literature in the Second Temple period.²³⁰ This is especially the case when presuming that there was only a very small group with the ability to read the ancient texts in Persian-period Yehud.²³¹ This group had a connection to the temple, but it was not the same as the priests or the Levites.²³² Instead, it appears that there was a small group of literati who were educated at the temple or, rather, the location of the conveyance of scribal learning. Ehud Ben Zvi has summarized as follows:

227. Blenkinsopp, *Wisdom and Law*, 11. On Blenkinsopp’s approach see the discussion by Richard A. Horsley, “Empire, Temple and Community—But No Bourgeoisie! A Response to Blenkinsopp and Petersen,” in *Second Temple Studies I: Persian Period*, ed. Philip R. Davies, JSOTSup 116 (Sheffield: JSOT, 1991), 168–72.

228. Blenkinsopp, *Wisdom and Law*, 12; see also the overview by Jürgen van Oorschot, “Hiob 28: Die verborgene Weisheit und die Furcht Gottes als Überwindung einer generalisierten חכמה,” in *The Book of Job*, ed. Wim A. M. Beuken, BETL 114 (Leuven: Peeters, 1994), 199; as well as the critical overview of scholarship by Gabriele Boccaccini, *Roots of Rabbinic Judaism: An Intellectual History, from Ezekiel to Qumran* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 8–14, with discussion of the approaches of E. P. Sanders, L. H. Schiffmann, S. J. D. Cohen and M. S. Jaffee, and J. Neusner.

229. Weeks, “Wisdom in the Old Testament,” 29–30 (“sometimes perhaps the same authors”).

230. See also van Oorschot, “Hiob 28,” 185–91.

231. See Ehud Ben Zvi, “Observations on Prophetic Characters, Prophetic Texts, Priests of Old, Persian Period Priests and Literati,” in *The Priests in the Prophets: The Portrayal of Priests, Prophets and Other Religious Specialists in the Latter Prophets*, ed. Lester Grabbe and Alice O. Bellis, JSOTSup 408 (New York: T&T Clark, 2004), 27; see also Oded Lipschits, “Demographic Changes in Judah between the Seventh and the Fifth Centuries B.C.E.,” in *Judah and the Judeans in the Neo-Babylonian Period*, ed. Oded Lipschits and Joseph Blenkinsopp (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2003), 355–60.

232. Ben Zvi, “Observations,” 19–23.

The entire population of Jerusalem was small at that time, and the total number of bearers of high literacy in Persian Yehud or Jerusalem was most likely very small. In such a society it is unlikely that simultaneous and compartmentalized elites of minimal numbers could have existed. It is most likely that the literati closely interacted with the contemporary priests. Moreover, although not every member of the literati was a priest (or a Levite), priests of high standing could have, and most likely were a substantial contingent among the literati.²³³

This group of literati should probably be equated with the so-called ספרים (“scribes”) in Ezra 7:6, 11, who are also mentioned in Jer 8:8.²³⁴ These are literate men who focus on written traditions and interpret them. If the function of the Jerusalem temple is definable similar to the temples of the Late Period in Egypt as the location of the conveyance of tradition and learning, then the representatives of the different theological positions might not have been located very far from one another.²³⁵ They would have been similarly educated at the temple or the school located there such that the terminological echoes in the texts are explainable as characteristics of the education. Certain texts were read and interpreted in various ways. In the present case, this primarily concerns the book of Deuteronomy that was increasingly understood as torah.

When going one step further, an observation of Gary Knoppers and Bernard M. Levinson becomes important. In their introduction to the anthology *The Pentateuch as Torah* from 2007, Knoppers and Levinson ask whether “the promulgation of the torah [has] to do with the revision and transformation of an elite scribal curriculum at the Jerusalem temple.”²³⁶ In light of the results of the present study, torah can arguably be related to a distinct professional group (the scribes) that stands behind the development of authoritative texts in the Second Temple period. A passage from the final frame of the book of Deuteronomy becomes espe-

233. Ben Zvi, “Observations,” 25–26, quotation 26–27.

234. See §3.3.1. On Ezra 7, see Grätz, *Das Edikt*, 107–8; and on Jer 8:8 Otto, “Jeremia,” 548.

235. Noteworthy here are the so-called houses of life (“Lebenshäuser”) in Egyptian temples and—as literary activity—the more than forty manuscripts of the “Book from the Temple” now being reconstructed out of more than forty manuscripts by Joachim Friedrich Quack; see Joachim F. Quack, “Der historische Abschnitt des Buches vom Tempel,” in Assmann and Blumenthal, *Literatur und Politik*, 274.

236. Knoppers and Levinson, “How, When, Where,” 1–19, esp. 3.

cially interesting when investigating the tradents of Deuteronomistic thought in particular. In Deut 1:13 Israel's judicial leaders are described as "wise, understanding, and experienced" (וְנִבְנִים חֲכָמִים וִידְעִים). Scholars such as Timo Veijola and Bernard M. Levinson argue that this description represents the self-perception of the Deuteronomistic scribes.²³⁷ According to Levinson, wisdom "appears as a product of professional study and training, as the formal competence associated with entry into a guild or school."²³⁸ This means that on the level of a distinct redactional layer in the book of Deuteronomy, a group of scribes are traceable who were associated with wisdom and who can be linked to a school of Deuteronomistic thoughts in the Second Temple period.

In sum, when investigating the tradents of the discourse of wisdom and torah, there appears to be a group of scribes that was educated in older literature, especially in Deuteronomy. These literati participated in an intellectual discourse that was shaped by the theology of Deuteronomy to become the main theological reference for late Persian and Hellenistic Judaism. The aforementioned spectrum of different hermeneutics of torah acquires a deeper meaning in this development, which can neither be limited to the book of Proverbs nor to wisdom literature in general, but also influenced prophetic and narrative texts.

5.4. Wisdom and Torah in the Books of Ben Sira and Baruch: A Prospectus

In a prominent study, Blenkinsopp described wisdom and law "as two great rivers which eventually flow together and find their outlet in rabbinic writings and early Christian theology."²³⁹ The wording emphasizes that the dimension of the topic is much broader than would have been possible to present in this volume. The interplay of wisdom and torah and the methodological aspects can hardly be limited to the book of Proverbs

237. Timo Veijola, "Die Deuteronomisten als Vorgänger der Schriftgelehrten: Ein Beitrag zur Entstehung des Judentums," in *Moses Erben: Studien zum Dekalog, zum Deuteronomismus und zum Schriftgelehrtentum*, ed. Timo Veijola, BWANT 149 (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2000), 192–240, esp. 200; Bernard M. Levinson, "Deuteronomy's Conception of Law as an 'Ideal Type': A Missing Chapter in the History of Constitutional Law," in "Right Chorale," 52–88, esp. 67.

238. Levinson, "Deuteronomy's Conception," 67.

239. Blenkinsopp, *Wisdom and Law*, 151.

and its use of Deuteronomy in certain sections. This involved other texts, such as Ps 19, Ps 119, or the wisdom books of Job and Ecclesiastes, which also present hermeneutics of texts from the book of Deuteronomy.²⁴⁰ The following presents two additional pieces of literature as examples that shed light on the discourse on wisdom and torah in a period after the book of Proverbs was completed: the books of Ben Sira and Baruch.

When starting with the book of Ben Sira, one must first state that “torah” for Ben Sira meant the Mosaic Torah. “Although Ben Sira might refer to the Torah..., he famously does not make formal citations of Torah and is not bound to the letter of the Torah.”²⁴¹ Two passages are of particular interest: the first chapter with its sections on the nature of wisdom (1:10) and fear of God (1:11–20); and the well-known speech by wisdom in 24:1–34. It has long been recognized that Sir 24 relies not only on Prov 8 but also on Sir 1:1–10, 11–20.²⁴² Beginning with chapter 1, already the first verse presents the theological position of the book of Sirach: “All wisdom is from the Lord, and with him it remains forever.”²⁴³ The notion that wisdom is with God also appears in Prov 2:6.²⁴⁴ However, in Sirach, unlike in Prov 2, it is described in the second half of the verse as an eternal and unchangeable entity. Sirach connects with the concept of a theological and

240. See Markus Witte, “Job in Conversation with the Torah,” in Schipper and Teeter, *Wisdom and Torah*, 81–100; Stuart Weeks, “‘Fear God and Keep His Commandments’: Could Qohelet Have Said This?,” in Schipper and Teeter, *Wisdom and Torah*, 101–18.

241. Benjamin G. Wright III, “Torah and Sapiential Pedagogy in the Book of Ben Sira,” in Schipper and Teeter, *Wisdom and Torah*, 165–66.

242. See Johannes Marböck, *Weisheit im Wandel: Untersuchungen zur Weisheitstheologie bei Ben Sira*, BBB 37 (Bonn: Hanstein, 1971), 55–57, who refers to the similarities to Bar 3–4. See Otto Kaiser, *Weisheit für das Leben: Das Buch Jesus Sirach übersetzt und eingeleitet* (Stuttgart: Radius, 2005), 171, who also cites Prov 1:20–33 and Prov 10:1–11:20 as reference texts for Sir 24. Still helpful is the overview found in Johann K. Gasser, *Die Bedeutung der Sprüche Jesu ben Sira für die Datierung des althebräischen Spruchbuches*, BFCT 8.2–3 (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1904).

243. Translation from NRSV, which accords with Georg Sauer, *Jesus Sirach/Ben Sira*, ATD.A 1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000), 42, following the Greek text. See also Marböck, *Weisheit*, 18–19, who translates according to the Syriac text “from eternity past” (on the text criticism, see Marböck, *Weisheit*, 19; and Pancratius C. Beentjes “Full Wisdom Is from the Lord: Sir 1,10 and Its Place in Israel’s Wisdom Literature,” in *‘Happy the One Who Mediates on Wisdom’ (Sir 14,20): Collected Essays on Ben Sira*. CBET 43 [Leuven: Peeters, 2006], 21).

244. This is noted by Kaiser, *Weisheit*, 157.

super-elevated wisdom encountered in Prov 8. The cosmic dimension of wisdom and its close connection to God are underscored by the rhetorical questions in 1:2–3, which allude to creation.²⁴⁵ The declaration in 1:4 that wisdom was created “before all other things” adopts Prov 8:22a.²⁴⁶

The subsequent verses are oriented toward Job 28 and carry forward the notion of God’s inaccessible wisdom.²⁴⁷ In Job 28 the wisdom hidden from humans in 28:1–27 contrasts with the “wisdom determined for humans as fear of God” in 28:28. The hidden cosmic wisdom in Job 28 is quite undetermined; all that remains for the human as their wisdom is the fear of God.²⁴⁸ Against this background, the juxtaposition of, on the one hand, cosmically defined wisdom that in the end is unavailable to humans in Sir 1:1–10, and the fear of God and its nature in Sir 1:11–20 on the other, appears related to Job 28.²⁴⁹ The qualitative difference between divine wisdom and the human level appears in both texts. Sirach goes beyond Job, however, in that Sir 1:11–13 now praises the fear of God itself with attributes that are classically accorded to wisdom.²⁵⁰ The fear of the Lord is “honor and glory.” As 1:11 underlines, it refreshes the heart and grants length of days (1:12). In contrast to Job 28, the human is given the ability to participate in wisdom through the torah (instruction) in Sirach.

The declaration of Sir 1:12 is interesting in the sense that the mention of the heart can be connected with other passages on the human heart in the book of Sirach. These express Sirach’s ongoing trust in the

245. Sauer, *Jesus Sirach*, 44; and Beentjes, “Wisdom,” 23–24.

246. Beentjes, “Wisdom,” 30; and Collins, *Jewish Wisdom*, 44.

247. Sir 1:2, 3 can be connected with Job 28:24–26a; Sir 1:6 with 28:20; Sir 1:8 with 28:23; and 1:9 with 28:27; see Beentjes, “Wisdom,” 31–32, who refers specifically to Job 28:27. See also Marböck, *Weisheit*, 30.

248. On this see the analysis by van Oorschot, “Hiob 28,” 200, whose conclusion is followed here. See also Witte, *Vom Leiden*, 206–11; and Witte, *Texte und Kontexte des Sirachbuchs: Gesammelte Studien zu Ben Sira und zur frühjüdischen Weisheit*, FAT 98 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015), 143.

249. On the structure of Sir 1:1–2:18 see Josef Haspecker, *Gottesfurcht bei Jesus Sirach: Ihre religiöse Struktur und ihre literarische und doktrinäre Bedeutung*, AnBib 30 (Rome: Pontifical Bible Institute, 1967), 94–100.

250. Grund, “*Die Himmel*,” 236 (table 3), sees the specific influence of Prov 8:7–9 here, but the similarities are rather general and do not allow for the determination of individual terms. When attempting to see similarity, then this can be found most likely in Sir 1:19, which names insight, “prudent knowledge,” and “honor.” See Kaiser, *Weisheit*, 158, who refers to Prov 8:18a (כבוד).

cognitive abilities of humanity and the fact that the concept of the fear of God developed in chapter 1 does not exclude this. To this end Sir 17 states that God has given humanity a heart “for thinking” (17:6) and has laid the “fear of him in their hearts” (17:7).²⁵¹ This trust in the abilities of the human heart is also expressed in chapter 37. In that context nothing manifests loyalty (that is, reliability) like the “counsel of the heart” (37:13).²⁵²

(17) The root of thought is the heart,

Four branches sprout (out of it):

(18) Goodness and evil and life and death;

But control over them all completely belongs to the tongue.

The text begins with the ambivalence of human thought, though it highlights the power of the word and therefore the individual achievement of the wise.²⁵³ An ambivalence is stated, but this can—according to the text—be controlled. Central to this control is the notion of the fear of God, which is articulated in Sir 1:20 through a reference to Prov 1:7 stating that the “root of wisdom” consists of “fearing the Lord.”²⁵⁴

It has often been highlighted that Sirach ties in with the Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic tradition through this connection of wisdom and the fear of God. This is illustrated, for example, in Sir 15:1, which states: “Whoever fears the Lord will do this, and the one that keeps the law will obtain it [wisdom].”²⁵⁵ A theme appears here that Sir 1 echoes and then is outlined

251. Krüger, “Herz,” 90. The citations are based on Georg Sauer, *Jesus Sirach (Ben Sira)*, JSHRZ III/5 (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1981)

252. Sauer, *Jesus Sirach (Ben Sira)*, 595.

253. Krüger, “Das menschliche Herz,” 90; see also Sauer, *Jesus Sirach*, 257, who emphasizes that in the mind is the “understanding instructed by God’s word (v. 16).”

254. Sauer, *Jesus Sirach*, 47.

255. Jack T. Sanders, “When Sacred Canopies Collapse: The Reception of the Torah of Moses in the Wisdom Literature of the Second-Temple Period,” *JSJ* 32 (2001): 123. The translation accords with Sauer, *Jesus Sirach*, 129. On the relationship between the book of Sirach and Deuteronomy, see also Timo Veijola, “Law and Wisdom: The Deuteronomistic Heritage in Ben Sira’s Teaching of Law,” in Dietrich and Veijola, *Leben nach der Weisung*, passim; see also Pancratius C. Beentjes, “Ben Sira and the Book of Deuteronomy,” in *Houses Full of All Good Things: Essays in Memory of Timo Veijola*, ed. Juha Pakkala and Martti Nissinen, PFES 95 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht; Helsinki: Finnish Exegetical Society, 2008), 416–33, with a critical evaluation of the material.

paradigmatically in Sir 24: the connection of wisdom and law.²⁵⁶ Within chapter 24, the well-known verse 24:23, “This is the torah that Moses commanded us as an inheritance for the community of Jacob,” marks a break within the chapter.²⁵⁷ The speech of wisdom about itself (24:1–22) now (in the structure of the chapter, quite abruptly) is linked to torah. While earlier scholarship often presupposed an identification or equation of wisdom and torah, recent works show that while the two entities of wisdom and torah are intimately connected, they are not conceived as identical. Wisdom, with its cosmic components, is not precisely interchangeable with torah.²⁵⁸ Especially these cosmic components provide Johannes Marböck with the reason to think that torah in Ben Sira is a much broader concept than the Mosaic legislation. Others as, for example, Eckhard Schnabel, argue that torah in Ben Sira refers to the Mosaic legislation or the Pentateuch.²⁵⁹

With the praise of wisdom, chapter 24 provides clear allusions to Prov 8 (in 24:3–6 to 8:27–30; in 24:5 to 8:22; in 24:19 to 8:4–10, 32–36; and in 24:22 to 8:32–36).²⁶⁰ There are only a few verbal matches. The accent instead lies on thematic affinity. Wisdom now appears in a first-person speech and moves close to the creator of the world. When looking closer at the text, the allusions to Prov 8 and to the speech of wisdom in Prov 1:20–33 appear

256. See 1:5, which speaks of “eternal commandments,” and 1:26: “when you desire wisdom, then obey the laws.” It is important that the theme of law for Sirach is always connected with other aspects, such as the fear of God and the themes of wisdom and creation; see Johannes Marböck, *Gottes Weisheit unter uns: Zur Theologie des Buches Sirach*, HBS 6 (Freiburg im Breigau: Herder, 1995), 54.

257. The expression “this is the book of the covenant of the highest God” in the Greek text (23a) is presumably an expansion following Bar 4:1; see Marböck, *Theologie*, 75 n. 5, and, following him, Armin Lange, *Weisheit und Prädestination: Weisheitliche Urordnung und Prädestination in den Textfunden von Qumran*, STDJ 18 (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 36 n. 141; differently, Sauer, *Jesus Sirach*, 565.

258. This has been mapped out by Boccaccini, emphasizing that wisdom and law are not interchangeable terms in the book of Sirach; see Gabriele Boccaccini, “The Preexistence of the Torah: A Commonplace in Second Temple Judaism, or a Later Rabbinic Development?” *Henoch* 17 (1997): 331. See also Beate Ego, “Der Strom der Tora: Zur Rezeption eines tempeltheologischen Motivs in frühjüdischer Zeit,” in Ego, Lange, and Pilhofer, *Gemeinde ohne Tempel*, 207.

259. See the overview in Wright, “Torah and Sapiential Pedagogy,” 162.

260. Kaiser, *Weisheit*, 171–72, and on the relationships also Veijola, “Law and Wisdom,” 146–47.

considerably fewer than to a text that has already been recognized for its discourse on wisdom and torah in the postexilic period: Ps 19.²⁶¹

In addition to the formulation from Sir 24:20, which describes the engagement with wisdom as “sweeter than honey” (see Ps 19:11), the text primarily concerns the connection with the notion of the course of the sun in Ps 19:5b–7 and Sir 24:4–5, 8.²⁶² Especially against the background of the cosmic description of wisdom, it becomes clear that despite its explication with the metaphor of the river of paradise, torah in Sir 24 does not appear as a cosmic entity. Instead, through the transference formulation in 24:23, it corresponds to the inscrutably conceived wisdom in 24:23, and, like writing, is the “‘canonical’ source and mediator” of wisdom and life.²⁶³ In the process, the comparison with the four streams in paradise functions to illustrate the imagery of life that comes from the law as determined by wisdom. It not only impacts the present but also encompasses the future. This is conveyed by the light metaphor in Sir 24:27, which, by taking up the conceptions of torah as light (Ps 19:9b; Prov 6:23) speaks of torah “radiating” in the sense of “glowing.”²⁶⁴ The final section of Sir 24 ties in with this:

(32) Again will I make instruction radiate like the dawn,
and (it) will be clear from far away.

(33) Again will I pour out teaching like prophecy,
and it will remain for all future generations.

(34) Observe that I have not labored only for myself,
but for all that seek it.²⁶⁵

The question of what replaces prophecy in the postexilic period is clearly answered here. The radiation of torah matches the impact of the teacher of wisdom, which comprises not only the generation of the children but “all future generations.” The instructor of wisdom, who recurs to “torah,” simultaneously points to the future, just as the prophets before him had

261. So Kaiser, *Weisheit*, 172.

262. Grund, “*Die Himmel*,” 348; Michael Reitmeyer, *Weisheitslehre als Gotteslob: Psalmentheologie im Buch Jesus Sirach*, BBB 127 (Berlin: Philo, 2000), 192 (Ps 19:6–7 and Sir 24:5).

263. This is the apt formulation by Grund, “*Die Himmel*,” 350, whose interpretation of Sir 24 is followed here.

264. Grund, “*Die Himmel*,” 349 and n. 155.

265. Translation following Sauer, *Jesus Sirach*, 179, in accordance with NRSV.

done.²⁶⁶ Wisdom steps in here as the heir to prophecy, though its basis is the interpretation of Scripture. Sirach 50:23 illustrates this when it speaks of the “house of its teaching” (בית מדרש), meaning the instruction of the wise.²⁶⁷ This is “the first time that the actual terms are mentioned for the ‘Jewish house of instruction,’” thereby indicating the existence of a school in which wisdom and torah are imparted.²⁶⁸

Sirach 24 stands in a progression from Jer 8:8–9 and the Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic tradition as well as from Prov 1–7*.²⁶⁹ The text carries on a line of tradition that originates in Deut 4:5–8 and can be followed through the previously mentioned passages of Proverbs into the Second Temple period.²⁷⁰ The future significance of the wisdom instruction alluded to in Prov 2:21–22, which in that text is developed in contrast to eschatological outlines, is then extended by Sir 24. Here the future aspect is now explicitly articulated, making every eschatological scheme unnecessary. Wisdom’s cosmic significance—which only applies to wisdom and not to torah—is connected theologically with the study of origins such that eschatology is minimized. In this conceptualization, wisdom appears superior to torah, and torah is the mediator of wisdom.²⁷¹ Wisdom can be experienced in torah, such that “torah” can even be described as the “incarnational location of wisdom.”²⁷² Despite the close connection between the two entities in Sir 24, wisdom alone has a cosmic quality.

266. Sauer, *Jesus Sirach*, 185.

267. Ego, “Der Strom,” 210, who refers to the suggestion by Skehan to read בית מוסר in Sir 50:23.

268. Martin Hengel, *Judentum und Hellenismus: Studien zu ihrer Begegnung unter besonderer Berücksichtigung Palästinas bis zur Mitte des 2. Jh. v. Chr.*, 3rd ed., WUNT 10 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1988), 145 (“erstmalig expressis verbis das ‘jüdische Lehrhaus’”); Ego, “Der Strom,” 210.

269. Central here is Deut 6; see Braulik, “Das Deuteronomium,” 257 n. 194, who believes that the “theory” unfolded in Sir 24 is already presented in Deut 6.

270. Veijola, “Law and Wisdom,” 162–63; and Markus Witte, “‘Das Gesetz des Lebens’ (Sirach 17,11),” in *Lived Religion: Conceptual, Empirical and Practical-Theological Approaches; Essays in Honor of Hans-Günter Heimbrock*, ed. Heinz Streib, Astrid Dinter, and Kerstin Söderblom (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 77. Interesting here is that the content of Deut 4:5–8 is not that far from Sir 24, but it is from Bar 4:3, see Krüger, “Gesetz,” 164–65.

271. Ego, “Der Strom,” 207.

272. Witte, *Texte und Kontexte*, 149 (“Inkarnationsstätte der Weisheit”); see also Frank Ueberschär, *Weisheit aus der Begegnung: Bildung nach dem Buch Ben Sira*, BZAW 379 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2007), 358 (“Form of expression for wisdom”).

Torah is instead held as the (also of divine origination, but not cosmic) law. As such, the sequence of cosmic and earthly entities in Sir 24 matches the conception of Ps 19. This preference for wisdom before torah also has an impact on the understanding of torah, which can be specified in the words of Krüger: The close connection between torah and wisdom in Sir 24 aims “less at limiting the seeking and teaching of wisdom by reconnecting it to the torah than at an understanding of the torah that is a rational and interculturally competitive foundation for life orientation.”²⁷³ Torah is therefore viewed as a whole, not as the collection of individual commandments and prohibitions. With regard to the interplay between wisdom and torah in Sir 24, Greg Schmidt Goering has argued for a general distinction: “YHWH has revealed wisdom to human beings in two apportionments. In one apportionment, YHWH gives a general wisdom to all human beings, and in another apportionment he gives a special wisdom to his chosen people, Israel.”²⁷⁴

A different position on wisdom and torah can be found in the book of Baruch, which dates one generation after Sirach.²⁷⁵ It reflects the new political situation of the period of Seleucid persecution including deportations (see 4:32). In light of the hegemonic claims by Antiochus IV Epiphanes, it proclaims the message that Israel’s exilic condition has an end, and Israel will again return.²⁷⁶ This message is developed by means of recourse to available written tradition and reaches its climax in the proclamation of promise in 4:5–5:9. The section relevant here, 3:9–4:4, appears immediately prior to this proclamation of promises and functions to articulate the foundation that makes the return essential. Central here is the notion that it is necessary to lead a life in accordance with God so that the promises of salvation can come to pass. Such action presupposes turning to God’s law.²⁷⁷ This consideration is formulated in 3:9–4:4 on the basis of Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic tradition as well as Baruch texts from the

273. Thomas Krüger, *Qoheleth: A Commentary*, trans. O. C. Dean, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2004), 24–25; see also Krüger, “Gesetz,” 163–64.

274. Greg Schmidt Goering, *Wisdom’s Root Revealed: Ben Sira and the Election of Israel*, JSJSup 139 (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 9.

275. The book of Sirach likely emerged around 190 BCE, see Sauer, *Jesus Sirach*, 22. On the date of the book of Baruch, see Steck, *Baruchbuch*, 285–303.

276. See Odil H. Steck, *Das Buch Baruch*, ATD.A 5 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998), 17; see also Steck, *Baruchbuch*, 281, with a description of the literary context of the book in the literature of the second century BCE.

277. Steck, *Baruch*, 47.

book of Jeremiah.²⁷⁸ The reference texts are Deut 4:6–8 as well as several passages from Job 28 and Prov 1–9.²⁷⁹

The law, and not wisdom, is placed in the center of the exhortation. The “commandments of life” (3:9) are connected with the “source of wisdom” (3:12), and wisdom attributes like insight and prudence are linked with the commandments (3:14). The introductory verse reads like a general accounting of the concept of a wisdom that helps toward life:

- (9) Listen, Israel to the commandments of life;
be attentive to known insight!
- (10) How did it happen, Israel, that you are in the land of the enemy,
having grown old in a foreign land,
- (11) “become like” one dying,
counted among those (descending) for the Underworld?
- (12) You have abandoned the source of wisdom!
- (13) If you would have walked in the way of God,
you would have dwelt in peace forever!²⁸⁰

The verses are clearly connected to sapiential thought through the metaphor of “the way,” but this text narrows it. The source of wisdom and the way of God were abandoned. Thus, this reflection is carried on in such a way that true wisdom cannot be found anywhere (3:15–23), and God alone is the one that has fathomed “the way of knowledge” (3:37). The proclamation of 3:37 ties in with a line of thinking that joins with statements about creation that have their final aim in depicting God as the actual lord of wisdom, prudence, and knowledge (3:32, 37).²⁸¹ This notion is continued in 3:38–4:1 as follows:

- (3:38) Then she (he?) appeared on the earth
And she (he?) resided among the people.²⁸²

278. On the significance of the Baruch texts from the book of Jeremiah for the overall composition of the book of Baruch see Steck, *Baruchbuch*, 268–69. See also Sheppard, *Wisdom*, 84–99, who also notes the reception of 1 Enoch for Bar 3:27–28.

279. Steck, *Baruchbuch*, 133–34; Krüger, “Gesetz,” 165–66.

280. Translation follows Steck, *Baruch*, 45, in consultation with NRSV.

281. Baruch 3: 32 therefore ties in with Prov 3:19; see Steck, *Baruchbuch*, 150, who also points to Job 28 (see also Steck, *Baruchbuch*, n. 154 with further reference texts).

282. Baruch 3:38 is unwieldy in the context. Steck contemplates assigning the verse to a Hellenistic-Jewish reception of the book of Baruch; see *Baruchbuch*, 53 n. 43.

(4:1) She is the book of God's statutes
 And the law that endures forever;
 All who hold fast to her (find) life,
 But those who abandon her will die.²⁸³

The formulation of the law "that endures forever," recurs to a tradition that is also received in Ps 119. There it is the "word" of YHWH that is described as eternal (לְעוֹלָם, 119:89, see 119:90). The text connects with the statutes of God in Deut 4:44–45; 30:10, and it must also be seen in light of the background of Sir 24.²⁸⁴ The determination of the relationship between wisdom and torah in Baruch marks a clear antithesis to Sirach. While Sirach defines torah in terms of wisdom, Baruch subordinates wisdom to torah. In the flow of the argument of the chapter, the knowledge of wisdom found only in God is made equivalent to the law.²⁸⁵ Wisdom appears as the book of God's statutes because there is a fundamental difference between human and divine understanding. The main argument in Bar 3:9–4:4 is, as Grätz has shown, that humans are unable "to penetrate to the pure, divine knowledge" (see also Bar 3:15–23, 24–31). Only God has this divine knowledge, which is communicated to Israel/Jacob "in the form of the torah (Bar 3:37–4:1).²⁸⁶ What appears in Baruch is an evaporation of the concept of wisdom that, like Qoheleth, positions itself against a notion of wisdom claiming a divine quality for itself. Baruch subordinates wisdom to the law and limits wisdom to torah.²⁸⁷ It does so without elevating torah or furnishing it with cosmological hues. The law in Bar 3:9–4:4 does not take the place of cosmic wisdom. Instead, in contrast to Prov 8 and Ps 19, in 3:29–36 it emphasizes that God created the world.²⁸⁸ This connects with

283. Translation follows Steck, *Baruch*, 47, in consultation with NRSV; see also Antonius H. J. Gunneweg, *Das Buch Baruch*, JSRZ 3.2 (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1980), 177.

284. Steck, *Baruchbuch*, 53; Sheppard, *Wisdom*, 90–91, with reference to Deut 30:12–13.

285. Steck, *Baruchbuch*, 53; Lange, *Weisheit*, 36.

286. Sebastian Grätz, "'Wisdom' and 'Torah' in the Book of Baruch," in Schipper and Teeter, *Wisdom and Torah*, 192.

287. Krüger, *Qoheleth*, 24–25; Steck, *Baruchbuch*, 53. See also Marböck, *Weisheit*, 57, "In Baruch there is no longer any wisdom independent from the law and Israel" ("Bei Baruch gibt es keine von Gesetz und Israel unabhängige Weisheit mehr.").

288. Cf. Steck, *Baruchbuch*, 150–51.

a conception that now has Israel rather than the individual in mind. Baruch therefore advances one of the basic notions of Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic tradition.

Its eschatology is also interesting when juxtaposed to Sir 24. Baruch represents a different position than Sirach on this topic. The interpretation of the law determined by wisdom reaches its limit here, and it cannot provide a future. What is instead needed is an orientation toward the divine law itself. This will then enable God to act. While wisdom and scriptural interpretation take on the role of prophecy in Sirach, Baruch reverses course and links with the Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic depiction of the prophet. In keeping with the textual strategy of the book, the prophet himself articulates the call of repentance by pointing to the guiding principle—the law—and then developing its proclamation for the future. This means that two different voices developed in rather close temporal proximity to one another, both of which adopt the available literary tradition to determine the relationship between wisdom and torah. In light of the dating of these two books, the different strategies in the texts are explainable as a result of the sociohistorical situation. In contrast to contemporary Alexandrian Judaism, which lived in a diaspora situation, the book of Baruch provides a program that presents a return to the Torah “as the cornerstone of the Israelite/Jewish tradition.” Wisdom is subordinated to torah because Israel “as a *heilsgeschichtliche* and political entity can only survive if it thinks of itself in terms of its genuine tradition—the divinely communicated torah.”²⁸⁹

On the whole, the situation sketched here in rather rough strokes illustrates that the lines developed within the framework of this study do not end with the final redaction of the book of Proverbs. The overview on the books of Ben Sira and Baruch shows that later developments are themselves enriched further by the texts of Proverbs. The material discussed here attests that not only central passages from Deuteronomy such as Deut 4 or Deut 30 were adopted but also texts such as Prov 8. At the same time, recognizable here is the same literary phenomenon found in Prov 2 and other texts of Proverbs—a form of textual coherence that receives and cites specific texts. Within the framework of this process, the question of the relationship between wisdom and torah is answered in different ways.

289. All quotations from Grätz, “‘Wisdom’ and ‘Torah’ in the Book of Baruch,” 199–200.

In addition to the sapientialization of torah, wisdom moves increasingly into the foreground as a cosmic entity, and torah—moving in the opposite direction—becomes the fundamental norm replacing wisdom (Baruch). As a result, what becomes clear is that the positions found in the book of Proverbs did not find their completion with the final redaction of Proverbs. They continued to serve as the objects of theological reflection in the literature of the Second Temple period and in the various forms of Judaism of the Hellenistic period.²⁹⁰

290. A subject of its own is the interplay between wisdom and torah in the Dead Sea Scrolls such as, e.g., 4QSapiental Work A (4Q415–418, 423) or Ps 154 (11Q5 [11QPsa] 18:1–16). On this, see the overview in Lange, *Weisheit*, 48; Lange, “Die Weisheitstexte”; Collins, *Jewish Wisdom*, 112; and Harrington, “Approaches,” 263, who connects 4QSapiental Work A with the book of Ben Sira.

Conclusion

The present study started with the observation of a nineteenth-century scholar and developed a path of argumentation that stretches from exegesis of a text to observations about the composition and redaction of Prov 1–9 and the reception of Deuteronomy in the book of Proverbs. The point of departure was the thesis of Strack (1888) that Prov 2 functions as something of a table of contents for the first collection of the book (Prov 1–9). This thesis, which can also be found in recent commentaries, was combined with a second observation from another nineteenth-century scholar. In his commentary from 1873, Delitzsch emphasized the influence of Deuteronomy on Prov 1–9. For Delitzsch, it was beyond question that some passages in Proverbs must be read against the backdrop of the Shema in Deut 6 // 11.

The approach of this study basically results from a combination of these two aspects. The focus has been on (1) the investigation of the literary (and hermeneutic) function of Prov 2 for the first collection of Proverbs and (2) the analysis of the influence of other Old Testament traditions on the book of Proverbs, especially those from Deuteronomy. As a result of this examination, it can be concluded that the book of Proverbs exhibits numerous internal links and contains diverse allusions to other Old Testament traditions, with a special emphasis on the so-called Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic tradition. These connections have been thoroughly noted in earlier research, but they have not been adequately evaluated with respect to questions such as the composition of the book and its theology. One reason research has taken this path is the paradigm that defines wisdom in opposition to torah. Scholars such as Fichtner (1933) and Fox (2000/2009) have sought to distinguish a sapiential understanding from a nomistic understanding of terms such as *tôrah* and *mišwôt*. One result of this study, however, is that wisdom literature cannot be separated

from the discourse about torah in the postexilic period. Moreover, this discourse has left its imprint on certain parts of the book of Proverbs as well as its composition, including the final frame of the book.

6.1. The Phenomenon of Textual Coherence and Proverbs 2

Parts of the book of Proverbs, especially in Prov 1–9, react to existing written traditions. Thus, this study concerns the examination of the connections between literary works rather than an oral phenomenon. In light of this observation, the inquiry could not follow the classic paths of tradition history (*Traditionsgeschichte*). As a result, chapter 1 of the present study started with a reflection about the selected methods and developed an approach that explores the connections between texts under the rubric “textual coherence.” An examination of the material from the ancient Near East shows that the phenomenon of textual coherence is found especially in wisdom literature as well as in texts that can be located in didactic settings. By means of citations, allusions, and key words, the respective authors established connections to other literary works and to some extent assume the reader’s knowledge of these connections. Given that the texts were written by literati and that the readers of the literature were trained in the same way as its authors, the citations and allusions relate to a form of textualism that can be found in both ancient Egypt and ancient Israel. From a methodological point of view, this form of textual coherence can be split into two phenomena: (1) *allusions* in which one text refers to another through shared terms and stylistic and thematic patterns and (2) *citations* in which a full or half-verse is quoted.

The textual analysis (§2) focused on a particular text from the book of Proverbs whose special place in the first collection (Prov 1–9) has long been recognized: the instruction of Prov 2. Exegesis of the chapter has demonstrated that this instruction is a integrated whole that should not be divided into different authorial hands. The text exhibits a well-composed style with respect to both its external structure as well as its inner composition. The teaching is unfolded in twenty-two verses that are oriented toward the Hebrew alphabet and contain acrostic elements. In this way, it not only accents the masterful form of the text but also provides an initial hint at a possible socio-historical context. By using specific letters of the alphabet as a mnemonic technique (*aleph* and *lamed*), the text employs a didactic method. Further analysis shows that the instruction contains other didactic elements, such as the technique of memorizing the first line

of a text as a mnemonic device, and literary allusions to additional didactic texts. All of this demonstrates that both the author and the addressee of Prov 2 belong to an educated class.

The sapiential instruction of Prov 2 has a complex construction with inner dynamics. Based on the identification of the wisdom concepts (2:1–11), the teaching in the second part (2:12–22) unfolds the dangers for the wisdom student (sinful men, 2:12–15; the strange woman, 2:16–19). These threats flow into the antithesis between the fate of the sinners and the righteous (2:20–22). At the end of the instruction, Prov 2 reaches a position that can hardly be differentiated from the imperative style of the other lectures in chapters 1–9. While Prov 2 is built on a conditional arrangement, through its declaration it becomes increasingly normative and ends with the statement that the sinner will be wiped out. Contrasting with the sinner is the one who follows the admonitions of the lecture and incorporates them into his life. The conditional structure of Prov 2 produces a connection between a deed and its result in which the successful life is a consequence of turning the heart and ears to sapiential instruction. The starting point of this process is the identification of wisdom as coming from YHWH (2:6–7), which, together with the earnest efforts of the wisdom student (inclining the heart and searching, 2:2) and the turning to YHWH, leads to a sound life. The exact content of this life remains unspecified, just as the statements in the second half (2:12–22) regarding the sinful men and strange woman are not very concrete. Rather, the text seems to assume other texts, thereby raising a set of questions in which the analysis of textual traditions and the connections within the book of Proverbs are examined.

6.2. Proverbs 2 and References to Other Traditions

In the tradition-historical analysis (§3) a field of reference was established that moves from the question of literary allusions between Prov 2 and other texts to the thematic concept of wisdom and torah. It becomes apparent that one cannot assume one-dimensional references but rather a complex system in which certain texts have a special impact and others—at times in a similar fashion—react to them. This is especially the case for passages from Deuteronomy, such as Deut 4, 8, 28, or 30. Proverbs 2 connects with these texts, however, not in the sense of direct citation (and this is different from the use of Deut 6 in Prov 3, 6, and 7) but rather so that the wisdom terminology in Prov 2:1–11 receives nomistic coloring. This

coloring of the text leads to a connection of Deuteronomistic terminology with wisdom language. Formulations like the “words” that come from the “mouth of YHWH” (2:6b) or the theme of the land (2:21–22) can be located in a literary tradition that stems from Deuteronomy. This tradition, however, cannot be limited to single biblical books. The theme of the land in the contrast between the righteous and the sinner is also found, for example, in Ps 37. This text is close to Prov 2, as it shares the central terms “loyal one/faithful” (*ḥasîd/ḥasîdîm*) in addition to other diverse terminological and conceptual commonalities. The psalm introduces a topic that guides the analysis of the present study: the interplay between wisdom and torah. Additionally, the exegesis of Pss 119 and 19 demonstrates that there was apparently a process in which different conceptions of wisdom and torah were developed on the basis of literary references (among others also to the book of Proverbs).

The third textual connection that was examined, specifically with late prophetic literature, helps one to grasp this phenomenon more precisely. In taking up and disputing certain Deuteronomic texts, the theological implications of an interpretation of torah is discussed. Texts especially from the book of Jeremiah contrast with the position of Prov 2, arguing that the fear of YHWH results not from wisdom instruction but rather from a process in which YHWH himself must plant it in the individual. Jeremiah 31:31–34 specifies this in that YHWH alone creates the preconditions in which humans can fulfill the torah. At the same time, the text opens an additional field of reference from Prov 2—late prophetic eschatology. A comparison of passages from Isa 56–66 with Prov 2 illustrates that certain features assigned by late prophecy to the future are made accessible in the present in Prov 2. Even if the closing verses of the sapiential instruction (Prov 2:21–22) have a future-oriented tone, the reference to the present dominates the text. This also appears in a comparison of Prov 2:5–6 with the characterization of the ruler of peace in Isa 11. The *ḥokmāh*, the *bînāh*, and the *daʿat* ascribed to the future ruler in Isa 11 instead appear in Prov 2 as accessible for the one who follows the wisdom instruction.

The analysis of the connection of Prov 2 to other traditions leads to a three-fold result: It becomes clear that (1) the beginning and ending of Prov 2 are influenced by Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic thinking. Both the first verse and the land thematic in 2:21–22 give the instruction a nomistic color. In addition, (2) Prov 2 stands in connection with other texts that treat specific traditions in a very similar fashion. These texts provide a glimpse of a discourse about the relationship of wisdom and torah

that cannot be limited to Prov 2; Pss 37, 19, or 119 but rather affects an apparently broad range of postexilic literature. This discourse (3) revolves around the abilities of human beings to fulfill the will of YHWH and around the status of the torah. Of central importance to this discussion was apparently the conception of anthropology, and therefore the idea of the heart. The question of the relationship of torah and wisdom can, to a point, be a first step in the consideration of human potentialities concerning whether or not the human being with its heart can practice YHWH's instructions through his own mind. Whereas one side emphasizes that only YHWH renders the observance of torah possible, the other side—the voice of sapiential literature—continues to maintain that human participation is possible.

6.3. Proverbs 2 and the Composition of Proverbs 1–9

Building on the tradition-historical analysis, the references between Prov 2 and the other texts in Prov 1–9 are examined in chapter 4 of this study. It thereby becomes clear that the thesis of Prov 2 as a table of contents of the instructions in Prov 1–7 has implications for the overall formation of the book of Proverbs.

The individual exegesis showed, first of all, that the nine lectures in Prov 1–7 are referenced in Prov 2 by means of their initial verses. Proverbs 2 connects with the lectures and brings the themes, which are named there, into a sequence.

2:1–4	Learning wisdom means orienting oneself toward sapiential instruction	4:1–9
2:5–8	YHWH gives wisdom—the human–divine relationship	3:1–12
2:9–11	Whoever has learned wisdom will be protected	3:21–35 (cf. 4:20–27)
2:12–15	(1) from the evil men	4:10–19 (1:8–19)
2:16–19	(2) from the strange woman	5:1–23; 6:20–35; 7:1–27
2:20–22	Antithesis between the righteous and the wicked (two ways)	(cf. 4:10–19, 20–27)

While Prov 2 addresses the subjects of the following instructions, these subjects do not follow the same order as in the other instructions. Rather, the author of chapter 2 arranged these themes to fit his own argument.

When combining this literary evidence with the results of the analysis of the composition of Prov 1–9, it must first be stated that Prov 1:8–19 turns out to be a redactional layer within the composition of Prov 1–9. The starting point for the literary formation of the first part of the book of Proverbs, Prov 1–9, was eight lectures (3:1–12; 4:1–9, 10–19, 20–27; 5:1–23; 6:20–35; 7:1–27), which were compiled by one author. The next stage within the formation of Prov 1–9 was Prov 2. Written as an introduction to the eight instructions, Prov 2 develops a distinct concept of wisdom. Given that wisdom comes from YHWH, three factors can help toward a life that pleases YHWH according to the author of Prov 2: (1) the instruction of the wisdom teacher, (2) adopting it and striving toward it on the part of the student of wisdom, as well as (3) YHWH's action. By referring in its first verses not only to Prov 7 and Prov 5, but also to the poem of Prov 8, the author of Prov 2 includes the concept of an independent, personified wisdom.

2:1	ומצותי תצפן אתך	אמרי	בני אם תקח
7:1	ומצותי תצפן אתך	אמרי	בני שמר
2:2	תטה לבך לתבונה	לחכמה אונך	להקשיב
5:1	לתבונתי הט אונך	קשיבה	בני לחכמתי
2:3	לתבונה תתן קולך	תקרא	כי אם לבינה
8:1	ותבונה תתן קולה	תקרא	הלא חכמה

The first three verses of Prov 2 cite the initial verses of the instructions from Prov 7 and 5 as well as the address of personified wisdom in Prov 8. In this way a literary process is adopted that is also found in ancient Egyptian wisdom literature: A wisdom instruction was memorized with the help of the first verse. Since the respective first verses of other lectures are cited in the introduction of Prov 2, the text alludes to the instructions as a unified whole. This means that Prov 2 is not to be understood only as a table of contents but rather as a guide for reading in which the specific texts are bound together.

The analysis of the citations and allusions within Prov 1–9 reveals additional connections, which touch both with the first collection of the

book of Proverbs and with other parts of the book (1:3 and 2:9; 6:8 and 30:25; 6:10–11 and 24:33–34; 9:1 and 14:1; 9:10 and 1:7; 9:11 and 4:10). Thus it becomes clear that one must not only methodologically differentiate between citations and thematic allusions but also that these are dispersed differently. While Prov 2 contains citations from other passages within Prov 1–9 and merely thematic allusions to Prov 10–31, it is the exact opposite in Prov 6:1–19. That is, Prov 6 contains thematic allusions to Prov 1–9 and citations from Prov 10–31. In contrast, Prov 9 contains both citations and thematic allusions to Prov 1–8 and 10–31.

These observations on the various chapters of Prov 1–9 and the allusions to the rest of the book found there introduce another topic: the composition and redaction of the book of Proverbs. Such interconnections cover all sections of the book of Proverbs (1–9; 10–22; 30–31). In this system of cross-references, the overall composition of the book is markedly shaped by the nine wisdom instructions in Prov 1–7.

6.4. The Hermeneutics of Torah:

Proverbs 2, Deuteronomy, and the Book of Proverbs

The last chapter of this book (§5) assessed the discourse on wisdom and torah. The goal was to connect the results of the analysis of the tradition history (*Traditionsgeschichte*) with those about the composition and redaction of the book of Proverbs. This unfolded an approach building on and binding together the aforementioned observations of Strack and Delitzsch. Deuteronomy's influence on the book of Proverbs affected its composition and redaction. The book of Proverbs—according to the thesis of the present study—can be related to a theological debate revolving around the relationship between wisdom and torah in general and with the reception of the book of Deuteronomy in particular. The crucial point is that different positions of the relationship of wisdom and torah are found not only in texts outside of the book of Proverbs but also within the book of Proverbs itself.

This variable reception of Deuteronomy can be seen already on the level of the eight lectures (Prov 3–7*), the nucleus of the first collection of the book of Proverbs. Proverbs 3, 6, and 7 each reference the Shema in Deut 6 (cf. Deut 11), but each depicts the relationship of wisdom and torah differently. Proverbs 3 emphasizes the boundaries of human insight, Prov 7 holds fast to the concept of a self-supporting (and personified) wisdom, and Prov 6 in contrast allows the torah to appear in the garb of wisdom.

The lecture in Prov 6:20–35 goes the furthest in its references to Deuteronomy as well as to the Decalogue and develops a concept in which the discussion is *de facto* no longer about wisdom but rather about torah.

All three concepts take up the Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic idea of torah instruction in Deut 6 and 8 in which parental teaching is shifted into close proximity with the mediation of the commandments of YHWH through Moses. Proverbs 2 ties in with this, but it substitutes a model that has its source in Deut 4 and designates wisdom in the sense of a hermeneutic of torah. Wisdom thinking serves the understanding of the commandments of YHWH; what was applied to the community in Deuteronomy can be learned by the individual in the form of sapiential instruction. With this concept of a hermeneutic of torah, Prov 2 stands close to the last of the nine lectures in Prov 7, to which Prov 2 connects with citations (2:1 = 7:1; 2:16 = 7:5) and allusions (2:17–19 = 7:26–27).

This concept of Prov 2 stands in opposition, however, to Prov 3 and 6 and thus to a part of the sapiential instructions that was available to the author of Prov 2. With the background of the citations and allusions, one must conceive of an approach in which the author intended to construct a counterbalance to the position of a sapientialized torah in Prov 6 by means of the allusions to Prov 8. For although Prov 8 does not speak of torah, the text can be assigned to this discourse and as a consequence would have been understood in this way. For their part Pss 19 and 119 reference Prov 8 but advance the ideas of Prov 6 in which the torah can take over the functions that were previously accorded to wisdom. In this way the concept of a sapiential hermeneutic of the torah is replaced through a sapientilization of the torah in which torah has increasing cosmic properties through the borrowing of formulations from Prov 8.

This resulted in an additional development in which both concepts—in Prov 2 the wisdom mediation of the torah and in Prov 3, 6 a sapientialization of torah—are increasingly understood as mutually exclusive. What was considered an open debate on the level of the instructions in Prov 3–7 increasingly developed into an antithetical contrast. The reason for this was a theological problem that can be seen in Deuteronomy as well as in late prophetic texts: Did the period of divine revelation end with the revelation of God to Moses (Deut 34), or can this still be expected? Jeremiah 8:8, with its critique of a false interpretation of (written) torah, attests to a position that references a decidedly opposing position in which wisdom might aid in the understanding of the torah. Connected with this is the question about humanity itself and its ability to implement the

will of YHWH. While the wisdom texts put this sort of confidence in the human heart (Prov 2:2), late prophetic texts such as Jer 31 and Ezek 11 categorically exclude this possibility. As a result, wisdom is denied any achievement in the sense of a hermeneutic of torah and is reduced to what constitutes wisdom thinking in the individual sayings of Prov 10–22, specifically instructional phrases focused on practical living.

This development guided the further composition and redaction of the book of Proverbs. A first step was the redaction of Prov 2–8*. The composition of Prov 1 and the additions of 3:13–20, 6:1–19, and 9:1–18 developed a concept of wisdom pointedly different from the position represented in Prov 2. While in Prov 2:5 the fear of YHWH appears as a result of wisdom instruction, this fear forms the beginning of all wisdom discourses in Prov 1:7. This curtailment of the ability of wisdom thinking is further sharpened in chapter 9. Through the contrast between the call of Lady Wisdom and the call of Dame Folly, any kind of claim that might compete with torah (Prov 8) should be removed. This idea is made explicit in Prov 28 and 30, which highlights torah and torah piety (Prov 28) while emphasizing that wisdom does not lead to a deeper understanding of God (Prov 30). At the end with Prov 30, the concept of a hermeneutic of torah is counteracted through a wisdom text itself.

Therefore, differing expressions of the relationship of wisdom and torah appear within the book of Proverbs. As a result, those voices that stood for a sapientialized torah and against a theologized wisdom triumphed on the level of the final redaction of the book. This means that the composition and redaction of the book of Proverbs connect with a theological discourse in the postexilic period that is manifest in texts such as Pss 19; 119; Sir 24; and Bar 3:9–4:4 and extends into the literature of Hellenistic Judaism and the Dead Sea Scrolls. One primary factor for this theological discourse was the book of Deuteronomy, which both shaped this debate as a primary theological tradition and was influenced by this discourse itself. As late additions to the book of Deuteronomy, passages such as Deut 4:5–8 and 30:1–14 show that the discourse on wisdom and torah did not flow in only one direction from Deuteronomy to Proverbs but probably also from Proverbs to Deuteronomy.

In sum, the instruction of Prov 2, which forms the starting point of the present study, is thus only one voice alongside others. Whether the position of a nomistic wisdom (Prov 13) in which torah refers to the teaching of the wise men without any reference to Deuteronomy, whether the concept of wisdom as a personified category that can take the place of

torah (Prov 8), or whether the idea of a sapientialized torah (Prov 6) in which torah takes on sapiential garb, different hermeneutics of torah can be found in the book of Proverbs. Among them is the instruction of Prov 2, which presents a position that in the end was neither accepted on the level of the book of Proverbs nor outside of it. It is the position of a group that formulated an instructional program out of the awareness of a special relationship to YHWH, and as a result the will of YHWH manifested in the commandments seemed achievable to them through the path of wisdom instruction. This group was a part of a spectrum of literati, and therefore scribes, who, with the help of similar literary techniques, reacted to current theological questions and thereby found a variety of answers in the form of different hermeneutics of torah.

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