

# Theology on the Web.org.uk

*Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible*

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

**PayPal**

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

---

A table of contents for *Irish Biblical Studies* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_ibs-01.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_ibs-01.php)

***The Calls and the Expectations of Wisdom towards her  
Audience in Proverbs 1-9 (Part one)<sup>1</sup>***

Rev Dr Bálint Károly Zabán  
Szentléányfalva, Co. Arad, Transsylvania.

---

## **Introduction**

*“The two things which have the greatest influence in a state, - namely, the greatest interest, and eloquence, are both making against us at the present moment; and while I am awed by the one, O Caius Aquillius, I am in fear of the other. . . .”<sup>2</sup>*

In Prov 1-9 the way in which the audience is supposed to distinguish between the contending voices of Wisdom and her counterparts is by means of differentiation between their competing voices.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, it is commendable to examine the calls of Wisdom in relation to that of her counterparts. This is important, since it may function as means to substantiate a valid connection between Wisdom and her counterparts and their speeches. Nevertheless, it also helps to notice the differences as well.<sup>4</sup> I would suggest that the two main differences between Wisdom’s calls and that of her counterparts are

---

<sup>1</sup> It is a tremendous honour for me to be able to present this article for the 80<sup>th</sup> birthday of the distinguished professor and scholar Stanley McIvor, whom I had the great privilege of knowing personally.

<sup>2</sup> C. D. Yonge, *The Orations of Marcus Tullius Cicero Vol. I. Orations For Quintus, Sextus Roscius, Quintus Roscius, Quintus Roscius, Against Quintus, Caecilius, and Against Verres* (London: Georger Bell & Sons, 1909), 1.

<sup>3</sup> J. N. Aletti, “Séduction et parole en Proverbes I-IX,” *VT* 27 (1977): 133; Stuart Weeks, *Instruction and Imagery in Proverbs 1-9* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 81-2.

<sup>4</sup> I think it is essential to highlight these differences just as Weeks deemed it important to highlight the differences between the Strange Woman and Folly, see further Weeks, *Proverbs 1-9*, 147.

emphasized by the way in which Wisdom reveals herself and expects the audience to perform something in turn to the issuing of her call.

***The Calls of Wisdom in Proverbs 1:20-33; 8:1-36 and 9:1-6 Compared to the Calls of Her Counterparts in Proverbs 1-9***

The competition and contrast between the different calls characterizes Prov 1-9 as a whole. The most prominent call is uttered by Wisdom, which is in competition and opposition with the call of the Strange Woman (אִשָּׁה זָרָה) in Prov 2:16 and 7:5 (her speech in 7:14-20) and that of Folly (אִשָּׁה כְּסִילוֹת) in 9:13-18.<sup>5</sup> As noted by

---

<sup>5</sup>Achim Müller, *Proverbien 1 – 9: Der Weisheit neue Kleider* (BZAW 291; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2000), 4-5. “Wer die Fremde Frau hauptsächlich aus ihrem Kontext in Prov 1-9 her begreift, wird sie in Opposition zur Frau Weisheit ebenfalls als Personifikation sehen. . . . in diesem Gegensatz sieht die Fremde Frau parallel zu den Bösen Buben. Die Fremde Frau personifiziert dann eine bestimmte falsche Lehre; dies hatte z.B. schon Ph. Melanchton (1524) im Gefolge der traditionellen Auslegung vertreten. Diese falsche Lehre kann der hellenistische Geist, die Torheit oder sonst etwas Schlechtes sein. . . . Sieht Melanchton die Fremde Frau noch in Opposition zu der Lehre Gottes, so ist ihr Gegensatz zur Frau Weisheit textnäher.” For further discussions of the opposition in question, see further Christl Maier, *Die «fremde Frau» in Proverbien 1-9: Eine exegetische und sozialgeschichtliche Studie* (OBO 144; Freiburg: Universitätsverlag Freiburg Schweiz, 1995); R. E. Murphy, “Wisdom and Eros,” *CBQ* 50 (1988): 600-3; R. J. Clifford, “Woman Wisdom in the Book of Proverbs,” in *Biblische Theologie und gesellschaftlicher Wandel: Festschrift N. Lohfink* (eds. G. Braulik et al.; Freiburg: Universitätsverlag Freiburg Schweiz, 1993): 61-72; Claudia V. Camp, *Wisdom and the Feminine in the Book of Proverbs* (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1985), 79-126, 255-81. For two other descriptions of the Strange Woman see further Prov 22:14 and 23:27-28 and their treatment in Weeks, *Proverbs 1-9*, 133. For a treatment of 22:14 as part of 22:6-16 see K. M. Heim, *Like Grapes of Gold Set in Silver: Proverbial Clusters in Proverbs 10:1 – 22:16* (BZAW 273; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2001), 307-11. In relation to 22:14-15, Plöger (Otto Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos (Proverbia)* (BKAT 17; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1984), 256) mentioned that the question of the straying women and the chastisement of the youth here resembles the similar allusions in Prov 1-9: “Zwar werden in der Spruchsammlung ab

Aletti, each speech by Wisdom corresponds to speeches uttered by her counterparts, e.g., the Strange Woman, Folly etc.<sup>6</sup> In Prov 9 Wisdom and Folly are placed side by side as counterparts, each providing their audience with their call.<sup>7</sup> Wisdom in Prov 1-9 makes herself accessible and available for everybody as opposed to the

---

*Kap. 10 die Frauen keineswegs übergangen, aber die fremden Frauen in der Weise, wie sie uns aus der Sammlung 1-9 bekannt sind, werden nur in V. 14 und in einem ähnlich lautenden Spruch in 23,27 erwähnt, und zwar im vorliegenden Vers in einer schärferen Zuspitzung. . . . Ist die Erwähnung der fremden Frau in den Sentenzensammlungen als Seltenheit anzusehen, so wird mit dem in V. 15 angeschnittenen Thema der Erziehung (bis hin zur körperlichen Züchtigung) ein weisheitlicher Aufgabenbereich genannt, der ebenfalls in den Kapiteln 1-9 eine hervorragende Rolle spielt und auch in den Sentenzsammlungen nicht übergangen wird (vgl. 13,24; 23,13; 29,15 u.ö.).”* This position was also accepted by Heim; see Heim, *Like Grapes of Gold*, 309.

<sup>6</sup> Aletti, “Séduction,” 129-44; Weeks, *Proverbs 1-9*, 79.

<sup>7</sup> Aletti, “Séduction,” 129-44; Weeks, *Proverbs 1-9*, 106. Concerning this on page 106 in his work Weeks commented in relation to Prov 9 that the invitation of Wisdom and Folly is issued “. . . to those who are, as yet, neither wise nor foolish.” Week’s next comment on page 83 of his work seems to contradict what he said earlier: “*A problem is also posed by Wisdom’s invitation in 9:4; she is surely not supposed to be inviting the simple to ‘turn.’ If the uninstructed are apparently going in the wrong direction anyway, then the bad characters seem redundant, and it is not clear how accepting the wrong sort of invitation will change anything for their victims. Conversely, if those who are invited to turn aside by Folly in 9:16 are going ‘straight on the way’ despite being uneducated, the role of Wisdom also seems unnecessary.*” So does Wisdom issue a call to the simple or uninstructed or not? I have to take issue at this point with Weeks. At this point it is enough to say that the above comments of Weeks reflect a slight deficiency in his work in terms of the way in which he failed to offer a balanced view of all the types of fools that are part of Wisdom’s audience in Prov 1-9. It seems to me that his main emphasis is on the פְּתוּלָה the “simple,” which would be fine but no significant treatment is offered about the rest of the fools who are equally important. So it seems that he tackled the question of instruction and acquiring Wisdom only from the perspective of פְּתוּלָה, which in my opinion weakens his argument. See further, Weeks, *Proverbs 1-9*, 105-6.

aspect of inaccessibility of wisdom in Job and Qoheleth. Therefore, as Weeks has pointed out on the basis of Aletti's argumentation, for the writer of Prov 1-9 the main concern is not that wisdom is concealed ". . . but that there are competing voices, presenting their own, false invitations."<sup>8</sup> Aletti has shown that the speeches occur in pairs but that they also encapsulate a major element of enticement providing the audience with the important task of choosing between them.<sup>9</sup> Proverbs 1:10-19 contains the first warning in which the son is instructed to avoid the enticements of the sinners (1:10:תַּפְּאִיִּם).<sup>10</sup> Weeks rightly suggested that although one might not assume much from the fact that the robbers in 1:10-19 employed speech alone but the verb I פָּתָה (1:10) signals that the robbers attract their audience with what they say,<sup>11</sup> which I think is also accentuated by the expression אַתְּ יִאמְרוּ, which is to be found before the inception of their address (1:11). In this case the verb I פָּתָה plays a distinguished role, which in O'Connor's view belongs to a group of speech act verbs, which do not frame direct discourse.<sup>12</sup> In respect to the meaning of I פָּתָה in 1:10 and 16:29 HALOT offers the following possible meaning, namely "to persuade someone, by offering a tempting allurements."<sup>13</sup> Now in respect to this clear enticement of the speech of the sinners, it is the father who has to make explicit the existing dangers. In similar fashion, in Prov 7:14-20, which comprises the Strange Woman's speech, it is the father anew who has to perform the warning.<sup>14</sup> The only "weapons" the characters display are their very words.<sup>15</sup> In 7:10 despite the fact that the Strange Woman wears an attractive garment (שִׁיר יוֹנָה) it is her speech and not her physical charms, which she employs in order to seduce the young man, "with

---

<sup>8</sup> Weeks, *Proverbs 1-9*, 108.

<sup>9</sup> Aletti, "Sédution," 130; Weeks, *Proverbs 1-9*, 80.

<sup>10</sup> Aletti, "Sédution," 136-8.

<sup>11</sup> Weeks, *Proverbs 1-9*, 81, 146.

<sup>12</sup> M. O'Connor, *Hebrew Verse Structure* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1997), 410.

<sup>13</sup> HALOT, Vol. 2, 985.

<sup>14</sup> Aletti, "Sédution," 134-8; Weeks, *Proverbs 1-9*, 80.

<sup>15</sup> Aletti, "Sédution," 129; Weeks, *Proverbs 1-9*, 80; Camp, *Wisdom*, 117.

great persuasiveness, with the smoothness of her lips” (7:21).<sup>16</sup> Apart from 7:21 noted by Weeks, I also want to allude to the similar admonition in 6:24 where the son is warned against the “smooth tongue of the adulteress.”<sup>17</sup> Wisdom replies to the very attractive calls and invitations of the Strange Woman and Folly with her own calls, invitations and promises. In her first speech Wisdom admonishes, in the second speech she furnishes her credentials as proofs for the fact that it is her speeches and calls that the simple should embrace<sup>18</sup> and in her third speech she invites her audience to the magnificent banquet.

### Setting Terms, Rhetorical Apertures and Rhetorical Questions

At this stage it is important to examine some of the similarities and differences between the speeches of Wisdom and that of her counterparts in terms of the setting terms, and the words pertaining to the calls and the rhetorical apertures and finally to the rhetorical questions.

---

<sup>16</sup> Weeks, *Proverbs 1-9*, 80. The MT of Prov 7:21 reads:

הַשְׁתוּ בְּרַב לִקְחָהּ בְּחֵלֶק שְׂפָתֶיהָ תְּדַיְחֶנּוּ.

Cf. D. Winton Thomas, “Textual and Philological Notes on Some Passages in the Book of Proverbs,” in *Wisdom in Israel and in the Ancient Near East Presented to Professor Harold Henry Rowley* (eds. M. Noth and D. Winton Thomas; VTSup 3; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1955), 284. The term לִקְחָהּ, occurs here with the meaning of “persuasiveness,” as opposed to 16:21, where it is used for learning as the process of comprehension of the teacher’s instruction, see William McKane, *Proverbs: A New Approach* (London: SCM Press LTD, 1980), 489; Berend Gemser, *Sprüche Salomos*, (HBAT 16; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1963), 71; Helmer Ringren, *Sprüche* (ATD 16; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1967), 70; Heim, *Like Grapes of Gold*, 220, n. 162.

<sup>17</sup> Proverbs 6:24 reads: הַשְׁמִירָךְ מֵאַשְׁתֵּי רַע מִחֵלֶקֶת לְשׁוֹן נְבָרִיָּהּ.

<sup>18</sup> Weeks, *Proverbs 1-9*, 81. I do not necessarily confer with Weeks in that Wisdom throughout struggles with the putative “disadvantage” in that she is unable to furnish the “immediate rewards and gratifications” proffered by the opposing figures. Moreover, apparently she is also unable to provide any proof apart from her very words that what she has to offer is more valuable.

It is worthwhile to show how the rhetorical apertures of Wisdom, the setting descriptions and the rhetorical questions can all be encountered in all three speeches. These aspects mark Wisdom's clear intentions concerning the issuing of public calls and invitations. Setting descriptions:<sup>19</sup> 1:20a - בְּחֹץ;<sup>20</sup> 1:20b - בְּרַחְבוֹת; 1:21a - הַמִּיּוֹחַ בְּרֹאשׁ־מְרוֹמִים עַל־יַדְרֹךְ; 8:2a - בְּרֹאשׁ נֶצְבָה; 8:2b - שְׁעָרִים בְּעִיר בְּפֶתְחֵי; 1:21b - לִירֵד־שְׁעָרִים לְפֶתַח; 8:3a - בֵּית נְתִיבוֹחַ מְרִמֵי קַרְתָּ; 8:3b - מְבוֹא פֶּתְחֵים; 9:3b - קַרְתָּ

<sup>19</sup> The words, which occur twice, are underlined.

<sup>20</sup> David-Marc D'Hamonville and Épiphané Dumouchet, *Les Proverbes* (La Bible D'Alexandrie 17; Paris: Les Éditions Du Cerf, 2000), 164. Note how the LXX text of Prov 1:20a and 8:3b offers a "very near" ("trèsnet") parallelism, with a "refined adjustment" ("avec une modulation raffinée"), which is not to be found in the MT: ἐν ἐξόδους(1:20a) / ἐν εἰσοδούς (8:3b), literally "at the outgoings" and "at the entrances."

<sup>21</sup> Greenstone, *Proverbs*, 79. The rabbis talked about the הַטוֹיִם אֲבָן or "Stone of the Losers," a venue in Jerusalem from where lost and found properties were announced. This was also mentioned by Waltke ("Loser's Stone"; Bruce K. Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs: Chapters 1-15* (NICOT; Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004), 394), when he cited Plaut's commentary.

<sup>22</sup> At the שְׁעָרִים. This was the very topos where Absalom stood, when he intended to offer fair judgment to the nation of Israel (2 Sam 15:2). He was standing at the עַל־יַד דְּרֹךְ הַשְׁעָרִים, "next to the road of the gate," and whenever someone came along in order to present his case before the king, Absalom would call him over (קָרָא) and offer his help. Jeremiah (17:19-20) is also said to be standing at the People's Gate ([הָעָם] בְּנֵי־עָם) and all the gates of Jerusalem (שְׁעָרֵי) and speak (אָמַר) to the kings and the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem who "enter the gates" (הַבָּאִים בְּשְׁעָרֵים הָאֵלֶּה). See further Michael V. Fox, *Proverbs 1-9: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 18A; New York: Doubleday, 2000), 266; Leo G. Perdue, *Proverbs: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching* (IBCTP; Louisville, 2000), 140; Van Leeuwen, *Proverbs*, 89. I would also like to mention the occurrence of שְׁעָרִים in connection to the Valiant Woman in Prov 31:23a, 31b.

על-גַּמְי. <sup>23</sup> The terms employed in the calls and rhetorical apertures of Wisdom betray a great deal of consistency:

1a. Rhetorical aperture (with verbs):

1:20a - תְּרַנֶּה

1:20b - תִּתֵּן קוֹלָהּ

1:21a - תִּקְרָא

1:21c - תֹּאמֶר

9:4b - אִמְרָה

8:1a - תִּקְרָא

9:3a - תִּקְרָא

8:1b - תִּתֵּן קוֹלָהּ

8:3b - תְּרַנֶּה

2b. Rhetorical aperture (with nouns):

1:20b - קוֹלָהּ

1:21c - אִמְרֵיהֶּ

8:1b - קוֹלָהּ

Concerning these rhetorical apertures and the fact that they occur frequently one could cite one of Von Rad's comments, which he used in relation to a similar wisdom text in Job 12:7-9, saying: "*How many verbs there are, meaning 'speak'!*"<sup>24</sup> Schäfer made a very good case when he envisaged the structure of Prov 1:20-21 and the way these "*speaking*" verbs function. The call of Wisdom is enacted in the following way:<sup>25</sup>

---

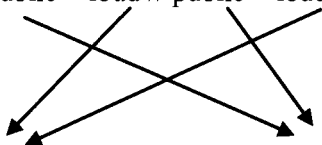
<sup>23</sup> Concerning the way in which the setting terms function only in the first and second speeches of Wisdom, see further Gerlinde Baumann, *Die Weisheitsgestalt in Proverbien 1-9: Traditionsgeschichtliche und theologische Studien* (FAT 16; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1996, 68-70.

<sup>24</sup> Gerhard Von Rad, *Wisdom in Israel* (Woking: Xpress Reprints, 1997), 162.

<sup>25</sup> Rolf Schäfer, *Die Poesie der Weisen: Dichotomie als Grundstruktur der Lehr- und Weisheitsgedichte in Proverbien 1-9* (WMANT 77; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1999), 42.



1:20 public + loud // public + loud



1:21 unmistakable // unavoidable

The rhetorical questions constitute a very important feature of poetic texts in the Hebrew Bible. One encounters three of these in the speeches of Wisdom and one more in the father's appeal in 5:20 and 6:9. The latter one commences with the same rhetorical question as Wisdom's appeal in 1:22a:

1:22a - עֲדֹמְתֵי פִתּוּם תֵּאָהָבוּ פֶתִי -

8:1a - הֲלֹא־תִקְמָה תִקְרָא -

9:4a - מִי־פִתִּי יִסֵּר הִנֵּה -

In order to see the similarities and differences between Wisdom's calls and that of her counterparts it is necessary to take a brief look at the setting descriptions, and the terms employed in the calls and rhetorical apertures and possible rhetorical questions in relation to the counterparts of Wisdom.

With regard to the setting descriptions related to the Strange Woman, first I am listing the ones that occur also in the speeches of Wisdom: 2:18a: בַּיִת (also in 5:8b; 7:6a; 7:8b; 7:11b; 7:19a; 7:20b; in relation to Wisdom in 9:1); 5:8b: פֶּתַח (in relation to Wisdom in 1:21b; 8:3b); 7:11a: הַמְּיָה (in relation to Wisdom in 1:21a);<sup>26</sup> 7:12a: בַּחוּץ (in relation to Wisdom in 1:20a); 7:12a: בְּרֵהָבוֹחַ (in relation to Wisdom in 1:20b).

---

<sup>26</sup> Aletti, "Séduction," 133, n. 10.

Second, I am enumerating those setting descriptions, which do not appear in relation to the speeches of Wisdom: 7:6a: חֲלוֹן; 7:6b: אֲשַׁנֵּב; 7:8a: בְּשׁוּק; 7:8a: פְּנֵה (7:12b).<sup>27</sup>

Third, I am providing those setting descriptions, which occur in relation to Folly: 9:14a: פְּתַח (in connection to the Strange Woman in 5:8b and Wisdom in 1:21b and 8:3b); 9:14a: בַּיִת (in connection to the robbers in 1:13b, the Strange Woman in 5:8b; 7:6a; 7:8b; 7:11b; 7:19a; 7:20b and Wisdom in 9:1); 9:14b: מְרוֹם (in connection to Wisdom in 8:2b and 9:3a); 9:14b: קֶרֶת (in connection to Wisdom in 8:3a and 9:3b). In two cases one encounters recurring setting expressions such as פְּתַח בַּיִתָּהּ in 5:8b (Strange Woman) and in 9:14a (Folly), then מְרִמֵי קֶרֶת in 9:3b (Wisdom) and 9:14b (Folly). Regarding the terms highlighting the rhetorical apertures and the calls of the robbers, the Strange Woman and Folly it is evident that except one term (1:10a: פְּתַח) all the others occur in relation to Wisdom's speeches: 1:11a: אָמַר (in relation to the robbers); 2:16b: אֲמַרְיָהּ (in relation to the Strange Woman); 7:13b: אָמַר (in relation to the Strange Woman); 9:15a: קָרָא (in relation to Folly) and 9:16b: אָמַר (in relation to Folly). In connection to the "words" of the Strange Woman in 2:16b one cannot help but think about the "words" of Wisdom in 1:21c. However, 1:21c was regarded by some scholars as superfluous.<sup>28</sup> I think however, that 1:21c and especially the term

---

<sup>27</sup> The latter term occurs with אֲצִל, "beside," in Prov 7:8a, 12b. Just as the Strange Woman is beside the corners of the streets in 7:8a, 12b in 8:30 Wisdom is "beside" God. See further Aletti, "Séduction," 134, n. 12; Jean-Noël Aletti, "Proverbes 8,22-31. Étude de structure," *Bib* 57 (1976), 26; Gale A. Yee, "An Analysis of Prov 8 22-31 According to Style and Structure," *ZAW* 94 (1982), 60. The expression אָנִי שָׁם, "I was there" in 8:27a is in intimate semantic connection with אֲצִלוֹ אֲמוֹן, "I was beside him, a darling child" in 8:30a.

<sup>28</sup> Crawford H. Toy, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on The Book of Proverbs* (ICC; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1899), 22, 30. In Toy's view בְּעִיר אֲמַרְיָהּ, spoils the rhythm and it seems to be a gloss, in which בְּעִיר was meant to explicate שְׁעָרִים, asseverating that "the gateways" in question are certainly that of a city, whereas אֲמַרְיָהּ makes it clearer that the

“words” (אִמְרֵיהָ) of Wisdom should receive a more positive appraisal in light of the fact that it may parallel the “words” (אִמְרֵיהָ) of the Strange Woman in 2:16b.

Fourth, there is only one rhetorical question occurring in relation to one of Wisdom’s counterparts, namely Folly in 9:16, which is technically exactly the same in its wording as Wisdom’s rhetorical question in 9:4. As it becomes clear in terms of the words used for the description of the setting, the terms used in relation to the calls and rhetorical apertures of Wisdom and of her counterparts and the rhetorical questions, there is indeed a great deal of affinity and one must concur with Aletti and Weeks that even in these respects it is hard to differentiate between these competing speeches. Moreover, the idea of likeness in terms of Wisdom’s address and her counterparts is not only signalled by the exact similarity of Wisdom’s and Folly’s rhetorical questions (9:4; 9:16), which is the pinnacle of these affinities in terms of address but by other examples as well.<sup>29</sup> The inviting imperative of the verb הִלֵךְ occurs at the

---

following words are that of Wisdom. Bickell obliterated חֹמֶר and אִמְרֵיהָ, which are required by the connection, and replaced בָּעִיר with אִמְרֵיהָ. Toy deemed that the two terms, which should rather be omitted and taken as glosses are בָּעִיר and אִמְרֵיהָ. The conclusion is that the Versions, apart from the LXX, are in accordance, with insignificant differences, with the MT, and the glosses ought to have been early, so said Toy. See further R. B. Y. Scott, *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes: Introduction, Translation, and Notes* (AB 18; Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1965), 34. Scott omitted חֹמֶר אִמְרֵיהָ. See further McKane, *Proverbs*, 272. McKane also approached 1:21 negatively, when he said that the second half of the verse seems to be “too long.” See further Plöger, *Sprüche*, 13. In Plöger’s view, Prov 1:21, when compared with 8:1-3 seems overloaded, although he did not deny that it may well be a long verse with a tricola as in 1:22-23 and 1:27. He deemed that a change in the construction of שְׁעָרַיִם, is not necessary. It should be compared with the adjectival usage in Isa 22:2.

<sup>29</sup> Aletti, “Séduction,” 133. Without noticing at the time that Aletti called this example “*le plus net*” (“*neatest*”) I labelled the example in question “*the pinnacle*” in terms of the affinities. Another example of resemblance is to be found between Prov 5:19 and 7:18 (also on page 135 in Aletti’s

inception of the invitation issued by the robbers in 1:10a (לָקַח אֶתֵּנוּ), by the Strange Woman in 7:18a (לָקַח נַרְדֵּה) and by Wisdom in 9:5 (לָבוֹ לְחַמּוֹ).

I agree with Aletti and Weeks in that the speeches are paired, that they all encapsulate an element of enticement. Furthermore, there are competing voices, which issue their false invitations and the only weapons the speakers have are their words. I would, however, like to highlight the fact that there are certain differences.<sup>30</sup> I concur concerning the similarities between these competing voices and that is the main reason why I have examined the actual calls, rhetorical apertures and rhetorical questions of the characters in order to highlight this. Recognizing the affinities is essential but one must not overlook the differences. I think these differences between the speeches of Wisdom and that of her counterparts may be grouped under two points: 1. Differences pertaining to the way in which Wisdom reveals herself or presents herself to the public, and 2. Differences concerning what Wisdom and Prov 1-9 generally expects the addressed public to do if Wisdom's call is accepted. I shall expand the first point as Wisdom's self-revelation, whereas the second point is discussed under four headings, which are: 1. To call out for insight and to raise the voice for understanding in Prov 2:3, 2. To seek and search for understanding in 2:4, 3. To love Wisdom and

---

article). When Aletti talked about the similarities between the speeches of Wisdom and her counterparts, he said: "*L'exemple le plus net, parce que stylistiquement marquée, se trouve en Prov. ix où dame Sagesse et dame Insensée dissent l'une et l'autre: 'que celui qui est inexpérimenté se détourne par ici!' (versets 4 et 15).*" Aletti did not mention anything about the rhetorical questions or their importance, which I discussed above. He simply mentioned that Wisdom and Folly say the same thing in Prov 9:4 and 9:15. In his article, there might be a mistake in the listing of 9:15 because the pairing question of Folly is in 9:16 and not in 9:15. Cf. Schäfer, *Poesie*, 248. Schäfer made a good case by highlighting the similar invitations in 9:4 and 9:16 in his outline of the structure of Prov 9.

<sup>30</sup> Aletti, "Séduction," 142. However, to be fair to Aletti by the end of his article he did tackle what the speech of Wisdom has to offer "*au contraire*" to her counterparts.

not to forsake her (4:6), 4. And to call Wisdom “*my sister*” and insight “*intimate friend*” (7:4). As I will make it clear these four headings represent four tasks, which those who internalize the instruction are asked to perform in relation to Wisdom but not in relation to any of Wisdom’s counterparts. I think that these differences between Wisdom and her counterparts are substantial in terms of the actual process of distinguishing between the competing voices.

### **The Self-Revelation of Wisdom in Proverbs 1-9**

As shown above the settings of Wisdom’s speeches seem to be important because of the common ideas they employ (1:20-21; 8:1-3; 9:3-4). In Wisdom’s House, i.e., Prov 1-9, all three speeches of Wisdom encapsulate apertures or introits, which I may also be inclined to call “*oratorical or rhetorical apertures.*” This aspect of structural “*Form*” might fulfil many purposes, out of which one is fairly evident, namely that this “*.. . all-embracing, eloquent, veracious and elevated wisdom,*”<sup>31</sup> calls and speaks in a public fashion so that everybody could hear what Wisdom has to say and share from her fullness and perfection. This public fashion is in opposition to some features related to the Strange Woman and Folly. As much as both the Strange Woman and Folly appear in public places one cannot avoid missing certain verses in relation to these characters, which point not to publicity but to its antonym, namely hiding or concealment as in 7:9,<sup>32</sup> 18-19 and 9:17. Therefore, the structural “*Form*” of the introductory part sets the scene of Wisdom’s appearance, which is not secretive or hidden but public through and through.<sup>33</sup> Weeks has rightly pointed out that the problem of the

---

<sup>31</sup>Berend Gemser, *Sprüche Salomos*, (HBAT 16; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1963), 22. This is Gemser’s definition. He wrote: “*allumfassende, lautere, wahrhaftige und höchste Weisheit.*” See further McKane, *Proverbs*, 272. The translation was that of McKane.

<sup>32</sup>The expression בַּאֵינֶן, “*pupil(of the eye)*,” in Prov 7:9 also occurs in 20:20b. Cf. Heim, *Like Grapes of Gold*, 281.

<sup>33</sup>Aletti, “*Séduction*,” 142. As opposed to the “*projet secret*” of the seductress.

wisdom writer in Prov 1:20-1; 8:1-3 and 9:3-4 “. . . is not that wisdom is hidden, but that there are competing voices, presenting their own, false invitations.”<sup>34</sup> As signified by the “*setting*” terms and expressions, Wisdom is present at the busiest thoroughfares of ancient Israelite city-life.

Having set the context in which Wisdom calls and invites it is now useful to examine how Wisdom attempts to reveal herself to the audience targeted in her speech and to inculcate her instruction in the mind of the uninstructed. In all three speeches of Wisdom the voice, which calls and invites humankind and speaks to them as a voice revealed. I feel this aspect automatically leads to the feature of the “*self-revelation*” of Wisdom. The feature I am alluding to is somewhat connected to the treatment of von Rad entitled “*The Self-Revelation of Creation*.”<sup>35</sup> The main question is that how does Wisdom reveal herself through her calls and invitations? Each speech of Wisdom has a section concerned directly with the act of call on the part of Wisdom (Prov 1:20-22; 8:1, 4; 9:3). It is fairly lucid what is intended here, i.e., Wisdom calls to humankind. In Von Rad’s interpretation of the self-revelation of creation Wisdom’s call to men represents a seminal event: “*The facts are clear. Wisdom . . . calls to men. And this brings us at last to the event which is the real subject of the didactic poem. And what an event it is! In this call we are dealing with the very opposite of something private and personal or even esoteric, which would be accessible only to initiates.*”<sup>36</sup>

The public character of Wisdom’s call is evident. Wisdom speaks at the most profane public venues. Wisdom’s intention is to proffer instruction and a release from stupidity (1:22). The audience is asked to learn from her and to listen to her (8:5; 10:32). Wisdom teaches intelligence and truth (8:5, 7). She is promising wealth, honour and righteousness (8:18, 21) and also life (8:35), divine favour (8:35) and even security (1:33). Wisdom, i.e., חֵכְמוֹת, if taken as a plural, as Gemser explicated, is a plural form of extension, intensity, and

---

<sup>34</sup> Weeks, *Proverbs 1-9*, 108, 120.

<sup>35</sup> Von Rad, *Wisdom*, 144-176. See also Waltke, *Proverbs*, 78-80.

<sup>36</sup> Von Rad, *Wisdom*, 158.

majesty, which could be taken as a tribute to the “. . . *all-embracing, eloquent, veracious and elevated wisdom.*”<sup>37</sup> In relation to this point Wisdom becomes an “*Offenbarungsmittlerin*” or a “*revelation-mediator.*”<sup>38</sup> Of course the way von Rad envisaged Wisdom being a “*revelation-mediator*” was through creation, which is a very important point. Wisdom seems to want to validate her calls, invitations and offers, with magnificent displays of her role in creation (Prov 3:13-20; 8:22-31). Wisdom’s call is a cosmic invitation into her cosmic house, which she has built with such artistry in Prov 8:22-36 and 9:1-2. Wisdom’s connection to creation brings the final and most important seal on the public character of her calls and invitations. However, as shown by her “*chiding speech*”/“*Scheltrede*” and “*threat speech*”/“*Drohrede*” in Prov 1:24-31, Wisdom’s revelation does not mean that she becomes available at the whim of anyone like a constantly flowing “*well of truth.*”<sup>39</sup> Wisdom is perfectly entitled to pull back from her audience when she experiences that she is not hearkened to in the way she should be.<sup>40</sup> Wisdom’s clarity is heard through her own voice retaining the marks of a divine address. It can be heard everywhere, it is not possible to avoid it. Moreover, similar to God, Wisdom calls for a decision between matters that concern life and death. Von Rad went as far as saying that the gifts Wisdom promises are “*gifts of salvation.*” At this point, von Rad underscored a difficulty, namely that this אֱלֹהִים who can speak apart from God, can say to her audience

---

<sup>37</sup> Gemser, *Sprüche*, 22. Gemser wrote: “. . . *die allumfassende, lautere, wahrhaftige und höchste Weisheit.*” See further McKane, *Proverbs*, 272. The translation provided above is that of McKane.

<sup>38</sup>C. Kayatz, *Studien zu Proverben 1-9: Eine Form- und Motivgeschichtliche Untersuchung unter Einbeziehung Ägyptischen Vergleichsmaterials* (WMANT 22; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1966), 127, 128, 128, n. 2. The term “*Offenbarungsmittlerin*” was borrowed by Kayatz from von Rad. Kayatz wrote: “*Das führt dazu, daß die Weisheit in göttlicher Autorität spricht, daß sie als ‘Offenbarungsmittlerin’ auftritt.*” Translation: “*This leads to [the fact] that Wisdom speaks with divine authority, appearing as a revelation-mediator.*”

<sup>39</sup> Von Rad, *Wisdom*, 161.

<sup>40</sup> Von Rad, *Wisdom*, 161.

that “*Whoever finds me, finds life*” (Prov 3:18; 8:35; 9:6; Sir 4:12)? Neither a prophet nor the Strange Woman and Folly can summon an audience in the way Wisdom has.<sup>41</sup> All those who do not hearken to her call are doomed to destruction. This calling voice, when disobeyed, can be withdrawn and made unavailable as exemplified by Wisdom’s first speech (1:20-33). Now, my point here is not to argue in support of von Rad’s view concerning the existence of a primeval word-order.<sup>42</sup> I simply want to draw attention to the character of Wisdom’s calls and how these calls resemble that of God in the Hebrew Bible and how they surpass in some points the calls of her counterparts in Prov 1-9. By this, as I said above, I also want to draw attention to the fact that Aletti and Weeks were far too quick in asserting that the similarities between the calls of Wisdom and that of her counterparts are decisive in terms of the difficulties faced by the audience in the process of choosing between the competing voices. I concur with both scholars in relation to the resemblances of these calls and invitations and that the audience finds it hard to distinguish between them. However, the existing affinities should not hinder one from seeing the differences between these calls and invitations. As much as one would like to see the equality of the competing voices at least in terms of the main aspects

---

<sup>41</sup> Von Rad, *Wisdom*, 163. I do not intend to explicate this problem in the way a good number of scholars have, namely that the fact that Wisdom has a separate voice means that one should postulate the existence of an “*ugly ditch*” between Wisdom and God. Moreover, I do not intend either to explain this problem in the light of the dichotomy of the alleged secular and religious Israelite wisdom traditions. In my opinion, as it is briefly shown here, there are too many similarities between the “*Ich-Stil*” addressed by Wisdom and that by God, thus to draw out significant discrepancies between the two might be a possible but somewhat forced task. The fact that Wisdom’s “*Ich-Rede*” in Prov 1:20-33; 8:1-36 and 9:1-6 is so similar to that of God’s in the Hebrew Bible is more likely to point to the superiority of the latter above the former and not the other way round. See further Kayatz, *Proverbien 1-9*, 76-98; Baumann, *Weisheitsgestalt*, 283-303.

<sup>42</sup> For an evaluation of Von Rad’s treatment see further F.-J. Steiert, *Die Weisheit Israels – ein Fremdkörper im Alten Testament? Eine untersuchung zum Buch der Sprüche auf dem Hintergrund der ägyptischen Weisheitslehren* (FThSt 143; Freiburg, 1990), 274.



such as the reasons why the audience finds it hard to distinguish between them I think that there is a difference between the calls of Wisdom and that of her counterparts not only in terms of Wisdom's self-revelation but also in terms of what Wisdom actually says to the audience. For instance after reading 1:24-31, i.e., the "*chiding speech*" and "*threat speech*" ("*Scheltrede*")/("*Drohrede*") of Wisdom one could hardly postulate that the audience finds it hard to distinguish in this case between the chiding and threatening voice of Wisdom and the smooth lips of the Strange Woman. I think that Wisdom seems to be able to afford the luxury of lashing out against her audience as opposed to her counterparts. However, the luxury is not so much on the part of Wisdom. Seemingly Wisdom will not lose out by not being enticing enough towards the audience just like the Strange Woman and Folly.<sup>43</sup> Those who cannot afford the luxury of not internalizing Wisdom's instruction are those who are addressed. Proverbs 1:24-31 clearly shows that the loss of Wisdom's voice (1:28a) will have catastrophic consequences. The audience will remain on its own having to live by their "*own initiative*," which will result in their doom: "*Even if they then come to realize that they need to be thus addressed to be able to live at all, then this voice will remain silent for them.*"<sup>44</sup> Wisdom can afford her voice to be silent as opposed to the other characters that cannot. She can be distant when she wants, not so her counterparts. Wisdom can remain in the house

---

<sup>43</sup>Cf. Fox, *Proverbs 1-9*, 327. The situation might change slightly if one would accept Fox's view about the, allegedly, logical order of the speeches of Wisdom. The three speeches of Wisdom, alongside with Prov 3:13-20 and 6:1-19 were docketed by Fox as the "*wisdom interludes*." Interlude A being 1:20-33, interlude B being 3:13-20, interlude C being 6:1-19, interlude D being 8:1-36, whereas interlude E being 9:1-6, 11, 13-18. He highlighted that: "*The logical sequence of the interludes, which a single author would likely have followed, is E-D-A.*" Therefore, I think this sequence would mean that Wisdom does not have any luxuries in terms of being able to threaten her audience. Moreover, this way she would keep her bitter judgment until the end, just as the Strange Woman and Folly proffer the bitter results of the allegiance manifested towards them after the various fools performed their affairs with them.

<sup>44</sup> Von Rad, *Wisdom*, 161.

(9:1-2) and send her envoys (9:3), which Folly does not seem to be able to do. As I noted above, the Strange Woman and Folly, who both seem to appear in similar public settings just as Wisdom, still betray a great deal of darkness and concealment about them, about what they say and intend to do (7:9, 18-19 and 9:17).<sup>45</sup> I think that even the frequent allusions to Sheol or the dead in the case of the robbers, the Strange Woman and Folly heighten this element of darkness (1:12; 2:18-19; 5:5-6; 7:27; 9:18).<sup>46</sup>

So to return to the second point of the examination how does Wisdom intend to inculcate her instruction in the mind of the audience? I would suggest that Wisdom plans to inculcate her instruction by revealing herself in a way in which she is unquestionably proving her superior knowledge about the paths of life, i.e., she reveals herself in a way in which she becomes convincing in terms of what she “*knows*” as opposed to the Strange Woman and Folly. There are pointers in Prov 1-9, which show that the Strange Woman and Folly do not seem to realize that their paths or houses sink into Sheol or go down to the dead. Proverbs 5:6 makes it clear “*mot à mot*” that the Strange Woman does not know (לֹא תָדַע) that her ways wander and 9:18 states the same thing about Folly that she does not know (וְלֹא תָדַע) that the dead are there, that her guests are in the depths of Sheol. In opposition to this, Wisdom knows about paths of life and where they lead. Her expertise about the paths of life should be convincing enough that she knows what she is talking about. Wisdom intends to inculcate the instruction by offering this knowledge, this insight about the paths of life, good paths and bad ones alike. As Waltke put it “*Wisdom is inseparable from knowledge.*”<sup>47</sup> The “*son*” is encouraged on several occasions to know wisdom (1:2a) understand words of insight (1:2b: בִּינָה), to call out for insight (2:3a), then he will understand the fear of the Lord

---

<sup>45</sup> Aletti, “Séduction,” 134. Aletti rightfully asked in relation to Prov 7:14-20 and the Strange Woman’s activity: “*Quedoit-on faire quand la nuit est tombée?*”

<sup>46</sup> By this I do not mean that all elements of “*hiding*” are negative in Prov 1-9. There are “*hidden treasures*” for instance in Prov 2:4.

<sup>47</sup> Waltke, *Proverbs*, 77.

(2:5a) and find knowledge of God (2:5b), which are the most precious gifts of Wisdom.<sup>48</sup> Then again the son will understand righteousness and justice and equity, every good path (2:9) because wisdom will come into his heart and knowledge will be pleasant to his soul (2:10). I would like to note the important verses in Prov 3:19-20 in relation to Wisdom and divine creation and 24:3-4 in connection to Wisdom and human “creation,” i.e., house-building and house-filling. This process of divine and human creation is described with the tripartite formula בְּדַעְתּוֹ, בְּחָבוּנָהּ, בְּהַכְמָהּ. Wisdom, understanding and knowledge are what Wisdom promotes in contrast to the lack of knowledge of the Strange Woman and Folly. Wisdom dwells in prudence (8:12a) and finds knowledge and discretion (8:12b), she has sound wisdom and insight (8:14). Wisdom’s words are straight to the one who understands (8:9a) and right to those who find knowledge (8:9b). This is the expertise that Wisdom has to offer to the audience and by this she intends to inculcate her instruction.

In the above section I attempted to examine the similarities and contrasts between the calls of Wisdom and that of her counterparts. I did this in order to show that the assumption according to which the audience found it hard to differentiate the calls of Wisdom and that of her counterparts because the calls are so alike, is only one part of the whole picture. I suggested that beside the affinities the differences have to be recognized as well. Wisdom in her calls in

---

<sup>48</sup> Gemser, *Sprüche*, 25. Gemser made a good case by noting that these parallel concepts, i.e., wisdom, knowledge, understanding etc. betray an intimate and personal contact and not a dry intellectual one: “*Von den Gaben der Weisheit wird die kostbarste, die Jahwefurcht, die Gotteserkenntnis genannt (5); die Parallellsetzung dieser Begriffe zeigt, daß mit ‘Erkenntnis’ nicht etwas rein Intellektuelles gemeint ist, sondern eine Vertrautheit, die aus persönlichem Verkehr entsteht (bei Hosea steht der ‘Erkenntnis’ parallel ‘Liebe und Treue’ 4 1 6 6).*” I think that this personal contact in connection to Wisdom is actually related to the aspect of trust and faith, which was usually mistakenly labelled irrelevant by von Rad but appraised positively by Waltke. See further Von Rad, *Wisdom*, 191 and Waltke, *Proverbs*, 82-3.

contrast to her counterparts does not betray any element of such concealment that is to be encountered in the calls of her counterparts. In her public calls she reveals herself and her purpose is to impart this knowledge just the way the robbers intend to share the booty, the Strange Woman her gratifications and Folly her stolen water and secret bread (9:17). Moreover, Wisdom, as opposed to her counterparts, can afford to be distant or silent. The audience may also be able to distinguish between the calls of Wisdom and that of her counterparts on the basis of their expectations. The robbers want the son to take part in the process of thievery (1:11-14), the Strange Woman invites her prey to take fill of love till morning (7:18a) and Folly offers the partaking in bread and water (9:17). Nevertheless, the audience is required to perform something more elevated, intimate and lasting in the case of Wisdom than a night's encounter. The audience is expected to enact four things: 1. To call out for insight and to raise the voice for understanding in Prov 2:3, 2. To seek understanding like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures in 2:4, 3. To love Wisdom and not to forsake her (4:6), 4. And to call Wisdom "*my sister*" and insight "*intimate friend*" (7:4).

### **The Expectations of Wisdom in Proverbs 1-9**

It has been suggested that the "*son*" in Prov 1-9 is not supposed to be capable of differentiating between the desirable offers of Wisdom and the perilous invitations, the "*perverse speech*" of the opposing figures. If this is the case, then of course this elevates the importance of the instruction offered by the father and Wisdom. Apparently, the author of Prov 1-9 advances this point so far that he employs in some ways a similar imagery and word-stock for both of the female figures, e.g., they can both be "*embraced*" (קָבַץ; 4:8; 5:20).<sup>49</sup> Moreover, in 7:21 the seductions of the Strange Woman are called her קִצְּרֹת,<sup>50</sup> literally her "*instructions*," word employed by the father in

---

<sup>49</sup> Aletti, "Séduction," 132-3; Weeks, *Proverbs 1-9*, 81. See further Gale Yee, "I Have Perfumed my Bed with Myrrh": The Foreign Woman ('iššā zarā) in Proverbs 1-9,' *JSOT* 43 (1989): 53-68.

<sup>50</sup> Aletti, "Séduction," 133; Waltke, *Proverbs*, 399. The verb retains an educational nuance of accepting what is true (Prov 1:5; 2:1; 24:32) or false

his teaching in 4:2, not being used negatively anywhere else.<sup>51</sup> Aletti pointed out that the final aim of all these aspects is to stress that the crux eventuated by the bad figures is not really the seduction to perform evil things but the acknowledgment of what is wrong thus compelling their listeners to differentiate between true and false speech.<sup>52</sup> Apparently, the individual is unable to perform a choice either between the offers of Wisdom or between that of the sinners only on the basis of shallow looks. What is expected is a well-informed and intelligent comprehension of the situation and the outcomes<sup>53</sup> (thus the emphasis on instruction). Following the reasoning of Aletti, Weeks agreed that the state of opposition between Wisdom and the Strange Woman is not maintained only to prove the superiority of the former. Wisdom, the Strange Woman and Folly target the simple, the uninstructed with their speeches (1:22a; 7:7; 8:5; 9:4, 16). The safeguard against the woman is provided only if the instruction is hearkened to (2:1-22; 5:1-6; 6:20-4; 7:1-5). The main idea is that only those who are instructed are able to differentiate between true and perverted speech, so the opposition or contrast in question finds its main fulfilment in this stress on instruction throughout Prov 1-9.<sup>54</sup> Naturally, as Newsom has pointed out, this may be formulated more negatively by saying that Prov 1-9 strives to establish the hegemony of its own discourse. As soon as the discourse of Prov 1-9 is hearkened to, one is guarded from “*other*

---

(6:25; 7:21; 22:24-25) and not “. . . *developing an independent critical faculty. Whatever you take takes you.*”

<sup>51</sup> Weeks, *Proverbs 1-9*, 81.

<sup>52</sup> Aletti, “Séduction,” 133. Aletti wrote: “*Toutefois l’ambiguïté est fondamentalement causée par la situation du locuteur. Deux personnes pouvant proposer les mêmes choses; mais l’une veut le mal et l’autre le bien. Dès lors, comment les reconnaître? Là peut se glisser plus facilement la séduction de la parole: la plus grande séduction ne consiste-t-elle pas à inviter au mal avec (presque) les mêmes paroles que celui qui appelle au bien?*” Weeks, *Proverbs 1-9*, 81.

<sup>53</sup> Aletti, “Séduction,” 133-44; Weeks, *Proverbs 1-9*, 81-2.

<sup>54</sup> Weeks, *Proverbs 1-9*, 82.

voices.”<sup>55</sup> I think that the intention of Prov 1-9 can be extended beyond the confines of this main idea of contrast postulated by Weeks on the lines of Aletti’s findings. The uninstructed are quite convincingly called not only to differentiate between the two competing voices but also to “embrace” either Wisdom or the Strange Woman. Nevertheless, as I pointed out above, as much as the calls of Wisdom and that of her counterparts retain great affinities and thus it is hard for the audience to distinguish between the competing voices, one must not overlook the fact that there are certain differences between the calls. Therefore, I think that the audience in Prov 1-9 is called to something more in relation to Wisdom than just to hear her call and to “embrace” her. The son is conditioned to enact four additional things in relation to Wisdom: 1. To call out for insight and to raise the voice for understanding in Prov 2:3, 2. To seek understanding like silver, and search for it as for hidden treasure in 2:4, 3. To love Wisdom and not to forsake her (4:6), 4. And to call Wisdom “my sister” and insight “intimate friend” (7:4).<sup>56</sup> These are aspects, which are not characterized by the same element of contrast, since neither the Strange Woman nor Folly bid the uninstructed to call for them or to love them and not leave them or even to call them “sister” or “intimate friend.” The furthest the Strange Woman goes, is the invitation to her prey to enjoy love until the morning (7:18a: לְכָה נְרַחֵם רַדִּים

עַד-הַבֶּקֶר) and to delight themselves with love (7:18b: נַחֲשֵׁלְסָה בְּאַהֲבִים). The same reciprocity of love however, is not as emphatically required by the Strange Woman as it is by Wisdom in 8:17. These four aspects to which the audience of Wisdom is conditioned are related to the actual calls of Wisdom, which provide further credentials as to why her voice should be heeded. The four aspects I suggested are somewhat connected to Kayatz’s treatment concerned

---

<sup>55</sup> C. A. Newsom, “Woman and the Discourse of Patriarchal Wisdom: A Study of Proverbs 1-9,” in *Gender and Difference in Ancient Israel* (ed. P. L. Day; Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 1989): 147.

<sup>56</sup> The expression “my sister” (which relates to point three) can also be found in Cant 4:9-10, 12 and 5:1-2. This expression and usage is well-known from such passages as Gen 12:13, 19; 20:2, 5, 12; 26:7, 9.

with the love of and for Wisdom and that of von Rad's "*Intellectual Love*" in which both expand the reasons for the presence of the motif of love-language in Prov 1-9, surmising that Wisdom not only addresses humankind but also loves them.<sup>57</sup> According to 4:6 humankind should love Wisdom, which is a role-reversal. This role-reversal is underscored by my first point proposed, according to which it is not just Wisdom who calls to her audience but the audience is also conditioned to call for Wisdom (2:3) and to seek her and search for her (2:4).

*(Continued Volume 29, issue 2)*

---

<sup>57</sup> Kayatz, *Proverbien 1-9*, 98-102; Von Rad, *Wisdom*, 166.