

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

An Annotated Bibliography

Presented to

Dr. Robert Vogel

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for 44560

by

C. Daniel Motley

SBTS Box ###

November 26, 2013

Ackerman, Susan. “‘And the Women Knead Dough’: The Worship of the Queen of Heaven in Sixth-Century Judah.” In *Gender and Difference in Ancient Israel*, edited by Peggy L. Day, 109-124. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989.

In this article, Ackerman argues that an Israelite goddess cult that worshipped the Queen of Heaven was present in Israel but was written out of history by the authoritarian authors of the OT. She argues this by analyzing various biblical and extra-biblical texts concerning goddess worship. Ackerman begins by stating that, contrary to what is depicted in the Bible, the religious life of Israel was not centered on the temple or the prophetic ministry. Rather, there were a variety of religious practices that were observed in Israel’s long history. She suggests that we must attend to extra-biblical sources in order to uncover what these religious beliefs and practices were. One such practice was the worship of the Queen of Heaven. This figure may have been synonymous with Istar, Astarte, Anat or Sapsu. Ackerman believes that the Queen of Heaven was actually a composite of both Istar and Astarte. This figure was associated with the heavens, as were other goddesses such as Aphrodite. The goddess Astarte shares a few characteristics with the Queen of Heaven, such as her association with fertility, war, and the offering of cakes. Also, Astarte was a very popular figure in the west Semitic cult of the first millennium. However, the goddess Istar is given the title “Queen of Heaven” and is also associated with fertility cults. The baking of cakes is associated with the goddess Istar as well as Astarte. Based on these associations, Ackerman believes that the Queen of Heaven mentioned in biblical literature is an amalgamation of Istar and Astarte. This article is helpful for my research because the figure of the Queen of Heaven has been mentioned in other scholarly sources as being the influence behind the personification of Wisdom.

Albright, William F. *From the Stone Age to Christianity: Monotheism and the Historical Process*. Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1957.

In this work, Albright argues that the figure of personified Wisdom is a conglomeration of different influences upon Israelite culture, including Egyptian, Canaanite-Phoenician, and Ugaritic. He seeks to prove this by an analysis of texts belonging to those cultures. Albright’s discussion of personified Wisdom comes in the midst of his argument that Gnosticism developed from a mixture of Canaanite and Babylonian influences. He denies that there is a Hellenic influence upon personified Wisdom because the idea of preexistence was prominent among pantheon of deities in the ANE cultures. Goddesses of Wisdom are found in Canaanite culture, such as the Mesopotamian Siduri Sabitu, who is called “goddess of wisdom, genius of life.” The figure of personified Wisdom, found in Proverbs 8-9, is described using many forms and words native to Ugaritic texts. She is called both Hokhmah and Hakhamoth, the latter of which has a Phoenician origin. Both texts about Baal and texts from Ahiqar employ similar language which speaks of their relative personified Wisdom figures. Albright dates Proverbs 8-9 as far back as the seventh century B.C. However, he states that it has gone through many editorial hands before coming down to us at the present day. Albright concludes this work by linking the figure of personified Wisdom to the rise of Gnostic ideas prominent during the early years of Christianity.

This work is helpful for my research because Albright interprets the figure of personified Wisdom through the lens of a history-of-religions interpretation. This is unique, given that most scholars only recognize one or two influences behind Wisdom.

------. "Some Canaanite-Phoenician Sources of Hebrew Wisdom." In *Wisdom in Israel and in the Ancient Near East*, edited by M. Noth and D. Winton Thomas, 1-15. Leiden: Brill Publishing, 1955.

Albright, in this article, argues that, although it must be conceded that Egyptian influences are primary when it comes to the book of Proverbs, nonetheless, the book is also influenced heavily by Canaanite-Phoenician sources. He seeks to prove this by examining poetic and terminological parallels between Proverbs and various Canaanite literature. Albright begins with the recognition that the Egyptian influence of the book of Proverbs is undeniable. However, considering that Israel emerged from the same Northwest Semitic background as the Canaanites, one should expect to find parallels with that culture. Albright mentions the various studies and findings that have been published by scholars and begins his analysis of the parallels between Canaanite and Israelite sources. The form of a tricolon betrays Canaanite influence when the final unit of a tricola is different from the two preceding cola, producing a type of climatic effect. Albright also suggests that there are many words that are Ugaritic in origin. These are especially prevalent in Proverbs 8-9, which contains the most famous of the personified Wisdom passages. The name of Wisdom in ch. 9, Hokmot, derives from a Phoenician word for "queen". The seven pillars of Wisdom has its origin in Ugaritic architecture. Albright lists several isolated aphorisms which betray their Canaanite influence. He suggests that the entire book of Proverbs is pre-exilic and was passed down orally until the 5th century B.C. Albright concludes with a short discussion of the Canaanite influence on Job and Ecclesiastes. This article is helpful for my research because it is consistently cited by the other literature as one of the classic articles concerning the influence of foreign wisdom texts upon the book of Proverbs.

Binger, Tilde. *Asherah: Goddesses in Ugarit, Israel and the Old Testament*. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Series 232. Edited by David J.A. Clines and Philip R. Davies. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997.

In this book, Binger argues that the goddess Asherah was worshipped in Israel but that this manifestation is different from that which is found in Ugarit. She argues this by analyzing various ANE texts along with various archeological features and inscriptions. Binger begins by defining the terms "Ugaritic", "Israelite", and "Canaanite". She continues by listing the sources that speak of the Asherah, including various Baal texts and epigraphic material. After listing and discussing the various names of the Asherah that are found in Ugaritic sources, she states that Asherah is presented as the prime goddess in the pantheon of Ugarit's gods. In light of the evidence from various epigraphs that were present in Israel, it seems as though that Asherah was viewed in different ways. It is evident that she was present as a goddess in Israel. This may indicate that she was worshipped alongside Yahweh. There also seems to be the notion present in

Israelite culture that Asherah was the wife or mistress of Yahweh. In the OT, Asherah is presented in two forms: Asherah, an indigenous goddess that existed in the life of Israel, and Astarte, who was a foreign deity. Binger concludes with a discussion of how our knowledge of Asherah is limited. This work is helpful for my research because Binger offers a portrait of Asherah, a goddess that scholars sometimes associate with the personification of Wisdom. This study suggests that the Asherah goddess should be associated with divine Wisdom based upon her function in Israelite culture.

Bledsoe, Seth A. "Can *Ahiqar* Tell Us Anything about Personified Wisdom?" *Journal of Biblical Literature* 132, no. 1 (2013): 119-137.

Bledsoe argues that the rearrangement of the *Ahiqar* in the new scholarly edition by Porten and Yardeni removes any certainty that the *Ahiqar* can reveal anything about personified wisdom. He begins with a review of the scholarly discussion of personified wisdom. Some have argued that it represents a Canaanite, Egyptian or Assyrian goddess. Others have attempted to show that personified wisdom is an echo of an earlier Hebrew goddess. The *Ahiqar*, a book of Aramaic proverbs found at Elephantine, has influenced scholarly reconstructions of the function of wisdom in the ANE. Bledsoe continues with an analysis of personified wisdom in the *Ahiqar* before the publication of *Textbook of Aramaic Documents: 3*. Scholars have based their interpretations of wisdom in the *Ahiqar* upon the 1983 translation by Lindenberger. A newer version, published by Porten and Yardeni in 1994, divides the crucial passage on wisdom. They base their reasoning for this upon advanced images of the papyri upon which the *Ahiqar* is written. The underlying text that was erased was a list of the exported and imported goods of ships. Porten and Yardeni were then able to reconstruct the exact structure of the text. Based upon this evidence, Bledsoe suggests that scholars should stop referring to the older translation by Lindenberger and instead use the new version by Porten and Yardeni. This should lead to a negative reevaluation of the role of personified wisdom in the *Ahiqar*. This article is helpful for my research because it offers an argument for why a work that has been considered crucial for wisdom studies in Proverbs should be disregarded. Although I will still make reference to the *Ahiqar*, its influence on my conclusions will be lessened.

Bostrom, Lennart. *The God of the Sages: the Portrayal of God in the Book of Proverbs*. Coniectanea Biblica Old Testament Series 29. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1990.

Bostrom, in this work, argues that Israelite sages, whose wisdom traditions make up the wisdom literature of ancient Israel, primarily drew upon the salvation-historical approach that books such as the Torah and the historical writings employed. He argues this by analyzing the book of Proverbs through the concepts of creation theology, retribution and order, God as supreme, and God as personal. Bostrom begins with a general background to the book of Proverbs. Proverbs consists of seven sections, each drawing upon non-Israelite sources, which are formatted according to the Egyptian genre of *sb3yt*, or instruction. The role of personified

Wisdom in Proverb's creation theology suggests that mythological traits that may have once been present in Proverbs 1-9 have largely been demythologized by the time of its redaction in the post-exilic period. Bostrom denies that the redactors would have used some type of hypostatization in regards to personified Wisdom given the exclusively monotheistic (Yahwistic) character of the work. Personified Wisdom functions as Yahweh's order in Proverbs 8, although she derives her authority to maintain the creation on account of the will of Yahweh. Yahweh is the sovereign deity because of his control of the forces in which man finds himself and the situation into which man is born. However, he is also personal in that he treats well both the poor and the righteous man. Bostrom concludes with a comparison with ancient non-Hebrew wisdom literature. This work is helpful for my research because it offers the perspective that personified Wisdom was utilized as a literary tool to make sense of the salvation historical perspective of the Torah coupled with the day-to-day activities of Israelites. This is a unique perspective that I have not seen argued in the literature.

Brenner, Athalya. "Some Observations on the Figurations of Woman in Wisdom Literature." In *A Feminist Companion to Wisdom Literature*, edited by Athalya Brenner, 50-66. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995.

Brenner, in this article, recounts the various ways in which females are portrayed in the wisdom literature of the Hebrew Bible. In doing so, she applies feminist theory to texts that are generally considered androcentric to discover whether feminine figurations exist alongside masculine ones. Brenner begins by discussing the limits of her survey: the wisdom literature and the wisdom genre she titles "inferior stranger achieves success". She suggests that the females present in Proverbs are a result of the male fascination with females and sex and their use for didactic purposes. In Hegelian language, the master-slave dynamic is on full display in Proverbs: the Female (F) undermines her own kind in defense of the Male (M). This is evident because of the appearance of the Strange Woman and the Wise Woman's condemnation of her in agreement with the male teacher. On account of these observations, it is legitimate to understand traditionally male-oriented texts through female readings. In Job, the female figures are known by their relationship to men. Job's wife acts as a foil to his pure, ideological worldview. His daughters are set forth as beautiful and have names. Their inheritance is spiritual rather than physical and thus the social equilibrium is reestablished. Qoheleth's primary purpose is to discuss desire, sex and gender. Brenner concludes with a discussion of women in Daniel, the Joseph narrative and Esther as wives, harlots, mothers and wise women. This work is helpful for my research because Brenner offers another feminist reading of the wisdom literature, this time providing alternate F readings to traditionally M texts.

Brenner, Athalya. *The Israelite Woman: Social Role and Literary Type in Biblical Narrative*. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1985.

Brenner argues, in this work, that women were treated as the Second Sex; however, they did occupy some positions of importance from time to time and offered a literary type for certain

aspects of the biblical canon, such as wisdom literature. She argues this by an analysis of the biblical literature in which female characters are on display. Brenner begins with a discussion of queens in the biblical era. Although they were present during this time period, they were often viewed with suspicion and were portrayed as in need of their husbands. Wise women were present in Israel in various ways: the woman of Tekoa and Abel-beth-maacah, the skilled women in Jeremiah 9:16 and Abigail in 1 Sam. 25:2-42. The personification of Wisdom found in Proverbs 1-9 may have been based upon these types of women because she too is elegantly persuasive like her counterparts. Women poets and prophetesses were relatively rare in this era, with those roles being filled more often than not by men. They are portrayed more often as witches. Brenner notes that there are four literary types that are prominent in the biblical literature: hero's mother, temptress, foreign women and the ancestress. She concludes with a summary of her findings. This work is helpful for my research because Brenner offers a comprehensive study of the role of women in Israelite culture. Most scholars are fit to make sweeping statements about how women "may" have influenced personified Wisdom, but Brenner offers more persuasive support for that thesis through her analysis of the roles of women in the Bible.

Camp, Claudia V. *Wisdom and the Feminine in the Book of Proverbs*. Decatur: Almond Press, 1985.

In this book, Camp argues that the personified Wisdom traditions evident in the book of Proverbs were influenced by the various roles undertaken by women in Israelite culture. She argues this by offering a sociological analysis of Israelite culture coupled with results culled from canonical and redaction critical readings of Proverbs 1-9. Camp begins by recounting the two main approaches to the interpretation of personified Wisdom: the history-of-religions approach and understanding her within traditional Israelite religious tradition. However, Camp suggests that they do not offer a literary reading of the figure of Wisdom. Based upon a literary reading, the figure of Wisdom could be understood to be a composite of the various roles in which Israelite wisdom assumes: companion, leader, lover, mother, etc. Camp continues by critiquing the ways in which scholars have attempted to integrate Proverbs 1-9 with 10-30. She suggests that an anthropological/canonical/literary approach integrates the two sections in a profound way. She claims that Proverbs 31 was crafted in order to repeat the themes found in both 1-9 and 10-30. Therefore, a web of feminine images weaves their way through the work as a whole. The image of personified Wisdom "works" in Proverbs because it utilizes a concrete image (that of females in Israelite culture) in order to point to a universal ideal. Camp concludes by recounting her own view as to the dating and place of writing of the book of Proverbs in the post-exile time period. This work is helpful for my research because Camp offers a unique thesis: ordinary Israelite women were the influence behind the figure of personified Wisdom. To my knowledge, this is the first time in the literature that this is argued in an extended format.

-----, "Wise and Strange: An Interpretation of the Female Imagery in Proverbs in Light of Trickster Mythology." *Semeia* 42, (1988): 14-36.

Camp, in her article, argues that the figures of personified Wisdom and the Strange Woman point to a "trickster god" motif that is prevalent in other world religions. She argues this by analyzing five characteristics of the trickster god motif in contrast to personified Wisdom and the Strange Woman. Camp opens with a discussion of the use of cross-cultural studies in the realm of biblical studies. Although some scholars have opted out, believing that it is forcing a methodology from outside upon the text, Camp argues that scholars have much to learn from outside disciplines. Through this method, Camp offers five characteristics of the trickster god motif found in other cultures: its duality, its embodiment of order and disorder, its use of language both wise and deceitful, its use in theodicies, and its status as being a figure "on the fringe." With this in mind, Camp compares and contrasts this universal trickster figure with both personified Wisdom and the Strange Woman. Instead of having one figure representing both good and evil, the author of Proverbs divides the figure in two, the evil embodied in the Strange Woman and the good embodied in personified Wisdom. Wisdom orders creation on behalf of Yahweh and the Strange Woman seeks to undo the family, thereby undoing society. Wisdom speaks truthful words, whereas the Strange Woman speaks words that lead to death. Although the role of Wisdom and the Strange Woman in theodicy is not immediately clear, Camp states that their appearance in Proverbs anticipates the struggle between life and death felt in the Israelite worldview. Finally, Camp concludes by analyzing Wisdom and the Strange Woman's presence at the boundaries. This article is helpful for my research because it analyzes the role of personified wisdom from the methodology of anthropology and cross-cultural studies.

-----, "Woman Wisdom as Root Metaphor: a Theological Consideration." In *The Listening Heart: Essays in Wisdom and the Psalms in Honor of Roland E. Murphy, O. Carm.*, edited by Kenneth G. Hoglund, Elizabeth F. Huwiler, Jonathan T. Glass and Roger W. Lee, 45-76. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987.

Camp, in this essay, argues that the root metaphor of Wisdom as female colors how one understands the theological framework of the Bible, no less than what is found in Proverbs. She argues this by discussing the role of personified Wisdom in the Bible and the theological enterprise. Camp begins by restating her previous position regarding the function of personified Wisdom with approval: Wisdom functions as a literary metaphor that draws together the Israelite sages' own experiences with the females in their own society. Camp adds that this way of understanding personified Wisdom allows for a variety of theological discourses to be undertaken that could not have possibly been allowed if another literary type was used. Why was this figure used? With the loss of the king in Israelite culture, sages sought to affirm the new social structure through the presence of divine Wisdom. As the king mediated the divine will to the masses, so personified Wisdom functioned as the bringer of the divine will to those who would listen to her. This is a metaphorical theology which allowed Israelite sages and others who would follow in their footsteps to come to terms with the reality in which they found themselves.

Camp then focuses on the sages' understanding of the manipulative power of language. The Strange Woman is used as a foil to Lady Wisdom in order to juxtapose the seductive, sensual words of the Strange Woman with the truth-filled words of Lady Wisdom. Camp concludes by seeking to integrate this understanding with contemporary feminist theology. This essay is helpful for my research because it offers a linguistic understanding of the role of Lady Wisdom in the thought-life of the author of Proverbs.

Clark Jr., Ronald R. "Schools, Scholars, and Students: The Wisdom School *Sitz im Leben* and Proverbs." *Restoration Quarterly* 47, no. 3 (2005): 161-177.

In his essay on the educational background of Proverbs, Clark argues that Israelite sages borrowed and adapted wisdom literature from other cultures in order to suit the purposes of the Israelite context. He argues this by moving from pericope to pericope in the book of Proverbs while comparing them with parallels found in Egyptian wisdom literature. Clark begins by stating the history of interpretation regarding the *Sitz-im-Leben* of Proverbs being the scribal school. The training of youths was the responsibility of the parents and the heads of the families. Several pieces of evidence, including the fact that other such schools existed in other cultures, archaeological finds and allusions to scribal training in the OT, suggest that the scribal school model for understanding the background to Proverbs is the strongest model available. Intercultural sharing was common amongst scribal schools, helping us to understand the presence of similar proverbs in surrounding cultural wisdom traditions. Clark continues by analyzing the major pericopes of Proverbs in order to provide support for his hypothesis. Various vocabulary found in the opening pericope parallels with vocabulary found in other wisdom works, suggesting intercultural sharing and mutual traditions. The school teacher uses metaphors like his foreign colleagues, such as those found in Proverbs 7-8. The final pericopes show that scribes were happy to collect and integrate wisdom traditions into their own works. Clark concludes by showing that the mission of the scribal schools was to enhance the community. This work is important for my research because the author argues for a scribal background to Proverbs, providing a reason for the use of Wisdom as a metaphor in Proverbs 1-9.

Cook, Johann. "אִשָּׁה נָרְדָה (Proverbs 1-9 Septuagint): A Metaphor for Foreign Wisdom?" *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 106, no. 3 (1994): 458-476.

In this article, Cook argues that the Septuagint translator of the book of Proverbs interprets the figure of the loose woman as that of foreign wisdom, expressly, Hellenistic wisdom that would have been disseminated around 200 B.C.E. He argues this by an analysis of Proverbs 2, 5, 6, 7, and 9. He begins by discussing the compositional history of Proverbs. There are many differences between the order of the chapters found in the MT and that found in the LXX and the Peshitta. However, this could merely be an instance of the translator's freedom in restructuring the text rather than the appearance of another Hebrew *Vorlage*. The translator, in Proverbs 2, downplays the sexual imagery found in the MT and replaces it with a theological point, namely, that listening to foreign wisdom corrupts one internally as opposed to sexual immorality which

corrupts externally. In Proverbs 5, the translator emphasizes the foreignness of the strange woman, using the figure in order to warn the reader not to mix with that which is not one's own (aka Hellenistic teaching). Cook suggests that the translator changed the wording in Proverbs 6 in order to make the point that a different category of strange women is in view. Proverbs 9 alludes to the Hades traditions from Greek mythology in order to warn the readers of its alluring but deadly wisdom. Cook concludes with a discussion of the translation method of the Septuagint translator. This article is useful for my research because Cook offers an alternate interpretation of the Good/Wicked Woman traditions in Proverbs as that of Yahwistic wisdom and non-Israelite wisdom. This interpretation denies that any type of "goddess" or hypostatic background is necessary.

Davies, G.I. "Were There Schools in Ancient Israel?" In *Wisdom in Ancient Israel: Essays in Honour of J.A. Emerton*, edited by John Day, Robert P. Gordon and H.G.M. Williamson, 199-211. New York City: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

In this essay, Davies argues that there was no widespread educational system in Israel, rather, students were taught either in the home or (possibly) in a school-like environment in the larger cities. He argues this by assessing all the relevant data found in the OT alongside scholarly literature. Davies begins with the admission that what we know of the learning environment in ancient Israel rests on very little evidence. Thus, it is almost impossible to understand completely how knowledge was transferred from one generation to the next. The presence of prophetic schools is based upon such texts as 2 Kings 6:1. Teachers are also present in Israel through their appearance in Proverbs 5:13. Davies argues that the lack of the term "father" or "mother" suggests that teachers could be understood to be those that teach students without a familial bond. Although the passage in Proverbs is post-exilic, key sections concerning schools come from pre-exilic times. Therefore, schools (in some form) did exist in Israel. Davies contends that scholars overstate their case when they argue for a widespread educational system in Israel. Some scholars argue that the school system was either a form of apprenticeship or that the Hebrew alphabet was easy to write, therefore there was no need for a school system. Davies discounts these arguments based upon their reliance upon inferences. After surveying the work of both Lemaire and Jamieson-Drake, Davies also discounts their arguments because of a lack of supporting evidence. Davies concludes by stating that, although a school system seems to have been present in Israel, we cannot know what form it may have taken or how long it lasted. This article is helpful for my research because many scholars have argued for the source of personified Wisdom to be the school in which sages learned their wisdom traditions. Davies' argument suggests that we should be careful in how much we say concerning any scribal traditions considering the lack of evidence to support it.

Day, John. "Foreign Semitic Influence on the Wisdom of Israel and its Appropriation in the Book of Proverbs." In *Wisdom in Ancient Israel: Essays in Honour of J.A. Emerton*, edited by John Day, Robert P. Gordon and H.G.M. Williamson, 55-70. New York City: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

In this essay, Day argues that foreign Semitic wisdom traditions coupled with Egyptian wisdom texts influenced the genre and style of the biblical Proverbs. He argues this by surveying the relevant literature and its thematic influence upon Proverbs. Day begins with the assessment that, although Egyptian wisdom literature was a major influence upon Proverbs, scholars should also take into account the influence of Israel's eastern neighbors. Other figures, such as Job and Daniel, are borrowed from Semitic sources. Contrasting Ecclesiastes and Gilgamesh, Day states that there can be no doubt of Eastern Semitic influence upon the Hebrew Bible. With this in mind, he turns to Proverbs, where he notes seven themes that are drawn from the Eastern Semitic wisdom tradition. First, the righteous/wicked contrast prevalent throughout the work is attested in the *Ahiqar*. Second, throughout Ugaritic wisdom texts there appear graded numerical proverbs such as those found in biblical Proverbs. Third, proverbs containing animals are found amongst the *el-Amarna* letters and *Ahiqar*. Fourth, the frequent address of "my son" also appears in the *Ahiqar* and in certain Akkadian and Babylonian wisdom texts. Fifth, although there is no evidence for it, the editor of Proverbs self-designates some of its wisdom as Eastern Semitic. Sixth, the "fear of the Lord" is found in texts in Babylonian wisdom literature. Finally, Day concludes with a discussion of personified wisdom's influence from the *Ahiqar*. This article is helpful for my research because the author offers both a survey of relevant hypotheses concerning the background of personified Wisdom and suggests a new way of looking at an old hypothesis.

Emerton, J.A. "Wisdom." In *Tradition and Interpretation: Essays by Members of the Society for Old Testament Study*, edited by G.W. Anderson, 214-237. New York City: Oxford University Press, 1979.

In this essay, Emerton offers a sweeping survey of various topics in wisdom studies (specifically those dealing with Proverbs). This includes studies in background material, wisdom literature's relationship to the rest of the OT and a study of the mysterious figure of personified Wisdom. Emerton begins with discussion of the background of the wisdom literature. He states that Egyptian wisdom literature has had the most influence on Proverbs; however, some influence can be seen from the Sumerian texts as well. Although it is difficult to place wisdom literature within the confines of OT theology, Emerton suggests that what we see in the wisdom literature is a movement from a realization of divine order (found in Proverbs) to the questioning of the consequences of the acts which a person does. Within Proverbs, scholars believe that Proverbs 1-9 reflects a later addition to the work (although some believe that it is, in fact, pre-exilic). As for the figure of personified wisdom, there are various theories as to its background and purpose. Some argue that Wisdom is based upon a counselor figure which was well known in Israelite culture. Others argue that there is a Canaanite origin (which Emerton denies) or Egyptian origin (which Emerton is more favorable to). The figure of Ma'at looms large behind the scholarly consensus about an Egyptian origin for personified wisdom. Emerton concludes with a short analysis of the book of Job. This essay is helpful for my research because Emerton provides a history of research concerning the wisdom literature up until the essay's publication

date. Although he does not offer his own opinions, this is a valuable collection of scholarly opinions concerning various topics in wisdom literature, including the role of personified Wisdom.

Fontaine, Carole R. "The Social Roles of Women in the World of Wisdom." In *A Feminist Companion to Wisdom Literature*, edited by Athalya Brenner, 24-49. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995.

Fontaine, in this essay, argues that the social roles in which women functioned informed and influenced the personification of both Wisdom and the Strange Woman in Proverbs 1-9. She seeks to prove this by analyzing relevant primary and secondary texts concerning women in the Bible. Fontaine begins with her own definition of a sage, that is: any "practitioners or tradents of the wisdom tradition, in addition to those who composed or copied wisdom books." She suggests that the personification of Wisdom in Proverbs 1-9 is related to the reality of the lives of Israelite women. Women acted as sages in Israelite culture and these sage women had various roles, such as wife and mother. Proverbs 31:10-31 is a clear example of this type of woman. The woman manages her home and takes part in teaching and instructing, making her an example of a wise person. Fontaine suggests that women in the Settlement and post-exilic periods experienced the most egalitarian freedom. This is supported by the existence of female sages during similar periods in other ANE contexts. One example of this is from the pen of the queen mother of King Lemuel, found in Proverbs 31:1-9. Though normally androcentric, this section of Proverbs has a woman directly addressing a man, her inferior (in this case, a mother speaking with her son). Fontaine concludes by culling examples of wise women from extra-biblical sources, such as the Mishnah. This work is helpful for my research for two reasons: (1) it offers a feminist reading of the wisdom material and (2) it suggests that personified Wisdom was based upon the existence of wise women in Israel.

Fox, Michael V. "Ideas of Wisdom in Proverbs 1-9." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 116, no. 4 (1997): 613-633.

Fox argues in this article that personified Wisdom and the Strange Woman were created as pedagogic tools to teach the young man the collected wisdom traditions of ancient Israel. Fox argues this by analyzing the ten lectures given in Proverbs 1-9 and attempts to show how Wisdom speaks in counter point to the teacher. Fox begins with a grammatico-historical study of the background of the Proverbs 1-9 passage. It consists of two parts: the lesson and the conclusion. The lectures consist of father to son teaching. The interludes themselves were based upon the lectures. The purpose of wisdom in these lectures is not merely to learn the precepts taught by the father but to impart the power to keep the precepts. Some rhetorical features of the father include vividness, intimacy, authority and promise/warning. Wisdom is used in the interludes to transcend yet identify with ordinary human wisdom. Wisdom does not embody Torah, nor God's teaching, but is merely used to draw people to wise teaching. Using the category of *mythos*, Fox describes the function of Lady Wisdom: she corresponds to ancient sage

teaching, she exists independently of the human mind, she is not an active agent in creation, she is contemplated by God as an intellectual and aesthetic attribute, etc. Fox concludes by drawing inferences from the teacher's role juxtaposed with the role that he gives to Wisdom. This article is useful for my research because it offers another type of literary/rhetorical analysis. Unlike other works, Fox explains that the role of Wisdom is used as a literary trope in order to further push the hearers towards the teaching of the teacher. In this sense, Wisdom is not primary: the words of the teacher are the most important.

-----, *Proverbs 1-9: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Anchor Bible Commentary v. 18a. New York City: Doubleday, 2000.

Fox, in his commentary on Proverbs, argues that personified Wisdom has its source in the *Ahiqar* proverbs. He argues this by way of references to the *Ahiqar* proverbs. Fox begins his essay on personified Wisdom by seeking to understand its literary precedents. Although there is no completely identical parallel in either the biblical or extra-biblical literature, nonetheless, other texts may have given rise to the character of personified Wisdom found in Proverbs. He denies that Wisdom would have been considered to be a goddess simply because she was hypostasized based upon similar findings in nearby Egyptian culture. The various metaphors speak about wisdom being a woman without wisdom actually becoming a woman, deity or not. Other qualities, such as understanding, are treated as though they are human but are never to be understood as becoming deified. Fox does recognize that personified Wisdom most likely has its background in the *Ahiqar* wisdom literature based upon a certain text which speaks of Wisdom being placed in heaven on account of the gods. Since the figure of wisdom certainly took its qualities that were common in Israelite culture, Fox contends that Wisdom could have been based upon a variety of real-life backgrounds. He concludes by arguing that both Mack and Baumann's arguments for a social/historical background of Wisdom are insufficient. This work is useful for my research because this is a leading Proverbs scholar's mature thoughts on the nature of personified Wisdom. He thoroughly seeks to understand the sources and background behind personified Wisdom.

Frymer-Kensky, Tikva. *In the Wake of the Goddesses: Women, Culture, and the Biblical Transformation of Pagan Myth*. New York City: the Free Press, 1992.

In this work, Frymer-Kensky argues that the feminine concept of personified Wisdom arose out of an environment in which Israel borrowed the idea of the goddess from the surrounding nations (particularly Sumer) and modified it in order to fit it into its variety of monotheism. She argues this by comparing pre-Israelite religious texts with various biblical texts concerning gender, sexuality and feminine personification of attributes. She begins with an analysis of the pantheon of Sumer. The Sumerian goddesses represented family, culture, the cosmos and the city. They are also representative of the arts and ideas associated with wisdom. Over time, these goddesses were transformed into males who carried out their functions. Alongside this transformation, women's roles in society diminished as well. Since Israel ascribed

worship to only one god, the roles that feminine deities used to play in Sumer and other neighboring nations had to be swallowed up in various forms. The idea of womanhood itself changes as a result of Israel's monotheism. Women, instead of being "in charge" of their pregnancy, now must wait for God to grant them children. Women also are at the mercy of their fathers in a patriarchal society. The superior position of men, unlike other societies, was never justified in Israelite culture. Although the Bible denies the presence of gender, Israelite culture was sharply divided along gender lines. The figure of woman-wisdom allows individual Israelites to connect to God via her erotic advances. She appears in a time when the family was important; this is evident by her role as wife, lover, and mother. Frymer-Kensky concludes by analyzing the role of sexuality and gender in biblical and post-biblical texts. This work is helpful for my research because Frymer-Kensky offers a unique perspective on the genesis of personified Wisdom. Although some article may postulate that Wisdom came from goddess traditions, Frymer-Kensky is the first scholar to offer a monograph long study of personified Wisdom's connection with ANE goddess traditions.

Gilchrist, Margaret Odell. "Proverbs 1-9: Instruction or Riddle?" *Proceedings* no. 4 (1984): 131-145.

Gilchrist, in this article, argues that the imagery used in Proverbs 1-9 is meant to be ambiguous and complex in order to push one towards wisdom. She argues this by placing Proverbs 1-9 in the context of the instruction literature of Egypt while also showing how the Israelite author expanded its normal bounds to include ambiguity in the figures of Lady Wisdom and Lady Folly. Gilchrist begins by seeking to understand the role of the imperative clauses in Proverbs 1-9. She suggests that they are not meant to show, in black and white terms, what one should do and not do. Rather, the figures of Lady Folly and Lady Wisdom are at the heart of Proverbs 1-9. The imperative to embrace Wisdom is at the center, in opposition to Egyptian wisdom literature which places the imperative to avoid scandalous women at the center. This is not a call to avoid adultery, per se, but to adhere to the teacher of wisdom. Gilchrist states that the paradox lies in the identity of the youth. Although this is a morally neutral designation, by chapter 9, the youths still have not come to their senses and embrace wisdom. Gilchrist reinterprets Proverbs 1 to mean that some people can be taught while others cannot. Chapter 9 concludes as a parody of Proverbs 1: although Wisdom has called the youth to embrace her and to dine at her table, he still is confused about whom he should choose between. Gilchrist concludes by underscoring the importance of the will in choosing wisdom. This article is helpful for my research because it argues that the roles of Wisdom and Folly are literary constructs used to emphasize the difficulty in living wisely. This viewpoint disregards a background of hypostatization or goddess worship as the source of Wisdom.

Goff, Matthew. "Hellish Females: the Strange Woman of Septuagint Proverbs and 4QWiles of the Wicked Woman (4Q184)." *Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period* 39, no. 1 (2008): 20-45.

Goff, in this article, argues that LXX Proverbs and 4Q184 present the Strange Woman of Proverbs in more abstract and allegorical terms who functions as a way of life to avoid. He argues this by analyzing LXX Proverbs and 4Q184. He begins by offering an introduction to the translation methods of the translator of LXX Proverbs. Goff states that the translator basically offers a literal translation of the Hebrew *Vorlage* from which he is translating. In his analysis of the Proverbs passages concerning the Strange Woman, he states that the author does not present her as a “foreign” woman as others have argued. Rather, she is the opposition to the Good Wife. He denies that there is a one-to-one correlation between Woman Folly and the Strange Woman. LXX Proverbs does not introduce the Strange Woman at the same junction but offers a warning to not be led by false counsel. Instead, “evil counsel” is personified. Therefore, the “Strange Woman” is morphed by the translator into the abstract principle known as “evil counsel”. In like manner, the Strange Woman is identified with wicked ways of living in 4Q184. As in LXX Proverbs, she dwells in Hades amongst those in the netherworld. Goff also offers evidence that suggests that the sexualized language and promiscuity associated with the Strange Woman is toned down in both LXX Proverbs and 4Q184. Goff concludes by stating that, although LXX Proverbs and 4Q184 do not completely transform the Strange Woman into an abstraction, they do seek to change her from a “real” woman into an abstract figure. This article is helpful for my research because it seeks to show how the original Strange Woman of the MT could possibly be based upon real women in the Israelite community. In this way, Lady Wisdom could be seen as a composite of strong, wise females in Israel.

Habel, Norman C. “The Symbolism of Wisdom in Proverbs 1-9.” *Interpretation* 26, no. 2 (1972): 131-157.

In this article, Habel argues that Personified Wisdom acts within a symbolic matrix with the “way” at the center of this matrix. He argues this by analyzing the three main symbols used in Proverbs 1-9 by means of “symbolic theory”. Habel begins by describing the current quest by biblical scholars and theologians for the internal unity of the Bible. He suggests that the literary unit “symbol” may offer a vehicle for scholars and theologians to find the Bible’s elusive center. As a test case, he offers a symbolic analysis of the three main symbols in Proverbs 1-9: the way, the heart, and wisdom. “The way” is the nucleus around which the other symbols revolve. These symbols function within “symbolic zones”, three of which Habel analyzes. In the symbolic zone of personal experience, the two ways function as juxtaposed systems of ethical living. The two hearts symbolize the internalization of the “way”. The two women symbolize companions that accompany one upon the way. The second symbolic zone concerns the realm of Yahwistic religion. The two ways symbolize Yahweh’s guardianship of the disciple’s life. The heart symbolizes the religious devotion of the disciple. The women symbolize faithfulness and apostasy. In the final symbolic zone, Habel recognizes that the author of Proverbs is reflecting upon mythical tradition. The way has been transformed into a house, which symbolizes either the realms of the dead or the holy point between heaven and earth. Heart symbolism is lacking in his analysis of the third zone. Lady Wisdom functions as a cohort and companion who symbolizes

the cosmic way of Yahweh. Habel concludes by suggesting that the symbols offer color and depth to the literary way of wisdom. This article is helpful for my research because it interprets wisdom as a symbolic reality and seeks to place it within its literary context. This is in opposition to purely cultural and historical constructions.

Hadley, Judith M. "Wisdom and the Goddess." In *Wisdom in Ancient Israel: Essays in Honour of J.A. Emerton*, edited by John Day, Robert P. Gordon and H.G.M. Williamson, 234-243. New York City: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Hadley, in this essay, argues that a goddess background for personified Wisdom cannot be stated as certain based upon an analysis of OT wisdom texts. She argues this by analyzing both Proverbs 8 and Job 28. She begins by recounting the scholarly opinion concerning the origin of personified Wisdom being a goddess. Beginning with W.F. Albright's hypothesis that personified Wisdom could be traced back to a Canaanite goddess, Hadley lists the various suggestions that have been proposed (Ma'at, Isis, Astrate, etc.). Others have stated that the personification of Wisdom was a way for leading figures in Israel to lend legitimization to goddess worship, which Hadley denies, although she states that Wisdom may be a literary composition that fills the gap of a once vibrant goddess tradition. She continues by analyzing Proverbs 8. Various proposals have been suggested for the term *qanani* (acquired, conceived, formed or created). While not siding with any one translation, Hadley suggests that this term associates Wisdom with God through some action of God on behalf of Wisdom. As for the term *'amon*, some scholars have suggested that the term means "little child", which makes sense in light of Wisdom being portrayed as playing before God during creation. However, others have suggested that the term means "master architect", which would make Wisdom a co-creator with God. Deferring the discussion, Hadley continues by discussing Job 28. In Job, wisdom is portrayed as a figure which God must seek out, instead of possessing her at the outset. Returning to her original discussion concerning Proverbs 8, she denies that Wisdom is accorded a divine status because the term *hokma* is not found among any list of gods in the ANE. This essay is helpful for my research because the author traces the development of the notion that Wisdom originated from goddess traditions in the pre-exilic period. She offers a unique reason as to why this is probably not so.

Hess, R.S. "Wisdom Sources." In *Dictionary of the Old Testament : Wisdom, Poetry & Writings*, edited by Tremper Longman III and Peter Enns, 894-901. Downers Grove, Ill: IVP Academic, 2008.

Hess seeks to determine the sources underlying the wisdom traditions contained in the Bible. Two social sources that gave rise to wisdom traditions are the scribal schools and the home. However, given that literacy rates may have been more widespread than has been supposed, the social genesis of wisdom traditions could have originated from any part of society. Hess believes that the family would have been the primary medium through which wisdom traditions would have been passed. Wisdom was also shared between nations, being a universal phenomenon. The closest parallel with the wisdom traditions in the book of Proverbs comes

from the Egyptian *Instruction of Amen-em-opet*. Western Semitic sources include the *Ahiqar*, a set of Aramaic proverbs that contains both narrative and proverbs in a single work. The *Instruction to Supe-ameli* from the Hittite civilization is comparable to the Proverbs in that it is a form of father-son instruction, similar to Proverbs 1-9. Hess concludes with a look at the canonical sources that influenced the wisdom literature of the Bible. Hess' article provides the background for understanding the historical situation in which the book of Proverbs was written. This is helpful for my work because it confirms that the personified wisdom traditions that are found in Proverbs may have taken their cue from the surrounding societies. This article also provides a detailed bibliography that will be helpful with supporting arguments.

Kitchen, K.A. "Proverbs 2: Ancient Near Eastern Background." In *Dictionary of the Old Testament : Wisdom, Poetry & Writings*, edited by Tremper Longman III and Peter Enns, 555-566. Downers Grove, Ill: IVP Academic, 2008.

Kitchen seeks to place the book of Proverbs within its *Sitz-im-Leben* in the Ancient Near East. He divides the wisdom books of the ANE into two types: Type A (those similar to Proverbs 10-31) and Type B (those similar to Proverbs 1-9). Type A sources are found in the third and first millennium B.C., but are notably absent in the second millennium B.C. Type B sources are found throughout the third millennia B.C. Titles are almost universally used in this type of wisdom literature, with short, medium, and long titles being used in every age. Subtitles shrink over time, except for the presence of more complex subtitles in the *Ankh-Sheonqy*. Exhortatory prologues are found in wisdom literature dating before 1000 B.C., such as the prologue found in Proverbs 1-9. Kitchen offers four qualities of prologues and notes that Proverbs 1-9 sits at the hinge of wisdom history, allowing him to date that pericope to around 950 B.C. He also addresses issues of authorship and personal address in wisdom literature and Proverbs. Personification is not due to Greek influence, but was found throughout the ANE. Kitchen offers various examples of the practice throughout Egypt and Canaan. He devotes a section to linguistic issues, including the role of Aramaisms and other West Semitic languages. Kitchen concludes with a discussion of the subject matter of Proverbs and his personal understanding of the context of Proverbs in the ANE. Kitchen's article offers a perspective on the book of Proverbs' relation to its ANE neighbors. His discussion of personification in the ANE is helpful for my research in that it confirms that (1) personification was used throughout the ANE with regards to its gods and goddesses and (2) the attributes of a deity can be personified while being closely related to that deity.

----- "Proverbs and Wisdom Books of the Ancient Near East: the Factual History of a Literary Form." *Tyndale Bulletin* no. 28, (1977): 69-114.

Kitchen, in this article, offers an extensive analysis of the form history of the book of Proverbs. He undertakes this by analyzing the entirety of the book of Proverbs while being conversant with extra-biblical sources that have influenced it. Kitchen begins by noticing the lack of an existing form history of Proverbs and offers to fill the void left by such an omission.

He begins by discussing the history of interpretation of Proverbs in conventional OT studies. Traditionally, chapters 1-9 were added on last to the rest of Proverbs. He then lists a wide variety of wisdom formats used throughout the ANE, including Akkadian and Egyptian sources. He analyzes the prologues and main texts of every piece of wisdom literature in the known world from the ANE. He also catalogues the various poetic forms that are on display in the ANE wisdom literature, including quotation, illusion and repetition. Wisdom literature in the ANE would often name their authors and treat them as real people. In the same way, Proverbs puts forth the names of four authors who contributed to the work and treat them as real. Based upon the evidence, Kitchen notes that ch. 1-24 of Proverbs could be dated to the years of Solomon. Moving on to conceptual and linguistic matters, he argues that the appearance of certain concepts and phrases do not place this work in the post-exilic era. Kitchen concludes by stating that the evidence overturns conventional analyses of Proverbs. This work is helpful for my research because it offers a complete form analysis of Proverbs 1-9, placing it within the context of the Solomonic reign.

------. "Some Egyptian Background to the Old Testament." *Tyndale House Bulletin* 5-6, (1960): 4-18.

In this article, Kitchen argues that Egyptian concepts and categories form the backdrop of certain OT texts. He argues this by analyzing a few concepts central to Egyptian thinking in comparison to those found in OT literature. He begins with the concept of personification. He denies that the author of Proverbs was influenced by Greek or other post-Exilic forces. Instead, older sources stemming from Egypt seem to be a better candidate for an extra-biblical background for personified Wisdom in Proverbs. Deities such as Hike, Hu, and Sia were originally attributes that were eventually worshipped. Mesopotamian figures such as Uznu and Khasisu were also abstract qualities that were hypostatized into godlike figures. The introductory discourse found in Proverbs 1 was also found amongst other Egyptian wisdom texts. Kitchen continues by noting the acceptance of predication as a valid concept amongst the ancient Egyptians which influenced the Hebrews. Prefabricated structures, such as the Israelite tabernacle, may have been influenced by structures such as the bed-canopy of Queen Hetepheres I, which has strikingly similar dimensions to the Tabernacle. There also existed the Tent of Purification in which corpses from the royal family were placed before and after the embalmment process. Kitchen notes that it would have been possible that Hebrews would have been employed in the upper echelons of society. This is evident because of the love which Egyptians had for Semitic metal works. Finally, Kitchen notes that genealogies and literary records of the past, such as those in the book of Genesis, were also kept by the Egyptian people. This work is helpful for my research because it outlines the ways in which outside cultures (in this case, the Egyptian culture) may have influenced the Israelite culture. This argument suggests that the personification of Wisdom displayed in Proverbs 1-9 may have been a result of Egyptian influences.

Lang, Bernhard. *Wisdom and the Book of Proverbs: an Israelite Goddess Redefined*. New York City: Pilgrims Press: 1986.

In this work, Lang argues that the figure of personified Wisdom found in Proverbs 1-9 is actually the reinterpretation and reimagining of an early Israelite goddess. He argues this by analyzing Proverbs 1:20-33; 8; and 9. Lang begins by offering his presuppositions: Proverbs 1-9 comes from an early period, schools existed in Israel and were the source of the book of Proverbs, and wisdom concerns both intelligence and skill. In his analysis of Proverbs 1:20-33, Lang states that Wisdom finds herself in the marketplace because that is where the audience was located. Proverbs 8 unveils Wisdom as a goddess in the service of the creator god. Because of her use of divine rhetoric and sayings common in the ANE, Proverbs 8 betrays Wisdom's polytheistic origins. Lang reconstructs the original text of Proverbs 9 in order to show how a pre-monotheistic Israelite would have read the passage. Wisdom calls for her hearers to enter into her house, that is, to her temple. Lang offers a history of monotheism, stating that the polytheism that was prevalent in early Israelite history evolved into a Yahweh-alone party which kept its hold on Israelite society after the writing of Deuteronomy and Deutero-Isaiah. Lang concludes by affirming that Wisdom comes from an age in which polytheism was rampant in Israel and offers a history of reinterpretation of Wisdom in the church and the synagogue. This work is helpful for my research because it offers an interesting viewpoint on the origin of personified Wisdom: that of an early Israelite goddess.

Lenzi, Alan. "Proverbs 8:22-31: Three Perspectives on Its Composition." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 125, no. 4 (2006): 687-714.

Lenzi seeks to argue in this work that the personification of Wisdom developed over time: first, by its initial inclusion, second, by internal polemic caused by other compilers of the text and, finally, in discourse over the relation of humanity to the divine. He argues this by offering an historical-critical background to the text, clarifying how personified Wisdom "works" in Proverbs, explaining the role of polemic in the personified Wisdom texts, and demonstrating how the editor of Proverbs includes Wisdom in the prophetic enterprise. Lenzi begins his article by stating his presuppositions concerning the book of Proverbs: it is a composite text that developed in the post-exilic era. 8:22-31 is a poem in itself, detached from the whole of chapter 8. Lenzi states that the earliest text concerning wisdom in Proverbs 1-9 is found in 3:19-20. 8:22-31 is literarily dependent upon 3:19-20. It borrows certain vocabulary from 3:19-20 and offers a sort of interpretation on it. The poem is also a polemic against the ancient Mesopotamian religions. Lenzi argues this by analyzing the use of "water words" in conjunction with the verb *qana*. He compares and contrasts Proverbs 8:22-13 with *Enuma Elish* I 79-108. There, he finds similarities between *banu* used in *Enuma Elish* and *qana* in Proverbs 8, along with birthing parallels. The use of the term *aman* is analogous to the Akkadian term *ummanu* meaning "master". Wisdom is imagined to be playful like a child in sharp contrast to Marduk. Lenzi concludes by juxtaposing the prophetic role of wisdom with the role of the biblical prophets. Lenzi offers a unique perspective on the personification of wisdom. His

argument does not exist (to my knowledge) in any other work. This article allows me to understand the role of Proverbs 8 as a commentary on Proverbs 3.

Longman III, Tremper. "Woman Wisdom and Woman Folly." In *Dictionary of the Old Testament : Wisdom, Poetry & Writings*, edited by Tremper Longman III and Peter Enns, 912-916. Downers Grove, Ill: IVP Academic, 2008.

Longman offers a summary of the role of Woman Wisdom and Folly, along with an interpretative history climaxing with contemporary feminist theology. He begins with a summary of Woman Wisdom and Folly's actions and discourse in Proverbs 1-9. Both offer a banquet for the reader and both are situated in a high place. Longman believes that Wisdom is identified with Yahweh because of her location, situated high above where the temple sits. The choice presented before the reader is the worship of Yahweh or the worship of idols. The origin of Woman Wisdom is debated amongst scholars, with some suggesting that she is a Canaanite goddess and other proposing that she is the Egyptian goddess Maat. Longman entertains the Maat theory but rejects it on the grounds that Maat is more of an abstract figure who never speaks while Woman Wisdom gives speeches. He proposes that the feminine gender of the Hebrew word for "wisdom" coupled with the idea that women were seen as wise counselors is the origin of Woman Wisdom. He concludes his article by describing the role of Woman Wisdom in the New Testament and in current feminist theology. Longman's article offers insights on the function of Woman Wisdom within the setting of Proverbs while also summarizing the scholarly debate on the origins of feminine wisdom.

Lucas, E.C. "Wisdom Theology." In *Dictionary of the Old Testament : Wisdom, Poetry & Writings*, edited by Tremper Longman III and Peter Enns, 901-912. Downers Grove, Ill: IVP Academic, 2008.

Wisdom theology is a multifaceted concept, spanning various forms of wisdom literature found in the Bible. Lucas begins the discussion on wisdom theology by seeking to understand the nature of wisdom. In the Bible, wisdom refers to the use of particular skills. However, the wisdom literature understands wisdom to be the right conduct of one's life. Wisdom theology is often difficult to place in a theology of the OT because wisdom literature does not make reference to God's saving acts on behalf of Israel. Within wisdom literature, a creation theology is prominent. God is referenced not as the redeemer of Israel, but as creator and maker. The personification of wisdom is a hotly debated issue within wisdom studies. Some sources offered include the Egyptian goddess Maat, an unknown Canaanite goddess and even an unknown Israelite goddess. However, Lucas argues that the origin of personified wisdom may stem from a common literary technique and the presence of wise women in Israel. Personified wisdom functions to encourage one to live wisely. Other themes within wisdom theology include the fear of the Lord and the two ways. It has been argued that within the book of Proverbs there is a cause-effect nexus: if you do this, this will happen. However, scholars respond that the Proverbs are aware of the complexities of life. The life of the one who follows the Proverbs is rooted in

the life and character of Yahweh. Finally, Lucas describes how God and humanity are characterized. Lucas seeks to offer a short theology of the wisdom literature. For my research, his short section on the personification of wisdom offers a glimpse into its sources and purpose.

Moore, Michael S. "‘Wise Women’ or Wisdom Woman? A Biblical Study of Women’s Roles." *Restoration Quarterly* 35, no. 3 (1993): 147-158.

In this article, Moore argues that there is very little to connect the figure of personified Wisdom with the roles of wise women in the ancient Israelite culture. He argues this by assessing the texts that speak of wise women and of personified Wisdom. Moore begins by recounting the history of interpretation regarding Proverbs 1-9 and personified Wisdom. Some understand her to be the relic of a lost goddess cult in Israel. Others believe that she is the remnant of a goddess cult found in Egypt or the wider Canaanite world. Some believe her to be a hypostasis like that of Yahweh’s glory while others do not think that her background has anything to do with her role in Proverbs 1-9. Moore believes that an analysis of wise women in Anatolia and Israel would better inform our understanding of personified Wisdom. Beginning with Anatolia, Moore proposes the existence of several varieties of wise women: the exorcist, the incantation-reciter, and purification priestess. These figures all had important roles in the societies in which they live. These women act fundamentally as mediators and their remedies parallel the afflictions that are sent to set right. In the Hebrew Bible, Moore focuses on four stories which clarify the role of wise women in Israel. These include 2 Sam. 14 and 20 and 1 Sam. 25 and 28. After describing the events of each story, he states that the role of mediator, as in the Anatolian stories, is the primary function of wise women in Israel. Wisdom, in comparison, does not exhibit the role of mediator. Instead, she lashes out like an angry prophet against those who do not heed her words. This article is helpful for my research because Moore uniquely argues against the role of wise women as a source for personified Wisdom. This goes against many scholars who argue for an anthropological understanding of personified Wisdom.

Murphy, Roland. "The Personification of Wisdom." In *Wisdom in Ancient Israel: Essays in Honour of J.A. Emerton*, edited by John Day, Robert P. Gordon and H.G.M. Williamson, 222-233. New York City: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Murphy, in this essay, offers a survey of the various functions of personified Wisdom in the OT. He begins by stating that there are two questions which occupy the study of the figure of Wisdom: where did she originate from and does she function in the same way in all of her manifestations in the OT? Many scholars have posited various theories as to her origin (unnamed Assyrian goddess, Ma’at, Isis) and her function (teacher, creator, hypostatic attribute). Whatever her origin, the function of Wisdom changes throughout Israelite history. Murphy begins his discussion of the various functions of Wisdom with Job 28. Wisdom is separate from creation and hard for humans to find. However, Ben Sira (referencing this passage) states that Wisdom was given by YHWH "to those who love him." In Proverbs, she is associated both with God and humanity. She plays and delights before God at the creation. Although many have attempted to understand the Hebrew term *'mwn*, the focus is upon Wisdom’s presence at creation. She is

placed in contrast to the “strange woman” who seeks to take away a man and destroy him. Using sexual language, the author points to Israel’s history of infidelity to YHWH and suggests that clinging to Wisdom (and the fear of the Lord) will keep contemporary Israelites from walking in the same path. Murphy concludes with commentary on the extra-biblical accounts of personified Wisdom. This article is helpful for my research because Murphy offers a survey of opinions concerning divine Wisdom and a critique of the various positions and argues for his own interpretation of the data.

-----, *Proverbs*. Word Biblical Commentary v. 22. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1998.

In this work, Murphy argues that the author of Proverbs utilizes the figure of Wisdom in order to display the feminine in God. He argues this by critiquing other interpretative options while offering inter-canonical reasons for his interpretation. Murphy begins by stating that he is not sure what the origin of personified Wisdom is. Although other scholars suggest that she was an Israelite goddess or Hellenistic Isis, Murphy suggests that the origin of personified Wisdom was simply as a pedagogic tool. In Proverbs 8, the author suggests that Wisdom may be divine, yet she is subject to the Lord of creation. Murphy believes that she is a “surrogate” for Yahweh. That is, she functions as the one who brings about life and creation on behalf of God. Wisdom also offers a divine image of the feminine that is reminiscent of the male and female creation story in Genesis. Since Proverbs 1-9 is a post-exilic composition, the author brings Wisdom in line with the Deuteronomic theology of choosing life over death. Outside of the biblical witness, Ben Sira identifies Wisdom with Torah. Wisdom of Solomon supposes that Wisdom is a spirit like the world-soul of Stoicism. However, she is uniquely identified with Yahweh as his “breath” and the emanation of his divine glory. Murphy concludes with a reference to the Christian conception of Wisdom as a shadowy image of Christ. This work is helpful for my research because Murphy emphasizes the literary nature of personified Wisdom while still considering the historical and social background behind the figure.

-----, *The Tree of Life: an Exploration of Biblical Wisdom Literature*. New York City: Doubleday, 1990.

Murphy argues in this work that the figure of Wisdom in Proverbs is not a hypostasized figure but is merely the characterization of an attribute of God. He argues this by reviewing the relevant primary sources in the Hebrew Bible. Murphy begins with a discussion of scholarly opinion concerning the figure of divine wisdom in the OT. Although some want to ascribe some type of deity to the figure of Wisdom, Murphy denies that this can be so because of the strict monotheism adhered to by Jews in the post-exilic period. Personification is used by Israelite writers for a multiplicity of different concepts and figures, such as justice, goodness and even wine. Although hypothetical reconstructions of the history of the personification of Wisdom may be helpful to a certain extent, they cannot tell us how the canonical text understands Lady Wisdom. Wisdom, as characterized by her description in Proverbs 8, is a figure that should be sought in order to receive life. This figure is also characterized by language that is fitting of

Yahweh (full of “truth” and “justice”). The association of creation with Wisdom is mysterious, but seems to suggest that Wisdom is intimately involved with humanity. Recounting the scholarly reconstructions of the prehistory of Wisdom, Murphy agrees with von Rad that Wisdom may have had her genesis in Egyptian wisdom literature that spoke of the personification of the figure known as Ma’at. In conclusion, Murphy suggests that the figure of Wisdom is intimately connected with Yahweh. This book is helpful for my research because it offers a unique interpretation of Lady Wisdom in Proverbs 8, namely, that the prehistory of Wisdom is not crucial to understanding her role in the canonical literature.

----- “Wisdom and Creation.” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 104, no. 1 (1985): 3-11.

In this article, Murphy surveys the scholarly literature concerning the relationship between wisdom and creation while offering an overview of the Sitz-im-Leben of wisdom and creation in the Israelite world. He begins by seeking to understand how wisdom “works” within a Yahwistic framework. He analyzes three of the most promising solutions: von Rad’s creation as “swallowed up” by redemption, Westermann’s creation as a category of blessing, and Zimmerli’s reframing of wisdom theology as fundamentally being a creation theology. Although Murphy finds much to agree with in all three solutions, he believes that they treat wisdom as marginal in the Israelite mindset. Creation and wisdom are intermingled in the Hebrew Bible. Wisdom contributes to the beginning of creation as an *amon*, a “craftsman” or “nursling”. Ben Sira opts for the former translation, but modern theology still does not know what to make of Wisdom’s role in creation. Wisdom is to be found in the created world, according the Bible’s own witness. Wisdom is a gift given by God to his creation. Wisdom has a divine origin, as is made clear by such texts as Proverbs 8:22-31. Biblical scholars have failed to understand the prehistory of personified Wisdom; however, von Rad has profoundly stated that “Lady Wisdom is the self-revelation of creation.” Wisdom is not to be equated with the term “order”, since the Bible uses many metaphors to describe the relationship between creation and wisdom. The most prominent image is that of a marriage. Wisdom herself is identified with Yahweh. Systematic theologians have much to incorporate from the insights of biblical scholars, including the reintegration of revealed knowledge with rational knowledge. Murphy concludes by warning that scholars should not make conclusions about wisdom because our knowledge has major gaps. Murphy’s article is helpful for my research because he offers an overview of scholarly opinion regarding wisdom in creation theology and he comments regarding the Israelite worldview of Wisdom’s role in creation.

Newsom, Carol A. “Woman and the Discourse of Patriarchal Wisdom: A Study of Proverbs 1-9.” In *Gender and Difference in Ancient Israel*, edited by Peggy L. Day, 142-160. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989.

Newsom argues, in this article, that personified Wisdom and Lady Folly are figures that are used by men in order to set the bounds of patriarchal wisdom. She argues this by an analysis of Proverbs 1-9. Newsom begins by stating that it is startling to find men in Proverbs talking so much about women and what they talk about. Seeking to understand the purpose of this,

Newsom walks step-by-step through the major sections of Proverbs 1-9. The role of the teacher is to act as a father to the reader, who acts as the voiceless son. Newsom, using Marxist analysis, compares this to a police officer who calls out to a bystander: at that point, the bystander becomes the subject of a particular ideology. Personified Wisdom, then, acts as the public affirmation of the teaching of the father. She represents the places of authority and power when she is said to “call in the gates.” The appearance of the “strange” woman threatens to overturn the father’s teaching through her lack of phallic imagery. Seeing that the sexual maturity of the son is on the horizon, he must learn to avoid the fourth person (the “strange” woman) who can disrupt the family (idealized as three people = two parents and a son) and, thus, society at large. Personified Wisdom is the voice of the father’s teaching given legitimacy through the mouth of a woman. This article is helpful for my research because it offers a literary and feminist understanding of the role of personified Wisdom. Instead of focusing on her supposed background, Newsom believes that it is a literary figure used to legitimize patriarchal teaching.

Perdue, Leo G. *Wisdom & Creation: the Theology of Wisdom Literature*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994.

In this work, Perdue argues that personified Wisdom is the remnant of a mythical tradition concerning fertility goddesses which the sages of Israel morphed into a teaching tool that allowed students, through the use of imaginary descriptions, to act wisely through moral discourse. He argues this by an in depth analysis of Proverbs 1-9. Perdue begins with an analysis of the literary structure of Proverbs 1-9. The positioning of the various sections emphasizes the importance and centrality of the figure of Lady Wisdom. The purpose of this pericope is to invite the student to learn the ways of wisdom. Drawing upon creation myths, the Israelite sages seek to invite the listener to participate in the creative work of God by living wisely. In Proverbs 3, Wisdom is personified as a goddess who bestows long life and honor upon those who follow her. She is equated with the tree of life found in the primordial garden. Wisdom is also the agent through which God creates the world. She acts as God’s architect and the plan by which God builds the cosmos. This theme stretches into Proverbs 8, the quintessential text concerning Wisdom’s role in creation. In this passage, she begins as the teacher for those who would seek to be wise. Uniquely, Wisdom acts as the royal Queen of Heaven, the divine goddess who works with God in the creation of the world. While being Queen of Heaven, she also plays and delights before God while he creates the world, mixing two images into one personification. Perdue concludes with a summary of his findings. This work is helpful for my research because Perdue argues that the figure of divine Wisdom plays many roles but was drawn primarily from a former time in which fertility goddesses played a larger role in Israelite culture.

Preuss, Horst Dietrich. *Old Testament Theology*. Vol. 1. Translated by Leo G. Perdue. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995.

In this work, Preuss argues that Yahweh’s wisdom, though borrowed from ancient Egyptian sources, was reworked throughout Israelite history until it was associated with Yahweh

himself. He argues this by analyzing the relevant texts in the Hebrew Bible. Preuss opens by stating that the appearance of divine wisdom in the Bible could only be possible in the post-exilic period. God's wisdom was given to both artisans and kings, farmers and prophets in earlier literature. However, Yahweh's wisdom as world creating force only appears in the later literature. This is displayed most clearly in Proverbs 1-9. Borrowing this motif from ancient Egyptian sources, the ancient sages used personified Wisdom in order to embellish its authority in the period after the exile. Subsequent theological reflection, such as that found in Job 28, states that wisdom is something that man cannot ascertain in and of himself. Wisdom is not able to reveal the ways of the created order or its creator. Rather, a distance and divide is spoken of in Job 38:1-42:6. Wisdom of Solomon is one of the few works that promotes the idea that God can be recognized through the created order. However, a later addition to Job 28 recognizes the value of human wisdom. Sirach 24 unites older and newer interpretations of wisdom in his work: although wisdom is seen to be far off, God calls her to dwell in Israel in the form of Torah. In this way, Wisdom is seen as both ancient (being with God at the creation) and future (indwelling with Israel as history moves forward). This source is helpful for my research because the author attempts to place the idea of Wisdom amongst the wider OT literature. This shows how other sources interpret wisdom and how the concept of wisdom is transformed through intertextual echoes.

Ringgren, Helmer. *Word and Wisdom: Studies in the Hypostatization of Divine Qualities and Functions in the Ancient Near East*. Lund: Hakan Ohlssons Boktryckeri: 1947.

Ringgren argues in this work that the use of hypostatization in polytheistic religions helped them to progress from polytheism to monotheism. He argues this by an analysis of hypostatization in Egyptian, Sumerian, Akkadian, West Semitic, Israelite and pre-Islamic Arabian sources. Ringgren begins by analyzing Egyptian sources for hypostatizing activity. He suggests that the attribute of *ma'at* (order), though initially considered an accompanying presence with the gods, came to be recognized as a goddess in her own right. Ringgren suggests that this is so because of the presence of priests and objects devoted exclusively to *Ma'at*. He continues by analyzing hypostatized attributes from Sumerian and Akkadian sources. He suggests that several deities, such as *Mesaru* and *Kettu*, arose from abstract nouns. Certain qualities of the gods spin off and become independent deities. After examining each central Israelite text concerning wisdom, Ringgren notes the Israelite tendency to hypostatize several other attributes of Yahweh, including his word and spirit. Several deities in pre-Islamic Arabia were hypostatized. The sun, moon and stars were worshipped by peoples in that region. The author concludes by summarizing his findings and announcing that the evolutionary theory of how societies went from polytheism to monotheism is incorrect. This work is helpful for my research because Ringgren offers an analysis of the influence of the hypostatization process on Israelite societies from the surrounding cultures. He also comments extensively on Proverbs 1-9.

Schroer, Silvia. "Wise and Counselling Women in Ancient Israel: Literary and Historical Ideals of the Personified HOKMA." In *A Feminist Companion to Wisdom Literature*, edited by Athalya Brenner, 67-84. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995.

In this article, Schroer argues that personified Wisdom functions as a wise and counseling woman amongst a mostly male-dominated society. She argues this by reading Proverbs 1-9 through the lens of feminist theory. Schroer begins with a lament that feminist criticism has not formed a positive theology for those within and without the church. She suggests that a study of personified Wisdom may help feminist critics such as herself embrace a uniquely female-centric brand of traditional Judeo-Christian spirituality. Wisdom, in Proverbs, performs many roles: lover, daughter, mother, hostess, and preacher, among others. It is interesting to note that only personified Wisdom is shown to function as a counselor in the Hebrew wisdom literature. Schroer suggests that the basis for this portrait of Wisdom as counselor stems from the roles which actual Israelite women performed: prophet and counselor. Counseling women are found in various biblical books, such as 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, etc., alongside non-canonical works such as Judith. Historically important females undergirded the literary representation of personified Wisdom. Socially, wisdom literature arose during the post-exilic period, which was characterized by the downfall of the monarchy and the renewed focus upon the family as central to society. Schroer concludes by applying her findings to current topics in Christian theology. This article is helpful for my research because the author argues for a feminist reading of personified Wisdom and for Wisdom being influenced by the presence of strong women in Israelite culture. While affirming the influence of the Ma'at traditions upon personified Wisdom, she also recognizes the social character of Israelite culture as birthing this figure called Wisdom.

Scott, R.B.Y. "Wisdom in Creation: The 'Amon of Proverbs 8:30.'" *Vetus Testamentum* 10, no. 2 (1960): 213-223.

Scott argues that the title *amon* given to personified wisdom in Proverbs 30 should be translated as "binding, uniting." In order to prove this, he analyzes the six most common interpretations that are given for the word *amon*. Scott begins by reciting what are the most common interpretations of the word *amon*: "skilled artisan", "faithfulness", "faithful one", "firm, true", "child", and "guardian". In order to be considered the most likely interpretation, it must have strong support from the older versions, be alluded to in later passages and suit the context. Although "skilled craftsman" is opted for by lexicographers, translators and commentators, it does not carry support from the ancient version nor from the immediate context. "Child cared for" has support from Aquila's translation, Kimchi and Ibn Ezra. The idea of wisdom being "begotten" is also found in the context of Proverbs 8. However, the verb *schq* that is associated with the word for "child" is also found in contexts of a farmer's delight for his vineyard and a student's delight for Torah. "Guardian" is rejected for many of the same reasons. "Binding, uniting" is attested by STJ and NT writers while also adhering to the context without the independence that is suggested by "skilled artisan". The final possibility, "faithful, true", is also attested to in antiquity and adheres to the context. All interpretations besides "binding, uniting"

are rejected based upon his criteria. This article is useful for my research because it offers a lens into how the ancient world understood personified wisdom and also how they may have reinterpreted hard to grasp concepts. His methodology for understanding the original form of *amon* is also enlightening.

Shupak, Nili. "Female Imagery in Proverbs 1-9 in the Light of Egyptian Sources." *Vetus Testamentum* 61, no. 2 (2011): 310-323.

Shupak argues in this article that the female imagery associated with wisdom and folly has its source in a common ANE wisdom tradition that associates wisdom and folly with actual adulterous or virtuous women. He argues this by comparing ancient Egyptian wisdom literature with Proverbs 1-9. Shupak begins with a summary of the female characters and their roles in Proverbs. Lady Folly and the Strange Woman are portrayed as wicked women that seek to steal away the young man. Lady Wisdom and the Wife of one's Youth are portrayed as good and worthy of honor and praise. Shupak analyzes the words associated with the Strange Woman, concluding that she is, in fact, a married woman. Therefore, she is not attempting to lead the young man away from marriage, but into an adulterous relationship. He contends that the image of the Strange Woman and the Wife of one's Youth are practical instructions, not allegories. To prove this, he offers selections from Egyptian wisdom literature. In *Any* and *Ptahhotep*, the young man is encouraged to restrain from having relationships with a married woman. In these works, the man is the seducer and the woman is seduced in opposition to what is found in Proverbs. As in Proverbs, the Strange Woman is said to be "far away from her husband." She is also compared to water that does not have limits. The Good Woman, as in Proverbs, is compared to waters that are channeled and a fertile field that is tended. Shupak concludes by reminding his readers that he has not sought to prove that the author of Proverbs was immediately influenced by Egyptian wisdom literature. This work is helpful for my research because it offers the point of view that the role of wisdom and folly are used as backdrops for teaching youth, not as a personified wisdom figure.

Skehan, Patrick W. "Structures in Poems on Wisdom: Proverbs 8 and Sirach 24." *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 41, no. 3 (1979): 365-379.

In this article, Skehan analyzes both Sirach 24 and Proverbs 8 in order to better understand the form and function of Proverbs 8. He does this by offering comments on the vocabulary and poetic format of both poems. Skehan begins by stating his reasons for undertaking the task of reformatting the text of Proverbs 8 and why we should possibly abandon Western ideas of poetic form. He continues by offering comments on the textual flaws of Proverbs 8. He then breaks down Proverbs 8 into various sections. In vv. 1-5, there is a strong presence of assonance and the presence of a cola that stretches into vv. 6-10. There, two imperatives bracket the pericope. Vv. 1-10 are a part of a single development, although the latter half drops the assonance found in vv. 1-5. In opposition to vv. 12-16 and vv. 17-21, Yahweh is the subject of vv. 22-26 but continues the alliteration and assonance found in previous verses. In

analyzing the chapter this way, Skehan suggests that Proverbs 8 and Proverbs 2 are the work of the same poet. He continues by arguing that Ben Sira's poem concerning wisdom shows evidence of the five-line stanza used in Proverbs 8. Skeham concludes by suggesting that Ben Sira and Proverbs 8 use a similar poetic structure. This article is helpful for my research because it argues that Proverbs 1-9 was written by a solitary author using poetic analysis.

Smith, Mark S. *The Early History of God: Yahweh and Other Deities in Ancient Israel*.

Dearborn: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1990.

In this work, Smith argues that Israel borrowed themes and concepts from the surrounding Canaanite culture in order to establish its conception of who and what Yahweh was. He argues this by an analysis of texts and inscriptions from the Canaanite and Israelite cultures. Smith begins by establishing the original deities of Israel. He suggests that El was the first deity worshipped by the Israelites, based upon a reading of certain texts in the Torah. Over time, El was identified with the name Yahweh. During the time period of the Judges, Israelites sought to differentiate themselves from the other Canaanites while also incorporating some of their practices. The worship of Baal was one such practice. Symbols and powers associated with Baal came to be associated with Yahweh. Other symbols, such as the warrior god image, may have come from a reliance upon Anat traditions. The role of the Asherah is hard to understand, however, Smith believes that this figure, who was once a goddess, eventually became merely a symbol that was not worshipped. Language associated with the Asherah is assimilated with language associated with Yahweh. Smith also argues that the Israelites assimilated solar imagery into its conception of Yahweh. He concludes with a discussion of how these various assimilations affected the cult of Yahweh and his portrayal in the OT. This work is helpful for my research because it offers the thesis that Israel's conception of Yahweh was an amalgamation of various ideas fomenting in the larger Canaanite religious culture. This may lend support to some scholars' insistence that personified Wisdom is merely the transformation of an older Israelite goddess into a form that is more easily "digested" by monotheistic Israelites.

Tan, Nancy Nam-Hoon. "Where is Foreign Wisdom to be Found in Septuagint Proverbs?"

Catholic Biblical Quarterly 70, no. 4 (2008): 699-708.

Tan argues that the LXX translation of Proverbs does not understand the Strange Woman to have any connotation of "foreignness". She argues this by a lexical study of Greek words used in reference to the MT in LXX Proverbs 2:16, 17; 5:20 and 9:18. Tan begins by highlighting the influence of Johann Cook and Michael Fox upon the study of LXX Proverbs. However, she contends that they are mistaken in regards to the LXX's understanding of the Strange Woman also being a "foreign" woman. She analyzes the Greek words for foreignness found in LXX Proverbs 1-9. *Allogenes* is used for other types of *genos*, without commenting on the strangeness of the *genos*. *Allophulos* means "of another *phulos*" which, again, does not comment on one's strangeness. These words can be used to indicate "foreign", but do not inherently mean that. In LXX Proverbs 2:16-17, the subject shifts from the Strange Woman to "evil counsel." Tan denies

with Fox that Hellenistic wisdom is in view here because of the lack of direct reference. In LXX Prov. 5:20, Tan again states that Cook is mistake because of the lack of direct reference to an explicitly foreign wisdom. Cook and Fox both take the meaning of *allotrois* too far in their analysis. Tan concludes with a summary of her argumentation. This work is helpful for my research because LXX Proverbs provides evidence of another *Vorlage* that may help unlock the role of Wisdom in Proverbs. This article also contends that the translator was attempting to use LXX Proverbs in order to counter Hellenistic wisdom.

Teeter, Emily. *The Presentation of Maat: Ritual and Legitimacy in Ancient Egypt*. Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization, no. 57. Chicago: University of Chicago, 1997.

In this work, Teeter argues that the rituals and offerings presented to Ma'at helped to legitimize the reign of the current king. She argues this by an extensive analysis of writings, inscriptions, and drawings from ancient Egypt. She begins with a chronology of the Ma'at ritual. The ritual's first appearance is during the reign of Thutmose III, although succeeding kings did not always perform the ritual. The iconography displayed concerning the Ma'at ritual consists of donor, the Ma'at symbol being offered and the divine recipient. Based upon the scenes that are on display throughout the Egyptian world, it is almost impossible to understand the sequence in which the offering to Ma'at would have taken place. However, the ritual itself was not unimportant in Egyptian life. Based upon its placement and arrangement on Egyptian monuments, sculptures and tombs, the Ma'at ritual must have had a central place in the religious life of the common man. The inscriptions of the Ma'at presentation consist of three parts: the offertory dedication, the phrase *lr f di 'nh*, and the recounting of Ma'at's recipient. The presentation of the king's name is equated with Ma'at, that is, with divine order. The Ma'at offering was seen as the supreme offering that could be given by the king because it legitimized his rule. Teeter concludes with an analysis of the role of Ma'at in the personal piety shown by the common man and the king. This work is helpful for my research because it accounts for the evolution of the attribute Ma'at from abstract quality to full goddess. Since Wisdom, in some scholars' estimations, has her source in Ma'at, this account of Ma'at's role in Egypt may bring to light whether Ma'at is a real source for Wisdom in Proverbs.

Toy, Crawford H. *Proverbs: a Critical and Exegetical Commentary*. International Critical Commentary. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1899.

Toy, in this work, argues that personified Wisdom is based upon the Hellenistic thought world that pervaded the Israelite author of Proverbs. He argues this by a discussion of the role of Wisdom in Proverbs 8. Toy begins by stating that Proverbs 8 is distinct from the surrounding sections. The figure of personified Wisdom is close to being a hypostasized figure, but Toy denies that it has reached the state of being so. He then offers a short history of interpretation of personified Wisdom, including Ben Sira's and Philo's renewed conceptions of the figure. The Israelite author composing this text is a true Israelite; yet, he is obviously grounded in a Hellenistic thought world since he seeks to unite Israelite, monotheistic belief with Greek

thought forms. The image of creation is taken from both Genesis and the Babylonian creation epic. There are many different ways that the term *amon* can be translated. The translation “artist” fits with the use found in Cant. 7:1. However, one can also make the case for “nursling” based upon its use in Lamentations 4:5. Toy denies that the term can be translated either by “faithful” or by “continually” because they do not fit the context and, with the form “continually”, would be graphically hard. The idea that Wisdom is found “playing” before God in creation does not fit his proposed translation of *amon* to mean “craftsman”; therefore, he suggests that “playing” should be understood as “laughter”. Toy concludes by stating that the final verse may have been an editorial edition. This work is helpful for my research because it is representative of the older scholarship which believed that the authors of Proverbs were influenced by Hellenistic thought forms, a view that is no longer held among scholars.

Trible, Phyllis. “Wisdom Builds a Poem: the Architecture of Proverbs 1:20-33.” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 94, no. 4 (1975): 509-518.

In this article, Tribble argues that the poem recited by Wisdom is given in a chiasmic structure. She argues this by analyzing the rhetorical and literary features of the poem. Tribble begins by discussing the contribution of Christa Kayatz’s analysis of Proverbs 1:20-33 as a wisdom-sermon. Although she outlines it according to its function, she fails to understand the true form of the poem by recognizing the poem’s repetitive vocabulary and motifs. Instead, Tribble offers a concentric chiasmus that seeks to do justice to the form of the poem. Circle A is concerned with drawing the listener into the realm of Wisdom’s voice. Circle B is based on an interrogative called to the unwise and untutored. Circle C is based upon an imperative that calls for the conversion of the unwise to wisdom. Circles D and E are at the core of the poem and offer a warning to those who do not heed Wisdom’s call. By interlocking the terms “panic” and “calamity”, Wisdom is stating that the unwise will suffer greatly if they do not heed Wisdom’s call. Circles A’, B’, and C’ are concerned with the fates of the unwise: their destruction and downfall. Tribble concludes with her outline of the poetic structure of Prov. 1:20-33. This article is helpful for my research because it offers an analysis of one of Wisdom’s speeches. It also suggests that Wisdom was used as a literary trope in order to bring the unwise to enlightenment.

Vawter, Bruce. “Prov. 8:22: Wisdom and Creation.” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 99, no. 2 (1980): 205-216.

Vawter argues in this article that wisdom in both Proverbs 8 and Job 28 is an entity possessed by God but not created by him for the purpose of creating the world. He argues this by referencing multiple scriptures that use the key term *qana*. Vawter begins with a history of research concerning the role of wisdom in Israelite wisdom literature. Some, such as von Rad, Murphy and Collins believe that the wisdom traditions in Israelite literature defused the overt supernaturalism that is displayed in the historical books. Vawter agrees, but disputes wisdom’s high role simply because of its creation by God. This is because, in Job 28 and Proverbs 8, wisdom is discovered by God rather than created by him. He then proceeds with a word study of

the verb *qana*. He finds that almost every time the word is used in the Hebrew Bible, the word either means “to possess” (or some variant) or the case can be made for the word to mean “to possess”. As an excursus, he seeks to locate the verb *qana* amongst the cognate Semitic languages. However, he is not satisfied with the proposed solutions but does not offer his own. The reason for Yahweh’s possession of wisdom is in order to model creation after it. In this way, wisdom functions as a blueprint for Yahweh’s creation. He denies that wisdom is based upon some Canaanite or Egyptian deity. He concludes by stating that wisdom was used in Israelite religion in order to establish the concept of the autonomy of reason in Yahweh’s universe. This article is helpful for my research because it offers a word study of *qana*, a debated term in the discussion on the personification of wisdom. He also interacts with the discussion concerning the origin of personified wisdom, denying a Canaanite or Egyptian origin. It will be interesting to interact with him and others in this discussion when I engage the text of Proverbs 1-8.

von Rad, Gerhard. *Old Testament Theology: the Theology of Israel’s Historical Traditions*. Vol. 1. Translated by D.M.G Stalker. New York City: Harper & Brothers, 1962.

In this work, von Rad argues that the concept of Wisdom evolved in the Israelite canon in order to reflect the situation that the Israelite people found themselves in from time to time. He argues this by analyzing the role that personified Wisdom plays in the Hebrew Bible. There is a great difference between pre- and post-Israelite wisdom. In pre-Israelite culture, wisdom was empirical and social. Post-Israelite culture used the notion of Wisdom to answer pressing theological issues, such as that of creation. In the Hebrew Bible, men are never wise in themselves, but are given divine wisdom from Yahweh. This is seen in the giving of wisdom to the builders of the Tabernacle and to Solomon. To understand Wisdom is to understand world history and salvation history. On account of their exile and confused identity amongst the nations of the world, the Israelite people used the concept of Wisdom in order to solidify their *raison d’etre*. Initially, in Israel’s history, wisdom was unable to be grasped by humanity except through death. However, Israelite wisdom literature eventually spoke of wisdom being “grasped” by anyone and encouraged others to do so. Wisdom was not something that Yahweh created but was used by him as a template to create the world. It was also a theological concept that allowed the Israelite sages to come to grips with the secrets of salvation history and the mysteries of life. Von Rad concludes with a discussion on the absence of ritualism in the wisdom literature. This work is helpful for my research because it offers an historical account of the development of the wisdom motif in Israelite literature. Von Rad also understands wisdom’s role as that of a theological concept through which Israelite sages might make known the ways of the world.

-----, *Wisdom in Israel*. Translated by James D. Martin. London: SCM Press, 1972.

In this work, von Rad argues that personified Wisdom is based upon the figure of Ma’at from Egyptian literature. He argues this by analyzing Proverbs 8:22-31. There are a variety of problems when it comes to understanding what is happening in Proverbs 8. The first is the textual problem. There is an assortment of linguistic difficulties that one comes across when

studying this passage. *Qana* has been translated in various ways, such as “created” or “formed”. The various translations opt for either one or the other of these two primary understandings. The term *amon*, having been discussed time and time again in the secondary literature, can be translated either “work-master”, “craftsman”, “darling”, or “child”. As for this pericope’s function within Proverbs 8, von Rad believes that it only functions in a subsidiary way. The greatest difficulty is the theology presented in the work: wisdom is said to be as old as creation, which causes some problems when compared with early Yahwism. Von Rad suggests that the way in which the figure of Wisdom speaks betrays Egyptian influence, especially her use of the formula “before...before...”. The goddess Ma’at is the likely idea behind personified Wisdom. Von Rad believes that the Israelite author(s) of Proverbs borrowed from other cultures in order to enhance their understanding of their own. He concludes with a discussion of Proverbs 8 as a didactic poem. This work is helpful for my research because it is one of the earliest sustained arguments for the role of the Egyptian goddess Ma’at in the formulation of personified Wisdom.

Waltke, Bruce K. “The Book of Proverbs and Ancient Wisdom Literature.” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 136, no. 543 (1979): 221-238.

In this article, Waltke provides an overview of insights into how the book of Proverbs was influenced by outside sources. He provides this overview by discussing the role of these sources upon critical questions such as authorship, date, textual transmission, etc. Waltke begins with a discussion of the role of newly discovered sources that bring light to the date and authorship of Proverbs. Older scholars thought that even the earliest Proverbs were written no earlier than the Persian period. However, new findings have found that the Bible’s own witness to antiquity should be trusted rather than questioned. Waltke catalogues the recent findings of scholars and states that wisdom literature appeared in history before the Hebrews were even a people. The literary genre found in Proverbs is also found amongst Egyptian and Sumerian proverb collections. Except for the title, the “Thirty Sayings of the Wise” possess a literary structure kin to the Egyptian *sboyet* genre. Other cultures also grouped their wisdom literature according to a structure in which wisdom is praised and then wisdom teaching follows. Waltke denies that Yahwistic religion overlays secular wisdom in the Proverbs. Instead, wisdom traditions in Israel have always been centrally Yahwistic. As in other cultures, the Proverbs originated in courtiers’ homes. Waltke denies that a figure such as the Egyptian Ma’at is the source of personified Wisdom in Proverbs. Instead, he argues that wisdom is presented as a fixed order of life which points to the creator God. The uniqueness of the theology in Proverbs rests in the idea that Yahweh brought wisdom in existence and upholds the moral order through her. Waltke concludes by affirming that the Word of God was written in very human ways. This work is helpful for my research because it offers an overview to the variety of influences wrought upon the book of Proverbs.

Webster, Jane S. "Sophia: Engendering Wisdom in Proverbs, Ben Sira and the Wisdom of Solomon." *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 78, (1998): 63-79.

Webster argues in this article that the authors of Proverbs, Ben Sira and the Wisdom of Solomon have engendered Wisdom for various reasons. In order to prove this, she analyzes the role that wisdom plays in these three works. Webster begins by offering a short summary of the various ways in which the role of Wisdom has been understood in Jewish wisdom literature. She begins her own analysis by looking at the way that the book of Proverbs uses Wisdom as a literary type. There are two different images of women in Proverbs: the Strange (Wicked) Woman and the Wise (Virtuous) Woman. The Wise Woman is used as a metaphor for divine wisdom. Through comparisons to various images, the author engenders Wisdom as a good wife. Overt sexuality characterizes the Wicked Woman. In Ben Sira, wisdom is associated with the Law. Ben Sira engenders Wisdom as an object of sexual desire. Using feminine imagery, Ben Sira encourages the reader to embrace wisdom as one would embrace his wife sexually. Unlike Proverbs, a personified wicked woman does not appear in order for all attention to be focused on the Law. In the Wisdom of Solomon, Wisdom does not speak nor is erotic language used to describe her. Instead, she is "degendered": male, female and neuter imagery is used to describe her. The "wife" imagery, so prominent in the previous works, is dropped in favor of daughter and mother imagery. In opposition to the previous works, male verbs are used in reference to feminine wisdom. She is said to "pervade and penetrate all things." She is also compared with the male Logos. Eventually, she fades into a description of the male deity. Webster concludes with a final comparison and contrast with the three works. This article is helpful for my research because it offers a feminist, literary interpretation of the personified wisdom tradition that has not been offered in any other article that I have surveyed. Although the author suggests that social, cultural and historical considerations may have influenced the text, a literary reading, according to her, offers the most plausible interpretive framework.

Weeks, Stuart. *Early Israelite Wisdom*. New York City: Oxford University Press, 1994.

In this book, Weeks argues that Israelite wisdom traditions, contra earlier scholarly reconstructions, were not formed in scribal schools but borrowed from wisdom traditions outside of Israel and appropriated to Israelite religion. He argues this by analyzing the existing non-Israelite wisdom literature. Weeks begins by narrating the history of interpretation in regards to Israelite wisdom traditions. Scholars have long thought that the wisdom traditions in the OT were birthed in scribal schools whose literature was only meant for the scribal class. Weeks reassesses the non-Israelite literature in the first chapter. Egyptian wisdom sources, originally thought to be the source material of many pieces of Hebrew wisdom literature, are not merely textbooks or manuals. Instead, they provide ways in which to improve themselves socially, hardly specific enough to be considered "court training" material. In sayings collections, such as Proverbs, the different sayings are linked together by associative links. The idea of a "collection" of sayings, therefore, is a helpful concept. Through his analysis of the superscriptions and the court and king sayings in Proverbs, Weeks denies that these are evidence for wisdom literature

being used in the context of the court. Although some have sought links between the Joseph story and the use of wisdom for the court, Weeks again denies any connection. In his final section, Weeks exposes the myth that schools existed in Israel for the purpose of training courtly figures. This work is helpful for my research because it seeks to trace the genesis of wisdom literature in Israel. While many works assume that a school tradition was existent in Israel, Weeks offers the unique position that schools, in fact, did not exist, based upon a comparison of Israelite wisdom sources with foreign wisdom sources.

------. "The Context and Meaning of Proverbs 8:30a." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 125, no. 3 (2006): 433-442.

Weeks argues that the Hebrew word *amon* should be rendered "faithfully", in opposition to suggestions by biblical scholars who suggest that term is better understood to reflect an Akkadian root meaning "artisan" or another Hebrew root meaning "child." He argues this by analyzing the syntax of Proverbs 8:21-33 and the various interpretative issues that the passage bears. Weeks begins by stating the three major readings of *amon*, that of artisan, child and faithfulness. Both the first and second solutions pose major grammatical problems. The second solution in particular wants to read *amon* as a participle, but that does not seem likely given that it is not in agreement with the head noun, *hockmah*. Also, the sense of "bringing up children" does not have a place in the context of the speech. Wisdom's speech concerns her presence before, during and after the creation of the world. Although the syntax is awkward, Weeks suggests that all of wisdom's actions are not simply before the creation, but also during and after as well. This being the case, he links v. 30 with v. 31 instead of with the preceding verses. Therefore, since the speech attempts to display wisdom's consistency with being at God's side during the whole of creation, Weeks suggests that *amon* should be understood as "faithfulness" because the poem itself implicitly highlights the faithfulness of wisdom to be at the side of God throughout the creation episode. Weeks concludes with a further critique of the other two major interpretations. This article is helpful for my research because Weeks offers an alternative temporal reading of the events in the wisdom narrative. He also promotes a view of the meaning of Proverbs 8:30a that has not been suggested in the other articles that I have read.

Whybray, R.N. "Proverbs 8:22-31 and Its Supposed Prototypes." *Vetus Testamentum* 15, no. 4 (1965): 504-514.

Whybray argues that the texts that Gemser and Ringgren use in comparison with Proverbs 8:22-31 are, when analyzed in detail, not relevant to the discussion concerning the hypostatization of wisdom in Proverbs. He argues this by analyzing the five texts that Gemser and Ringgren refer to their writings on the personification of wisdom. He begins by offering the full text of each of the writings: *Enuma Elish*, *The Creation of the World by Marduk*, Genesis 1:1-3 and Genesis 2:4b-7. Although all of the relevant passages contain a series of negative temporal clauses, he suggests that their similarities with Proverbs are not as close-knit as once supposed. For instance, Proverbs 8:22-31 begins with a positive statement before moving to a

series of negative clauses. The *Book of the Apophis* is an Egyptian magical text that is referenced in comparison to Proverbs 8. However, this text is not concerned with the creation of the world but with the coming into existence of the god Re. In the same vein, *Enuma Elish* is a work concerned with Marduk's coming into existence. The negative temporal clauses are not concerned with creation but with everything taking place before creation. Thus, the non-biblical texts do not resemble Proverbs 8:22-31. As for the biblical texts, Whybray states that the purpose of the Genesis texts has nothing to do with Proverbs 8:22-31. He concludes by stating that the creation narrative displayed in Proverbs 8 may draw from a common tradition, but that has yet to be seen. Whybray's article is necessary for my research because he compares the text concerning personified wisdom with traditions outside of the Bible in order to better understand the background of the personified wisdom traditions.

-----, *Wisdom in Proverbs*. Studies in Biblical Theology no. 45. London: SCM Press, 1965.

In this book, Whybray analyzes the entirety of Proverbs 1-9 alongside Egyptian wisdom literature to argue that there are two layers of wisdom passages in that pericope. Whybray begins with a discussion of the role of wisdom traditions in Israel. Schools were set up in Israel to teach the young. Wisdom traditions were borrowed from Egyptian schools and appropriated to Israelite thinking. Proverbs 1-9 is the latest addition to the book, being influenced by developed Israelite religious traditions. After analyzing the ten discourses, Whybray concludes that the wisdom traditions are imported from foreign concepts of wisdom but dressed in Israelite religion. In spite of their greatly different social and religious set-up, Egyptian and Israelite wisdom traditions contain four central motifs: the role of order, the role of the gods/God, the role of the ideal man, and an understanding of the purpose of instruction. Whybray distinguishes between two types of wisdom passages in Proverbs 1-9: those concerned with the figure of wisdom and those concerned with connecting the figure of wisdom with the deity. In this way, wisdom "evolves" to become a figure that is associated with God as creator and also morphs into an attribute of Yahweh. Personified wisdom may have her background in a Canaanite cult of a love goddess. The additions added by the second type of wisdom passages "nationalized" wisdom, that is, it made wisdom a part of the Israelite worldview instead of seeming foreign. Whybray concludes by discussing the second type of wisdom passages which added references to Yahweh and tied wisdom to the creation account. This book is useful for my research because it suggests, uniquely, that there are two types of wisdom passages, one building upon the other.

Wilson, Frederick M. "Sacred and Profane? The Yahwistic Redaction of Proverbs Reconsidered." In *The Listening Heart: Essays in Wisdom and the Psalms in Honor of Roland E. Murphy, O. Carm.*, edited by Kenneth G. Hoglund, Elizabeth F. Huwiler, Jonathan T. Glass and Roger W. Lee, 313-334. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987.

In this essay, Wilson denies that the Proverbs were initially secular sayings that were, at a later date, updated with Yahwistic theology in order to enhance their credibility in the religious

Israelite culture. Instead, the sacred/secular wisdom found within Proverbs is meant to complement and enhance one another. He argues this by analyzing the arguments of those scholars who argue for the former understanding and the relevant biblical literature. He begins by rehearsing the argument of scholars regarding the book of Proverbs: it was initially just a book of secular sayings that were eventually updated to fit in with the *cultus* and religious life of Israel. Wilson recounts the arguments of the various scholars who have supported this idea (such as Eichrodt, Wright and von Rad) and shows how they have a deficient understanding of the way wisdom works within Israel's religious life. Those, such as Roland Murphy, have properly suggested that we should do away with the notion of a sacred/secular split within Israelite wisdom theology. Wilson then surveys the four major sections of Proverbs in order to show how the former thesis is deficient. Although scholars have attempted to show that an editorial hand has left its mark on the book of Proverbs, Wilson notes that there are as many scholars as there are theories of exactly which parts were edited and which were not. Wilson concludes by restating his thesis that the sacred/secular division is a construct forced upon the text by scholars and not found within the text itself. This essay is helpful for my research because it questions a fundamental tenet that is held by scholars: that of a sacred/secular tension amongst the various sections of Proverbs. Wilson's thesis would mean that the figure of Lady Wisdom is an integral part of understanding the text and not a later addition that adds foreign themes.