CHAPTER 1

Beyond the Limits of Wisdom

The purpose of this book is to offer a fresh perspective on the topic of wisdom in the Dead Sea Scrolls. The large collection of scrolls and fragments was discovered in the 1940s and 1950s in caves near Qumran by the western shore of the Dead Sea.[1] The scrolls were produced in the last two centuries before the Common Era and the first century of the Common Era. They offer first-hand information on Jewish texts and collections from the period of the Second Temple. Before the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, our knowledge of Hebrew texts from antiquity was almost entirely based on manuscripts from the Middle Ages. Both the texts and the collections of which they were part had been impacted by processes of selection that took place in light of the concerns of communities that lived many centuries after the early stages of composition. The Dead Sea Scrolls, on the other hand, offer us an opportunity to get glimpses of the earlier development of these texts and corpora.

This book explores ways in which the scrolls and fragments can help us understand how traditions of wisdom were being reshaped in the Hellenistic and early Roman period. Several texts from the Hebrew Bible emphasize the limits of wisdom.[2] Biblical scholars have argued that wisdom literature presents human beings as limited when it comes to accessing the treasures of knowledge that are inscribed in the organization of the cosmos and society.[3]

1 For a concise account of the discoveries and further bibliography, see Hans Debel, "Discoveries," in *T&T Clark Companion to the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. G. J. Brooke and C. Hempel (London: T&T Clark, 2016), 7–16. For overviews of the entire corpus, see Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, "Dead Sea Scrolls," in *The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism*, ed. J. J. Collins and D. C. Harlow (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010), 163–80; and Mladen Popović, "The Manuscript Collections: An Overview," in Brooke and Hempel, *T&T Clark Companion*, 37–50. For detailed lists of manuscripts and official editions, see Emanuel Tov, *The Texts from the Judaean Desert: Indices and an Introduction to the* Discoveries in the Judaean Desert *Series*, DJD 39 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002).

2 Isaiah 40:12–14; Jeremiah 9:22–23; Proverbs 1:7; 3:7; 9:10; 12:15; 26:5, 12, 16; Job 28 and 38; Qohelet 1:12–18; 2:12–26; 6:8; 7:23–24; 8:16–17; 9:10, 11–12; 12:12. Compare: Ben Sira 3:21–24; 4 Ezra 4:1–25.

3 Walther Zimmerli, "Ort und Grenze der Weisheit im Rahmen der alttestamentlichen Theologie," in *Les sagesses du Proche-Orient ancien*, Université de Strasbourg—Centre de recherches d'histoire des religions (Paris: Presses universitaires de Paris, 1963); idem, "The Place and Limit of Wisdom in the Framework of the Old Testament Theology," *SJT* 17 (1964): 146–68, reprinted in J. L. Crenshaw (ed.), *Studies in Ancient Israelite Wisdom* (New York, NY: Ktav Publishing House, 1976); Gerhard von Rad, *Wisdom in Israel* (London: SCM Press, 1972),

The wise person lives according to the principles of cosmic and social order, but also knows that ultimately these are secrets that cannot be fully grasped. By contrast, the wisdom we encounter in the Dead Sea Scrolls develops this theme in a different direction. Many texts from Qumran express the desire to move beyond the limitations of human knowledge and human nature. In the Dead Sea Scrolls we witness how wisdom is being reconfigured by reaching beyond traditional limitations. These new configurations of wisdom and their expressions across a range of different texts invite us as scholars to reconsider the definitions and categories we have imposed on wisdom literature based on collections and notions of canonicity that were shaped in later periods.[4]

1 Rethinking Categories

In the context of the Dead Sea Scrolls, wisdom as a general category can refer to a broad range of texts, concepts, and practices that are associated with Hebrew terms such as *ḥokmâ*, *bînā*, *śekel*, *daʿat*, *mûsār* and *tôrā*, and which relate to knowledge, understanding, knowing how to explain the meaning of texts, knowing how to act in certain situations, knowing when and how to perform certain practices. In this broad sense practically all of the texts that were discovered at Qumran contain wisdom, whether they are categorized by scholars as legal, liturgical, narrative, commentary, rule texts, visions etc. By extension, all the scrolls from Qumran, excluding the documentary texts, could be considered as wisdom, and may have been considered as such by the ancient communities that owned them.[5] On the other hand, when scholars speak about wisdom literature, they refer to a distinct group of texts with a number of specific characteristics. Some of the texts discovered at Qumran are

97–110; Bernd U. Schipper, "When Wisdom Is Not Enough! The Discourse on Wisdom and Torah and the Composition of the Book of Proverbs," in *Wisdom and Torah: The Reception of 'Torah' in the Wisdom Literature of the Second Temple Period*, ed. B. U. Schipper and D. A. Teeter (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 55–79.

4 Menahem Kister, "Wisdom Literature and its Relation to Other Genres: From Ben Sira to Mysteries," in *Sapiential Perspectives: Wisdom Literature in the Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. J. J. Collins, G. E. Sterling and R. A. Clements, STDJ 51 (Leiden: Peeters, 2004), 13–47; Hindy Najman, "Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Period: Towards the Study of a Semantic Constellation," in *Is There a Text in this Cave? Studies in the Textuality of the Dead Sea Scrolls in Honour of George J. Brooke*, ed. A. Feldman, M. Cioată and C. Hempel. STDJ 119 (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 459–72; Arjen Bakker, "Wisdom in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Early Jewish Interpretation," in *The Oxford Handbook of Wisdom and the Bible*, ed. W. Kynes (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), 141–53.

5 Cf. Menahem Kister, "Wisdom Literature," 17–19.

considered as belonging to this category and have been called "wisdom texts" or "sapiential texts."

The category of wisdom literature derives from biblical studies and was based on a set of books in which the theme of wisdom is prominent.[6] These books share formal features like terminology related to wisdom and knowledge and literary forms associated with pedagogy, such as proverbs and instructions. They are also characterized by a worldview in which notions of cosmic and social order play a central role. Important examples of this literature are the books of Proverbs, Job, and Qohelet, a selection of psalms, and the Book of Ben Sira. In the 19th and 20th centuries, texts were unearthed in Mesopotamia and Egypt that made use of similar literary forms and presented worldviews and concepts that corresponded to those found in biblical wisdom books. This led to the assumption that wisdom literature was part of an ancient, international tradition.

The editors of the Dead Sea Scrolls recognized similarities between these wisdom writings and a number of the newly discovered fragmentary texts from caves 1 and 4.[7] This was reflected in the titles they gave to these texts.[8] Some of these works were preserved with sizeable portions of text, in multiple

6 For general discussions, see: James L. Crenshaw, *Old Testament Wisdom: An Introduction*, rev. and enl. ed. (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1998); Leo G. Perdue, *The Sword and the Stylus: An Introduction to Wisdom in the Age of Empires* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008); Will Kynes, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Wisdom and the Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021). The usefulness of wisdom as a category of biblical literature is much debated recently: Stuart Weeks, "Is 'Wisdom Literature' a Useful Category?" In *Tracing Sapiential Traditions in Ancient Judaism*, ed. H. Najman, J.-S. Rey and E. J. C. Tigchelaar, JSJSup 174 (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 3–23; Will Kynes, *An Obituary for "Wisdom Literature": The Birth, Death, and Intertextual Reintegration of a Biblical Corpus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018). In response to Kynes, both John Collins ("Wisdom as Genre and as Tradition in the Book of Sirach," in *Sirach and Its Contexts*, ed. S. Adams, G. S. Goering and M. J. Goff, JSJSup 196 [Leiden: Brill, 2021], 15–32) and Matthew Goff ("The Pursuit of Wisdom at Qumran: Assessing the Classification 'Wisdom Literature' and Its Application to the Dead Sea Scrolls," in Kynes, *Oxford Handbook of Wisdom*, 617–34) defend the usefulness of the category. On the question of genre in wisdom literature, see further below.

7 See e.g., John Strugnell, "Le travail d'édition des fragments manuscrits de Qumrân," *RB* 63 (1956): 49–67 (64–65). For lists of Qumran texts that have subsequently been classified as wisdom, see: Armin Lange with Ulrike Mittmann-Richert, "Annotated List of the Texts from the Judaean Desert Classified by Content and Genre," in Tov, DJD 39:115–64 (140); Matthew J. Goff, *Discerning Wisdom: The Sapiential Literature of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, VTSup 116 (Leiden: Brill, 2007); John Kampen, *Wisdom Literature* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011).

8 For a critical discussion of name giving in Dead Sea Scrolls scholarship, see: Hindy Najman and Eibert Tigchelaar, "A Preparatory Study of Nomenclature and Text Designation in the Dead Sea Scrolls," *RevQ* 26 (2014): 305–25.

copies, and possibly in different versions. Other works that have been classified as "sapiential" survive in only a few small fragments and in a single copy. The better preserved among these fragmentary texts that have received most attention in scholarship are known as Instruction (1Q26; 4Q415; 4Q416; 4Q417; 4Q418; 4Q418a; 4Q418*; 4Q423);[9] Mysteries (1Q27; 4Q299; 4Q300; 4Q301);[10] and Beatitudes (4Q525).[11] A number of psalms that were preserved in the large Psalms scroll (11Q5) but are not included in the Masoretic version of the Book of Psalms are often listed among the Qumran wisdom texts as well.[12] In addition, the book of Ben Sira, of which two small fragments were found at Qumran (2Q18), is frequently categorized among the sapiential texts discovered in the caves.[13] Moreover, it has been argued that a section of the cave 1 Community

9 John Strugnell, Daniel J. Harrington and Torleif Elgvin, *Qumran Cave 4. XXIV: Sapiential Texts, Part 2. 4QInstruction (Mûsār lĕ mēvîn): 4Q415 ff*, DJD 34 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1999); Elisha Qimron, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: The Hebrew Writings* (Jerusalem: Yad Ben-Zvi, 2013), 2.147–184. DJD 34 contains a re-edition of 1Q26, which had first been published by Milik. Cf. Dominique Barthélemy and Józef T. Milik, *Qumran Cave I*, DJD 1 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1955), 101. The readings and reconstructions of the text were improved significantly by Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, *To Increase Learning for the Understanding Ones: Reading and Reconstructing the Fragmentary Early Jewish Sapiential Text 4QInstruction*, STDJ 44 (Leiden: Brill, 2001). The composition was previously known as Sapiential Work A. The editors proposed the Hebrew title מוסר למבין and the English title 4QInstruction (suggested by Elgvin). Menahem Kister proposed the title חכמת רז נהיה ("Wisdom Literature at Qumran," in *The Qumran Scrolls and their World*, ed. M. Kister [Jerusalem: Yad Ben-Zvi, 2009], 1:299–319 [Hebrew]), which is also used by Qimron and appears frequently in Israeli scholarship. The title most widely used in scholarship is 4QInstruction. However, the text is also attested in Cave 1. Therefore, I use the title "Instruction" in this book. The *Scripta Qumranica Electronica* project of the universities of Haifa, Göttingen and Tel Aviv will produce an online digital edition of Instruction under supervision of Jonathan Ben-Dov (see: www.qumranica.org).

10 Milik, DJD 1:102–7 (1Q26); Lawrence H. Schiffman, "Mysteries," in Elgvin et al., *Qumran Cave 4. XV: Sapiential Texts, Part 1*, DJD 20 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1997), 31–123 (4Q299–301); Qimron, *Dead Sea Scrolls*, 2:129–45.

11 Émile Puech, *Qumrân Grotte 4. XVIII: Textes Hébreux (4Q521–4Q528, 4Q576–4Q579)*, DJD 25 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1998), 115–178; Qimron, *Dead Sea Scrolls*, 2:113–128. Qimron considers 4Q184 (known as "*Wiles of the Wicked Woman*") as belonging to the same composition as 4Q525. See further: Eibert Tigchelaar, "Lady Folly and her House in Three Qumran Manuscripts: On the Relation between 4Q525, 5Q16, and 4Q184 1," *RevQ* 23 (2008): 371–81.

12 Goff, *Discerning Wisdom*, 230–63. Cf. James A. Sanders, *The Psalms Scroll of Qumrân Cave 11 (11QPs^a)*, DJD 4 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1965).

13 Maurice Baillet, Józef T. Milik and Roland de Vaux, *Les 'Petites Grottes' de Qumran*, DJD 3 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1962), 75–77. A manuscript containing a large portion of the Hebrew text of Ben Sira (with material from chapters 39–44) was discovered at Masada. Cf. Yigael Yadin, "The Ben Sira Scroll from Masada" (revised by Elisha Qimron), in *Masada VI: The Yigael Yadin Excavations 1963–1965: Final Report*, ed. S. Talmon (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1999), 151–231.

Rule that is known as the Treatise of the Two Spirits (1QS 3:13–4:26) is a separate composition that was included in the Rule but was composed earlier and should be considered a sapiential text.[14]

One thing that is striking when considering the various lists of wisdom texts from Qumran is that wisdom books from the Hebrew Bible are usually not included, even though fragments of each of these works were preserved at Qumran.[15] The exclusion of biblical wisdom texts from such lists is surprising because scholars are generally in agreement that the Bible as such did not yet exist and there was no closed canon in the Second Temple era.[16] It has even

14 Armin Lange, *Weisheit und Prädestination: Weisheitliche Urordnung und Prädestination in den Textfunden von Qumran*, STDJ 18 (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 121–70. See further below.

15 Exceptions are Daniel J. Harrington, *The Wisdom Texts from Qumran* (London: Routledge, 1996); and Armin Lange, "Wisdom Literature and Thought in the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. J. J. Collins and T. H. Lim (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 455–78. The following manuscripts contain texts that are usually counted among the biblical wisdom texts: 2Q15 (Job); 4Q99 (Job); 4Q100 (Job); 4Q101 (Job); 4Q102 (Proverbs); 4Q103 (Proverbs); 4Q109 (Qohelet); 4Q110 (Qohelet); 11Q10 (Targum of Job).

16 The literature is extensive. See e.g., Adam S. van der Woude, "Pluriformity and Uniformity: Reflections on the Transmission of the Text of the Old Testament," in J. Bremmer and F. García Martínez, *Sacred History and Sacred Texts in Early Judaism* (Kampen: Kok, 1992), 151–69; John J. Collins, "Before the Canon: Scriptures in Second Temple Judaism," in *Old Testament Interpretation: Past, Present and Future: Essays in Honor of Gene M. Tucker*, ed. J. L. Mays, D. L. Petersen, and K. H. Richards (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1995), 225–41; Eugene Ulrich, "The Bible in the Making: The Scriptures at Qumran," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Origins of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999), 17–33; Shemaryahu Talmon, "The Crystallization of the 'Canon of Hebrew Scriptures' in the Light of the Biblical Scrolls from Qumran," in *The Bible as Book: The Hebrew Bible and the Judaean Desert Discoveries*, ed. E. D. Herbert and E. Tov (London: British Library, 2002), 5–20; L. M. McDonald and J. A. Sanders, eds., *The Canon Debate: The Origins and Formation of the Bible* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2002); James C. VanderKam, "Questions of Canon Viewed through the Dead Sea Scrolls," in McDonald and Sanders, *The Canon Debate*, 91–109; George J. Brooke, "Between Authority and Canon: The Significance of Reworking the Bible for Understanding the Canonical Process," in *Reworking the Bible: Apocryphal and Related Texts at Qumran: Proceedings of a Joint Symposium*, ed. E. G. Chazon, D. Dimant, and R. A. Clements, STDJ 58 (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 85–104; Florentino García Martínez, "Rethinking the Bible: Sixty Years of Dead Sea Scrolls Research and Beyond," in *Authoritative Scriptures in Ancient Judaism*, ed. M. Popović, JSJSup 141 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 19–36; Hindy Najman, "The Vitality of Scripture Within and Beyond the 'Canon'," *JSJ* 43 (2012): 497–518; Konrad Schmid, "The Canon and the Cult: The Emergence of Book Religion in Ancient Israel and the Gradual Sublimation of the Temple Cult," *Journal of Biblical Literature* (2012): 291–307; Timothy H. Lim, *The Formation of the Jewish Canon* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013); Eva Mroczek, *The Literary Imagination in Jewish Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016). For a discussion of the concept of canon in Judaism in the medieval period, see Robert Brody, "Canon: An elusive concept,"

been argued that the whole notion of canonicity misrepresents the nature of textual collections in this period.[17] Based on what we know of the authority of texts in these collections there is no reason to assign a different status to Qohelet and Ben Sira, nor for that matter to Instruction. It may be true that their form and content are distinctive, and they may have been composed in different circles. But that does not justify treating them as categorically different, because in the period under consideration the canonical category did not yet exist as it did in later ages. For example, the pluriformity of psalms collections across the Qumran manuscripts, the Septuagint versions, the Masoretic codices, and Syriac manuscripts, suggests that there was no definitive and canonical form of the book of Psalms when the scrolls were being written.[18] There would be no point, therefore, in including non-canonical psalms from 11Q5 among the Qumran wisdom texts but excluding those that later became canonical, such as Psalm 119.[19]

The very fact of textual pluriformity conceals another reason for studying biblical and non-biblical texts in an integrative manner. Recent scholarship on textual criticism in biblical studies has challenged the notion of an *Urtext*.[20] Just as it was true that collections of psalms existed in various forms

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in *Uncovering the Canon: Studies in Canonicity and Genizah*, ed. M. Ben-Sasson, R. Brody, A. Lieblich and D. Shalev (Jerusalem: Magnes, 2010), 11–23 (Hebrew).

17 Najman, "Vitality of Scripture."

18 Peter W. Flint, *The Dead Sea Psalms Scrolls and the Book of Psalms*, STDJ 17 (Leiden: Brill, 1997); Mroczek, *Literary Imagination*, 19–50.

19 There are 36 Psalms manuscripts according to Emanuel Tov's list (DJD 39:173–4). Manuscripts 4Q89 and 4Q90 both preserve material from Psalm 119 alone and Sanders proposes (DJD 4:108, 114) that the scrolls may have contained only this text. Since Psalm 119 is often considered a wisdom psalm, these manuscripts might also be counted among the wisdom texts found at Qumran.

20 Shemaryahu Talmon, "The Old Testament Text," in *The Cambridge History of the Bible: From the Beginnings to Jerome*, ed. P. R. Ackroyd and C. F. Evans (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1970), 159–99 (164–66); idem, "The Transmission History of the Text of the Hebrew Bible in the Light of Biblical Manuscripts from Qumran and Other Sites in the Judean Desert," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls Fifty Years after Their Discovery*, ed. L. H. Schiffman, E. Tov and J. C. VanderKam (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2000), 40–50 (45–47); Hindy Najman, "Configuring the Text in Biblical Studies," in *A Teacher for All Generations: Essays in Honor of James C. VanderKam*, ed. E. F. Mason, JSJSup 153 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 1:3–22; George J. Brooke, "The Qumran Scrolls and the Demise of the Distinction between Higher and Lower Criticism," in *Reading the Dead Sea Scrolls: Essays in Method* (Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2013), 1–17 (7–9; 13–14); Irene Peirano Garrison, "Source, Original, and Authenticity between Philology and Theology," in *Classical Philology and Theology: Entanglement, Disavowal, and the Godlike Scholar*, ed. C. Conybeare and S. Goldhill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 87–109. Najman's proposal to look at "traditionary processes" ("Configuring the Text," 7–8), rather than trying to establish the

and were being reorganized and reworked by scribes, it is equally true that the book of Proverbs existed in different versions.[21] There is no reason to assume that scribes would freely intervene in psalms ascribed to David but would feel inhibited to rework collections of Solomonic proverbs.[22] In other words, in the Second Temple period, the Proverbs of Solomon are in progress and are being copied and reworked in different circles. There are good arguments for suggesting that Instruction existed in more than one version and was a composition in progress.[23] So if there are different versions of Instruction and different versions of Proverbs, and both are in flux and being reworked, should we necessarily consider them as separate traditions? If these texts, which have multiple formal similarities, are found in the same collections, is it not conceivable that the same people who copied and reworked one text, also copied and reworked the other? In other words, there might be shared layers between these texts, and it would be a mistake not to take this possibility into consideration.

The point I am making could be considered superfluous since many scholars acknowledge that in the Second Temple period there is no fixed canon and that the manuscripts attest to textual fluidity. It could be suggested that the distinction between biblical and non-biblical texts is only made for practical reasons, to facilitate orientation, and to accommodate the distinct traditions of scholarship that have focused on biblical and non-biblical texts respectively. But precisely the fact that these traditions of scholarship remain largely distinct is problematic. The biblical manuscripts discovered at Qumran are not only the earliest witnesses to textual traditions of the Hebrew Bible against which the value of later textual traditions such as the Masoretic Text, the Samaritan Pentateuch and the Septuagint might be measured. They also teach

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Urtext or the earliest retrievable version, is elaborated further in her monograph *Reading Practices and the Vitality of Scripture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming).

21 Emanuel Tov, "Recensional Differences between the Masoretic Text and the Septuagint of Proverbs," in *Of Scribes and Scrolls: Studies on the Hebrew Bible, Intertestamental Judaism, and Christian Origins, Presented to John Strugnell on the Occasion of his Sixtieth Birthday*, ed. H. W. Attridge, J. J. Collins and T. H. Tobin (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1990), 43–56; Jan de Waard, "4QProv and Textual Criticism," *Textus* 19 (1998): 87–96.

22 On David's prophetic status, see: James L. Kugel, "David the Prophet," in *Poetry and Prophecy: The Beginnings of a Literary Tradition*, ed. J. L. Kugel (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990), 45–55; Mroczek, *Literary Imagination*, 51–85.

23 On the possibility that 4Q417 preserved an alternative, shorter version of Instruction (first suggested by A. Steudel and B. Lucassen), see Tigchelaar, *To Increase Learning*, 156–7, 191–2. The many small differences between 4Q416 iii and 4Q418 9 + 9a + 9b + 9c also suggest progressive writing (e.g., 4Q416 iii 9 ישיבכה / 4Q418 9 8 יושיבוכה; 4Q416 iii 10 למכבדיכה / 4Q418 9 9 למכבדכה; 4Q416 iii 16 מצעדיכה / 4Q418 9 17 מצעריכה).

us that we need to conceive in an entirely new way of the nature of textual traditions in the Second Temple period, and we have no data whatsoever on the status of these textual traditions before the Second Temple.[24]

Another challenge lies in generic classification. When do we call a text a "wisdom text"? The first team of editors was confronted with thousands of fragments which they had to organize, classify and assign to distinct reconstructed manuscripts.[25] According to what principles did the editors classify the fragmentary manuscripts? The first obvious division was between previously unknown compositions, and between compositions that could be identified because they were known from later manuscript traditions, i.e., the biblical texts, those texts known as pseudepigrapha and apocrypha (e.g., Tobit, Jubilees, Enoch),[26] and texts that had been discovered in the Cairo Genizah half a century earlier (the Damascus Document and Aramaic Levi). But how could the editors classify the assembled fragmentary manuscripts of texts that were completely unknown prior to the discoveries? It made sense to categorize and name the unknown texts according to their literary form. In many cases the editors used literary genres that had been identified by form criticism of the Hebrew Bible as a frame of reference.[27]

At this point, it is important to emphasize once again that the large majority of manuscripts is extremely fragmentary with sometimes only a few small fragments preserving a dozen of words in total remaining. How can we classify texts according to literary form if we can barely reconstruct the literary forms

24 García Martínez, "Rethinking the Bible"; Najman, "Vitality of Scripture"; Brooke, "Demise of the Distinction."

25 On the work of assembling manuscripts, see Eibert Tigchelaar, "Constructing, Deconstructing and Reconstructing Fragmentary Manuscripts: Illustrated by a Study of 4Q184 (4QWiles of the Wicked Woman)," in *Rediscovering the Dead Sea Scrolls: An Assessment of Old and New Approaches and Methods*, ed. M. L. Grossman (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010), 26–47.

26 On the history and usage of the categories pseudepigrapha and apocrypha, see Annette Yoshiko Reed, "The Modern Invention of 'Old Testament Pseudepigrapha,'" *JTS* (2009): 403–36; Loren Stuckenbruck, "Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha," in *The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism*, ed. J. J. Collins and D. C. Harlow (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010), 143–62; Eibert Tigchelaar, "Old Testament Pseudepigrapha and the Scriptures," in *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha and the Scriptures*, ed. E. Tigchelaar, BETL 270 (Leuven: Peeters, 2014), 1–18. For a discussion of pseudepigraphy as literary device and a critique of its evaluation as forgery, see Hindy Najman, *Seconding Sinai: The Development of Mosaic Discourse in Second Temple Judaism*, JSJSup 77 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 1–40; Hindy Najman and Irene Peirano Garrison, "Pseudepigraphy as an Interpretive Construct," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Fifty Years of the Pseudepigrapha Section at SBL*, ed. M. Henze and L. I. Lied (Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2019), 331–35.

27 Najman and Tigchelaar, "Preparatory Study of Nomenclature," 314–15.

from the remaining manuscript evidence? A good example is the final blessing in Aramaic Levi in which wisdom is the main theme.[28] If only fragments pertaining to this blessing would have been preserved, and not the narrative framework, it is highly likely that this manuscript would have been classified as a sapiential text. Vice versa, 4Q185, which is known as 4QSapiential Work, is classified as a wisdom text, because in terms of vocabulary and literary form the preserved lines have much in common with wisdom writings.[29] But the text is also presented as a first-person discourse that is addressed to "my people … who were saved from Egypt …" (4Q185 1–2 i 13–15), and it is entirely possible that the preserved text is part of a speech that was set in a narrative framework, a speech by Moses or one of the prophets, for example.[30] If fragments of such a narrative framework would have been preserved, it is unlikely that 4Q185 would have been classified as a wisdom text. An additional complication is that although official editions have now been published for practically all of the reconstructed manuscripts, the work of reconstruction is ongoing, and scholars are still reassigning fragments to other manuscripts than the ones in which they had first been published.[31] This means that because individual fragments are still moving between manuscripts, the overall character of a fragmentary text is not completely stable.

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28 Jonas C. Greenfield, Esther Eshel and Michael E. Stone, *The Aramaic Levi Document: Edition, Translation, Commentary* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 102–9; Eibert Tigchelaar, "Wisdom in the Dead Sea Scrolls: She's No Lady," in *Répresentations et personification de la sagesse dans l'antiquité et au-delà*, ed. S. Anthonioz and C. Dogniez (Leuven: Peeters, 2021), 207–19 (216–17). Note that Henryk Drawnel calls the fragmentary Levi Document a "wisdom text". Cf. Henryk Drawnel, *An Aramaic Wisdom Text from Qumran: A New Interpretation of the Levi Document*, JSJSup 86 (Leiden: Brill, 2004).

29 John M. Allegro, *Qumrân Cave 4. I (4Q158–4Q186)*, DJD 5 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1968), 85–87; Hermann Lichtenberger, "Der Weisheitstext 4Q185: eine neue Edition," in *The Wisdom Texts from Qumran and the Development of Sapiential Thought*, ed. C. Hempel, A. Lange and H. Lichtenberger, BETL 159 (Leuven: Peeters, 2002), 127–50; Mika S. Pajunen, "4QSapiential Admonitions B (4Q185): Unsolved Challenges of the Hebrew Text," in *The Mermaid and the Partridge*, ed. G. J. Brooke and J. Høgenhaven, STDJ 96 (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 191–220.

30 Compare the suggestion of Menahem Kister ("Wisdom Literature," 28–29, n. 74) that 4QMysteries may have been framed as a wisdom dispute between Moses and Aaron and the Egyptian *ḥarṭummîm*.

31 See Eibert Tigchelaar, "Constructing, Deconstructing and Reconstructing Fragmentary Manuscripts"; idem, "On the Unidentified Fragments of DJD XXXIII and PAM 43.680: A New Manuscript of 4QNarrative and Poetic Composition, and Fragments of 4Q13, 4Q269, 4Q525 and 4QSb (?)," *RevQ* 21 (2004): 477–85; idem, "Two Damascus Document Fragments and Mistaken Identities: The Mingling of Some Qumran Cave 4 and Cave 6 Fragments," *DSD* 28 (2021): 64–74; idem, "Reconsidering 4Q424 (4QLeviticus^{b}): Two Manuscripts and a New Fragment," *VT* 71 (2021): 263–73.

But even if we were to have access to completely preserved manuscripts, generic classification would still form a challenge.[32] First of all, the literary genres according to which ancient texts in Hebrew and Aramaic are being classified are inventions by scholars. There were no explicit literary norms according to which these compositions were formed, in contrast to certain Greek literary genres, which implies that in the context of ancient Jewish literature genre is merely an "idea."[33] This does not mean that composers of ancient Hebrew and Aramaic texts were not adopting distinct literary patterns or emulating specific literary forms. But as far as we know there was no explicit discourse on literary genre, which means that when we establish criteria for distinguishing genre X or Y, we should remain aware that these are modern scholarly constructs. This is not invalid as a method of study. But we should be careful not to reify our categories and project them onto an ancient body of literature, as if these categories had an independent existence outside of our frame of analysis.[34] This also means that we should not treat genres as boxes in which we can deposit texts, but rather allow for texts to "participate" in multiple genres, and thereby to bend and reshape generic categories.[35]

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32 For helpful discussions of genre and genre theory in the context of biblical studies, see: Carol A. Newsom, "Spying out the Land: A Report from Genology," in *Seeking out the Wisdom of the Ancients: Essays Offered to Michael V. Fox on the Occasion of his Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. R. Troxel, K. Friebel and D. Magary (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2005), 437–45; eadem, "Pairing Research Questions and Theories of Genre: A Case Study of the Hodayot," *DSD* 17 (2010): 270–88; George J. Brooke "Genre Theory, Rewritten Bible and Pesher," *DSD* 17 (2010): 361–86; and Hindy Najman, "The Idea of Biblical Genre: From Discourse to Constellation," in *Prayer and Poetry in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature: Essays in Honor of Eileen Schuller on the Occasion of her 65th Birthday*, ed. J. Penner, K. M. Penner and C. Wassen (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 307–21. A special issue of DSD in 2010 (17/3) was devoted to questions of genre in the study of the Dead Sea Scrolls. On genre and genre theory in the study of Literature more generally, see: Alastair Fowler, *Kinds of Literature: An Introduction to the Theory of Genres and Modes* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982); David Duff, ed., *Modern Genre Theory* (Harlow: Longman, 2000); John Frow, *Genre*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2015).

33 Najman, "Idea of Biblical Genre."

34 Najman develops the concept of constellations ("Idea of Biblical Genre," 316–17), invoking the work of Walter Benjamin and Max Weber, to bridge the gap between the perceived reality of ancient Jewish writings and the perspective of the reader. See further, Najman, *Losing the Temple and Recovering the Future: An Analysis of 4 Ezra* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 20–23.

35 See Newsom's discussion ("Spying out the Land," 439) of Jacques Derrida's reflections on genre. See also the helpful remarks of George Brooke on diachronic developments and generic instability in Brooke, "Genre Theory." For a study of genre bending as a literary technique in the Gospel of John, see Harold W. Attridge, "Genre Bending in the Fourth Gospel," *JBL* 121 (2002): 3–21.

We can use literary genre as a heuristic tool to compare forms and trace literary developments. But we cannot impose rigid boundaries, because with each new example, we need to reconsider the entire generic category.

I want to return now to wisdom. There has been an ongoing discussion on the definition of wisdom literature.[36] The writings that are classified as wisdom engage a range of literary genres, from proverbs, to riddles, to acrostic poems, to hymns, to pedagogical admonitions and instructions. Moreover, they span across different civilizations, epochs, and languages. The category of wisdom is a scholarly construct, and it is not a coincidence that scholars have not been able to reach agreement on what constitutes wisdom literature. This does not mean that the category has no heuristic value. Distinguishing a set of literary forms that are associated with wisdom can lead to helpful insights into the possible ways in which these are transformed and travel between periods and cultures.[37] But it would be a mistake to strictly delineate wisdom traditions and not to consider how these interact with literary forms that are associated with other traditions.[38] This would lead to a misconceived notion of the development and growth of literary traditions. Especially in the Second Temple period we encounter abundant amalgamation between literary forms

36 The definition of Crenshaw (*Old Testament Wisdom*, 11) is often cited and criticized for being too narrow in scope. The discovery of the scrolls has had an impact on discussions on the definition of wisdom, although within the study of biblical wisdom literature the Qumran texts often play a marginal role at best. See John J. Collins, "Wisdom Reconsidered, in Light of the Scrolls," *DSD* 4 (1997): 265–281; Matthew Goff, "Qumran Wisdom Literature and the Problem of Genre," *DSD* 17 (2010): 315–35; Benjamin G. Wright, "Wisdom Literature," in *Early Judaism and Its Modern Interpreters*, ed. M. Henze and R. A. Werline (Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2020), 437–59. In recent years, a number of scholars have argued that wisdom literature is not a legitimate category and that it merely represents a scholarly construct that was based on a selection of biblical books and projected onto ancient Near Eastern literature. See: Mark Sneed, "Is the 'Wisdom Tradition' a Tradition?" *CBQ* 73 (2011): 50–71; Weeks, "Is 'Wisdom Literature' a Useful Category?"; Kynes, *Obituary for "Wisdom Literature*." For a critique of this development, see Collins, "Wisdom as Genre"; Goff, "Pursuit of Wisdom at Qumran."

37 See e.g., Miriam Lichtheim, *Late Egyptian Wisdom Literature in the International Context: A Study of Demotic Instructions* (Freiburg: Universitätsverlag; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1983).

38 This does not mean that the books of the Hebrew Bible provide the preferred context for studying wisdom, to the exclusion of other (non-Hebrew or non-biblical) texts and traditions. Will Kynes argues (*Obituary for "Wisdom Literature"*) that the anachronistic category of wisdom literature should be abandoned and that instead Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Job should be seen as a "Biblical Corpus" that is to be reintegrated into the canon of the Hebrew Bible through intertextual reading. However, as noted above, for the period in which the wisdom books were written, the category of the biblical is no less anachronistic than the category of wisdom.

associated with wisdom and other genres such as prophecy and liturgy, and we see the dispersion of sapiential terminology across a range of texts.[39] This implies that there is no distinct tradition of wisdom that is reflected in the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Regarding the Qumran texts that have been classified as "wisdom," it was immediately recognized that these texts did not correspond to the classical forms of wisdom literature, but rather blended wisdom elements with features that are associated with other types of literature.[40] Many discussions on wisdom in the Dead Sea Scrolls focus on the question of how these texts relate to yet another ambiguous category of ancient literature: apocalyptic. Since the 1970s there has been significant debate on whether and how the notion of literary genre can be applied to the construct of apocalyptic.[41] In many ways, the category of apocalyptic poses even greater methodological challenges than the category of wisdom.[42] Nonetheless, scholars often speak of a mixture of wisdom and apocalyptic, especially in relation to the texts Instruction, Mysteries, and the Treatise of the Two Spirits.[43] The discussion on the blending

39 Michael E. Stone, "Lists of Revealed Things in the Apocalyptic Literature," in *Selected Studies in Pseudepigrapha and Apocrypha* (Leiden: Brill, 1991), 379–418 (390–91); Kister, "Wisdom Literature," 19.

40 Collins, "Wisdom Reconsidered"; Kister, "Wisdom Literature."

41 Klaus Koch, *The Rediscovery of Apocalyptic* (Naperville: Allenson, 1972); Paul D. Hanson, "Apocalypse, Genre" and "Apocalypticism" in *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible Supplementary Volume* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1976); Stone, "Lists of Revealed Things"; John J. Collins, "Introduction: Towards the Morphology of a Genre," *Semeia* 14 (1979): 1–20; Newsom, "Spying out the Land"; Hindy Najman, "The Inheritance of Prophecy in Apocalyptic," in John J. Collins (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Apocalyptic Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 36–48; Najman, *Losing the Temple*, 20–23; Collins, "The Genre of Apocalypse Reconsidered," *ZAC* 20 (2016): 21–40.

42 Newsom, "Spying out the Land"; Najman, "Inheritance of Prophecy,"; Judith H. Newman, "The Participatory Past: Resituating Eschatology in the Study of Apocalyptic," *Early Christianity* 10 (2019): 1–20.

43 Lange, *Weisheit und Prädestination*, 301–6; Daniel J. Harrington, "Two Early Jewish Approaches to Wisdom: Sirach and Qumran Sapiential Work A," *JSP* 16 (1997): 25–38; James K. Aitken, "Apocalyptic, Revelation and Early Jewish Wisdom Literature" in *New Heaven and New Earth: Prophecy and the Millennium*, ed. P. J. Harland and R. Hayward, VTSup 77 (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 181–93; Torleif Elgvin, "Wisdom and Apocalypticism in the Early Second Century BCE: The Evidence of 4QInstruction," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls Fifty Years after Their Discovery*, ed. L. H. Schiffman, E. Tov and J. C. VanderKam (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2000), 226–47; Florentino García Martínez, "Wisdom at Qumran: Worldly or Heavenly?" in *Wisdom and Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in the Biblical Tradition*, ed. F. García Martínez, BETL 168 (Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 1–15; John J. Collins, "The Eschatologizing of Wisdom in the Dead Sea Scrolls," in Collins, Sterling and Clements, *Sapiential Perspectives*, 49–65; Matthew J. Goff, *The Worldly and Heavenly Wisdom of 4QInstruction*, STDJ 50 (Leiden: Brill, 2003); Goff, *Discerning Wisdom*; Kampen, *Wisdom Literature*, 12–15; Jean-Sébastien Rey, *4QInstruction: sagesse et eschatology*,

of wisdom and apocalyptic in Qumran texts has been influenced by the biblical scholar Gerhard von Rad, who argued several decades before the publication of the fragmentary wisdom texts that apocalyptic is an offshoot of wisdom literature.[44] Taking a closer look at the way in which von Rad understands wisdom and its relation to apocalyptic can be helpful for gaining some perspective in the discussions on Qumran wisdom texts.

According to von Rad, biblical wisdom is characterized by a deep concern for defining the limits of wisdom. In these writings we see the adoption of a new "secularized" worldview that grows out of a rational search for knowledge. The emergence of wisdom literature during the early monarchy could even be described as "a kind of enlightenment" that was inspired by the international wisdom movement.[45] Wisdom is acquired by empirical means, by observing the world, understanding social relations, and contemplating the order of nature. But at the same time, the wisdom of Israel emphasizes human limitations and teaches that the world is guided by divine rule into which humans have only very limited insight. Von Rad regards this dual perspective as a synthesis of the new "secularized" worldview, and the older notions of indigenous "religious" traditions.[46] The biblical sage perceives the regularity of social and natural phenomena and sees how every aspect of the world is measured and balanced according to predetermined patterns. But the sage also acknowledges that successfulness in life depends on divine sanction. The principles underlying the order of the world, the measurements of the cosmos, and the predetermined course of events, cannot ultimately be known. Human wisdom runs into its own limits when it tries to comprehend the details and hidden structures of cosmic order, which ultimately remain mysteries.[47]

STDJ 81 (Leiden: Brill, 2009); Matthew Goff, "Wisdom and Apocalypticism," in *The Oxford Handbook of Apocalyptic Literature*, ed. J. J. Collins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 52–68 (55–56); Jonathan Ben-Dov, "Family Relations and the Economic-Metaphysical Message of *Instruction*," *JSP* 30 (2020): 87–100 (89). Davis Hankins argues with respect to Instruction ("4QInstruction's Mystery and Mastery of Wisdom," *DSD* 23 [2016]: 183–205), that in terms of epistemology, it is difficult to make a strict distinction between wisdom and apocalyptic. In the past decades, the discussion on wisdom and apocalyptic has been stimulated enormously by the Wisdom and Apocalypticism program unit at SBL. See Lawrence M. Wills and Benjamin G. Wright, *Conflicted Boundaries in Wisdom and Apocalyptic* (Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2005).

44 Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, trans. D. M. G. Stalker (New York, NY: Harper & Row Publishers, 1965), 2:301–8. See now George J. Brooke, "Gerhard von Rad and the Study of Wisdom in Texts from the Qumran Caves," in *Gerhard von Rad and the Study of Wisdom Literature*, ed. T. J. Sandoval and B. U. Schipper (Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2022), 347–76.

45 Gerhard von Rad, *Wisdom in Israel*, trans. J. D. Martin (London: SCM Press, 1993), 58–61.

46 Von Rad, *Wisdom in Israel*, 97–100.

47 Von Rad, *Wisdom in Israel*, 107–8. Cf. Job 5:9; 11:7–8; 25:2–3; 36:26; Isa 40:28.

The concept of the limits of wisdom is important for understanding the relation between wisdom and apocalyptic. Where wisdom pauses at the limits of what can be known by human beings, apocalyptic emphatically transcends these limits. Traditional wisdom is interested in understanding the order of the cosmos and the structure of social reality, but apocalyptic wants to understand the hidden rules and mysteries that govern the world. Wisdom books preserve the teaching that everything occurs at its proper time, but apocalyptic literature goes beyond the bare facts and presents revealed knowledge of the divine determination of the times, the schematisation of history, and especially the time of the end.[48] Von Rad argues that wisdom and apocalyptic basically share the same approach to understanding the world, but what distinguishes them is that wisdom literature is much more reserved concerning the human capacity of knowing, while apocalyptic sages surpass these boundaries and acquire insight into heavenly secrets and mysteries through divine revelation.[49]

There seems to be much overlap between the areas of knowledge that interest apocalyptic sages and the prophets, but von Rad emphatically states that apocalyptic is a "child of wisdom" and is entirely unrelated to prophecy.[50] It might be true that the prophets are interested in revelations concerning the course of history and the future. However, von Rad claims that the ways in which apocalyptic and prophetic literature view history are fundamentally incompatible. The main reason for this strict distinction is that prophecy "is rooted in definite election traditions" and can never lead to the universalist view of history we encounter in apocalyptic.[51] This universalist approach is intrinsically related to the idea that everything that happens has been predetermined from the very beginning of time. There is one universal map for the course of history, and the roles of all creatures have been determined and assigned at the outset. Even if certain nations or individuals are given a distinct task within this masterplan, the overall perspective looks at humanity as a whole rather than at a specific nation (which von Rad argues distinguishes prophecy). According to von Rad, not one detail of this divine blueprint can be altered. This again is an important distinction from prophecy, in von Rad's reading. While the prophets teach that God's anger can be averted if people repent and change their ways, the apocalyptic teachers emphasize that God

48 Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, 2:306–8; idem, *Wisdom in Israel*, 263–69, 282.

49 On the limits of human wisdom that are breached by revelatory experience and the forms of knowledge that are revealed in this context, see Stone, "Lists of Revealed Things."

50 Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, 2:303–6; idem, *Wisdom in Israel*, 269–70.

51 Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, 2:303.

always already knows how humans will behave and also who is predetermined for destruction and who for salvation.[52]

Von Rad's strict distinction between prophetic literature on the one hand, and between wisdom and apocalyptic on the other, has received much critique.[53] If it is true for Isaiah that elements of wisdom are interwoven with prophecy,[54] then all the more so for texts from the late Second Temple period, in which varieties of literature that participate in authoritative collections are being studied and emulated indiscriminately. Precisely the deeper and hidden understanding of these texts is associated with revelation.[55] There also appears to be a particular teleological dimension to von Rad's argument when he makes such strict distinctions between the prophets' particularist conception of history and the universal perspective of apocalyptic. According to von Rad, apocalyptic is a necessary final stage in the historical process that prepares for the fulfilment of the Old Testament in the coming of Jesus Christ.[56]

The final section of von Rad's *Theology of the Old Testament* (Part three: "The Old Testament and the New") is entirely devoted to demonstrating how "… the way in which the Old Testament is absorbed in the New is the logical end of a process initiated by the Old Testament itself…."[57] Along these lines, von Rad argues that:

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52 Von Rad, *Wisdom in Israel*, 270.

53 Peter von der Osten-Sacken, *Die Apokalyptik in inhrem Verhältnis zu Prophetie und Weisheit* (München: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1969); Klaus Koch, *Ratlos vor der Apokalyptik* (Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1970), 43–45; Frank Moore Cross, "New Directions in the Study of Apocalyptic," *JTC* 6 (1969): 157–65; Paul D. Hanson, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), Stone, "Lists of Revealed Things," 400–9; Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, *Prophets of Old and the Day of the End: Zechariah, the Book of Watchers and Apocalyptic*, OTS 35 (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 9–11; James VanderKam, "Mantic Wisdom in the Dead Sea Scrolls," *DSD* 4 (1997): 336–53 (336–38); John J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), 20–21; Kister, "Wisdom Literature," 19–20; Hindy Najman, "The Inheritance of Prophecy in Apocalyptic," in Collins, *Oxford Handbook of Apocalyptic Literature*, 36–57; Goff, "Wisdom and Apocalypticism," 58–60.

54 See e.g., Isa 28:23–29 (cf. von Rad, *Wisdom in Israel*, 18, 140–41); Isa 40:12 (ibid., 19); Isa 40:28 (ibid., 108).

55 Menahem Kister, "Wisdom Literature," 21–22.

56 Von Rad's discussion of apocalyptic begins with the statement (*Old Testament Theology*, 2:301): "Even after prophecy had ceased Israel continued to look into the future and to speak of the eschatological events still to be realised." When explaining his view that the conceptions of history of prophecy and apocalyptic are incompatible, he emphasizes that (ibid., 2:303): "… even the son of man does not come from Israel, but 'with the clouds of heaven.'"

57 Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, 2:321.

> No special hermeneutic method is necessary to see the whole diversified movement of the Old Testament saving events, made up of God's promises and their temporary fulfilments, as pointing to their future fulfilment in Jesus Christ. This can be said quite categorically. The coming of Jesus Christ as a historical reality leaves the exegete no choice at all; he must interpret the Old Testament as pointing to Christ, whom he must understand in its light.[58]

The radical distinction between prophecy and apocalyptic serves von Rad's supersessionist agenda and obfuscates the interwovenness of law, prophecy and wisdom that is apparent throughout the textual evidence.[59]

The paradigm offered by von Rad has been influential for the ways in which scholars have approached the wisdom materials discovered at Qumran. Some have taken his views as a point of departure in studying the Qumran materials.[60] Others have rejected the theory that apocalyptic is unrelated to prophecy and is a pure descendent of the wisdom tradition.[61] But in either case the wisdom-apocalyptic model has framed the discussions of the fragmentary Qumran wisdom texts and much attention has been paid to the supposedly apocalyptic features of these texts, such as revealed knowledge, the immanency of the eschaton, and the divine determination of the times. These discussions have resulted in pertinent insights. But there are also limitations. As argued above, the texts participate in multiple literary genres and foregrounding wisdom and apocalyptic at the expense of other types of literature creates a new pigeonhole, which obscures important aspects of these texts. In particular, the relation to liturgy, commentary and rewriting has insufficiently been studied and understood.

A second problem is that generic distinctions are frequently interpreted as reflecting sociological distinctions (and what is called "*Sitz im Leben*"). This bears on the discussion concerning the relationship between wisdom and Torah. Scholars have observed that the Mosaic Torah is not an explicit theme

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58 Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, 2:374.

59 Compare also the following remark (von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, 2:357): "The Old Testament is a history book; it tells of God's history with Israel, with the nations, and with the world, from the creation of the world down to the last things, that is to say, down to the time when dominion over the world is given to the Son of Man (Dan 7:13f)."

60 Lange, *Weisheit und Prädestination*, 301–6. Cf. Brooke, "Gerhard von Rad," 360.

61 John J. Collins, "Wisdom, Apocalypticism and the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Jedes Ding hat seine Zeit … Studien zur Israelitischen und altorientalischen Weisheit. Diethelm Michel zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. A. A. Diesel et al. (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1996), 19–32; Goff, "Wisdom and Apocalypticism."

in many fragments of Instruction, for example, whereas we find some passages in Ben Sira and 4QBeatitudes that explicitly associate or even identify wisdom with Torah.[62] On this basis, some have argued that the communities behind texts like Instruction had little concern for the Torah of Moses and had alternative sources of authority.[63] The supposed existence of sapiential groups disinterested in Mosaic Torah is based entirely on the assumed absence of references to the Torah in fragmentary texts. While such absence could also be explained on other grounds, such as literary form or thematic focus, the fact is that both implicit and explicit references to Torah and commandments are pervasive in Instruction.[64] There is no external evidence for the existence of

62 Elgvin, "Wisdom and Apocalypticism," 237–38; John I. Kampen, "The Puzzle of Torah and the Qumran Wisdom Texts," in *HĀ-'ÎSH MŌSHE: Studies in Scriptural Interpretation in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature in Honor of Moshe J. Bernstein*, ed. B. Y. Goldstein, M. Segal and G. J. Brooke, STDJ 122 (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 190–209 (196); Benjamin Wold, *4QInstruction: Divisions and Hierarchies*, STDJ 123 (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 146, 184. On wisdom and Torah in the Dead Sea Scrolls, see further: John J. Collins, "The Transformation of Wisdom in Second Temple Judaism," *JSJ* 43 (2012): 455–74; William A. Tooman, "Wisdom and Torah at Qumran: Evidence from the Sapiential Texts," in Schipper and Teeter, *Wisdom and Torah*, 203–32; D. Andrew Teeter, "Torah, Wisdom, and the Composition of Rewritten Scripture: Jubilees and 11QPs[a] in Comparative Context," in Schipper and Teeter, *Wisdom and Torah*, 233–72; Elisa Uusimäki, *Turning Proverbs towards Torah: An Analysis of 4Q525* (Leiden: Brill, 2016); Kampen, "*Tôrah* and Wisdom in the Rule Texts from Qumran," in *Sacred Texts and Disparate Interpretations: Qumran Manuscripts Seventy Years Later*, ed. H. Drawnel, STDJ 133 (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 316–40.

63 Elgvin, "Wisdom and Apocalypticism," 237–38; Kampen, "Puzzle," 208; Wold, *4QInstruction*, 175.

64 Implicit references to the significance of the Torah and commandments in Instruction include: 4Q417 1 i 27 (לוא תתרו אחרי לבבכמ[ה] ואחרי ע'[נ]יכמה; refers to Num 15:39); 4Q418 184 3 (ופן תאוכל ושבעתה; refers to Dt 8:12); 4Q423 7 5–6 (ל]בלתי [שחוט אותו ואת בנו] ביום אחד; refers to Lev 22:28; cf. Qimron, *Dead Sea Scrolls*, 2:182). Explicit references to the Torah and commandments include: 4Q418 184 1 *par* 4Q423 11 2 (כאשר צו]ה ביד משה); 4Q416 2 iii 15–19 *par* 4Q418 9+9a–c 17–18; 10a–b 1–2 (כבוד אביכה ברישכה ואמכה במצעריכה; refers to Ex 20:12; Dt 5:15); 4Q416 2 iv 6–10 *par* 4Q418 10a–b 8–10; 4Q418a 18 4 (וכל שבועת אסרה לנדר נד[בה] הפר על מוצא פיכה; refers to Num 30:2–17). On the importance of Torah and commandments in Instruction, see further: Lange, *Weisheit und Prädestination*, 57–60; George J. Brooke, "Biblical Interpretation in the Wisdom Texts from Qumran," in Hempel, Lange and Lichtenberger, *Wisdom Texts from Qumran*, 201–220 (208–11); Lawrence H. Schiffman, "Halakhic Elements in the Sapiential Texts from Qumran," in Collins, Sterling and Clements, *Sapiential Perspectives*, 89–100; Menahem Kister, "Divorce, reproof, and other sayings in the Synoptic Gospels: Jesus traditions in the context of 'Qumranic' and other texts," in *Text, Thought, and Practice in Qumran and Early Christianity,* ed. R. A. Clements and D. R. Schwartz, STDJ 84 (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 195–229 (203–8, 220–22); Rey, *4QInstruction*, 285, 292; Teeter, "Torah, Wisdom and Rewritten Scripture," 251–53; Meike Christian, *Zu Entstehung und Theologie von 1/4QInstruction und der 'Zwei-Geister-Lehre'* (*1QS III,13–IV,26*): *Geheimwissen, Erwählung*

non-Mosaic sapiential groups in ancient Judaism, and the evidence that we do have at our disposal points in the opposite direction: various kinds of literature (including legal texts) were being copied, studied and taught within the same communities.[65]

The observation that the wisdom texts discovered at Qumran contain elements occurring in compositions categorized as apocalyptic is not mistaken. But rather than classifying such texts as "apocalyptic wisdom" and forging a new category, I want to propose that we first explore the many intimate connections and interactions with other types of literature from the period. In the Qumran texts, wisdom reaches beyond its limits. For a deeper appreciation of the rich literary and conceptual landscapes we encounter in the scrolls, we need to move beyond the limits we impose with the categories that we apply. This pertains to genre, this pertains to canonicity, but this also pertains to a third categorization that is highly influential for the ways in which scholars read the texts from Qumran.

2 The Sectarian Divide

Within scholarship on wisdom in the Dead Sea Scrolls the distinction between "sectarian" and "non-sectarian" texts plays a fundamental role. This categorization has even resulted in the formation of two opposite views on the nature of the Qumran wisdom texts. One group of scholars claims that these wisdom texts are non-sectarian, i.e., these texts were not composed by the community or sect that owned the scrolls but were merely preserved and copied by them. Another group of scholars holds that all or most of the wisdom texts were composed by this community or sect. This divergence of opinion has resulted in an impasse in scholarship that makes further discussion difficult. In what follows I will take a closer look at the reasons and criteria for classifying wisdom texts as either sectarian or non-sectarian and problematize this categorization. But first, I want to provide some context for the practice of categorizing Qumran texts as sectarian and non-sectarian.

During the first stages of research on the Dead Sea Scrolls, scholars adopted the convention of distinguishing between three categories: (1) biblical texts,

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und Prädestination, STDJ 135 (Leiden: Brill, 2022), 133–37; Shlomi Efrati, "Law and Order: Priests, Commandments, and Cosmic Mysteries in the Qumran Composition Instruction," *JAJ* 13 (2022): 314–343.

65 Kister, "Wisdom Literature," 21–22. On reading culture and the interaction between practices of reading and writing reflected in scrolls, see Mladen Popović, "Reading, Writing and Memorializing Together: Reading Culture in Ancient Judaism and the Dead Sea Scrolls in a Mediterranean Context," *DSD* 24 (2017): 447–70.

(2) apocryphal and pseudepigraphic texts, and (3) sectarian texts.[66] This categorization made sense as an *ad hoc* instrument to organize the voluminous corpus, but it has been noted that the three categories are of different kinds and partly overlap.[67] This can easily lead to confusion. The category of sectarian, for example, sometimes refers to authorship and sometimes to style or content.[68] The publication of the Temple Scroll in 1977 prompted a critical article by Baruch Levine who questioned the sectarian provenance of this text, arguing that the calendrical and legal issues set out in the scroll need not have originated within a sectarian context.[69] This stimulated the discussion on the question whether all of the texts previously classified as sectarian were necessarily to be attributed to the same community. Further debate was incited by the polemical contributions of Norman Golb, who emphatically rejected the hypothesis that the scrolls were left in the caves by a sectarian community living in the Judean desert.[70] Golb argued that the scrolls had instead been deposited in the Qumran caves by Jerusalemites who wanted to bring the treasures of the city into safety in the years 66–70 CE during the first Roman war.

Subsequent decades saw the emergence of an elaborate debate on the criteria for establishing whether a text from Qumran was composed by the community or not. Most scholars regarded the presence of features associated with the community as an indication of sectarian authorship. Among the characteristics that are considered to be sectarian are the following: adherence to a 364-day calendar, strong concerns for ritual purity, the dating of compositions after the supposed foundation of the community (around 150 BCE), literary genre (with rules and pesher considered typically sectarian genres).[71]

66 Frank Moore Cross, *The Ancient Library of Qumran*, 3rd ed. (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 36–46; Józef T. Milik, *Ten Years of Discovery in the Wilderness of Judaea* (London: SCM Press, 1959), 20–43; James C. VanderKam, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Today* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1994), 29–70.

67 Eibert Tigchelaar, "Classifications of the Collection of Dead Sea Scrolls and the Case of *Apocryphon of Jeremiah C*," *JSJ* 43 (2012): 519–50 (520).

68 Tigchelaar, "Classifications," 521.

69 Baruch A. Levine, "The Temple Scroll: Aspects of its Historical Provenance and Literary Character," *BASOR* 232 (1978): 5–23.

70 Norman Golb, "The Problem of Origin and Identification of the Dead Sea Scrolls," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 124 (1980), 1–24.

71 Hermann Lichtenberger, *Studien zum Menschenbild in Texten der Qumrangemeinde* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1980), 15–19; Carol Newsom, "'Sectually Explicit' Literature from Qumran," in *The Hebrew Bible and its Interpreters*, ed. W. H. Propp (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 167–87; Esther G. Chazon, "Is *Divrei Ha-Meo'orot* a Sectarian Prayer?" In *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Forty Years of Research*, ed. D. Dimant and U. Rappaport, STDJ 10 (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 3–17; Devorah Dimant, "The Qumran Manuscripts: Contents and Significance," in *History, Ideology and Bible Interpretation in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Collected Studies*, FAT 90 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 27–56;

Scribal practices associated with sectarian scribes have also been suggested as a criterion.[72] But since the large Isaiah scroll also features the peculiar Qumran scribal practices, it is obvious that these features could only be relevant to the provenance of a copy not to the provenance of a composition. Other features such as the 364-day calendar and a strong concern for purity are not necessarily sectarian.[73] Moreover, the chronology of the archaeological site of Qumran has been revisited, and its occupation prior to 100 BCE has been challenged, which has implications for the date of the supposed foundation of the community.[74]

For these reasons Devorah Dimant has argued that the criteria for classifying texts as sectarian should be based on formal features alone, namely on specific vocabulary that is only found in sectarian texts.[75] This procedure of course requires that we know which texts are sectarian in the first place. Dimant designates a core corpus from which such features might be deduced. There is an obvious problem of circularity here and the fragmentary status of most materials implies that we can never know whether the lost portions of those texts

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Lange, *Weisheit und Prädestination*, 6–20; idem, "Kriterien essenischer Texte," in *Qumran Kontrovers*, ed. J. Frey and H. Stegemann (Paderborn: Bonifatius, 2003), 56–69; Charlotte Hempel, "Kriterien zur Bestimmung 'essenischer Verfasserschaft' von Qumrantexten," in Frey and Stegemann, *Qumran Kontrovers*, 71–85. For a review of discussions on criteria for sectarian texts, see Devorah Dimant, "The Vocabulary of the Qumran Sectarian Texts," in *History, Ideology and Bible Interpretation*, 57–100 (57–65).

72 Emanuel Tov, "The Orthography and Language of the Hebrew Scrolls at Qumran and the Origin of these Scrolls," *Textus* 13 (1986): 31–57. For a detailed description of the features that Tov identifies with the Qumran scribal practice, see idem, *Scribal Practices Reflected in the Texts Found in the Judean Desert*, STDJ 54 (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 261–73, 77–278, 337–43.

73 On the lack of evidence for considering the 364-day calendar a sectarian institution, see Matthias Albani, "Zur Rekonstruktion eines verdrängten Konzepts: Der 364-Tage-Kalender in der gegenwärtigen Forschung," in *Studies in the Book of Jubilees*, ed. M. Albani, J. Frey and A. Lange, TSAJ 65 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997), 79–125 (97); Sacha Stern, *Calendar and Community: A History of Jewish Calendar. 2nd Century BCE to 10th Century CE* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 16–18; idem, "The 'Sectarian' Calendar of Qumran," in *Sects and Sectarianism in Jewish History*, ed. S. Stern (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 39–62. Vered Noam challenges the widely held notion that halakhic purity rulings in the Dead Sea Scrolls are unusually stringent ("Stringency in Qumran: A Reassessment," *JSJ* 40 [2009]: 342–55) and she argues that in many cases the rulings in the scrolls derive from a plain sense interpretation of scripture, whereas Tannaitic halakhah often represents revolutionary reinterpretations that are less stringent in purity rulings in a number of cases, although they are more stringent in some other cases.

74 Jodi Magness, "The Chronology of the Settlement at Qumran in the Herodian Period," *DSD* 2 (1995): 58–65; eadem, *The Archaeology of Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2021), 64–81.

75 Dimant, "Vocabulary," 64.

contained a smaller or larger amount of terminology that we have designated as sectarian.

The discussion on classification has had a major impact on the study of wisdom literature from Qumran. This impact is exemplified in a striking way by John Strugnell who radically changed his own position on the classification of one of the most important wisdom texts. Strugnell was responsible for editing fragments from cave 4 that he assigned to 4Q415, 4Q416, 4Q417, 4Q418 (4Q418a, b) and 4Q423 and which he later gave the title 4QInstruction (or Musar le-Mevin). At the initial stages Strugnell assumed that this was a wisdom composition of the Qumran sect which contained moral teachings of the community.[76] However, when he published the official edition of the manuscripts of Instruction in 1999, he had completely altered his view and argued that because the text lacked sectarian features it should be considered a non-sectarian composition that was composed long before the sect had been founded.[77] This reversal of opinion is in line with the broader developments in scholarship since the late 1970s on which Strugnell himself reflected explicitly.[78] In the past decades, many scholars have given serious consideration to questions of classification. Nonetheless, there continues to be a thorough disagreement on the status of wisdom texts from Qumran.

Most authors follow Strugnell in viewing Instruction and other wisdom texts as representative of broader strands of Jewish thinking in the 3rd or 2nd century BCE. But a minority of leading scholars claims that most of these wisdom texts, including Instruction, were composed within the sectarian community that owned the scrolls. These different categorizations result in radically different interpretations of countless details in these texts. As a first step in bridging some of these contradicting readings, it will be helpful to take a closer look at the arguments that scholars introduce for classifying the Qumran wisdom texts as either sectarian or non-sectarian.

Many scholars argue that these texts are the products of wisdom teachers and schools that represent an ongoing sapiential tradition that was part of the "mainstream" intellectual world of Second Temple Judaism.[79] The perceived

76 Strugnell, "Travail d'édition," 64–65.

77 Strugnell, Harrington and Elgvin, DJD 34:20–22.

78 John Strugnell, "Moses-Pseudepigrapha at Qumran: 4Q375, 4Q376, and Similar Works," in *Archaeology and History in the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. L. H. Schiffman (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990), 221–56 (221, 247–48).

79 Adam S. van der Woude, "Wisdom at Qumran," in *Wisdom in Ancient Israel: Essays in Honour of J. A. Emerton* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 244–56 (256); Daniel J. Harrington, *Wisdom Texts from Qumran* (London: Routledge, 1996), 84–86; Goff, *Discerning Wisdom*, 301–6; Lange, "Wisdom Literature"; Kampen, *Wisdom Literature*, 23;

absence of sectarian features in the wisdom texts has led to the view that they had not been composed by the sectarian community but were merely copied and preserved as part of their library. The most important examples are: Mysteries; Beatitudes; 4Q184 (Wiles of the Wicked Woman); 4Q185 Sapiential text B; 4Q424; 4Q185; the Two Spirits Treatise (1QS 3:13–4:26); and Instruction, which in many ways is paradigmatic for the discussion of the broader collection of wisdom texts. The argumentation for viewing Instruction as a non-sectarian text is twofold. On the one hand Instruction would lack terminology relating to the organization and worldview of the community.[80] On the other hand, the social setting that is read into the text would be distinct from that of the Qumran community.

According to more traditional reconstructions, the community at Qumran lived a secluded life. The members shared possessions and obeyed strict disciplinary rules. They observed high standards of purity and were partly or completely celibate.[81] In contrast to this model, the addressees of Instruction appear to be integrated in the larger society and interact with people who do not belong to their group.[82] They have private possessions and financial dealings, even debts.[83] It is not clear from the fragments whether or not the addressees

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George J. Brooke, "The Place of Wisdom in the Formation of the Movement behind the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Goochem in Mokum, Wisdom in Amsterdam*, ed. G. J. Brooke and P. Van Hecke, OTS 68 (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 20–33 (23–25); Elisa Uusimäki, "Wisdom Texts from the Dead Sea Scrolls" in the *Wiley Blackwell Companion to Wisdom Literature*, ed. S. L. Adams and M. J. Goff (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2020), 122–38 (122).

80 Lange, *Weisheit und Prädestination*, 48–49; Strugnell, Harrington and Elgvin, DJD 34:22–31; Goff, *Worldly and Heavenly Wisdom*, 223–26; Benjamin G. Wold, *Women, Men and Angels: The Qumran Wisdom Document Musar leMevin and its Allusions to Genesis Creation Traditions*, WUNT 2.201 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 19–20; Samuel L. Adams, *Wisdom in Transition: Act and Consequence in Second Temple Instructions*, JSJSup 125 (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 268–69; Rey, *4QInstruction*, 335; Wold, *4QInstruction*, 8–11, 198–201.

81 The question whether and to what extent members of the Qumran community would have been celibate is disputed. For an overview, see Eileen Schuller, "Women in the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls after Fifty Years: A Comprehensive Assessment*, ed. P. W. Flint and J. C. VanderKam (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 2:117–144; Cecilia Wassen, *Women in the Damascus Document* (Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2005), 5–9; Maxine L. Grossman, "Women and Men in the Rule of the Congregation: A Feminist Critical Assessment," in Grossman, *Rediscovering the Dead Sea* Scrolls, 229–45; Paul Heger, "Celibacy in Qumran: Hellenistic Fiction or Reality? Qumran's Attitude toward Sex," *RevQ* 26 (2013): 53–90.

82 Strugnell, Harrington and Elgvin, DJD 34:20; Eibert Tigchelaar, "The Addressees of 4QInstruction," in *Sapiential, Liturgical and Poetical Texts from Qumran*, ed. D. K. Falk, F. García Martínez and E. M. Schuller, STDJ 35 (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 62–75 (74–75).

83 Catherine M. Murphy, *Wealth in the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Qumran Community*, STDJ 40 (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 163–209; Goff, *Worldly and Heavenly Wisdom*, 140–62; Benjamin G. Wright, "The Categories of Rich and Poor in the Qumran Sapiential

observe high standards of purity, but they are certainly not celibate.[84] In short, the lack of sectarian features and the distinct social setting of Instruction are taken as indications that the composition is non-sectarian.

Scholars making this argument generally do recognize the overlap in terminology with texts such as the Serek ha-Yaḥad and the Hodayot. They usually explain this overlap as influence of the sapiential texts on the sectarian texts: the sectarian composers had Instruction and other wisdom texts in their library and adopted terms and concepts from these texts. The fact that at least eight copies of Instruction were hidden in Caves 1 and 4 suggests that the composition was held in high esteem by the community or communities that owned the scrolls. This could support the argument that the Serek and the Hodayot were influenced by the teachings and phraseology of Instruction.[85] The problem with this line of reasoning, however, is that we have no evidence that the sapiential texts were actually composed prior to the sectarian ones. There are no internal clues for dating the wisdom texts and none of the manuscripts are dated earlier than the oldest manuscript of the Serek.[86] The argument for the chronological priority of the wisdom texts is circular. The only reason for dating these compositions earlier is the assumption that they had not been written by the sect and must therefore have been written before its

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Literature," in Collins, Sterling and Clements, *Sapiential Perspectives*, 101–23 (109–23); Kister, "Wisdom Literature at Qumran," 1:313–316); Jean-Sébastien Rey, "Prêt et cautionnement dans 4QInstruction et dans Ben Sira," in *L'identité à travers l'éthique. Nouvelles perspectives sur la formation des identités collectives dans le monde gréco-romain*, ed. K. Berthelot, R. Naiweld and D. Stökl Ben Ezra (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015), 149–67; Ben-Dov, "Family Relations"; Amit Gvaryahu, "Lending at Interest in Rabbinic Literature: Law, Homiletics, and Cultural Contacts" (PhD diss., The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2019), 33–41.

84 Strugnell, Harrington and Elgvin, DJD 34:20; Lange, *Weisheit und Prädestination*, 49.

85 Strugnell, Harrington and Elgvin, DJD 34: 34; Goff, *Worldly and Heavenly Wisdom*, 226–27; idem, *4QInstruction*, 28; Adams, *Wisdom in Transition*, 244; Rey, *4QInstruction*, 28, 336.

86 Strugnell classifies 4Q416 and 4Q418 (DJD 34:76, 214–17) according to Frank Moore Cross' typology as late Hasmonean/early Herodian hands, i.e., second half of the 1st century BCE. The earliest manuscript of the Serek was dated by Cross to the second half of the 2nd century BCE. See James H. Charlesworth, *The Dead Sea Scrolls. Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek Texts with English Translations. Volume 1: Rule of the Community and Related Documents* (Tübingen and Louisville, KY: Mohr and John Knox, 1994), 57. Cross' typology for the paleographical dating of ancient Hebrew manuscripts is currently being assessed by Mladen Popović with the aid of new carbon-14 dating samples and new AI technology that assists in handwriting recognition. For preliminary results, see: Maruf Dhali, Mladen Popović, Lambert Schomaker and Eibert Tigchelaar, "A Digital Palaeographic Approach towards Writer Identification in the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Proceedings of the 6th International Conference on Pattern Recognition Applications and Methods—Volume 1: ICPRAM, 693–702, 2017, Porto, Portugal*, https://doi.org/10.5220/0006249706930702.

foundation. But first of all, we cannot exclude the possibility that the community (or communities) adopted contemporaneous compositions from the outside. More importantly, there are no arguments to support a relative dating of the wisdom texts vis-à-vis sectarian texts. There is in fact a significant degree of terminological overlap and there is no reason why this vocabulary could only be used to prove literary dependence in one direction and not in the other, or even shared provenance.

According to several scholars, Instruction is quoted in the Hodayot, which is used as an argument for dating Instruction in the late third or early second century BCE.[87] There are indeed some close correspondences including a verbatim parallel that may attest to a literary relation of some kind.[88] But none of these instances require literary dependence in one direction. From a literary-historical perspective, the parallels could just as well be explained by arguing that Instruction was based on the Hodayot, that they influenced each other, or that both texts were based on a common source.[89] In the end there is only one argument that could sustain the chronological priority of Instruction over against the Serek and the Hodayot: the argument that Instruction is a non-sectarian text that was adopted in the sectarian library. But this argument depends on creating a subdivision between two sets of terminology within the Serek and the Hodayot: one set of sectarian terminology, which is absent from the wisdom texts, and one set of non-sectarian terminology, which *is* present in the wisdom texts but is regarded as non-original within the sectarian texts. This subdivision is completely arbitrary, and we cannot exclude the possibility that precisely the terminology shared with the wisdom texts is originally sectarian terminology, if we are willing to use this category.

There are further problems with this line of reasoning. If scholars automatically assume that a text without sectarian features is non-sectarian, then they are, in the words of Carol Newsom, "conflating the categories of content/style and authorship."[90] Newsom emphasizes that certain literary genres, such as prayers and liturgical texts, are generally composed in stereotypical language.

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87 Lange, *Weisheit und Prädestination*, 46; idem, "Wisdom Literature," 463; Rey, *4QInstruction*, 335; Matthew J. Goff, *4QInstruction* (Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2013), 28–29; Wold, *4QInstruction*, 5, 119–20, 200. Adams similarly dates Instruction in relation to the Hodayot (*Wisdom in Transition*, 244), but argues that the latter were not composed until the first century BCE, which in his view would imply a late 2nd century BCE date for Instruction.

88 4Q418 55 10 (דעתם יכבדו איש מרעהו) and 1QH^{a} 18:29–30 (ולפי דעתם יכבדו איש מרעהו).

89 Compare the parallel expression in 1QSa 1:17–18 וחזק מתנו למעמדו עם תום דרכו **לפי שכלו** **יכבדו איש מרעהו** יביאת עבודת מעשו בתוך אחיו בין רוב למועט באלה. This passage indicates that similar phraseology was more widespread. Note its derivation from Prov 12:8 לפי שכלו יהלל איש.

90 Newsom, "'Sectually Explicit' Literature," 175.

There is no reason to assume that all psalms and prayers composed by members of the community would be markedly different from those composed by non-members.[91] The same holds true for wisdom texts. If there is an established literary form that is represented by texts such as Proverbs and Ben Sira, it is entirely possible that a sectarian author would seek to emulate this form and would compose a sapiential text that has few sectarian features.

With regard to social setting, it is certainly true that the wisdom texts are not explicitly addressed to monastic-like communities living in the desert. But since the beginning of Qumran scholarship it has been recognized that the community behind the scrolls could have consisted of various branches.[92] The editors of Instruction entertain the possibility that it was composed for an order of the Essenes that "married, owned property, and observed distinct legal practices."[93] In recent years, a number of scholars have argued that the community behind the scrolls was a broader and more diversified movement.[94] There appears to be nothing in the implied social setting of wisdom texts like Instruction which a priori excludes them from being part of that movement. Thus, neither the supposed absence of sectarian features nor the social setting of wisdom texts indicates that they are necessarily non-sectarian.

The Two Spirits Treatise (TST) is a special case among the texts that are categorized as wisdom, because it is embedded in Serek ha-Yaḥad, which is *the* sectarian text par excellence. TST is often seen as an independent composition because it has a distinctive style and constitutes a separate literary unit within the Serek. In addition, this unit is certainly absent from the manuscript 4Qs^{d} and may not have been included in other Serek manuscripts as well. From these facts Hartmut Stegemann inferred that the unit originates in a non-sectarian environment.[95] Armin Lange builds on Stegemann's hypothesis and argues

91 Newsom, "'Sectually Explicit' Literature," 175–76.

92 Cross, *Ancient Library*, 70–71.

93 Strugnell, Harrington and Elgvin, DJD 34:36; cf. 21.

94 John J. Collins, "Forms of Community in the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Emanuel: Studies in Hebrew Bible, Septuagint, and Dead Sea Scrolls in Honor of Emanuel Tov*, ed. S. M. Paul et al., VTSup 94 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 97–111; idem, *Beyond the Qumran Community: The Sectarian Movement of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010); Alison Schofield, *From Qumran to the Yaḥad: A New Paradigm of Textual Development for the Community Rule*, STDJ 77. (Leiden: Brill, 2009). See also the articles in the thematic issue "The Community of the Dead Sea Scrolls," ed. S. Metso and H. Najman, *DSD* 16.3 (2009).

95 Hartmut Stegemann, *Die Essener, Qumran, Johannes der Täufer und Jesus* (Freiburg: Herder, 1993), 154–56. In an earlier article Stegemann suggested the possibility that TST is a "non-sectarian" text but that further research was required to settle the issue. Cf. idem, "Zu Textbestand und Grundgedanken von 1QS III, 13-IV, 26," *RevQ* 13 (1988): 95–130

that TST differs from sectarian texts in several respects.[96] He does not discern any distinctive sectarian terminology in TST and argues that the text uses designations for God and for the evil sphere that are not to be expected in sectarian texts. Moreover, he assumes that Torah observance does not play any role in TST and argues that the covenant only has eschatological significance. The view of Stegemann and Lange that TST is an independent non-sectarian text was accepted by a number of scholars.[97]

The argument that TST is non-sectarian runs into similar difficulties encountered in the argument that Instruction is non-sectarian. The absence of sectarian terminology does not evince that the text is not of sectarian provenance. Moreover, the arguments that TST does not develop the theme of Torah observance and only refers to an eschatological covenant are imprecise. The themes of obedience to the covenant and observance of the commandments are in fact of great significance in TST. Although these themes remain mostly implicit, the text contains phraseology that unmistakably alludes to them.[98] John Collins argues that TST reinterprets existing covenant traditions within a dualistic and deterministic worldview.[99] The presence of the peculiar combination of dualism and determinism in other sectarian texts leads him to the conclusion that TST is likewise sectarian.

It is difficult to verify whether the ideas singled out by Collins are exclusively sectarian or whether they were shared in broader circles. However, the location of TST within the Serek, immediately following the ceremony of the covenant (1QS 1:1–3:12), does suggest a connection between the Serek's understanding of the covenant and the theories set forth in TST. This connection is corroborated by evident terminological links between the covenant ceremony and the

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(127–28). In his monograph he claims (*Die Essener*, 154) without further argument that TST "… ist sicher vor-essenischer Herkunft und vom Babylonischen Judentum beeinflußt."

96 Lange, *Weisheit und Prädestination*, 127–28.

97 Jörg Frey, "Different Patterns of Dualistic Thought in the Qumran Library: Reflections on Their Background and History," in *Legal Texts and Legal Issues*, ed. J. M. Baumgarten, STDJ 23 (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 275–335 (295–300); Tigchelaar, *To Increase Learning*, 194–95; idem, "'These are the Names of the Spirits of …': A Preliminary Edition of 4QCatalogue of Spirits (4Q230) and new manuscript evidence for the Two Spirits Treatise (4Q257 and 1Q29a)," *RevQ* 21 (2004): 529–47 (546); Loren Stuckenbruck, "The Interiorization of Dualism within the Human Being in Second Temple Judaism: The Treatise of the Two Spirits (1QS III:13–IV:26)," in *Light Against Darkness: Dualism in Ancient Mediterranean Religion and the Contemporary World*, ed. A. Lange, B. H. Reynolds III and R. Styers (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011), 145–68 (161).

98 See page 27 footnote 100 and see page 88.

99 John J. Collins, *Scriptures and Sectarianism: Essays on the Dead Sea Scrolls*, WUNT 332 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 193.

Treatise.[100] The issue is further complicated by evidence from 1Q29a, 4QS[a] and 4QS[c] which suggests that the Treatise existed in different versions.[101] The combination of the literary development of TST and terminological links with 1QS 1–3 poses a challenge to the position that TST as it occurs in 1QS 3:13–4:26 is a non-sectarian text. It is the 1QS version of TST that has numerous correspondences with Instruction. Thus, the argument that both TST and Instruction originate in similar non-sectarian circles does not have a solid basis.[102]

Several scholars have pointed out that a large number of distinctive phrases and concepts that are typically associated with the community are found in the Qumran wisdom texts.[103] Menahem Kister, for example, argues that peculiar terminology and imagery related to measurement plays a central role in the sectarian conceptual world and also abounds in the wisdom texts from Qumran. Moreover, he observes striking parallels between Instruction (4Q418 77) and passages in the Serek that deal with the inspection of candidates

100 See the following six examples: (i) 1QS 1:10 (בגורלו בעצת אל) with 1QS 4:24 (כירשתו בגורל עול); (ii) 1QS 1:23–25 (נעוינו פשענו ... בליעל במשלת וחטאתם אשמתם כול פשעי חטאנו הרשענו) with 1QS 3:22 (כול חטאתם ועוונתם ואשמתם ופשעי מעשיהם בממשלתו); (iii) 1QS 2:20 (לפי רוחותם) with 1QS 3:14 (לכול מיני רוחותם); (iv) 1QS 3:7–9 (... ברוח קדושה לטהרו ברוח קודש מכול עוונותו ... יטהר מכול בשרו להזות במי נדה יטהר בשרו) with 1QS 4:21 (עלילות רשעה ויז עליו רוח אמת כמי נדה); and (v) 1QS 3:11–12 (לברית יחד עולמים) with 1QS 4:22 (לברית עולמים). Note also (vi) the phrase בני אור in 1QS 1:9; 2:16 and in 1QS 3:13, 24, 25.

101 Tigchelaar, "These are the Names," 538–47. For discussions on the literary development of TST, see also Charlotte Hempel, "The Treatise on the Two Spirits and the Literary History of the Rule of the Community," in *Dualism in Qumran*, ed. Géza Xeravits (London: T&T Clark, 2010), 102–20; Albert L. A. Hogeterp, "The Eschatology of the Two Spirits Treatise Revisited," *RevQ* 23 (2007): 247–59.

102 Recently, Meike Christian argued ("The Literary Development of the 'Treatise of the Two Spirits' as Dependent on Instruction and the Hodayot," in *Law, Literature, and Society in Legal Texts from Qumran*, ed. J. Jokiranta and M. Zahn, STDJ 128 [Leiden: Brill, 2019], 153–84) that rather than being a pre-sectarian text that has influenced sectarian texts, TST is a composition written in the later stages of the rewriting of the Serek that was itself influenced by the Hodayot and Instruction. Cf. eadem, *Zu Entstehung und Theologie von 1/4QInstruction und der 'Zwei-Geister-Lehre.'*

103 Dimant, "Qumran Manuscripts," 45; eadem, "Vocabulary," 91–93; Geza Vermes, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English* (London: Penguin, 2004), 425; Daryl F. Jefferies, *Wisdom at Qumran: A Form-Critical Analysis of the Admonitions in 4QInstruction* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2002), 59–70; Menahem Kister, "Physical and Metaphysical Measurements Ordained by God in the Literature of the Second Temple Period," in *Reworking the Bible: Apocryphal and Related Texts at Qumran*, ed. E. G. Chazon, D. Dimant and R. A. Clements, STDJ 58 (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 153–76 (170–71); idem, "Divorce," 222; Émile Puech, "'Les oeuvres de la Loi': Mariage et divorce à Qumrân et dans les lettres de Paul," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls and Pauline Literature*, ed. J.-S. Rey, STDJ 102 (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 143–69 (153 n. 23); Qimron, *Dead Sea Scrolls*, 2:146.

and members (1QS 5:20–25; 6:12–23).[104] Both texts describe the examination of the "spirit" (רוח) of individuals and use similar vocabulary in this context. In addition, Kister notes common ground in Instruction and the Serek with regard to the practice of reproving one's fellow in "humility and merciful love" (ענוה ואהבת חסד). He also recognizes sectarian elements in other wisdom texts such as Mysteries and 4QBeatitudes.[105] The details which he introduces into the discussion are so pertinent and the correspondences between texts which he identifies are so compelling, that any argument for a separate provenance of these texts faces a major challenge: if these texts were indeed composed in distinct circles, then how can we explain that the fabric of these texts, the language and the thoughts they express, is so deeply interwoven?

Devorah Dimant argues that the "cumulative weight" of the correspondences with sectarian texts and the large number of sectarian phrases in Instruction and other wisdom texts from Qumran indicate that these are also sectarian.[106] The question that arises in response to this approach is to what extent the sectarian features of these texts are exclusively sectarian. The remaining fragments do not seem to contain terminology that is related to the community (e.g., עדה, יחד), its organizational structure (e.g., רבים, מבקר), or its history (e.g., מורה הצדק, הכוהן הרשע).[107] Rather, the terminology in Instruction that is classified as sectarian is situated in the domain of worldview. Its sectarian features consist mainly in phraseology that expresses dualistic thinking (e.g., אמת vs. עול/ה) or concepts of predestination (e.g., חוק חרות, נחלה).[108]

The Qumran texts labelled sectarian share many aspects of their worldview with contemporaneous writings that are not classified as sectarian. Therefore, worldview itself cannot be considered as a marker of sectarian provenance. Of course, the sectarian features consist not only in concepts but in the specific phraseology that expresses a worldview. But even then, the terminology found in sectarian texts may not be restricted to these texts. For example, the pair "sons of light" and "sons of darkness" could be seen as characteristically sectarian terminology, but the same pair occurs in the Aramaic Visions of Amram,

104 Kister, "Physical and Metaphysical Measurements," 170–71.

105 Kister, "Wisdom Literature"; idem, "Wisdom Literature at Qumran."

106 Dimant, "Qumran Manuscripts," 45; eadem, "Vocabulary," 91–93.

107 Dimant, "Vocabulary," 67–89.

108 Note, however, that Kister compares ("Divorce," 220–21) הנק שר in 4Q417 2 i 2 with את אשר איננו נקשר in CD 13:9 (*par* 4QD[a] 9 iii 9–10). Both passages deal with reproach. The term נקשר could be classified as a term relating to the community. But the fragmentary state of both the passages in Instruction and CD urges some caution.

which is often classified as a non-sectarian text.[109] Since only a small portion of the Jewish literature composed in Aramaic and Hebrew in the last centuries BCE has been preserved, it is difficult to judge which phrases *were* and which phrases *were not* unique to the sectarian texts. Thus, even if Instruction shares a significant amount of peculiar terminology with these texts, this does not necessarily mean that it is sectarian.

A second issue that needs to be considered is, once more, the probability that wisdom texts have adopted source material and underwent different stages of literary development. Charlotte Hempel points out that editorial additions often contain typical sectarian vocabulary.[110] She interprets this phenomenon within the framework of a parent group, represented by the Damascus Document, and a daughter group, the *yaḥad*. In her view, the *yaḥad* inherited literary material from its "parent" that was edited by members of the *yaḥad* according to their own views, which they expressed in their characteristic terminology. Many texts contain traces of editing, and these layers can be formulated in typical sectarian vocabulary. This complicates the procedure of classification, since texts with clearly sectarian features may contain a smaller or larger portion of non-sectarian material.[111] With respect to the relationship between Instruction and the Serek this implies that part of their shared vocabulary may be due to a common (sectarian) background. In addition, early layers of one text may have influenced layers of the other, and both texts may have mutually influenced each other in their respective histories of development.

Scholars who argue that the Qumran wisdom texts are non-sectarian claim that these texts lack sectarian features, especially sectarian terminology. But the second group of scholars who argue that these texts *are* sectarian claim the opposite, namely that the presence of sectarian terminology is pervasive

109 4Q548 1 ii–2 11, 16. Cf. Devorah Dimant, "Sectarian and Nonsectarian Texts from Qumran: The Pertinence and Use of a Taxonomy," in *History, Ideology and Bible Interpretation*, 101–11 (103–4); Mladen Popović, "Anthropology, Pneumatology, and Demonology in Early Judaism: The *Two Spirits Treatise* (1QS III, 13–IV, 26) and Other Texts from the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Dust of the Ground and Breath of Life* (*Gen 2:7*)*: The Problem of a Dualistic Anthropology in Early Judaism and Christianity*, ed. J. T. A. G. M. van Ruiten and G. H. van Kooten, TBN 20 (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 58–98 (92–95).

110 Hempel, "Kriterien," 82–83.

111 Dimant dismisses the argument that the classification of texts should account for their literary history ("Vocabulary," 66), because she regards classification and literary analysis as independent methodological procedures. Yet, there is a clear difference between a text that was entirely composed by members of a certain community and an existing text in which members of this community add only a few sentences. Therefore, it may be asked whether a dichotomous model of categorization as suggested by Dimant can do justice to the diversity of the material.

in these texts. They concede that most of this terminology is not related to the organization of the community but expresses conceptual structures that belong to the teachings of this community. This is *precisely* the overlapping terminology which the first group of scholars had identified in both the wisdom texts and the sectarian texts, and which they had explained as pre-sectarian sapiential influence on the sectarian texts. This means the two groups of scholars use the same set of terminology to make opposite arguments. But neither can the wisdom texts be proven to be chronologically prior, nor can the sectarian character of the shared terminology be measured against external standards. There is nothing inherently sectarian about the terms and concepts and we cannot use normative models from later sources, whether they be rabbinic or early Christian, to assess to what extent certain ideas were marginal or mainstream in the Second Temple period. The discussion reaches an impasse here because the contextual and interpretive frameworks have become so distinct that scholars reading the fragments on either side of the "sectarian divide" are basically reading different texts.

At this point we should ask ourselves the question whether the categorizations we have developed for organizing the material are not blocking our access to the texts and forming an obstacle to academic discussion. In the case of generic categories scholars generally agree that these are not native concepts and that we should be careful not to use them as pigeonholes in which we deposit texts. But the risk that the sectarian/non-sectarian division causes us to straitjacket a rich variety of texts is even more serious, because we take these to be historical categories that correspond to an external reality that actually existed, namely the sectarian community that owned the scrolls. But first of all, the nature and organization of the groups or networks behind the manuscripts continue to be the focus of research and discussion, and there is nothing like a consensus in view. And second, the qualification sectarian is as much an anachronistic imposition as the concept of the biblical, which only gained meaning in a period, several centuries later, when there was a clear notion of what was *not* biblical.[112]

The dual binary categorizations of biblical/non-biblical and sectarian/non-sectarian are related to each other and can help us understand why the sectarian category is problematic.[113] We find all kinds of writings among the

112 Najman, "Vitality of Scripture."

113 Florentino García Martínez, "Beyond the Sectarian Divide: The 'Voice of the Teacher' as an Authority-Conferring Strategy in Some Qumran Texts," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Transmission of Traditions and Production of Texts*, ed. S. Metso, H. Najman and E. Schuller, STDJ 92 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 227–44; Tigchelaar, "Classification"; Najman, "Vitality of Scripture". See also the critical discussion of sectarianism by Gwynned de Looijer, *The*

Dead Sea Scrolls which to a smaller or larger degree reflect the authority that is later attributed to biblical writings. But we do not find a category of writings that corresponds in any way to the texts that are considered *non-biblical* according to canonical notions of Judaism and Christianity in late antiquity.[114] Similarly, although we have writings of deeply devoted pious groups that engaged in polemical debates with others and amongst themselves (i.e., the Dead Sea Scrolls), we have no contemporaneous sources in the original language that can unequivocally be classified as non-sectarian. As long as we cannot give content to the non-sectarian category, "sectarian" remains a hollow term. The organization of the communities behind the scrolls may have included features that sociologists associate with sectarianism.[115] But to label *texts* as sectarian implies a value judgment that is anachronistic. The dichotomous categorization leads to an impasse in scholarly discussion as we create boxes that predetermine the way we read the texts. To move beyond this impasse, I want to follow Florentino García Martínez's proposal to broaden the horizon, if only heuristically, and look "beyond the sectarian divide."

In the chapters that follow, I will demonstrate that important concepts and practices of wisdom in the Dead Sea Scrolls are better understood once we lay aside the sectarian/non-sectarian dichotomy. First, I will discuss terms that designate the figure of the sage. The usage and avoidance of terms for the sage reveal a shift of interest from worldly wisdom to heavenly wisdom, which is hidden and can only be accessed upon initiation into a community of sages. This shift occurs across the sectarian and non-sectarian categories to which scholars have assigned the relevant texts. Next, I will look at practices of studying and the quest for wisdom that reaches beyond its very limits. I will discuss a series of passages that refer to the aspiration of staying awake at night to study while emulating heavenly beings that pursue knowledge continuously,

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Qumran Paradigm: A Critical Evaluation of Some Foundational Hypotheses in the Construction of the Qumran Sect (Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2015).

114 See David Brakke's discussion of the formation of canonical discourse as interrelated with the contest over true and false doctrine and the competition between different groups in the context of early Christian diversity: "A New Fragment of Athanasius's Thirty-Ninth *Festal Letter*: Heresy, Apocrypha, and the Canon," *HTR* 103 (2010): 47–66; and see idem, "Scriptural Practices in Early Christianity: Towards a New History of the Christian Canon," in *Invention, Rewriting, Usurpation: Discursive Fights over Religious Traditions in Antiquity*, ed. J. Ulrich, A.-C. Jacobsen and D. Brakke (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2012), 263–80; and idem, *The Gnostics: Myth, Ritual, and Diversity in Early Christianity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 1–28.

115 See Jutta Jokiranta, "Social Scientific Approaches to the Dead Sea Scrolls," in Grossman, *Rediscovering the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 246–63; eadem, *Social Identity and Sectarianism in the Qumran Movement*, STDJ 105 (Leiden: Brill 2012).

without interruption. This ideal is attested in texts from Qumran classified as either sectarian or non-sectarian, but it also occurs in the Greek text Wisdom of Solomon, which stands outside the boundaries of this categorization entirely. In the fourth chapter, I will explore the dynamics of revelation in which the human body is subjected to the interplay of good and evil, of light and darkness. The pursuit of higher knowledge involves the need to overcome human limitations and the false wisdom that humans generate. This can only be achieved by participating in higher forms of existence and insight.

In the fifth and final chapter, I will explore the enigmatic phrase *rāz nihyeh*, which I argue can be paraphrased as "the secret of time." This phrase occurs in texts that cross the boundaries between the sectarian and non-sectarian categories, as they are constructed by many scholars. I will argue that *rāz nihyeh* signals a profound reflection on time as the organizing principle behind all of reality. Reconsidering categories makes it possible to open up new avenues for understanding concepts of time in the Dead Sea Scrolls and beyond. Time is at the centre of von Rad's construction of the nexus between wisdom and apocalyptic. In his view the biblical sage marvels at the order of the cosmos and tries to understand the proper times, while the apocalyptic visionary has insight into the divine determination of the times, the schematization of history, and the time of the end. I will demonstrate that an intricate conception of time far surpasses these two categories of wisdom and apocalyptic and is expressed in a much broader variety of texts. In the construction of the sectarian category, time also plays a central role, since some of the most distinctive features of Qumran sectarianism are temporal: calendrical dispute, determinism or predestination, and eschatology. The secret of time, however, invites us to venture beyond these categorizations and explore a rich conceptual framework that is manifested across a wide range of texts, beyond generic categories, and beyond the sectarian divide.