

The Relative Independence of the Books of Genesis and Exodus¹

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A. The Problem

The first two chapters of the book of Exodus open the biblical narrative of the history of the people of Israel. At the same time, they introduce the two main characters of the exodus narrative – Moses and the pharaoh – and set the stage for the events that will follow. This occurs against the background of a wider set of events: The notices about the migration of the sons of Israel/Jacob to Egypt, the notice of the death of Joseph, his brothers and his entire generation as well as the remark about the rise of a new Egyptian ruler who did not know anything about Joseph (Exod 1:8) clearly point back to events from the Joseph story. However, it is noteworthy that the present form of the exodus narrative does not connect directly to the preceding narrative. Rather, the narrative background is presented in the form of a recapitulation of Gen 46:8–27, as is shown already in the close correspondence between Gen 46:8 and Exod 1:1. Thus, the introduction to the exodus narrative does not present itself as the beginning of a new chapter within a continuous narrative but rather corresponds to its present function as the beginning of a new book. This impression is further strengthened by the duplicate notice of Joseph's death in Gen 50:24 and Exod 1:6. This raises the question of the connection between the books of Genesis and Exodus or, alternatively, between the Joseph story and the exodus narrative. This question has been answered in various ways by both the biblical authors and modern scholarship, and it is this question that will be taken up again here.

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B. The Separation of Books and Narrative Periodization

In terms of form, the separation of books is the primary concern of the texts in question, while in terms of content it is the division between major epochs in the people's early history. Regarding the first aspect, it is worthwhile to consider the manuscript evidence from Qumran.² The superscription ברשיית (sic!) attested on 4QGen^{h-Title}, probably placed on the reverse side of the scroll, as well as the highly distinctive translations of the individual books of the Pentateuch in the LXX, indicate that the present five-part division of the Pentateuch was known in early Judaism already before Philo of Alexandria.³ Yet the material evidence from Qumran and Wadi Murabba'at also shows that the books of the Pentateuch were regarded as a single textual unit. Among the texts from the Judean desert are several scrolls whose preserved text spanned two or more books of the Torah (4QRP^{b, c, d}, 4QGen-Exod^a, 4QpaleoGen-Exod^l, MurGen-Exod.Num, 4QExod-Lev^f, 1QpaleoLev-Num^a, 4QLev-Num^a). On the basis of the fragments belonging to 4QRP^c, which contain texts from every book of the Pentateuch, as well as its reconstructed size, it can be concluded with certainty that this scroll included the entire Pentateuch.⁴ Since many scrolls containing books of the Pentateuch (such as 4QRP^c) have a particularly large format in comparison to other scrolls, it is likely that 4QRP^c was not an exception but instead was the rule.⁵ Moreover, it can be observed that the few preserved book boundaries on single scrolls are clearly marked as such in the text. For the unit under consideration here, the scroll 4QpaleoGen-Exod^l, written around 100–50 B.C.E., is of particular interest.⁶

The right margin of 4QpaleoGen-Exod^l, frg. 1 has perforations from stitching.⁷ In the uppermost preserved line of the fragment, traces of two letters can be seen near the right margin, while the rest of the line is blank. Below this line are three blank but ruled lines. Lines 5–8 contain the fragmentary text of Exod 1:1–5.⁸ The two letters in the uppermost line fit perfectly with בַּמְצֵרִים,

² On what follows cf. LANGE, *Handbuch*. For an initial redaction-critical evaluation of the evidence cf. also the observations in SCHMID, *Erzväter*, 26–33.

³ Cf. LANGE, *Handbuch*, 168–169.

⁴ Cf. LANGE, *Handbuch*, 40.

⁵ So also LANGE, *Handbuch*, 169.

⁶ An image of 4QpaleoGen-Exod^l is provided in part I, section 1 of this volume.

⁷ SKEHAN et al., DJD 9, 17–18, 24–26, pl. I. On what follows cf. ULRICH, *Origins*, 124–125.

⁸ Unlike MT, 4QpaleoGen-Exod^l frg. 1 does not read וְאֵלֶּה שְׁמוֹת in Exod 1:1 but rather אֵלֶּה שְׁמוֹת. This could be due to the fact that 4QpaleoGen-Exod^l, like the LXX, treated Exod 1:1 as the beginning of a book. Why this introduction should be considered an “unusual candidate for a book opening” (so Christoph Berner in his contribution on “Material Evidence” in part I, section 1 of this volume) is not obvious to me, since the material

the last word of Gen 50:26. The material evidence of 4QExod^b, frg. 1 is comparable. In that fragment there is probably at least one blank line before Exod 1:1, which is located halfway down the column.⁹ A similar layout is also conjectured for the transition from Leviticus to Numbers in 4QLev-Num^a, frg. 27. However, this assumption seems to rest only on the analogy to other manuscripts and on an estimative reconstruction.¹⁰ Regarding the Book of the Twelve, the evidence is different. While the manuscript of the Book of the Twelve from Wadi Murabba'at (MurXII) leaves three blank lines between the individual "minor prophets,"¹¹ the scribes who copied the manuscripts of the Twelve found at Qumran only left one blank line between the individual "minor prophets."¹² Similar features can be observed in the Psalms manuscripts.¹³ Within the pentateuchal scrolls, blank lines, blank ends of lines, or spaces in the middle of lines mark the beginning and end of sections.¹⁴ This differentiation resembles the later rabbinic rule that prescribes four blank lines between individual books in Torah scrolls and for the "major" prophets but only three blank lines within the Book of the Twelve (b. Baba Batra 13b; m. Soferim 2:2; y. Megilla 1:9[8]).

At a first glance, the evidence for the Pentateuch in the Qumran manuscripts thus seems ambiguous, since both entire Pentateuch scrolls and scrolls of individual books are attested. The clear separation between books in 4QpaleoGen-Exod¹, 4QExod^b and 4QLev-Num^a shows, however, that the Pentateuch was perceived as *a unit consisting of multiple books*. The marking of the separation between books within a single scroll thus emphasizes the notion of "multiple books." Already, the differing length of the individual

evidence attests precisely such a reading in the aforementioned Qumran scroll and in the LXX. In its original context within the Priestly Writing, Exod 1:1 opened a new section and should neither be regarded as the beginning of a book nor as the simple continuation of the narrative. On this see C. below.

⁹ Cf. ULRICH et al., DJD 12, 79–80, 84–85, pl. XIV.

¹⁰ Cf. ULRICH et al., DJD 12, 163, pl. XXVI. Occasionally the manuscript 4QExod-Lev^f from the third century B.C.E. is named as a further example of such a layout. All that is certain is that the scroll encompassed two books; however, whether the layout indicated a division between books can probably no longer be determined.

¹¹ BENOIT et al., DJD 2 (192, pl. LXI: Jonah/Micah; 202, pl. LXXI: Zephaniah/Haggai; 205, pl. LXXII: Haggai/Zechariah. Less clearly discernible: 197, pl. LXVI: Micah/Nahum; 200, pl. LXIX: Habakkuk/Zephaniah).

¹² 4QXII^g, frg. 71 (a blank line between Amos/Obadiah); 4QXII^g, frg. 76 ([at least] one blank line between Obadiah/Jonah); 4QXII^b, frg. 3 (a blank line between Zephaniah/Haggai and increased spacing between the first two lines in Haggai). Cf. ULRICH et al., DJD 15, 308, 309–310, 235, pl. LVIII, LIX, XLIII.

¹³ Cf. WILSON, *Editing*, 93–138.

¹⁴ On this and on the correspondences and divergences in the internal divisions within books in the Qumran manuscripts and in the later traditions of the Masoretic and Samaritan texts cf. OESCH, 'Gliederungshermeneutik'.

books of the Pentateuch speaks against the notion that the Torah was divided into five books for purely practical reasons.¹⁵ The implausibility of this notion is further supported by the presence of scrolls of individual books as well as scrolls of the entire Pentateuch at Qumran. It is also obvious that the scribes at Qumran knew how to differentiate between the boundaries of books on the one hand and changes in authorship on the other. Thus, it can be postulated that the scribes of 4QpaleoGen-Exod¹ and 4QExod^b were familiar with the tradition that the books of Genesis and Exodus were two books within the same literary work and most likely also assumed that they were written by one and the same author.¹⁶ In contrast, the scribes of 4QXII^{a, b, g} demarcated the individual prophetic writings within the Book of the Twelve as sections within a single book, even though it can hardly be assumed that the scribes regarded these writings as going back to the same author.

The literary shaping of the beginnings and endings of biblical books shows a feature similar to the manuscript evidence.¹⁷ Considering the received form of the text, the beginnings and endings of the books in the Pentateuch appear to be shaped differently from those in the Book of the Twelve. Even though the individual parts of the Book of the Twelve can be identified as independent units that go back to particular prophets, a considerable effort to connect the individual units to each other redactionally through shared motifs or themes can be detected. In contrast, despite the continuity of the pentateuchal narrative, the boundaries or transitions between books in the Pentateuch give the impression of demarcating individual books, which were connected by repeating the end of the preceding book. This process is reminiscent of catchlines in cuneiform literature or of the duplicate report in 2 Chr 36:22–23 || Ezra 1:1–2. In Gen 50 and Exod 1, this repetition consists of the duplicate reference to Joseph's death (Gen 50:26a; Exod 1:6) and to the list of the children of Israel who came to Egypt, which is often attributed to P (Exod 1:1–5*).

To summarize thus far: 1) Scrolls and “books” are not identical. This can also be seen through linguistic usage in different parts of the Hebrew Bible. Any composition can be termed a “book” (ספר), yet the biblical authors could also differentiate between content and script bearing artifacts, as the phrase

¹⁵ Once again, regarding the present question of the transition from Gen 50 to Exod 1, BADEN, ‘Continuity’, 163–164. Cf. also the critique by SCHMID, ‘Genesis and Exodus’, 187–189.

¹⁶ In this respect, the statement “so that you may gain insight *into the book of Moses and into the books of the Prophets and into David*” (בספר משה וּבספרי הנביאים ובדודי) in 4QMMT (4Q397/4QMMT^d, frg. 14) is no argument against a widespread division of the “book of Moses” into five books. In my view, here the attribution to Moses stands in the foreground, as in the phrase “the book of the Torah of Moses” that is attested already in the Hebrew Bible (cf. 2 Chr 25:4; 35:12; Neh 8:1; 13:1).

¹⁷ Cf. SCHMID, *Erzväter*, 29–32 (with further literature).

“book-scroll” (מגלת ספר) indicates (Jer 36:2, 4; Ezek 2:9; Ps 40:8). 2) The differentiation between books in the Pentateuch cannot simply be glossed over by reference to the continuity of the pentateuchal narrative over multiple books.¹⁸ 3) Provided that significant parts of the catch-line type of connection between books in Exod 1:1–5* can be ascribed already to the Priestly Writing, then the task of joining books together was not the exclusive domain of scribes and redactors who were active during the final stages in the formation of the Pentateuch. Yet irrespective of the literary-historical evaluation of Exod 1:1–5*, the overall evidence for the beginnings and endings of books in the Pentateuch (as well as in the Former Prophets) indicates that the division into books was part of the literary growth of the text insofar as it has left clear marks within the composition of the individual books.¹⁹ 4) Given that the differentiation between the larger literary work (the Pentateuch) and its constituent parts (i.e., books) extends backwards into the literary development of the Pentateuch, then the often-ignored distinction between intratextual and intertextual cross-references is all the more important.²⁰ Not every forward- or back-reference at the boundary between Genesis and Exodus must be explained as an intratextual reference. It is conceivable either that the authors assumed their intended readers simply had prior knowledge of the material being referred to or that a reference is genuinely intertextual, whereby the question of authorship is a separate problem.

In terms of its content, the present text of Exod 1 focuses on the transition from the ancestral period to the story of Moses. While Gen 50:26a already notes Joseph’s age and reports his death, Exod 1:6, 8 once again note the death of Joseph, his brothers and the entire generation as well as the rise of a new pharaoh who knew nothing of Joseph. The correspondence of Gen 50:22b (or 50:26a*) and Exod 1:6, 8 with the conclusion to the book of

¹⁸ Cf. also the debate over the relationship of the Iliad to the Odyssey, which is comparable to the present discussion in several respects, as well as the theory of a Chronic History. Differently BADEN, ‘Continuity’, 164–165, who dismisses the question of the literary connection at the level of the non-Priestly text as irrelevant through reference to narrative continuity.

¹⁹ On the colophon to the book of Leviticus and the composition of the book of Numbers cf. NIHAN, *Priestly Torah*, 69–76. Similar evaluations regarding the age of the “division into books” are also found in OLSON, *Death*, 51–53, and ALBERTZ, ‘Beginn’, 234 with n. 44.

²⁰ This applies also to my own work. Cf. especially the literary-historical evaluation of Gen 46:1–5a in GERTZ, *Tradition*, 277ff. On this cf. the critique in BLUM, ‘Verbindung’, 131ff., who, following SCHMID, *Erzväter*, 62–63, connects God’s commitment to bring Jacob up from Egypt to Jacob alone and not to the exodus of the people. Of course, the possibility that later recipients of the text, such as the author who expanded Exod 3, noticed this originally unintended connection cannot be ruled out; in this case, however, it would be a question of an *intertextual* connection. Cf. also BLUM, ‘Literarkritik’, 513 with n. 82.

Joshua in Josh 24:29–30 and the beginning of the period of the Judges in Judg 2:8, 10 has been discussed many times.²¹ Here it will suffice to note that these parallels highlight the effort to mark a transition between two major historical epochs.

C. The Priestly Integration of the Ancestral Narratives and the Exodus Narrative into a Single Literary Work

Within Priestly literature, the ancestral narratives and the exodus narrative are joined through a series of explicit cross-references. This can be seen in the Priestly version of the call of Moses in Exod 2:23aβb–25; 6:2–7:7*: God's self-revelation to Moses is placed explicitly in continuity with God's self-revelation to the ancestors, and according to P, God's delivering intervention in Egypt results from the "covenant" with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Furthermore, among the promises to the ancestors enumerated in Gen 17* (P), the promise of an eternal relationship with God is confirmed here and is subsequently fulfilled in the announcement of Yahweh's dwelling in the midst of Israel in Exod 29:45–46 (P). Additionally, in P the creation report and the beginning of the revelation at Sinai have been shaped in light of each other.²² The Priestly Writing thus forms an indissoluble connection between creation, the ancestors, the exodus and Sinai. Regardless of which model one adopts for the literary character of Priestly literature (whether an originally independent source, a layer of reworking or both at the same time),²³ this indicates an overarching literary work.

There is a broad consensus that the most basic material in Exod 1:1–5, 7, 13–14 belongs to P. This attribution poses no problems for Exod 1:13–14.²⁴ This is also true for Exod 1:7, despite recent objections.²⁵ The description of the Israelites' multiplication in v. 7 corresponds to Priestly diction. With few exceptions, the verb פרה *qall/hif*. "to be/make fruitful" in the Pentateuch is only attested in P or in the context of Priestly texts. The combination of פרה with רבה *qall/hif*. "to be/make numerous" is limited to P, aside from one attestation in the Holiness Code (Lev 26:9). Generally, the root פ"ר is more or

²¹ See the discussion in part III of this volume.

²² On the structural parallels between Gen 1:1–2:3 and Exod 24:15b–18aα; 25–31; 35–40 cf. among others LEVENSON, 'The Temple and the World', esp. 286ff., JANOWSKI, 'Tempel und Schöpfung', esp. 46ff.

²³ On this debate see HARTENSTEIN/SCHMID, *Abschied*.

²⁴ On what follows cf. GERTZ, *Tradition*, 352–357, and the literature cited there.

²⁵ For a different view see esp. BERNER, *Exoduszählung*, 14–16, who attributes this verse to a post-Priestly reworking. See also LEVIN, *Jahwist*, 315; PROPP, *Exodus 1–18*, 125; KRATZ, *Komposition*, 243.

less limited to Priestly literature. The verb שרץ “to swarm” in the context of a statement related to multiplication using the verbs פרה and רבה is attested elsewhere only in the Priestly flood narrative (Gen 8:17; 9:7). The adverbial phrase במאד מאד “exceedingly” in Exod 1:7a – apart from the contextually distinct attestations in Ezek 9:9; 16:13 – appears elsewhere only in P, and significantly, like in Exod 1:7a, in connection with the verbs פרה and רבה (cf. Gen 17:2, 6, 20). The concluding statement ותמלא הארץ אתם “and the land was full of them” has its only counterpart in the imperative blessing in Gen 1:28 ומלאו את הארץ “and fill the earth.” The exclusive reference to the preceding Priestly commands and promises of multiplication (cf. Gen 1:22, 28; 8:17; 9:1, 7; 17:2, 6, 20; 28:3; 35:11) is thus unmistakable. Prepared for by Gen 47:27 (P), Exod 1:7 notes the corresponding fulfillment and in this way, marks a clear turning point at the beginning of the Mosaic period. Thus, this verse has a structuring function within the Priestly narrative, particularly in connection to the periodization of “redemptive history” in the call of Moses that follows and the promise of the possession of the land made there (Exod 6:4, 8). The Priestly nature of the verse cannot be denied.²⁶

The fact that Exod 1:7 uses the root עצ”ם “to be mighty,” which is otherwise not attested in Priestly literature but *is* found in clearly non-Priestly statements about the growth of the Israelites in the immediate literary context (Exod 1:9, 20) does not change this conclusion. Since there are no literary-critical grounds for subdividing Exod 1:7, the *prima facie* simplest explanation is that P formulated Exod 1:7 from the outset for its present context, namely the non-Priestly exodus narrative.²⁷ However, the precise literary-historical place of the latter is hotly debated, since the pharaoh’s statement – at least according to the present form of the text – presupposes the immediately preceding statement about the people’s multiplication by P.²⁸ Moreover, as far as I see, the only securely pre-Priestly statement about the people’s multiplication within the present literary context is found in Exod 1:12, which uses the verbs רבה and פרץ (the latter of which is not used in Exod 1:7) and notably does *not* use עצ”ם.

In light of these problems, it should be considered whether the formulation of Exod 1:7 represents a variation within the Priestly statements regarding multiplication that is not literarily dependent upon Exod 1:9, 20 but in fact influenced the formulation in Exod 1:9, 20.²⁹ After all, Exod 1:7 concludes the series of Priestly statements regarding multiplication and at the same time

²⁶ Cf. recently WÖHRLE, *Fremdlinge*, 139.

²⁷ Cf. WÖHRLE, *Fremdlinge*, 139–141.

²⁸ See D. below.

²⁹ Cf. GERTZ, *Tradition*, 366–368. This way, the separation of the pairing of פרה and רבה through the use of עצם and שרץ (which is otherwise widely attested in P but absent in Exod 1:9, 20!) can also easily be explained; cf. WÖHRLE, *Fremdlinge*, 140–141.

forms a transition to the history of the people. Moreover, Exod 1:7 draws on Gen 47:27 where, however, the typical combination of פרה with רבה relates to the growth of Jacob's family during the lifetime of Joseph. Not following Christoph Berner who evaluates these statements about the growth of Jacob's family (Gen 47:27) and about the rise of a mighty people *after* Joseph's death (Exod 1:7) as doublets and thus separates the material into two different literary layers,³⁰ it seems more appropriate to understand Exod 1:7 as an amplification within the Priestly chain of statements regarding multiplication.

The Priestly authors, who certainly had knowledge of texts beyond their own literature, did not lack precedents for the combination of the verbs רבה and עצם or the adjectives רב and עצום.³¹ In contrast, the fact that from the four terms used in Exod 1:7 only the terms רב and עצום (רבה and עצם) appear in Exod 1:9 (and 1:20, which is dependent upon the latter) says absolutely nothing about the direction of possible influence.³² The pharaoh's observation in Exod 1:9 that "they are too numerous and too strong for us" is formulated with a view to a possible military conflict, since this is where numbers and strength are of significance. A comparison with the people's fertility, such as "they are too fecund (פררה) for us" would have been possible linguistically but does not fit well with the narrative context. Such a comparison using the verb שרץ can be ruled out both linguistically and in terms of content. If Exod 1:9 is dependent on Exod 1:7, it is thus likely that it (and Exod 1:20) would have only taken up the words רבה and עצם (or רב and עצום) from that verse.³³

It may now be asked whether the statement that "they filled the land" in Exod 1:7 (analogous to Gen 1 and Gen 9) is a motif that is never resolved in the Priestly thread of the exodus narrative. This would support the assumption that P was written with a view to its non-Priestly context.³⁴ The composition-historical evaluation of this observation, however, is not absolutely necessary. It could also be argued that the intended readers could discern this unresolved motif while the authors of Exod 1:7 merely sought to create a back-reference to Gen 1 and 9.

In the present form of Exod 1, the description of Israel's oppression in Egypt in vv. 13–14 should be understood as an expression of the increased coercion and the worsened situation of the Israelites. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that these verses are a doublet of Exod 1:11–12 and can easily be removed from their present context. Both vv. 11–12 and vv. 13–14 report that

³⁰ BERNER, *Exoduserzählung*, 15.

³¹ Cf. Deut 7:1; 9:14; 26:5; Isa 53:12; Joel 2:2; Amos 5:12; Mic 4:3; Zech 8:22; Ps 35:18; 135:10.

³² Against BERNER, *Exoduserzählung*, 15–16.

³³ Likewise, the *במאד מאד* from Exod 1:7, which Berner (*ibid.*) explains as an intensification of Exod 1:9, has no place in the pharaoh's comparison in Exod 1:9 and can hardly serve as proof that Exod 1:7 is literarily dependent upon Exod 1:9.

³⁴ Cf. BLUM, 'Verbindung', 148.

the Egyptians imposed forced labor on the Israelites. It should also be noted that v. 14 does not connect smoothly to the pharaoh's decision in v. 15 to require the midwives to kill the newborn males. Such a decision is not at all prepared for by vv. 13–14, which say nothing about the success or failure of the coercive measures. In contrast, v. 15 connects smoothly to v. 12 inasmuch as the multiplication of the Israelites and the Egyptians' dread of them can be understood as the motivation for the pharaoh's decision. At the same time, vv. 13–14 can be read as the continuation of the Priestly stratum in v. 7 and form a coherent connection to the Priestly narrative in 2:23aβ–25; 6:2–7:7*. Thus, while the possibility cannot be ruled out that Exod 1:7 was formulated for its present context, the evidence from vv. 13–14 (and certainly from 2:23aβ–25; 6:2–7:7*) points to a largely independent Priestly exodus narrative.³⁵

The attribution of the list of Jacob's sons in Exod 1:1–5 to P is debated. With the exception of Joseph's unusual position in the list, which is determined by the immediate context, the names in vv. 2–4 correspond to the list in Gen 35:22b–26, which is generally ascribed to P. The historicizing frame in vv. 1, 5, however, is clearly reminiscent of the post-Priestly genealogy in Gen 46:8–27 (cf. v. 1 with Gen 46:8 and v. 5 with Gen 46:20, 26–27). It is often noted as striking that both lists begin with the phrase “these are the names of the sons of Israel,” whereby “Israel” is clearly understood as the renamed ancestor Jacob.³⁶ While P also knows of Jacob's renaming as Israel (Gen 35:10), P continues to use the name Jacob, including in the parallel listing of sons in 35:22b–26 (immediately following Gen 35:10 [!]; cf. also 46:6; 47:28; 49:1, 33). It should also be noted that in Exod 1:7 בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, as elsewhere in Priestly literature, does not indicate Jacob's “sons” in the restricted sense as in v. 1 but instead indicates the people of Israel who were descended from Jacob and his sons. Since there is nothing mediating between the use of בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל in v. 1 as the immediate descendants of Jacob and in v. 7 as the people of Israel, it can be supposed that the list of Israel's sons in vv. 1–5 as well as its doubtlessly even later corrective anticipation in Gen 46 represent expansions that are dependent on Priestly passages.³⁷

³⁵ Cf. WÖHRLE, *Fremdlinge*, 154, who describes P as a layer of reworking within the ancestral narratives and the beginning of the exodus narrative but speaks of P as an originally independent source for the primeval history and for the main part of the exodus narrative (beginning in Exod 2:23aβ–25). Cf. also the suggestions in GERTZ, *Tradition*, 391.

³⁶ Within v. 1, 4QExod^b, 4QpaleoGen-Exod¹ and LXX add to the phrase “with Jacob” the phrase “their father” as a further clarification. On this cf. the contribution of Christoph Berner on the *material evidence* in part I, section 1 of this volume.

³⁷ Cf. LEVIN, *Jahwist*, 315; PROPP, *Exodus 1–18*, 125; SCHMID, *Erzväter*, 30 n. 177; GERTZ, *Tradition*, 354–357; KRATZ, *Komposition*, 243; BERNER, *Exoduserzählung*, 14.

Against this conclusion it has been noted that the phrase בני ישראל in v. 1 already aims at the ancestors of the tribes of Israel, whose development into a people is stated in Exod 1:7.³⁸ This observation is certainly correct. But if Exod 1:1–5 were the work of P, these verses would rather have expressed this idea without using the phrase בני ישראל – even if a different phrase may not have been as fitting in the present narrative context – since such a use of בני ישראל is not at all typical of P. In view of the “identity of Israel’s origins”³⁹ presupposed by P (but not only by P), already the (specific) reference to the total number of the בני יעקב consistently refers to the tribes and to the later people of “Israel.” The argument and the counterargument thus cancel each other out. Meanwhile, another observation speaks quite clearly in favor of an attribution of Exod 1:1–5 to P. As already noted above, Exod 1:7 draws on Gen 47:27. The logic of the multiplication of Jacob’s family during his lifetime to the later development of a great nation that is inherent to such a reference to Gen 47:27 is much more understandable if Exod 1:7 follows the information on the substantial yet not incredulously large extended family of the migrant Jacob in Exod 1:1–5(a?).⁴⁰ Their total number of 70 individuals

³⁸ BLUM, ‘Verbindung’, 150.

³⁹ BLUM, ‘Verbindung’, 150 n. 144 (“ursprungsgeschichtliche Identität »Israels«”).

⁴⁰ According to BLUM, ‘Verbindung’, 151, IDEM, ‘Literarkritik’, 511 n. 70, the reference to Joseph in v. 5b is a later addition. The placement of this half-verse (“and Joseph was [already] in Egypt”) after v. 5a (“The total number of people born to Jacob was seventy”) poses problems. The juxtaposition of these two half-verses could create the impression that Joseph is not one of Jacob’s biological sons, which raises the suspicion that Joseph was inserted secondarily by an editor who did not want to see Joseph left out of a list of Jacob’s descendants. Yet this could also have been intended from the outset. In any event, the emphasis in v. 5a lies in the number of the biological descendants of Jacob who migrated with him to Egypt (cf. v. 1b).

As is documented in the contribution of Christoph Berner on the *material evidence* (pp. 14–16 above), the reference to Joseph led to confusion within the history of the text’s transmission. In the view of some scholars, the most coherent reading is offered by 4QExod^b: Joseph is placed in the genealogically correct position within the list of Jacob’s sons, the statement that Joseph was already in Egypt (cf. v. 5b MT+Sam) is left out and there are 75 people in total. Nevertheless, a harmonizing tendency is evident in 4QExod^b, indicating that this manuscript is a poor witness to the late addition of v. 5b in MT+Sam. The fact that the LXX placed v. 5a after v. 5b can easily be explained as an improvement to the text. The statement in the LXX that Jacob’s descendants numbered 75 individuals, which corresponds to Gen 46:27 LXX, also points in this direction. This statement results directly from the repositioning of v. 5b: like the harmonizing manuscript 4QExod^b and presumably also 4QGen-Exod^a, the LXX adds Joseph, his sons and his first grandsons (cf. Gen 46:20 LXX) to the 70 individuals who “came to Egypt with Jacob” (v. 1). However, the number 70 that is offered by MT, Sam and 4QpaleoGen-Exod^l should – as in Gen 46:27 – be regarded as more original. The number 70 elsewhere reflects the notion of completeness (cf. Deut 10:22), in which case a recalculation is unnecessary. The problems created by a recalculation can be seen in Gen 46:26–27: 70 male descendants are counted

(v. 5a) at the time of their settling in Egypt (cf. v. 1) sets up a contrast⁴¹ with the shift to the history of the people noted in Exod 1:7.

Finally, a brief discussion of the Priestly portions of Gen 50:22–26 is necessary. The conclusion to the non-Priestly Joseph story in Gen 50:21 is followed by a short notice in Gen 50:22a that Joseph resided in Egypt with his father's family, to which a Priestly notice regarding Joseph's life span is connected in Gen 50:22b.⁴² Based on Joseph's age, a later editor concluded in v. 23 that Joseph lived to see the third generation of his descendants.⁴³ Regarding the literary history of the text, it is significant that the idiomatic expression $\text{וַיְחַי} + \text{number of years}$ in Gen 50:22b in itself is never used to indicate a person's total life span. Rather, it indicates either a person's age at which a particular event occurs or the years somebody lived to see after an explicitly mentioned incident.⁴⁴ Thus, it can be concluded first of all that Gen 50:22b on its own cannot have served as a notice of Joseph's death (which poses significant problems for reconstructing multiple complete sources here). Moreover, this means that the notice in 50:22b, which is incomplete in and of itself, has been separated from its original continuation,⁴⁵ which is found in Gen 50:26a. As is well known, the assignment of v. 26a to P is far from a matter of consensus. The reasons for this are the repetition of Joseph's age following the notice of his death and its slightly different formulation. Both observations can be easily explained, however, by postulating that the intervening farewell scene in Gen 50:24–26 was inserted into the narrative of P.⁴⁶ In this way, the author who added this scene reworked the Priestly notice of Joseph's death in light of Judg 2:8, 10.⁴⁷ Since the reworked Priestly notice

while only 69 are named (Beriah seems to have been counted twice); of the 69/70 "sons" two already died in Canaan, which would leave 67 or 68 descendants coming to Egypt. If one subtracts the two sons born to Joseph in Egypt, then one arrives at 65 or 67 "sons," while v. 26 speaks of 66 "souls" that "came from Jacob's loins" and v. 27 speaks of 70 individuals, including the two sons of Joseph that were born in Egypt. Yet even if MT and Sam offer the better reading (as it seems to me), this says nothing about whether this partial verse is original or is a later addition.

⁴¹ BLUM, 'Verbindung', 150.

⁴² On the Priestly provenance of Gen 50:22 cf. the detailed arguments in LUX, 'Geschichte als Erfahrung', 158–161, and more recently WÖHRLE, *Fremdlinge*, 130–131 (with further literature).

⁴³ Cf. LEVIN, *Jahvist*, 316.

⁴⁴ Cf. BLUM, 'Literarkritik', 507.

⁴⁵ This also applies, *mutatis mutandis*, if P was a layer of reworking and the Priestly notice of Joseph's life span was placed before the notice of Joseph's death.

⁴⁶ Cf. BLUM, *Studien*, 364 with n. 14.

⁴⁷ Cf. GERTZ, *Tradition*, 360 n. 43; IDEM, 'Transition', 79–80; BLUM, 'Literarkritik', 510. According to BERNER, *Exoduserzählung*, 21, it is unclear "what would have prompted a later editor to add the undisputed life span of Joseph in 50:26aβ following 50:22b" ("was einen späteren Bearbeiter dazu veranlaßt haben sollte, die von 50,22b her unstrittige Le-

of Joseph's death in Gen 50:26a is indissolubly linked to Gen 50:24–26*, this is a clear indication that the farewell scene is in its entirety a post-Priestly expansion based on the Priestly notice of Joseph's life span and death in Gen 50:22b, 26a*.⁴⁸

In sum, the following observations can be maintained: 1) The literary cross-references within Priestly texts suggest that the primeval history, the ancestral narratives and the Moses story were part of a single literary work at the Priestly level of composition. 2) The beginning of the Priestly Moses story consists of Exod 1:1–5, 7, 13–14, which was preceded by a brief notice about Joseph's residence in Egypt, his life span and his death (Gen 50:22, 26a*). 3) Irrespective of its comprehensive literary composition, P casts the beginning of the Moses story as a new era and thus anticipates the later separation of the books of Genesis and Exodus.

D. The Non-Priestly Text: Continuous Narrative(s), Redactional Hinge or Reworking?

The state of research on the non-Priestly portions of Exod 1 (and the related passages in Gen 50:22–26) is highly complex. The starting point of the analysis is the observation that a large part of the non-Priestly materials in the transition from the Joseph story to the exodus narrative stands in a complex network that goes far beyond the connection between the books of Genesis and Exodus. As is often the case, this observation is neither new nor in itself disputed; all that is debated is its significance. The specific areas of interweaving are as follows: 1) Joseph's final instructions regarding his bones and the embalming of his corpse in Gen 50:25, 26b are connected to the bringing of Joseph's bones out of Egypt in Exod 13:19 and to their burial in Josh 24:32. That narrative thread is prepared by the notice about Jacob's purchase of the land in Gen 33:19 (cf. Gen 33:18 and 48:22). 2) As has often been noted, the sequence of the notice of Joseph's death in Gen 50:26a (par. Exod 1:6) and the rise of a new pharaoh in Exod 1:8 stands in parallel with Judg 2:8, 10 through the reference to the beginning of a new era:

Gen 50:26 Joseph died (וימת) at the age of 110 [...] Ex 1:6 [...] and that entire generation.
1:8 And a new king arose (ויקם) [...] who did not know Joseph.

Judg 2:8 Joshua died (וימת) [...] at the age of 110 [...] 2:10 [...] and that entire generation [...] And a new generation arose (ויקם) [...] that did not know Yahweh.

bensdauer Josephs in 50,26aβ nachzutragen"). The reason is found in Judg 2:8b (par. Josh 24:29b)!

⁴⁸ Cf. recently BLUM, 'Literarkritik', 510 with n. 67, who additionally notes that the promise to the ancestors as an oath that is presupposed in v. 24 occurs in exclusively post-Priestly contexts.

As Erhard Blum has recently shown once again, these two transitions between major eras reflect some form of literary dependence.⁴⁹ Among Blum's observations, one that seems particularly important is the fact that Joseph's instructions on the repatriation of his bones point precisely to Josh 24 and, thus, to the transition from the time of Joshua to the period of the Judges. This, in turn, reinforces the conclusion that both instances of interweaving belong to one and the same level of redaction. Here, the model for the change of epochs should be found in the transition from the time of Joshua to the period of the Judges: The succession from one generation to the next reported was thus modified in Exod 1:8 with a view to the specific situation at the beginning of the exodus narrative, reporting the death of one generation and the rise of a new pharaoh. If one also considers the duplicate notice of Joseph's death in Gen 50:26; Exod 1:6 and takes into account the indications that Gen 50:24–26 are a post-Priestly expansion,⁵⁰ then it seems likely that the notice of the change in epochs in Gen 50:26; Exod 1:6, 8 is the product of a post-Priestly author who also created a book division in the transition between Joshua and Judges.⁵¹

It may of course be asked whether particular verses in this post-Priestly transition between the books of Genesis and Exodus can be convincingly isolated from their present context and attributed to a pre-Priestly connection between the ancestral narratives and the exodus narrative. As was shown above, this cannot be the case for Gen 50:23–26; thus, any pre-Priestly connection with the beginning of the exodus narrative would have to connect to the end of the Joseph story in Gen 50:21. Exod 1:6, 8 are usually assigned to a pre-Priestly connection between the books of Genesis and Exodus. Thus, Christoph Berner has recently argued that Exod 1:6* (only וימת יוסף, 8–10abα* (up to פנן ירבה, 22) connect an exodus narrative beginning in Exod 2:1⁵² with the Joseph story: “The beginning and end of the literary hinge (the death of Joseph and the command to kill the firstborn) are so perfectly tai-

⁴⁹ BLUM, ‘Literarkritik’, 509–510.

⁵⁰ On the literary unity of Gen 50:24–26 cf. GERTZ, *Tradition*, 360–362, and more recently WÖHRLE, *Fremdlinge*, 132–133, who, however, denies that the expansion in v. 26a is based on a Priestly formulation. According to BLUM, ‘Literarkritik’, 510, v. 23 also belongs to this expansion.

⁵¹ Cf. BLUM, ‘Literarkritik’, 510.

⁵² The problems associated with the beginning of the exodus narrative in Exod 2:1 need not be repeated here. The counterarguments are sufficiently well-known. On this debate cf. GERTZ, *Tradition*, 374–376, and more recently ALBERTZ, ‘Beginn’, 227–229. Against the background of this debate, the statement of BERNER, *Exoduserzählung*, 49, that recently the “view has become more widespread that the pre-Priestly exodus narrative began with the story of Moses' birth in Exod 2:1–10” (“In den vergangenen Jahren hat sich verstärkt die Erkenntnis durchgesetzt, daß die vorpriesterschriftliche Exoduserzählung mit der Geburtsgeschichte Moses in Ex 2,1–10 einsetzte.”) seems a bit too optimistic.

lored to a literary connection with the end of the Joseph story (Gen 50:21) and with the beginning of the exodus narrative (Exod 2:1) that there can be no doubt that here the original literary joint between the ancestors and the exodus can be detected.”⁵³

Christoph Levin already reconstructed a similar transition, although he took the notice of Joseph’s death from Gen 50:26a.⁵⁴ This difference reveals a problem in terms of content insofar as Christoph Berner correctly concludes that the present form of both notices can be ruled out for a pre-Priestly transition: “Gen 50:26a notes that Joseph died when he was 110 years old [...] and thus presupposes the corresponding notice from 50:22 (P), while Exod 1:6 also has Joseph’s brothers and the entire generation die alongside Joseph himself [...], which can only be explained by the fact that the post-Priestly list from 1:1–5 is already in view here.”⁵⁵ For this reason, Christoph Berner excludes everything in Exod 1:6 except the two words *יוסף וימת* as post-Priestly expansions and thereby “rescues” his pre-Priestly connection between Genesis and Exodus. In view of the many transformations that can be observed in the textual unit under consideration, it is not unthinkable to eliminate the notice of the death of Joseph’s brothers and of the entire generation from an assumed pre-Priestly version of Exod 1:6. Yet, it remains a problem that such an intervention into the text is not reflected by any literary tension within the verse.⁵⁶

Moreover, the proposed elimination of the notices about the death of Joseph’s brothers and of the entire generation throws light on fundamental problems within such a reconstruction. With some degree of realism and the demand for literary coherence, the observation placed in the mouth of an Egyptian, “See, the people of the sons of Israel (*עם בני ישראל*) is more numerous and stronger than us” (Exod 1:9), which is striking in every respect, presupposes that the descendants of Jacob/Israel (cf. Exod 1:1) have become a people whom the pharaoh should fear. It is unlikely that this presupposition

⁵³ BERNER, *Exoduserzählung*, 17–18: “Anfang und Ende des Schamiers (Tod Josephs / Tötungsbefehl) sind so perfekt auf eine literarische Verknüpfung mit dem Ende der Josephsgeschichte (Gen 50,21) bzw. mit dem Anfang der Exoduserzählung (Ex 2,1) abgestimmt, daß kein Zweifel daran bestehen kann, daß hier das ursprüngliche Verbindungsstück zwischen Erzvätern und Exodus greifbar wird.”

⁵⁴ LEVIN, *Jahwist*, 313–314.

⁵⁵ BERNER, *Exoduserzählung*, 20: “Gen 50,26a notiert, daß Joseph im Alter von 110 Jahren das Zeitliche segnet [...], und setzt dabei die entsprechende Angabe aus 50,22 P voraus, während Ex 1,6 neben Joseph auch dessen Brüder und die gesamte Generation sterben läßt [...], was sich nur so erklärt, daß hier bereits die nachpriesterschriftliche Liste aus 1,1–5 im Blick ist.”

⁵⁶ Similar to Berner’s analysis is the view of CARR, ‘What is Required’, 175. Berner additionally differentiates different layers within this addition, identifying the phrase “and that entire generation” as an even later addition.

is already given with Joseph's statement that God intended to deliver "many people" through him (Gen 50:20). For the characters of the narration (including the pharaoh), the "many people" in Gen 50:20 signifies the members of Jacob's family who came to Egypt. On a meta-level, this statement is of course transparent with regard to the fact that the sons of Jacob – as always in the narratives in Genesis – are a metonym for the tribes of Israel and that the history of the people is told as a family history. At the narrative level, however, it would have to be explained if the family is to be understood as a people, as is presupposed by the situation in Exod 1:8–9. Thus, Exod 1:8–9 turns completely on the assumption that a certain amount of time has passed since the death of Joseph in which Jacob's family truly became a great people and in which a gap in the Egyptians' collective memory could have arisen. After all, the new pharaoh can hardly have been the immediate successor (and son) of the pharaoh under whom Joseph was elevated to the position of vizier and the second-in-command in the state (cf. Josephus, *Ant.* II 202).

One more observation can be added to this. If, following Christoph Berner and others, Exod 1:6*, 8–10 are connected directly to Gen 50:21, then either Joseph's brothers took part in the exodus or their death is simply not mentioned. Both possibilities are equally unlikely. In a once-independent Joseph story concluding with Gen 50:21, neither the death of Joseph nor that of his brothers need to be mentioned. Yet for an exodus narrative that originally connected to the Joseph story the picture is completely different, particularly since the exodus narrative explicitly mentions the rise of a new pharaoh who did not know Joseph. Finally, a direct connection between the notice of Joseph's death in Exod 1:6* and the reconciliation scene in Gen 50:15–21, which points to the brothers' future together ("I myself will provide for you and your little ones," v. 21), is so abrupt that it is difficult to imagine it as the original sequence of the narrative.⁵⁷

Thus, there is reason to doubt the assumption that Exod 1:6* (only יימה יוסף, 8–10abα (up to פן ירבה), 22 once constituted the original connection between the ancestral narratives and the exodus narrative. Rather, Exod 1:6, 8–10 presuppose Exod 1:1–5, 7 (P). This applies at least to those elements that are constitutive of a literary connection between the Joseph story and the exodus narrative. Yet, in my view, this also applies to the beginning of an independent exodus narrative in Exod 1:(8a,) 9–10 that has been separated from the notice of Joseph's death in Exod 1:6 and the allusion to Joseph's position in Egypt in Exod 1:8b.⁵⁸ "The claim that the Israelites have become more numerous than the Egyptians is a fantastical exaggeration, which would appear isolated without the redundant description of multiplication that emphasizes the exorbitance of the process. Seen in this light, all the statements

⁵⁷ Cf. BLUM, 'Literarkritik', 508; ALBERTZ, 'Beginn', 232.

⁵⁸ Thus ALBERTZ, 'Beginn', 230–236; BLUM, 'Literarkritik', 511.

concerning the size of the people of Israel up until 1:9 depend upon the Priestly minimization in 1:5 and maximization in 1:7.”⁵⁹

Although the dependence of the pharaoh’s statement in Exod 1:9 on Exod 1:7 has often been objected to on the grounds that the readers could have been informed of the Israelites’ multiplication from the mouth of the pharaoh rather than by the narrator,⁶⁰ such a scenario is rather unlikely considering the importance of the subject. Moreover, the dependence of Exod 1:9 on Exod 1:1–5, 7 is further supported by an observation on the terminology in Exod 1:9. The phrase *עם בני ישראל* is unique in the Pentateuch and occurs elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible only rarely and in late contexts (Judg 20:14; 1 Kgs 8:9; 2 Chr 5:10; 6:1). If Exod 1:9 were merely concerned to set up a juxtaposition between Israel and the pharaoh’s people (the addressees), then perhaps *עם ישראל* would be expected. However, the striking phrase *עם בני ישראל* can easily be explained as drawing on *בני ישראל* in Exod 1:1, through which the continuity between the sons of Jacob and the people of Israel is emphasized.⁶¹ Thus, also in this respect P is presupposed in Exod 1:9.

It is only in Exod 1:11–12 that the literary evidence changes.⁶² The appointment of taskmasters here does not require any previous multiplication of the people.⁶³ While in the present form of the text the forced labor is a first step in the decimation of the Israelites, v. 11 *per se* does not give the impression that the Israelites are a people that is larger than the Egyptian people. The multiplication of the people does not begin before Exod 1:12. Exod 1:12 undermines the progressive logic of Exod 1:9 (and 1:7), as can be seen from the fact that the terminology for the people’s multiplication from the latter

⁵⁹ UTZSCHNEIDER/OSWALD, *Exodus 1–15*, 72 (ET: 70): “[Die] Aussage [des Pharaos], die Israeliten seien zahlreicher als die Ägypter, ist eine phantastische Übertreibung, die ohne die redundanten, die Exorbitanz des Vorgangs betonenden Mehrungsaussagen isoliert dastünde. So betrachtet hängen alle Aussagen zur Größe des Volkes Israel bis 1,9 [...] an der priesterlichen Abfolge von Minimierung in 1,5 und Maximierung in 1,7.”

⁶⁰ CARR, ‘What is Required’, 172; BERNER, *Exoduszählung*, 22–23. The examples of Gen 26:16 and Num 22:3–4, 6 cited as parallels by Berner (with reference to KRATZ, *Komposition*, 287) are unconvincing. Gen 26:16 offers no new information; rather, Abimelech draws his conclusion on the basis of Isaac’s wealth noted in vv. 13–15. Likewise, when the Moabites note in Num 22:3–4, 6 that the people is a “great nation,” this is perhaps news to Balak but certainly not to the readers of the Pentateuch.

⁶¹ Cf. also ALBERTZ, ‘Beginn’, 235 with n. 45, who assumes that the Priestly editor inserted the word *בני* into the phrase *עם ישראל* found in his *Vorlage*.

⁶² On the beginning of the exodus narrative in Exod 1:11 cf. GERTZ, *Tradition*, 370–372; see also UTZSCHNEIDER/OSWALD, *Exodus 1–15*, 72.

⁶³ According to ALBERTZ, ‘Beginn’, 230, without v. 9 there would be no motive for placing the Israelites under forced labor. However, comparison with common practices involving prisoners of war, refugees and other migrants reveals a different picture. In any event, sufficient motivation for the measure can be found in v. 12a.

verses is not taken up in Exod 1:12.⁶⁴ Yet if the non-Priestly (and pre-Priestly) thread of the exodus narrative can only be identified with confidence beginning in Exod 1:11, then the problem arises that the beginning of this narrative is missing. Since Exod 1:11 does not contain an explicit subject, one is forced to assume that the original beginning of the narrative has either been lost or has been so heavily reworked by Exod 1:1–10 that it can no longer be reconstructed.

E. Summary

The renewed analysis and consideration of the relevant arguments has strengthened the view expressed in various forms in recent scholarship that Priestly texts constitute the earliest literary connection between the Joseph story and the exodus narrative within a single literary work. It has also become clear, however, that this result implicates some degree of uncertainty, since the transitional section between the two narrative works clearly underwent significant transformation. Within the context of scholarly discourse, it is necessary to clearly identify this uncertainty in the reconstruction of the text's literary development. What does seem certain, however, is that a literary connection at the level of multiple continuous narrative sources is hardly demonstrable.

It has also been shown that the existence of a literary connection between the Joseph story and the exodus narrative should not be overemphasized. As the evidence of the manuscripts from the Judean desert already indicates, scribal indicators of book boundaries and the existence of overarching literary works are not mutually exclusive. Yet this evidence also indicates that beside *intertextual* cross-references also *intratextual* cross-references always have to be reckoned with. This significantly relativizes the question of a *caesura* between the two literary works. This is highlighted by the evidence of the Priestly texts, which show opposing tendencies. On the one hand, the Joseph story and the exodus narrative – and, by extension, the books of Genesis and

⁶⁴ BERNER, *Exoduszählung*, 32, finds a multi-layered supplement in Exod 1:11–12 that prepares for the addition in Exod 2:11aβ and seeks to make the vague references to the Israelites' suffering more concrete. Regarding the terminology, he notes: "Exod 1:11a, 12 are strikingly different because they replace the second part of the multiplication formula from 1:9, 20 (עצם) with the verb פרך (1:12aβ). Apparently, the author no longer felt bound to the terminology of the source text." ("Aus dem Rahmen fallen Ex 1,11a.12 schließlich auch deshalb, weil sie den zweiten Teil der in 1,9.20 vorgegebenen Mehrungsformel (עצם) durch das Verbum פרך ersetzen (1,12aβ). Offenbar sah sich der Verfasser nicht mehr an die terminologischen Vorgaben gebunden.") This statement is surprising in the context of an analysis that otherwise derives entire chains of literary dependence from the smallest differences in terminology.

Exodus – were first joined as a single literary work at a Priestly level of composition. On the other hand, the Priestly texts fundamentally shaped the transition from the Joseph story to the exodus narrative as a shift from one epoch to another, which ultimately led to the development of a book boundary. In other words: the connection between the books of Genesis and Exodus and their independence from one another are two sides of the same coin.