

STEPHEN GERMANY

# The Exodus-Conquest Narrative

*Forschungen  
zum Alten Testament  
115*

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**Mohr Siebeck**

# Forschungen zum Alten Testament

Herausgegeben von

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Stephen Germany

# The Exodus-Conquest Narrative

The Composition of the Non-Priestly Narratives  
in Exodus–Joshua

Mohr Siebeck

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*for Lisa*



## Preface

The present study, which is a significantly revised and expanded version of my 2016 Emory University doctoral dissertation, would not have been possible without the support of the teachers who have shaped my development as a scholar of the Hebrew Bible, the institutions that facilitated my research, and the friends and colleagues who have supported me along the way.

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San Francisco, July 2017

Stephen Germany

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## Chapter 1

# Introduction

*“[T]here is reason to believe that the pre-Priestly Moses story, starting with the exodus, did not end at the Mountain of God but included – given the push of the narrative flow towards this goal – an account of the conquest of the land. ... At this time, however, it is not possible to present a sufficiently well-founded hypothesis of the assignment of specific texts to particular sources for such a pre-Priestly account that includes both the exodus from Egypt and the conquest of the land.”<sup>1</sup>*

This statement by Konrad Schmid reflects two views of a growing number of scholars of the Hebrew Bible: (1) prior to the integration of priestly literature within the Pentateuch and the demarcation of the Pentateuch as a canonical unit, there existed a narrative that extended at least from the exodus from Egypt to the conquest of the land, and (2) the precise literary shape of this narrative remains unclarified at present. The present study seeks to address both of these observations, evaluating the theory of a pre-priestly exodus-conquest narrative through a comprehensive reappraisal of the non-priestly narratives in the books of Exodus, Numbers, and Joshua.

## 1. Contextualization of the Problem

The notion that the narrative arc that begins with the exodus from Egypt finds its conclusion only in the book of Joshua is not new and indeed is almost unavoidable when the Pentateuch is read in its received form.<sup>2</sup> Yet since the books of Genesis through Deuteronomy form a distinct canonical unit, critical scholarship has often investigated their formation independently of that of the book of Joshua. Already in the late eighteenth century, however, some critical scholars began to consider whether the narrative sources found in the Pentateuch in fact continue into the book of Joshua.<sup>3</sup> This notion gained momentum throughout the nineteenth century<sup>4</sup> and was eventually given lexical

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<sup>1</sup> K. SCHMID, “Exodus,” 45–46.

<sup>2</sup> Notably, the church fathers already used the term “Hexateuch” to speak of the books of Genesis through Joshua as a literary unit; see AULD, *Joshua, Moses and the Land*, 3 n. 8.

<sup>3</sup> This idea seems to have first appeared in GEDDES, *Holy Bible*, 1:xxi.

<sup>4</sup> On the implicit assumption of a Hexateuch as a discrete literary work prior to Wellhausen, see BLEEK, “Einige aphoristische Bemerkungen,” 44; EWALD, “Review,” 602;

expression in a series of articles by Julius Wellhausen from 1876–1877 entitled “Die Composition des Hexateuchs.”<sup>5</sup> Wellhausen’s use of the term “Hexateuch” was quickly adopted by other scholars,<sup>6</sup> and the tendency to find the continuation of the Pentateuchal sources in the book of Joshua continued well into the twentieth century.<sup>7</sup>

This trend continued apace until the mid-twentieth century, when Martin Noth began a sustained critique of the notion of the Hexateuch that would exert a profound influence on Pentateuchal scholarship up to the present. In his 1938 commentary on the book of Joshua, Noth made two primary arguments against the continuation of the classical Pentateuchal sources in the book of Joshua: (1) the material in Josh 13:1–21:42 has its own literary prehistory that is independent of both the remainder of the book of Joshua and the Pentateuchal narratives; and (2) even in the other parts of Joshua, the literary evidence differs from that found in Genesis (the classical case study for source-critical analyses).<sup>8</sup> Noth echoed this skepticism about a Hexateuch in subsequent studies in the 1940s,<sup>9</sup> yet he also found it difficult to abandon the notion that the “old sources of the Pentateuch” originally contained a conquest narrative.<sup>10</sup> In the second edition of his Joshua commentary from 1953, Noth reaffirmed his view that the old sources of the Pentateuch do not

IDEM, *Geschichte*, 1:75–164 and 2:225–70; STÄHELIN, “Beiträge,” 472; DE WETTE, *Lehrbuch*; KNOBEL, *Numeri, Deuteronomium und Josua*, 357–488, 547–59; KUENEN, *Historisch-kritisch onderzoek*<sup>1</sup>, 181–83; and COLENZO, *Pentateuch*, 6:112–29.

<sup>5</sup> Surprisingly, although Wellhausen’s articles seem to have been the first to use the term “Hexateuch” in the realm of critical scholarship (RAKE, *Juda*, 8), Wellhausen provides no explicit justification for the shift from “Pentateuch” to “Hexateuch.” Wellhausen’s analyses were further developed in WELLHAUSEN, *Skizzen*; IDEM, *Composition*.

<sup>6</sup> E.g., KUENEN, *Historisch-kritisch onderzoek*<sup>2</sup> and its English and German translations.

<sup>7</sup> DILLMANN, *Numeri, Deuteronomium und Josua*; ALBERS, *Quellenberichte*; DRIVER, *Introduction*; ADDIS, *Documents*; J. E. CARPENTER, *Composition*, 303–59; STEUERNAGEL, *Deuteronomium und Josua*; HOLZINGER, *Josua*; SMEND (SR.), *Erzählung*; COOKE, *Book of Joshua*; EISSFELDT, *Hexateuch-Synopse*; BERTHOLET, “Josua,” 384–85; NOTH, *System*, 270; cf. MOWINCKEL, *Erwägungen*, 59–118; VON RAD, *Priesterschrift*; and RUDOLPH, *Elohist*.

<sup>8</sup> NOTH, *Josua*<sup>1</sup>, viii. Notably, however, Noth’s denial of narrative continuity between the book of Joshua and the preceding books is based on only two examples: (1) differences in the representation of the miracle at the sea in Exod 14 and in Josh 2:10; 4:23 and (2) divergences between the description of certain events as narrated in the Pentateuch and the review of those events in Josh 24:2b-13 (*ibid.*, xiii; IDEM, *Josua*<sup>2</sup>, 16).

<sup>9</sup> IDEM, *ÜSt*. According to Noth, “Einen Hexateuch in dem üblichen Sinn, daß die überlieferten Bücher Gen.-Josua im wesentlichen in dem vorliegenden Bestande einmal eine literarische Einheit gebildet hätten, hat es nie gegeben” (*ibid.*, 253).

<sup>10</sup> “Das kann...nicht zweifelhaft sein, daß sie (d. h. die alten Pentateuchquellen) eine – wie auch immer gestaltete – Landnahmeerzählung gehabt haben” (IDEM, *ÜSt*, 210); cf. IDEM, *ÜP*, 16, 54–58, 77–79. For this view, see already GOFF, “Lost Jahwistic Account,” 241–49 and more recently CARR, “Moses Story,” 31–32. See also RÖMER, “Mose,” 204–5, who speaks of an alternate tradition rather than a concrete narrative.

appear in the book of Joshua, which he now defended through his hypothesis of a Deuteronomistic History (DtrH) spanning from Deuteronomy to Kings.<sup>11</sup> Noth's reliance upon his own Deuteronomistic History hypothesis in challenging the existence of a Hexateuch sets his argument on unstable ground: once this hypothesis is questioned, Noth's denial of a Hexateuch is left without a firm foundation.

As Noth's Deuteronomistic History hypothesis became more influential,<sup>12</sup> the notion that the book of Joshua formed part of a Hexateuch gradually receded into the background, although it did not disappear completely from scholarly discussions. In fact, a steady stream of studies continued to employ the notion of a Hexateuch, some of which explicitly defended this notion over against the Deuteronomistic History hypothesis<sup>13</sup> while others sought to harmonize the two competing theories.<sup>14</sup>

In 1977, the publication of Rolf Rendtorff's study *Das Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Problem des Pentateuch* set off a scholarly discussion that would radically alter the nature of Pentateuchal criticism up to the present. Rather than taking for granted the existence of continuous, parallel sources in the Pentateuch, Rendtorff advocated investigating the growth of the Pentateuchal narratives from smaller cycles into larger units without assuming that every Pentateuchal text necessarily formed part of a larger "source."<sup>15</sup> In the wake of Rendtorff's study, a number of scholars began developing a variety of alternative models for understanding the formation of the Pentateuch,<sup>16</sup> including new iterations of the Hexateuch hypothesis.

One of the most significant modifications to the classical theory of the Hexateuch is the theory of an exodus-conquest narrative as a narrative work that was originally independent of the narratives in the book of Genesis.<sup>17</sup> The concept of an exodus-conquest narrative was first proposed by Klaus

<sup>11</sup> "Man wird daher die Frage des Auftretens einer der alten Pentateuch-*'Quellen'* in Jos verneinen müssen, und zwar auf Grund des literarischen Sachverhaltes in Jos. *Daß dem so ist, ist um so begreiflicher, als das Josuabuch in den großen literarischen Zusammenhang des deuteronomistischen Geschichtswerkes gehört, das völlig unabhängig von dem großen Traditionswerk des Pentateuch entstanden ist*" (NOTH, *Josua*<sup>2</sup>, 16, emphasis added).

<sup>12</sup> See, e.g., SOGGIN, *Joshua*, 3–7; MILLER, "Book of Joshua," 493; BOLING / WRIGHT, *Joshua*, 57; and FRITZ, *Josua*, 7.

<sup>13</sup> E.g., EISSFELDT, "Deuteronomium," 39 (repr. 258).

<sup>14</sup> E.g., MOWINCKEL, *Tetrateuch*; FOHRER / SELLIN, *Einleitung*; and TENGSTRÖM, *Hexateucherzählung*.

<sup>15</sup> RENDTORFF, *Das Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Problem*, 154–58 (ET 181–89).

<sup>16</sup> This shift in Pentateuchal research has been discussed in a number of studies. For two contrasting presentations, see NICHOLSON, *Pentateuch*, 95–221 and ZENGER, "Theorien," 74–123.

<sup>17</sup> For a review of literature on the original separation of Genesis and Exodus, see K. SCHMID, *Erzväter*, 56–102 (ET 50–92).

Bieberstein in 1995 and since then has been taken up by a number of other scholars.<sup>18</sup> There is little agreement, however, over its beginning and ending,<sup>19</sup> and very few scholars have attempted to delineate the internal contents of this hypothetical narrative.

Thus far, the only comprehensive identification of the contents of an early exodus-conquest narrative has been provided by Reinhard Kratz. According to Kratz's reconstruction, an early *Grundschrift* of an exodus-conquest narrative<sup>20</sup> existed at a pre-priestly and pre-Deuteronomistic stage of composition and possibly underwent some expansion at this stage.<sup>21</sup> This pre-priestly and pre-Deuteronomistic Hexateuch (Exodus through Joshua) was subsequently expanded to form an Enneateuch (Exodus through Kings), which was then prefaced with non-priestly materials in Genesis prior to the composition of the Priestly narrative and its insertion into the non-priestly Enneateuch.<sup>22</sup> While Kratz's reconstruction convincingly demonstrates the *minimum* pre-Deuteronomistic and pre-priestly narrative connection between the exodus and the conquest, Kratz does not always differentiate between pre-priestly and post-priestly material in the later additions to the *Grundschrift*,<sup>23</sup> raising

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<sup>18</sup> Cf. BIEBERSTEIN, *Josua*, 336–41; KRATZ, *Komposition*, 286–304 (ET 279–95); BECKER, “Endredaktionelle Kontextvernetzungen,” 152; KNAUF, *Josua*, 17; K. SCHMID, *Literaturgeschichte*, 89 (ET 79); ZENGER, “Theorien,” 101; GERTZ (ed.), *Grundinformation*, 289; GERTZ et al., *T&T Clark Handbook*, 356–60; BERNER, *Exoduserzählung*, 430–31; FRELVEL, “Wiederkehr,” 29; and NIHAN, “Literary Relationship,” 108.

<sup>19</sup> Cf., e.g., the various positions in BIEBERSTEIN, *Josua*, 341, 431; KRATZ, *Komposition*, 293–94 (ET 292); KNAUF, *Josua*, 17; K. SCHMID, *Literaturgeschichte*, 86–89 (ET 79–83); GERTZ (ed.), *Grundinformation*, 289; GERTZ et al., *T&T Clark Handbook*, 357–58; and BERNER, *Exoduserzählung*, 49.

<sup>20</sup> This narrative is denoted by the siglum E<sup>G</sup>, with “E” now signifying “Exodus” rather than “Elohist”: Exod 2:1–22; 3:1–6, 7–8, 21–22; 4:18, 20a; 12:35–36; 14:5–6, 13–14, 21, 27, 30b; 15:20–22a; Num 20:1\*; 22:1; 25:1a; Deut 34:5–6; Josh 2:1–7, 15–16, 22–23; 3:1, 14a, 16; 4:19b; 6–8; and 12:1a, 9–24 (KRATZ, *Komposition*, 293–94 [ET 292]).

<sup>21</sup> These additions are denoted by the siglum E<sup>S</sup>: Exod 15:22b–25a, 27; 16:1aa; 19:2, 3; 24:18b; Num 20:1aβb, 14–21; 21:21–24a; 22–24 (ibid.).

<sup>22</sup> KRATZ, *Komposition*, 304 (ET 295). For Kratz, there is no evidence for the existence of a post-priestly Hexateuch from a literary-critical perspective; rather, such a work is only a “*literarische Fiktion*”; IDEM, “Der vor- und der nachpriesterschriftliche Hexateuch,” 322.

<sup>23</sup> E.g., Kratz states that “[i]n substance the Sinai pericope [i.e., Exod 19–24; 32–34] is pre-Priestly and pre-Deuteronomic, and therefore pre-Deuteronomistic. But it is not a literary unity and also contains a series of later expansions influenced by Deuteronomy, the Deuteronomists and the Priestly writing” (KRATZ, *Komposition*, 139 [quote from ET 134]). Yet in his analysis of the narrative materials in Exod 19–24, Kratz is unclear about which materials may belong to a pre-priestly stage of composition and which are post-priestly (ibid., 142–45 with the table on 149–50 [ET 136–40 with Table B.I.3 on 143]). Moreover, Kratz rules out the possibility that Exod 32–34 could be post-priestly in their entirety (ibid., 140 [ET 135]) but does not provide a detailed reconstruction of a pre-priestly version of Exod 32–34 to support this claim.

the question of the precise extent of further pre-priestly narrative material in Exodus through Joshua.

Alongside the recent theory of an independent, pre-priestly and pre-Deuteronomistic exodus-conquest narrative spanning from Exodus to Joshua, a number of other scholars have sought to explain the literary connection between the exodus and the conquest through the redactional joining of narrative material in Exodus and Numbers with some sort of Deuteronomistic literary work. These scholars can be subdivided into two major groups: the proponents of the so-called “late Yahwist” theory and the proponents of a redactional Hexateuch/Enneateuch. According to the late Yahwist theory, the pre-priestly narratives in Genesis through Numbers were *composed from the outset* with the Deuteronomistic History in view.<sup>24</sup> According to the redactional Hexateuch/Enneateuch theory, the pre-priestly narratives in Genesis through Numbers had their own literary prehistory but were combined with the conquest narratives in the book of Joshua only *after* the latter had already been integrated into a larger Deuteronomistic literary work, whether DtrL (*Deuteronomistische Landnahmeerzählung*: Deut 1–30 + Josh 1–23\*)<sup>25</sup> or DtrH. While some scholars have argued that this redactional joining first occurred at a pre-priestly stage of composition,<sup>26</sup> others have argued that it incorporated priestly literature from the outset.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> This theory has an important forerunner in H. H. SCHMID, *Der sogenannte Jahwist*, although he denied that the literary relationship between the “so-called Yahwist” and Deuteronomistic literature can be determined precisely (169). The first scholars to argue that the Yahwist was literarily dependent on DtrH were VAN SETERS, “Confessional Reformation,” 454, 459; IDEM, *In Search of History*, 361; and ROSE, *Deuteronomist*, 323–28; cf. IDEM, “La croissance,” 230–32. Van Seters later systematically applied this compositional model in VAN SETERS, *Prologue and Life*.

<sup>25</sup> For the theory of an independent Deuteronomistic conquest narrative in Deuteronomy through Joshua as a literary precursor to DtrH, see LOHFINK, “Kerygmata.” More recent advocates of an independent DtrL (albeit with differences from Lohfink’s understanding) include OTTO, *Deuteronomium im Pentateuch*, 130–55; MOENIKES, “Beziehungssysteme,” 71–77; RÖMER, “Das doppelte Ende,” 534 (tentatively); OSWALD, *Staatstheorie*, 96; BRAULIK, “Die deuteronomistische Landeroberungserzählung”; and CARR, *Formation*, 256–57, 278; see also BIEBERSTEIN, “Buch Josua,” 165–67, who argues that Deuteronomy and Joshua once constituted an independent literary work, albeit one that is secondary to an earlier exodus-conquest narrative.

<sup>26</sup> BLUM, *Studien*, 109; JOHNSTONE, “Use of the Reminiscences,” 247–48; IDEM, “Recounting,” 226–31; CARR, *Formation*, 278; IDEM, “Scribal Processes,” 75; and KRAUSE, *Exodus und Eisdodus*, 406–13.

<sup>27</sup> H.-C. SCHMITT, “Das spätdeuteronomistische Geschichtswerk”; SCHORN, *Ruben*, 137–222, esp. 195–222; OTTO, *Deuteronomium im Pentateuch*, 17–86, 103–9, 130–35, 175–80, 243–62; IDEM, “Pentateuch,” 29; ACHENBACH, “Pentateuch,” 138; RÖMER / BRETTLER, “Deuteronomy 34,” 401–19, esp. 408–16; and RÖMER, *So-Called Deuteronomistic History*, 178–83; IDEM, “Das doppelte Ende,” 535; IDEM, “Israel’s Sojourn,” 426; IDEM, “How Many Books?,” 30.

The proponents of both the late Yahwist theory and the redactional Hexateuch/Enneateuch theory assume that DtrL and/or DtrH once existed as independent literary works, yet this only compounds the hypothetical nature of such models. Even if it were granted that DtrL/DtrH was at one time conceived of as an independent literary work, that work must have already presupposed a narrative connection between the exodus and the conquest, since (1) the Israelites' journey through the wilderness (presupposed in Deut 1–3) is intelligible only in light of their subsequent entry into the land, and (2) the people's entry into the land *from the outside* as recounted in the book of Joshua is intelligible only in light of the exodus from Egypt. Thus, every model for the literary joining of the exodus and conquest that takes DtrL or DtrH as its starting point is forced to reckon either with the *loss* of the original conclusion to the exodus narrative<sup>28</sup> or with the secondary *separation* of the conquest narratives in Joshua from a preexisting narrative arc spanning from the exodus to the conquest.<sup>29</sup> In short, there is good reason, *prima facie*, to hypothesize the existence of a continuous pre-priestly and pre-Deuteronomistic narrative in Exodus through Joshua.

## 2. Methodology

In order to evaluate the hypothesis of a pre-priestly and pre-Deuteronomistic exodus-conquest narrative, it is necessary to identify the pre-priestly and pre-Deuteronomistic narrative material in the books of Exodus through Joshua and then to evaluate whether this narrative material is coherent and complete. Within the framework of the classical Documentary Hypothesis, this material (at least within the Pentateuch) has usually been assumed to comprise the sources J and E, which, since the time of de Wette, have been regarded as pre-priestly and pre-Deuteronomistic *by definition*.

With the breakdown of the classical Documentary Hypothesis, a number of scholars have begun to speak of “non-priestly” narrative material in the Pentateuch rather than the sources J and E. Nevertheless, the view persists in many quarters that the priestly (and Holiness) materials in the Pentateuch belong to the last major stage in its formation – a view which derives directly from the classical order established for the Pentateuchal documents J–E–D–

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<sup>28</sup> This was noted explicitly by Noth in the second edition of his Joshua commentary: “Eine Frage für sich, die mit der literarischen Analyse des Josuabuches nicht verquickt werden darf, ist die, was aus der Landnahmeerzählung geworden sein mag, auf die die alten Pentateucherzählungsquellen einmal hinausgelaufen sein müssen” (NOTH, *Josua*<sup>2</sup>, 16). Many of Noth's intellectual descendants, however, fail to address this as a problem.

<sup>29</sup> For a similar critique of the presupposition of DtrL/DtrH as a starting point of the analysis of the Pentateuch, see KRATZ, “Pentateuch,” 57.

P.<sup>30</sup> As long as this assumption is maintained, it implies that most of the non-priestly narrative material in the Pentateuch is also *pre-priestly*.<sup>31</sup> If this assumption is abandoned, however, then the relative chronology of the various narrative materials that do not show clear indications of priestly or Deuteronomistic provenance can no longer be taken for granted. As Kratz has observed, “non-Priestly or non-Deuteronomistic texts can always be both: Pre- and post-Priestly or pre- and post-Deuteronomistic.”<sup>32</sup> Or, in the words of Thomas Römer, “Die Unterscheidung von priesterlichen und nichtpriesterlichen Texten bedeutet nicht (mehr), dass das Gros der nichtpriesterlichen Texte zeitlich vor P anzusetzen sei.”<sup>33</sup>

This observation is in fact not new. From a relatively early stage in the critical study of the Pentateuch, scholars have suggested that some texts are the work of the so-called “Pentateuch redactor” (R<sup>p</sup>) who, by definition, was familiar with both the priestly and the non-priestly materials in the Pentateuch.<sup>34</sup> In more recent scholarship, the major difference is that the stage of composition previously associated with the Pentateuch redactor has been expanded to include not only the addition of small-scale stitches joining the preexisting fabric of the Pentateuch but rather entire patches of new fabric that are the work of several different hands.<sup>35</sup>

Such materials are sometimes termed *endredaktionell* or *nachendredaktionell*, although in my view such terms should be avoided for two reasons. First, they assume that the pre-priestly and priestly narratives in the Pentateuch once existed as separate documents, although this itself is a hypothesis that remains debated.<sup>36</sup> Moreover, it implies that the texts that presuppose the integration of priestly material in the Pentateuch were all composed very near to the end of the Pentateuch’s formation, which runs the risk of flattening a

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<sup>30</sup> Here I agree with Baden’s critique of the notion of a fixed chronological order J–E–D–P and the related notion that P constitutes the latest material in the Pentateuch (BADEN, *J, E*, 307–8). I cannot agree, however, with Baden’s alternative, namely, that P is completely independent of J and E and thus that its diachronic relationship to the non-priestly narratives in the Pentateuch cannot be determined further.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. the critique of the term “non-P” by LEVIN, “Priesterschrift,” 24 n. 49.

<sup>32</sup> KRATZ, “Pentateuch,” 47; cf. IDEM, *Komposition*, 251 (ET 250).

<sup>33</sup> RÖMER, “Provisorische Überlegungen,” 128.

<sup>34</sup> E.g., WELLHAUSEN, *Komposition*<sup>3</sup>, 89, 93 attributed some of the material in the Sinai pericope to the “letzten Redaktor des Pent... der Q und JE verbunden hat.”

<sup>35</sup> Examples of the systematic application of this approach include LEVIN, *Jahwist* and GERTZ, *Tradition*.

<sup>36</sup> For the view that the priestly narratives in the Pentateuch were never literarily independent from the pre-priestly narratives, see GRAF, “Die s.g. Grundschrift,” 474; KLOSTERMANN, *Pentateuch*, 10; LÖHR, *Untersuchungen*, 1; VOLZ, “Anhang,” 135; CROSS, “Priestly Work,” 324–25; RENDTORFF, *Das überlieferungsgeschichtliche Problem*, 141–42 (ET 169–70); BLUM, *Komposition*, 426–27; VAN SETERS, *Pentateuch*, 164; BERNER, *Exodus-erzählung*, 435; IDEM, “Der literarische Charakter,” 131–33; and ALBERTZ, *Ex 1–18*, 21.

theologically diverse – and potentially long and productive – stage in the Pentateuch’s formation to a single layer of literature.<sup>37</sup> Thus, in order to avoid these assumptions that accompany the terms “final redactional” and “post-final redactional,” here I will use the term *post-priestly* to refer to any text that presupposes the integration of priestly literature within the Pentateuch. Although this term is itself still quite broad, it is sufficient for the purposes of this study, since the primary goal here is not to reconstruct overarching literary strata *within* the priestly and post-priestly material in the books of Exodus through Joshua but instead to identify potentially *pre-priestly* narrative material through the process of bracketing out priestly and post-priestly material.<sup>38</sup>

Following a broad consensus held since the time of Theodor Nöldeke’s 1869 study *Untersuchungen zur Kritik des Alten Testaments*, the following texts in the books of Exodus through Numbers can be regarded, broadly speaking, as “priestly,” leaving aside the question of whether they constitute an originally independent source, a redactional layer or layers, or some combination of both: Exod 1:1-5, 7, 13-14; 2:23-25; 6:2-9, 10-13, (14-15), 29-30; 7:1-7, 8-13, 19-20a\*, 22; 8:1-3, 11-15; 9:8-12; 11:9-10; 12:1-23 (24-27), 28, 37a, 40-51; 13:1-2, 20; 14:1-4, 8-9, 10\*, 15-18, 21\*, 22-23, 26, 27\*, 28-29; 15:27; 16; 17:1; 19:2a; 24:15-18b; 25-31; 35-40; Lev 1-27; Num 1:1-10:28; 13:1-17a, 21, 25, 32\*; 14:1-10, 26-38; 15; 16:3-11, 16-24, 35; 17-19; 20:6-11, 22-29; 21:10-11; 22:1; 25-27 (28-29); 30; 31; 32:2-6\*, 16-32; 33:1-49; 34-36.<sup>39</sup> Within the book of Joshua, chapters 13-22 are also widely regarded as an insertion that has links to priestly literature.<sup>40</sup> If the aforementioned materials are bracketed out, then any pre-priestly material in the books of Exodus through Joshua must be sought within Exod 1-12; 13-18; 19-24; 32-34; Num 10-14; 16; 20-24; Deut 1-34; and Josh 1-12; 23-24. As noted above, however, it cannot simply be assumed that all of the non-priestly materials in these chapters are also *pre-priestly*.

Ideally, the identification of a non-priestly narrative text as post-priestly should be based upon the demonstration that the non-priestly text presupposes a lexical term, narrative event, or theological concept that is attested elsewhere exclusively in an indisputably priestly text. Nevertheless, such clear

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<sup>37</sup> For a similar objection to the notion of an *Endredaktion*, see BLUM, *Studien*, 380 and LEVIN, “Priesterschrift,” 30-31.

<sup>38</sup> For this approach, see KRATZ, “Pentateuch,” 55 with n. 77.

<sup>39</sup> NÖLDEKE, *Untersuchungen*, 35-93. On the consensus that these materials can broadly be labeled as priestly, see CARR, “Moses Story,” 9 and KRATZ, “Analysis,” 540. More recently, Nöldeke’s attribution of Exod 16 in its entirety to his *Grundschrift* (i.e., P) has been challenged (for further literature, see Chapter 3, §5.2), raising the question of whether this chapter may contain some pre-priestly material.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. VAN SETERS, *In Search of History*, 331-37; CORTESE, *Josua 13-21*, 49-85; and RÖMER, *So-Called Deuteronomistic History*, 82.

knowledge of priestly literature by a non-priestly text is not always evident.<sup>41</sup> Moreover, the assumption that any text that postdates the integration of priestly literature within the Pentateuch *must* reflect priestly language or concepts is logically flawed. Indeed, it is quite plausible that a post-priestly text could forego the use of specifically priestly terms or concepts if these were not relevant to the rhetorical aims of that text. This means that lexical and conceptual affinities to priestly literature – while undoubtedly important – cannot be the only criteria for identifying post-priestly material within the texts in question.<sup>42</sup>

In order to overcome this problem, a different approach is needed to evaluate whether a non-priestly text predates or postdates the integration of priestly literature within the books of Exodus through Joshua. Such an approach must take as its starting point an independent evaluation of the relative chronology of the materials within individual narrative units *before* turning to the question of whether a particular verse, group of verses, or narrative strand is pre-priestly or post-priestly. In this way, the internal stratification of a given narrative unit can serve as the basis for the subsequent evaluation of how each respective layer in that unit relates to priestly literature.

Thus, in this study, each narrative unit under consideration will be analyzed in two discrete steps. The first step consists of a *literary-critical analysis* in which different literary strata are identified as far as possible on the basis of internal criteria such as narrative tensions, contradictions, or repetitions; inconsistencies in terminology or grammar; or unusual or problematic syntax. The second step consists of a *macrocontextual analysis* in which the various literary strata identified in the literary-critical analysis are evaluated in terms of their relationships to other texts outside the unit, including to priestly and post-priestly texts.<sup>43</sup> The results of this two-step process will then be presented together in a synthesis of the literary growth of each unit.

Proponents of the Documentary Hypothesis may object that the method employed here unduly favors a supplementary or fragmentary approach over against a documentary approach and assumes that the most basic narrative thread (or *Grundbestand*) identifiable in the received text on the basis of the literary-critical analysis also represents the oldest version of the narrative *tout court*. While such objections are legitimate and indeed caution against categorically ruling out the possibility that parallel accounts of the same events have been interwoven at points in the present text of Exodus through Joshua,

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<sup>41</sup> If it were, the notion that P is the latest of the Pentateuchal sources would hardly have become so deeply entrenched in the scholarly discussion, and the debate over the pre- or post-priestly nature of many non-priestly texts in the Pentateuch would not be so contentious.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. KRATZ, "Pentateuch," 47–49.

<sup>43</sup> For a plea in favor of such an approach, see KRATZ, "Analysis," 539.

they do not justify the assumption of multiple parallel, complete, and originally independent narrative sources from the outset. Indeed, the most frequently cited ancient example of the joining of parallel narrative sources – Tatian’s Diatessaron – suggests that even if parallel accounts were combined, they were hardly independent from each other in any absolute sense, given that the separate sources of the Diatessaron (i.e., the Gospels) are themselves literarily dependent upon each other and stand in a particular diachronic relationship.<sup>44</sup> Therefore, the literary-critical analysis of the narratives in Exodus through Joshua cannot stop at the *separation* of literary strata but must also attempt to determine the *diachronic relationship* of those strata based – crucially – on the internal evidence of each narrative unit.

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<sup>44</sup> Thus, as KRATZ, “Analysis,” 537 has noted, “[T]he analogy of the Diatessaron reveals that the documentary hypothesis is a particular variant of the combined fragmentary and supplementary hypotheses and cannot do without these other two methodological approaches.”

## Chapter 2

# Out of Egypt (Exod 1–12)

## 1. Pharaoh's Oppression of the Israelites (Exod 1)

### 1.1. Literary-critical analysis

*The death of Joseph (Exod 1:1-9).* The first indication of possible literary growth in Exod 1 is found in 1:5b (ויוסף היה במצרים), which is something of a *non sequitur* following 1:1-5a but prepares the ground for 1:6 by shifting the focus to Joseph, who is not mentioned in 1:1-5a.<sup>1</sup> Another possible literary-critical break is created by 1:7, which interrupts the focus on Joseph in 1:6 and 1:8. Within 1:9, the phrase עם בני ישראל is slightly awkward syntactically, and the fact that the remainder of the verse uses singular suffixes with reference to עם בני ישראל is somewhat surprising, since in 1:1, בני ישראל 7 clearly takes plural grammatical forms.<sup>2</sup>

*The oppression of the Israelites (Exod 1:10-14).* The clause ועלה מן הארץ at the end of Exod 1:10 contradicts Pharaoh's plans to control the Israelite population, since the Israelites' departure from Egypt would resolve Pharaoh's concern without the need for further intervention.<sup>3</sup> Rather, Pharaoh's concern that the Israelites might "go up from Egypt" is better understood in light of the motif of the Israelites' bondage (1:11a) and thus comes too early in the sequence of the narrative, suggesting that ועלה מן הארץ is a later addition.<sup>4</sup> The statement in 1:11b that the people built store-cities for Pharaoh

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<sup>1</sup> On Exod 1:5b as a later addition, see BLUM, "Die literarische Verbindung," 151; IDEM, "Zwischen Literarkritik und Stilkritik," 511 n. 70.

<sup>2</sup> This tension was clearly felt in the later versions (Ⓞ, Ⓢ, Ⓣ), which either partially or completely replaced the singular grammatical forms in Exod 1:10 with plural forms. GERTZ, "Zusammenhang," 247 n. 51 holds that the phrase עם בני ישראל was intentionally formulated as such from the outset but downplays the tension that עם בני ישראל creates with the singular grammatical forms in 1:10.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. GERHARDS, *Aussetzungsgeschichte*, 35 n. 35, although he resolves this problem not by means of literary criticism but by interpreting ועלה מן הארץ as "to inundate the land" ("das Land überschwemmen").

<sup>4</sup> BERNER, *Exoduserzählung*, 24 argues that Exod 1:10b\* (from ויהי) as a whole is a later addition, although I see no reason to remove the reference to the threat of war in 1:10b\* from the most basic narrative on the basis of a literary-critical analysis alone. In contrast, a number of other commentators assume the unity of Exod 1:8-12; cf., e.g., CHILDS, *Exodus*,

creates a degree of syntactic tension, since it shifts the subject from the Egyptians to the Israelites without naming the Israelites explicitly as the subject, and 1:12 does not reintroduce the Egyptians as the subject. Thus, it seems possible that 1:11a once connected directly to 1:12.<sup>5</sup> Within 1:12–14, it is noteworthy that 1:12a refers to the people using singular grammatical forms, while 1:12b–14 refer to the people as “the Israelites” (בני ישראל) and use plural grammatical forms. This suggests that 1:12b–14 may not belong to the same compositional level as 1:8–10\*, 11a, 12a.

*The midwives episode (Exod 1:15–22).* This unit is not a compositional unity, as it contains two different versions of Pharaoh’s command to kill male Israelite infants, one directed specifically at the midwives in Exod 1:15–16 and one directed at “all his people” in 1:22. Since the more general command in 1:22 can hardly be understood as a later addition to the midwives episode in 1:15–21, this verse must be the more original of the two versions, indicating that the midwives episode in 1:15–21 does not belong to the most basic material in Exod 1.<sup>6</sup> Within the midwives episode itself, the reference to the midwives by name in 1:15b is an even later addition, indicated by the *Wiederaufnahme* of ויאמר in 1:16.<sup>7</sup> Likewise, the reference to God making “houses” (i.e., posterity) for the midwives in 1:21 comes too late after the reference to the multiplication of the people in 1:20b and can be interpreted as a later addition that clarifies specifically how God “dealt well” with the midwives (1:20a).<sup>8</sup> Once 1:21 is bracketed out as a later addition within 1:15–21, the statement וירב העם ויעצמו מאד in 1:20b can be interpreted as a *Wiederaufnahme* of the basic issue raised by Pharaoh in 1:9, thus forming a new transition to Pharaoh’s original command to kill male Israelite infants following the insertion of the midwives episode.<sup>9</sup>

*Interim result.* On the basis of a literary-critical analysis of Exod 1, several distinct narrative strata can be identified in this chapter. Whereas 1:1–5a, 7, 13–14 refer to the people as בני ישראל and attribute the oppression of the Israelites to the Egyptians as a whole, 1:6\*, 8, 9\*, 10\*, 11a, 12a refer to the people using the term עם and attribute their oppression to Pharaoh. Since it is difficult to determine the relative chronology of these narrative strata on the basis of 1:1–14 alone, it is necessary to consider the relationship of both strata

7 (with reference to earlier literature); PROPP, *Exodus 1–18*, 126; DOZEMAN, *Exodus*, 61; GERTZ, *Tradition*, 365–69; BADEN, “From Joseph,” 136; and ALBERTZ, *Ex 1–18*, 47.

<sup>5</sup> On Exod 1:11b as a later addition, see REDFORD, “Exodus I 11,” 414–15; LEVIN, *Jahwist*, 314; and BERNER, *Exoduserzählung*, 30–31, 434.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. GERHARDS, *Aussetzungsgeschichte*, 38–43 and BERNER, *Exoduserzählung*, 25.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. BERNER, *Exoduserzählung*, 27.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. NOTH, *Exodus*, 13 (ET 24); W. H. SCHMIDT, *Ex 1–6*, 19; GERHARDS, *Aussetzungsgeschichte*, 44; and BERNER, *Exoduserzählung*, 29. GERTZ, *Tradition*, 373 regards Exod 1:20b–21a as an insertion between 1:20a and 1:21b.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. GERHARDS, *Aussetzungsgeschichte*, 46.

to 1:15-22. As noted above, 1:22 is earlier than 1:15-21, and it also forms the necessary transition to Exod 2. Thus, either 1:1-5a, 7, 13-14 or 1:6\*, 8, 9\*, 10\*, 11a, 12a must have once connected directly to 1:22. There are two major problems with a direct connection between 1:1-5a, 7, 13-14 and 1:22. First, 1:1-5a, 7, 13-14 – unlike 1:22 – do not mention Pharaoh at all and also do not refer to the Egyptians as a “people” (עַם). Moreover, a direct connection between 1:13-14 and 1:22 fails to explain why the oppression of the Israelites shifts from servitude and forced labor (1:13-14) to a decree to kill newborn Israelite males (1:22). In contrast, a direct connection between 1:6\*, 8, 9\*, 10\*, 11a, 12a and 1:22 is more plausible in both respects. Pharaoh is already introduced in 1:8, and 1:9 refers to the Egyptians as Pharaoh’s “people” (עַמּוֹ). Moreover, Pharaoh’s decree to kill Israelite males in 1:22 fits well with both the initial concern raised by the king in 1:9\*-10\* (i.e., a perceived military threat) and with the failure of the oppressive measures described in 1:11a, 12a, which were presumably intended to decimate the adult population (and possibly also reduce the rate of reproduction) through forced labor. Thus, it can be concluded that 1:6\*, 8, 9\*, 10\*, 11a, 12a are the original counterpart to 1:22 and belong to the most basic compositional level within Exod 1.<sup>10</sup> Within these materials, it is notable that two different schemes are described for controlling the Israelite population, namely, the imposition of forced labor in 1:11a, 12a and the command to kill newborn Israelite males in 1:22. Since either scheme would be effective on its own, it is possible that one of these two motifs is secondary to the other. Considering that the killing of newborn males is closely linked to the story of Moses’ birth in Exod 2, while the motif of forced labor is not, 1:22 cannot be removed from the most basic material in Exod 1, while 1:11a, 12a can.<sup>11</sup>

### 1.2. Macrocontextual analysis

In its present form, Exod 1 cannot constitute an independent introduction to the exodus narrative but instead presupposes the preceding ancestral narratives in the book of Genesis.<sup>12</sup> By extension, this observation raises two heavily debated issues: (1) the relative date of the first literary connection between

<sup>10</sup> Cf. BERNER, *Exoduserzählung*, 26; similarly GERHARDS, *Aussetzungsgeschichte*, 47.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. BERNER, *Exoduserzählung*, 24, who argues that the motif of forced labor in Exod 1:11-12\* does not belong to the most basic material in Exod 1 and is even later than the midwives episode in 1:15-21.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. W. H. SCHMIDT, *Ex 1–6*, 7; KRATZ, *Komposition*, 288 (ET 281); and BERNER, *Exoduserzählung*, 11. The only way to identify the beginning of an independent exodus narrative in Exod 1 that does not connect to the preceding ancestral narratives is to postulate that an earlier introduction has been suppressed by the present one; for this view, cf. GERTZ, *Tradition*, 379 (prior to Exod 1:11) and ALBERTZ, “Beginn,” 235–36; IDEM, *Ex 1–18*, 43 (prior to 1:9).

the ancestral narratives and the exodus narrative<sup>13</sup> and (2) the relative date of the Joseph story.<sup>14</sup> Although these questions cannot be treated exhaustively here, the analysis of Exod 1 can indirectly shed light on them.

*Exod 1:1–9.* As discussed in §1.1, the references to Joseph's death in Exod 1:6\* and 1:8 belong to the most basic narrative thread in Exod 1, while 1:1–5 and 1:7 do not. There is a broad consensus that both 1:1–5 and 1:7 belong to a priestly or post-priestly stage of composition.<sup>15</sup> In contrast, 1:6\*, 8 may preserve a pre-priestly narrative thread, although the latter must be limited to the basic notice *וימת יוסף* in 1:6\*,<sup>16</sup> since the phrase *וכל אחיו* presupposes the (post-)priestly reference to Jacob's sons in 1:1–5a,<sup>17</sup> while the phrase *וכל הדור ההוא* is a blind motif that presupposes the death of Joshua and his generation in Judg 2:8–10,<sup>18</sup> which also likely belongs to a post-priestly stage of compo-

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<sup>13</sup> For the view that the ancestral narratives and the exodus narrative were first joined at a priestly or post-priestly stage of composition, see RÖMER, *Israels Väter*, 567, 574; DE PURY, "Le cycle de Jacob," 78–96; K. SCHMID, *Erzväter*, 69–72, 241–54 (ET 62–65, 224–37); IDEM, "Transition," 73–87; GERTZ, *Tradition*, 357–66; IDEM, "Zusammenhang," 239–45; BLUM, "Die literarische Verbindung," 119–56; and ALBERTZ, "Beginn," 232–36; IDEM, *Ex 1–18*, 44–46. For the view that Exod 1 may preserve a pre-priestly transition between the ancestral narratives and the exodus narrative, see KRATZ, *Komposition*, 287–88 (ET 280–81); VAN SETERS, "Patriarchs," 1–15; LEVIN, "Yahwist," 133; CARR, "What is Required?," 164–75; BERNER, *Exoduserzählung*, 17–26; H.-C. SCHMITT, "Erzvätergeschichte," 241–66; and L. SCHMIDT, "Die vorpriesterliche Verbindung." See also the discussion of the problem in RÖMER, "Zwischen Urkunden, Fragmenten und Ergänzungen," 9–14.

<sup>14</sup> On this issue, see RÖMER, "Zwischen Urkunden, Fragmenten und Ergänzungen," 14 n. 57 and IDEM, "Joseph Story."

<sup>15</sup> On Exod 1:1–5, see CHILDS, *Exodus*, 2 (P); PROPP, *Exodus 1–18*, 125 (R<sup>p</sup>); GERTZ, *Tradition*, 354–57 (post-priestly); BERNER, *Exoduserzählung*, 38–40; IDEM, "Der literarische Charakter," 96 (post-priestly); DOZEMAN, *Exodus*, 61 (P History); and ALBERTZ, *Ex 1–18*, 22, 25 (a first P redaction and a Hexateuchal redaction). On 1:7, see LEVIN, *Jahwist*, 315; GERTZ, *Tradition*, 352–53; KRATZ, *Komposition*, 243 (ET 241); CARR, "What is Required?," 173; and BERNER, *Exoduserzählung*, 15–16, 38–41; IDEM, "Der literarische Charakter," 96–97. As has often been noted, 1:7 forms a connection with the priestly creation account in Gen 1 through the use of the verbs *פָּרָה*, *שָׂרָץ*, and *מָלֵא* (see, e.g., GERTZ, "Zusammenhang," 240).

<sup>16</sup> For documentary approaches that adopt this solution, see VRIEZEN, "Exodusstudien," 334–35; H.-C. SCHMITT, *Die nichtpriesterliche Josephsgeschichte*, 126–27; and W. H. SCHMIDT, *Ex 1–6*, 31–32. For non-documentary approaches, see LEVIN, *Jahwist*, 313; KRATZ, *Komposition*, 287 (ET 280); CARR, "What is Required?," 175; and BERNER, *Exoduserzählung*, 20–21.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. GERTZ, *Tradition*, 362; IDEM, "Zusammenhang," 248; BERNER, *Exoduserzählung*, 20; and ALBERTZ, "Beginn," 233; IDEM, *Ex 1–18*, 43.

<sup>18</sup> Against W. H. SCHMIDT, *Ex 1–6*, 10 and GERHARDS, *Aussetzungsgeschichte*, 64–65, who argue that the two passages may not reflect direct literary dependence.

sition.<sup>19</sup> Thus, Exod 1:8 likely served as the source for Judg 2:10, upon which the expanded form of Exod 1:6 (וּכְל הַדּוֹר הַהוּא) subsequently drew.<sup>20</sup>

It has often been argued that Pharaoh's comment about the Israelites' great numbers in 1:9\* presupposes 1:7,<sup>21</sup> yet it should also be noted that the long chain of verbs in 1:7 seems to *combine* the shorter phrase רַב וְעִצּוּם from 1:9\* with language from the priestly creation account and thus is likely *later* than 1:9\*.<sup>22</sup> Moreover, if the primary purpose of Exod 1 is to create a transition from the Joseph story to the story of Moses, then 1:9\* does not require 1:7 in order to form a coherent narrative, since Pharaoh's observation is merely a pretext for the command to kill newborn Israelite males (1:22) in order to prepare the ground for the narrative of Moses' birth in Exod 2.<sup>23</sup>

*Exod 1:10-14.* As was noted in §1.1, Exod 1:13-14 are repetitive in light of 1:11a, 12a and bear lexical connections with 1:1-5, 7. It is thus not surprising that these verses, like 1:1-5, 7, are widely attributed to priestly authorship.<sup>24</sup> In contrast, there are no clear indications that 1:11a, 12a presuppose priestly literature.<sup>25</sup> The reference to the store cities of Pithom and Raamses in 1:11b, which was evaluated as a later addition, can hardly be taken as an ancient historical memory from the premonarchic period but instead most likely reflects the historical circumstances of the seventh century B.C.E.<sup>26</sup>

*Exod 1:15-22.* It was concluded in §1.1 that this unit once consisted solely of Pharaoh's command to kill all male Israelite infants in 1:22, which was later supplemented with the midwives episode in 1:15a(b), 16-20, (21). This episode does not show any clear connection to priestly literature and thus may belong to a pre-priestly stage in the formation of Exod 1.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Judg 2:10 states that "all that generation was gathered to its ancestors," which seems to presuppose the priestly motif of being "gathered to one's ancestors" in Gen 49:29, 33.

<sup>20</sup> In contrast, GERTZ, "Zusammenhang," 246 argues that Exod 1:6, 8 were written by the same (post-priestly) author who created the transition between the books of Joshua and Judges in Judg 2:8-10.

<sup>21</sup> E.g., GERTZ, *Tradition*, 365; IDEM, "Zusammenhang," 247.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. LEVIN, *Jahwist*, 315; KRATZ, *Komposition*, 243; CARR, "What is Required?," 173; and BERNER, *Exoduszählung*, 15-16.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. CARR, "What is Required?," 175; GERHARDS, *Aussetzungsgeschichte*, 63; and BERNER, *Exoduszählung*, 22-23. On the close connection between Exod 1:22 and Exod 2, see GERHARDS, *Aussetzungsgeschichte*, 30-31.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. CHILDS, *Exodus*, 7; PROPP, *Exodus 1-18*, 126-27; GERHARDS, *Aussetzungsgeschichte*, 50-51; DOZEMAN, *Exodus*, 61; and ALBERTZ, *Ex 1-18*, 22. GERTZ, *Tradition*, 353-54 and BERNER, *Exoduszählung*, 10 further note that Exod 1:13-14 use the verbal root עָבַד, which appears elsewhere in the priestly version of the commissioning of Moses (6:5).

<sup>25</sup> Cf. BERNER, *Exoduszählung*, 31-33, who regards Exod 1:11-12\* as a pre-priestly expansion that is already presupposed in the (post-)priestly additions in 1:13-14.

<sup>26</sup> REDFORD, "Exodus I 11," 416 and SCHIPPER, "Raamses," esp. 276-82.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. BERNER, *Exoduszählung*, 44-48. See also GERHARDS, *Aussetzungsgeschichte*, 70, who regards the midwives episode as a fragment of E.