

Noncontinuous Literary Sources Taken Up in the Book of Exodus

Rainer Albertz

There is near consensus that there is some preexisting literary material integrated into the book of Exodus. Many scholars would include the Songs of Moses (Exod 15:1–18*) and of Miriam (v. 21) or the Book of the Covenant (20:22–23:19). Only the extent of that material and its range are disputed. Although Hermann Gunkel has shown that in the book of Genesis the patriarchal story included smaller narrative compositions (*Sagenkränze*) such as the Abraham-Lot and the Jacob-Esau stories,¹ a thesis extended by Erhard Blum from the oral to the literary stage of text formation,² most scholars regard the book of Exodus as part of a much longer narrative thread running from the birth until the death Moses (Exod 2–Deut 34) or even to the conquest of the promised land in the book of Joshua. Hugo Gressmann’s attempt to distinguish smaller compositions, which he called “Moses legends,” “Jethro-Moses legends,” or “Kadesh legends,” has failed.³ Even Blum confined himself to the reconstruction of large compositions in this area, namely, a late Deuteronomistic (KD) and a Priestly one (KP), and only tentatively suggested a *vita Mosis* behind them.⁴

Preparing my commentary on the book of Exodus,⁵ however, I noticed that this book was also composed of several smaller narrative, poetic, legislative, and cult programmatic units, which had probably existed in written form before they were integrated into larger compositions.⁶ Because of the limited space in

¹ See H. GUNKEL, *Genesis* (7th ed.; HK 1/1; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1966), li–liiii, 214–217, 291–293.

² See E. BLUM, *Die Komposition der Vätergeschichte* (WMANT 57; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1984), 273–361; 461–477.

³ See H. GRESSMANN, *Mose und seine Zeit: Ein Kommentar zu den Mosesagen* (FRLANT 18; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1913), 386–392.

⁴ See E. BLUM, *Studien zur Komposition des Pentateuch* (BZAW 189; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1990), 216–218; Blum was skeptical as to whether such older *Vorlagen* could be reconstructed, since their beginnings and conclusions are missing.

⁵ See R. ALBERTZ, *Exodus, Band I: Ex 1–18* (ZBK 2/1; Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 2012); *idem*, *Exodus, Band II: Ex 19–40* (ZBK 2/2; Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 2015).

⁶ See R. ALBERTZ, “Die vergessene Heilsmittlerschaft des Mose: Erste Überlegungen zu einem spätexilischen Exodusbuch,” *EvTh* 69 (2009), 443–459; *idem*, “The Late Exilic Book of Exodus (Exodus 1–34*): A Contribution to the Pentateuchal Discussion,” in *The*

this extended volume, I would like to restrict myself to the narrative material of the non-Priestly texts. From this corpus, three examples representing a low, middle, and high level of text formation will be presented.

1 The Beginning of a Political Moses Story

In Exod 2 we encounter a well-structured narrative sequence, which can be called a political Moses story, since Moses, having been saved after his birth and brought up by a daughter of Pharaoh (vv. 1–10), killed an Egyptian officer, who tortured a Hebrew compulsory worker (vv. 11–15). But what could have been a signal for an uprising failed. Moses was denounced and persecuted by Pharaoh and had to flee to Midian, where he found accommodation at the house of Jethro (vv. 16–22). The midwife scene in Exod 1:15–22* probably also belongs to this story, since it provides it with the reason for the mortal threat to the baby Moses.⁷ The preexisting character of this narrative can be seen in the abrupt introduction of the midwives in v. 15 and its suddenly narrowed perspective, which was only secondarily applied to the main topic of the chapter (vv. 9–12), the increase of the people, through the insertion of vv. 20b–21a.⁸ Since the days of the Greek translators it has often been observed that the political Moses story, which is interrupted by a Priestly passage (2:23a β –25) and the non-Priestly vocation story (3:1–4:18) after 2:23a α , originally found its continuation in Exod 4:19–20a.⁹ After the death of Pharaoh, who had persecuted

Pentateuch: International Perspectives on Current Research (ed. T. B. Dozeman et al.; FAT 78; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 243–256; R. ALBERTZ, “Der Beginn der vorpriesterlichen Exoduskomposition (K^{EX}): Eine Kompositions- und Redaktionsgeschichte von Ex 1–5,” *ThZ* 67 (2011), 223–262. For the first part of my textual reconstruction of K^{EX} and its integrated sources, see ALBERTZ, *Exodus I* (see n. 5), 19–21. Even the Priestly editor used older sources in Exod 25–31.

⁷ I have shown in ALBERTZ, “Beginn” (see n. 6), 227–229, that Exod 2:1–10 cannot stand on its own.

⁸ Note the resumptive repetition of Exod 1:17 in v. 21a.

⁹ The Septuagint repeats the sentence about the death of the king of Egypt (Exod 2:23a α) in 4:19. That both verses represent an original literary connection was already observed by B. D. EERDMANS, *Alltestamentliche Studien III: Das Buch Exodus* (Gießen: Töpelmann, 1910), 8; W. RUDOLPH, *Der ‘Elohist’ von Exodus bis Josua* (BWANT 68; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1938), 6–7; M. NOTH, *Überlieferungsgeschichte des Pentateuch* (2nd ed.; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1948), 103; BLUM, *Studien* (see n. 4), 20–22; C. LEVIN, *Der Jahwist* (FRLANT 157; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993), 327–329; K. SCHMID, *Erzväter und Exodus: Untersuchungen zur doppelten Begründung der Ursprünge Israels innerhalb der Geschichtsbücher des Alten Testaments* (WMANT 81; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1999), 188–190; J. C. GERTZ, *Tradition und Redaktion in der Exoduserzählung: Untersuchungen zur Endredaktion des Pentateuch* (FRLANT 186; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000), 254–256.

Moses, the deity intervenes in order to bring the liberator back to his oppressed people in Egypt. The brief scene in which Zipporah saves her husband from a divine attack (4:24–26) may belong to the same story. In any case, the political Moses story ends somewhere in chapter 4 and is thus incomplete. Many details that we would expect after what has been narrated – how the new pharaoh reacted to Moses’s return, how Moses found new trust among his companions, whether he received support from the Egyptian princess who had brought him up, and what role Zipporah played during Israel’s liberation – are no longer told in the present book of Exodus. After Exod 4:20a or 26, there is clearly a severe discontinuity in the Exodus narration. The exposition of the political Moses story is also lacking. Thus, it constitutes a noncontinuous literary source. The result can be interpreted in a traditional-historical way: the composer of the pre-Priestly book of Exodus, be it J or E or the author of the exodus composition (R^{EX}), took up an older source about Moses in a selective way. In order to use it for his larger composition, he cut off its beginning and its end. Moreover, he amplified it with an explicit vocation story (3:1–22*; 4:18), where he foretold all the events that would happen in place of those expected: After the negotiations with Pharaoh had failed, YHWH himself would transfer the fight for Israel’s liberation from the political to the theological arena (3:18–22). Thus, what can clearly be identified as an intrusion into the political Moses story¹⁰ creates the literary links to the following plague narrative. Although we can distinguish two older narrative layers in Exod 1–4*, the literary unity and continuity on the level of the Exodus composer (R^{EX}) can be maintained.¹¹

¹⁰ In order to save the vocation story Exod 3–4* for J and E, M. NOTH, *Das zweite Buch Mose: Exodus* (4th ed.; ATD 5; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1966), 21–22, neglected his own insight in NOTH, *Überlieferungsgeschichte* (see n. 9), 103, that Exod 2:15–23aa and 4:19–20a constitute an original literary connection. For similar reasons, C. BERNER, *Exodus erzählung: Das literarische Werden der Ursprungslegende Israels* (FAT 73; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 56–59, explicitly questioned this connection in order to reconstruct an original narrative thread of the first chapters of the book of Exodus, including chapters 3–4. But none of his arguments are convincing.

¹¹ There is no need to assign the vocation story (Exod 3:1–22*) to a much later literary layer; see ALBERTZ, *Exodus I* (see n. 5), 67–77; and see T. RÖMER, “Exodus 3–4 und die aktuelle Pentateuchdiskussion,” in *The Interpretation of Exodus: Studies in Honour of Cornelis Houtman* (ed. R. Roukema; CBET 44; Leuven: Peeters, 2006), 65–79, here 68–70, *pace* E. OTTO, “Die nachpriesterliche Pentateuchredaktion im Buch Exodus,” in *Studies in the Book of Exodus: Redaction – Reception – Interpretation* (ed. M. Vervenne; BETL 126; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1996), 61–111, here 101–111; SCHMID, *Erzväter* (see n. 9), 186–209.

2 The Body of the Plague Narrative

Chapters 7–12 of Exodus consist almost entirely of the extended plague narrative. In its non-Priestly stage of formation, this narrative consisted of a structured sequence of six (three times two) increasing divine sanctions against Pharaoh accompanied by Moses's more and more dramatic negotiations with him, with the seventh sanction, the killing of the Egyptian firstborn, forcing Pharaoh so far to his knees that he accepted Israel's emigration.¹² The plague narrative has probably already integrated the story about the negotiations on relief from compulsory labor in Exod 5, to which it refers back several times (7:14, 16; 8:23, 25).¹³ Thus, at its full length it relates how YHWH took over the struggle with Pharaoh after the efforts on a human level had failed.

This extended, well-structured narrative composition, however, does not constitute the main compositional level of the pre-Priestly book of Exodus. That becomes clear from its end, where its final motif, that the Israelites were driven out from Egypt so quickly that they had no time to prepare their food for the journey in a proper way (Exod 12:33–34, 39), is interrupted by two compositional links. The first one, in vv. 35–36, which recounts that the Israelites even earned farewell presents from their Egyptian neighbors, looks back to 11:2–3 and 3:20–21. The second, which mentions Israel's first wandering from Rameses to Succoth (12:37, 38b), looks forward and introduces the pre-Priestly itineraries of the journey to Mount Sinai (13:20; 15:22, 27; 16:1aα; 17:1b; 19:2aα). Thus, these verses were inserted by the pre-Priestly Exodus composer, however he is designated (J, E, JE, KD, or R^{EX}), and the extended plague narrative belongs to the preexisting literary material of the book of Exodus as well. Its final motif, that the first food of freedom turned out to be unleavened (12:39), probably originally led to the foundation of the Matsot feast, which is lost in the present text of the book.¹⁴ Its beginning, too, before chapter 5, was replaced by the

¹² The seven stories within Exod 7:14–12:39* constitute a well-structured composition, as shown by B. JACOB, *Das Buch Exodus* (ed. S. Mayer; Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1997), 174–183, and M. GREENBERG, "The Redaction of the Plague Narrative," in *Near Eastern Studies: Studies in Honor of William Foxwell Albright* (ed. H. Goedicke; Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1971), 243–352, here 244–250. There is no reason to attribute the plague stories of Exod 9–10 to a later or even the final redaction (thus, GERTZ, *Tradition* [see n. 9], 74–188, and BERNER, *Exoduszählung* [see n. 10], 168–250) if one has accepted that P was not only an author of his own passages but also operated as an editor of the received pre-Priestly material. See ALBERTZ, *Exodus I* (see n. 5), 163–174.

¹³ For the disputed evaluation of Exod 5, see ALBERTZ, "Beginn" (see n. 6), 248–257; ALBERTZ, *Exodus I* (see n. 5), 102–106. The literary bridge from Exod 5:3–19 to the beginning of the plague story in 7:14–15 is still visible in 5:20–21; note the rare phrase *niššab liqrā't*, which only appears in these two passages of the Hebrew Bible.

¹⁴ The original etiological conclusion of the plague narrative seems to be supplanted by the Matsot regulations of the late Deuteronomistic editor (Exod 13:1–10), where it perhaps

redactor with a newly formulated introduction in Exod 1:9–12 and the political Moses story, as already shown.¹⁵ Thus, the plague story, too, is an incomplete and noncontinuous literary source within the book of Exodus. It can be compared to one of the reused and reworked subunits of the Gilgamesh Epic, to which David Carr refers as an example of book formation in ancient Near Eastern culture.¹⁶

3 The Final Scene of the Non-Priestly Exodus Narrative

There is a broad consensus that the non-Priestly exodus narrative comes to its end in Exod 32–34, before the Priestly report on the construction of the tabernacle revealed in Exod 25–31 filled the rest of the book in chapters 35–40. Many scholars also accept that Exod 32–34 concludes that narrative, inasmuch as Israel's covenant with YHWH at Mount Sinai (19–24), which was broken by Israel's veneration of the golden calf (32), is renewed in chapter 34 because of Moses's numerous intercessions (32:11–12, 29–33; 33:12–17; 34:9), Israel's repentance (33:4, 6), and God's overwhelming compassion (34:6–7).¹⁷ According to my own research, the main problem treated in these chapters is that YHWH's extreme closeness to Israel, which had been established by the original covenant – even laymen could take a meal in proximity to the deity (24:9–11) – became a lethal threat after Israel's apostasy. Now, just a moment of YHWH's presence in Israel's midst would kill the people (33:3, 5). Thus, God decides to stop accompanying the Israelites in order to cede them a chance of survival. Moses, however, persuades God not to do this (33:12–17; 34:9). In the end, Moses himself, whose face shone because of his encounter with the divine (vv. 29–32*), turned out to be God's representative, who would portray the divine presence among the people in a less dangerous form. As YHWH's mediator of salvation, he would guarantee the renewed covenant for the future.¹⁸

If this interpretation is correct, the non-Priestly exodus narrative did not need any continuation but would refer directly to the present and future of its

glimmers through in vv. 3–4, a passage that constitutes a kind of doublet to the following admonition speech (vv. 5–10) and differs from it with regard to the number.

¹⁵ See the compositional link in Exod 5:5, which secondarily introduces the topic of the people's increase from 1:9–12.

¹⁶ See D. M. CARR, *The Formation of the Hebrew Bible: A New Reconstruction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 40–48.

¹⁷ See the research report of K. SCHMID, "Israel am Sinai: Etappen der Forschungsgeschichte zu Ex 32–34 in seinen Kontexten," in *Gottes Volk am Sinai: Untersuchungen zu Ex 32–34 und Dtn 9–10* (ed. M. Köckert and E. Blum; Veröffentlichungen der Wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft für Theologie 18; Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2001), 9–40, and especially BLUM, *Studien* (see n. 4), 45–72.

¹⁸ See ALBERTZ, "Heilsmittlerschaft" (see n. 6), 450–459; IDEM, "Late Exilic Book" (see n. 6), 248–253; IDEM, *Exodus II* (n. 5), 321–324.

contemporary audience, probably of the late exilic generation. That Exod 34:32 actually constituted the end of a literary composition can be supported by several additional observations: First, the striking motif of Moses's shining face is never taken up again in the rest of the Pentateuch; the reference to Moses's splendor (*hōd*) in the late Priestly text Num 27:20 is a vague allusion at best. Second, although the theological motif of YHWH's and Moses's presence in the midst of the people, so central in Exod 33–34 (33:3, 5, 12–17; 34:9–10), is known in Num 11:20–21, it has lost any significance and is not further developed. Third, all passages of Exod 32–34 that explicitly refer to future events – the promised land (33:1b), its conquest (33:2), and the future revelations to Moses at the tent of meeting (33:7–11) – are clearly later insertions into the original narrative context. The same is true of the appendix 34:33–35, which intends to integrate Moses's shining face into a repeatable revelation praxis.¹⁹ Fourth, Exod 32–34 does not really prepare for the departure from Mount Sinai. YHWH's order for departure is located too early, in 33:1a. The topic is used here only for dealing with the problem of further divine company (vv. 3–6, 12–17).²⁰ Exodus 34 has nothing to do with Israel's wanderings; the extraordinary miracles, which are mentioned in v. 10, refer not to them but to Moses's transfiguration. Unsurprisingly, Julius Wellhausen regarded this chapter as totally out of place.²¹

Even more problems are raised by the non-Priestly passages that appear again after the bulk of the Priestly Sinai texts from Num 10:29 onward. They do not really follow Exod 34. To mention just one example: Joel Baden, who is very skillful at reconstructing smooth narrative threads, recently made the suggestion that Num 10:29 directly followed Exod 34:27 in the Yahwistic document.²² If one reads these verses one after another, however – “YHWH spoke to Moses: ‘Write these words down, because in accordance with these words I will make a covenant with you and with Israel.’ And Moses spoke to the Midianite Hobab ben Reuel, Moses's father-in-law: ‘We are setting out for the place that YHWH has promised to give us. Come with us, and we will

¹⁹ See ALBERTZ, “Heilsmittlerschaft” (see n. 6), 454–456; IDEM, “Late Exilic Book” (see n. 6), 245–247. Exod 33:1b, 7–11; 34:33–35 can be attributed to D and 33:2 to the Mal'ak redaction (MalR), as elaborated by BLUM, *Studien* (see n. 4), 365–378.

²⁰ NOTH, *Exodus* (see n. 10), 208, stated that Exod 33 reflects the topic of “the presence of God in the midst of the people”; he was rightly followed by T. B. DOZEMAN, *Commentary on Exodus* (ECC; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009), 718.

²¹ See J. WELLHAUSEN, *Die Composition des Hexateuchs und der historischen Bücher des Alten Testaments* (4th ed.; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1963), 334. Among his postscripts, he even stated that Exod 34, which he regarded as the Yahwistic version of the Elohist theophany story in Exod 19–20, “has been so to speak thrown in the junk room.” Like E. BLUM, *Textgestalt und Komposition: Exegetische Beiträge zu Tora und Vordere Propheten* (FAT 69; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 157–176, I regard Exod 34:11–27 as an intrusion of MalR.

²² J. S. BADEN, *The Composition of the Pentateuch: Renewing the Documentary Hypothesis* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012), 79.

deal generously with you [. . .]’” – the result is not really convincing. Moses’s reaction appears to be somewhat strange, if not impolite. Instead of following the divine command, he starts a conversation with someone else. The Midianites do not play any role in Exod 32–34. They are not even mentioned after Exod 18, before the Sinai theophany started. Thus, Num 10:29–32 is better understood as a redactional frame around the Sinai pericope, together with Exod 18. Whereas Jethro went home after having given Moses substantial help (Exod 18:27), his son Hobab is invited to join Israel in the hope that he can help orient the people (Num 10:29, 32). According to my model, both passages can be assigned to the Hexateuch redactor (HexR),²³ who presupposes even later Priestly texts. Thus, it is more likely that Num 10:29–32 was written for its present context.²⁴

The next unit, Num 10:33–36, which starts with an implicit subject, “They set off from the mountain of YHWH for a three-day walk, while the ark of the covenant of YHWH moved before them [. . .] to find them a place of rest,” followed by the ark sayings, could perhaps be connected to Exod 34:32 syntactically, but it does not fit with regard to content, because neither in Exod 32–34 nor in the pre-Priestly exodus narrative is the ark even mentioned. Many scholars have racked their brains to understand why or where the non-Priestly report about the construction of the ark got lost,²⁵ but without any convincing results. In my view, it is much easier to admit that in our received text such a report can only be found in the Priestly revelation of the tabernacle (Exod 25:10–22; cf. 40:20–21; Num 3:31; 4:5). This would mean that the non-Priestly verses Num 10:33–36 already presuppose the Priestly tabernacle report of the book of Exodus. Syntactically, they could have followed the Priestly subscript to the Sinai revelation in Lev 26:46 or 27:34.²⁶

The suggestion that the non-Priestly passages of the book of Numbers come from a later date than most of those in the book of Exodus is supported by additional observations. The first narrative in Numbers, the combined quail and elders story in Num 11:4–34,²⁷ refers back to the tent of meeting outside the

²³ In defense of ascribing Exod 18 to the HexR, see ALBERTZ, *Exodus I* (see n. 5), 296–314.

²⁴ See the brief transitional remark “Then” or “When they set off” in Num 10:28b, after the Priestly report about the order of departure in 10:11–28a.

²⁵ See, for example, WELLHAUSEN, *Composition* (see n. 21), 93; B. BAENTSCH, *Exodus–Leviticus–Numeri* (HAT 1/2; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1903), 274; BLUM, *Studien* (see n. 4), 135–141; BADEN, *Composition* (see n. 22), 276, n. 127.

²⁶ In both subscripts, *bānē yiśrā’ēl*, the missing subject of Num 10:33, are mentioned.

²⁷ The two topics of Num 11:4–34, feeding the people quails and the inspiration of the seventy elders, cannot be separated into two different literary layers. Both are dependent upon the lament of the people in vv. 4–17. The thematic term *’āsap*, “to collect, to assemble,” which is used six times, appears in the context of both topics (for collecting the quails, see vv. 22, 32[2×]; for assembling the elders, see vv. 16, 24; and for their return, see v. 30). The phrase *kol-hā’ām hazzē* is used with regard to both topics in vv. 11, 12, 13, 14. That the quail material is also formulated by the late Deuteronomistic author can be seen from v. 10, where he uses a

camp (vv. 10, 16–17, 24b–29) and thus to the very passage that constituted a later insertion into Exod 33 (vv. 7–11).²⁸ Moreover, it explicitly refers back to the priestly manna story of Exod 16, a chapter in which, according to many scholars, no pre-Priestly stratum can be found.²⁹

Within the quail and elders story, one passage is intended to provide the reader with information about the manna (Num 11:7–9). This passage exhibits several verbal allusions, especially to the Priestly portions of Exod 16. In Num 11:8, only the rare verb *lāqaṭ*, “to collect,” is used, which functions as a key word in the Priestly story (see Exod 16:16–18, 21, 26–27; secondarily used in v. 5); apart from Exod 16 it appears only once more in the Pentateuch (Gen 31:46). The rather strange idea of the Priestly story that the manna can be cooked (*bāšal*; Exod 16:23) is taken up in Num 11:8. It has a narrative function only in the context of Exod 16, where it emphasizes the wonderful character of the Sabbath meal. Numbers 11:9 mentions that the manna came down in Israel’s camp together with the dew, which recalls Exod 16:13b–14. This motif, which seems to be superfluous information in the context of Num 11, has great significance for the process of the discovery of the manna depicted in Exod 16.³⁰ Thus, there are good reasons for concluding that Num 11:7–9 is literarily dependent upon the Priestly formulation of the manna story in Exod 16. Since the passage aims to remind readers of previous events in Israel’s salvation history, it functions as an explicit literary link to the book of Exodus and makes sense as the product of an author who intended to supplement this history with a new chapter. Thus, the passage cannot be regarded as secondary in the combined quail and elders story; Num 11:4–34 altogether is of a post-Priestly date. We have to conclude that the literary continuity between the book of Exodus (along with Leviticus) and the

phrase from Exod 33:8, 10, “everybody at the entrance of his tent,” the very unit to which he refers in the verses in which he depicts how the seventy elders got a share of Moses’s spirit (see Num 11:17, 25 and Exod 33:5, 9–10).

²⁸ The affiliation of Exod 33:7–11 to the late Deuteronomistic composition KD was shown by BLUM, *Studien* (see n. 4), 61–62; 76–88. Meanwhile, the secondary position of the passage in its context and its post-Priestly dating has been demonstrated by several scholars; see R. ALBERTZ, “Ex 33,7–11, ein Schlüsseltext für die Rekonstruktion der Redaktionsgeschichte des Pentateuch,” *BN* 149 (2011), 13–43.

²⁹ See E. RUPRECHT, “Stellung und Bedeutung der Erzählung vom Mannawunder (Ex 16) im Aufbau der Priesterschrift,” *ZAW* 86 (1974), 267–307, here 271–291; BLUM, *Studien* (see n. 4), 146–152; ALBERTZ, *Exodus I* (see n. 5), 262–265, and others. Here I have shown that the Priestly manna story of Exod 16* is located at its original position in the work of the first Priestly editor (PB¹). Thus, the suggestions of J. S. BADEN, “The Original Place of the Priestly Manna Story in Exodus 16,” *ZAW* 122 (2010), 491–504, seem to be superfluous. According to my research, the non-Priestly passages of the chapter (Ex 16:4–5, 28–29) were added by MalR.

³⁰ The fact that only Exod 16:31 and Num 11:7–8 compare the appearance of manna to coriander seed and mention its taste (*ta’am*) does not help for determining the direction of literary dependence, because the former passage seems to be a later Priestly addition (PB³) to the manna story, where the influence might have run in the opposite direction.

book of Numbers was not established until a later date, that is, at a post-Priestly redactional stage. In my model, Num 10:33–36; 11:1–35; and Exod 33:7–11 belong to the late Deuteronomistic redaction D, which corresponds more or less to Blum's KD but has to be dated later than the first two Priestly layers.³¹

All these observations provide good reasons for concluding that Exod 34 not only shows the final scene of a narrative sequence but also constitutes the end of a literary composition, which was originally not continued. What looks like a continuation in the book of Numbers does not fit and seems to belong to later literary layers. Therefore, I speak of a specific Exodus composition (K^{EX}) containing most of the non-Priestly passages of the book within the wide range from Exod 1:9 to 34:32. This composition was not completely preserved, either; its exposition was lost in the redactional work at the beginning of the book.³² Whether some concluding remarks are missing at the end is not certain. Thus, a large but noncontinuous literary unit seems to have existed in the book of Exodus even at a higher level of text formation, where many scholars tend to assume continuous literary documents or comprehensive redactional compositions.

4 A Brief Conclusion

The observation that the Exodus composition probably came to its conclusion in Exod 34:32 has an important methodological consequence. It suggests that the discontinuity of the narrative flow is not only restricted to the preexisting material taken up by the composer of larger works but can also be found at the level of larger compositions themselves. This means that it cannot be taken for granted any longer that those sources of the Pentateuch that are situated in a higher compositional layer, whether they are designated J, E, JE, P or otherwise, constitute literary units throughout the entire range of the pentateuchal or hexateuchal narrative. How far such sources actually extended has to be carefully investigated in each case, as has already been done in the case of the preexisting material at lower levels of text formation.

³¹ See R. ALBERTZ, "Das Buch Numeri jenseits der Quellentheorie: Eine Redaktionsgeschichte von Num 20–24," *ZAW* 123 (2011), 171–183; 336–347, here 336–338; *idem*, "Schlüsseltext" (see n. 28), 13; 37–39. According to my research, it was the D redaction that connected the Priestly edited books of Gen–Lev (Triteuch) with the already existing Dtr book of Deut by creating the first parts of the book of Numbers.

³² The first verse that can be attributed to the Exodus Composition (K^{EX}), Exod 1:9, lacks its subject, which – in the present text – is already named in 1:8, a passage introduced by the HexR together with vv. 1b, 5b–6; for a more detailed discussion, see my analysis in ALBERTZ, "Beginn" (see n. 6), 227–238.