

The Late Exilic Book of Exodus (Exodus 1–34*): A Contribution to the Pentateuchal Discussion

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It was one of the uncritical assumptions of the Source theory that the sources must have contained the entire account of the salvation story, from the creation or the patriarchs up to the conquest of the land, because the pentateuchal narrative constitutes a more or less continuous story. But does it hold true? Doubts could have already arisen from the research of M. Noth, who in 1943 had shown that the conquest stories in the book of Joshua belonged to a different literary unit, the Deuteronomistic History (Deut 1–2 Kgs 25), and were never part of the pentateuchal sources.¹ And in subsequent research it has been demonstrated that the primeval history (Gen 1–11)² and the patriarchal narrative (Gen 12–50) constituted separate literary units for a long period, until they were integrated in the pentateuchal story, probably by the Priestly source or redaction as shown by K. Schmid and J. C. Gertz.³ In particular, Erhard Blum, who developed Gunkel's form-critical method to a comprehensive composition-critical approach, has elaborated in detail on how Gen 12–50 emerged step by step from a separate Jacob narrative, which was extended by the Joseph story and interconnected with the Abraham-Lot and the Isaac sto-

¹ See Martin NOTH, *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien: Die sammelnden und bearbeitenden Geschichtswerke im Alten Testament* (3rd ed.: Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1967), 3–110. That the Priestly passages of the book of Joshua also cannot be assigned to Priestly source was explicitly defended by him: *ibid.*, 180–216. Although Noth downplayed the significance of these passages in some way, Rainer ALBERTZ, "The Canonical Alignment of the Book of Joshua," in *Judah and the Judeans in the Fourth Century B.C.E.* (ed. O. Lipschits et al.; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2007), 287–303, fundamentally confirmed his position by showing that those passages already presuppose the canonization of the Pentateuch.

² See Frank CRÜSEMANN, "Die Eigenständigkeit der Urgeschichte: Ein Beitrag zur Diskussion um den 'Jahwisten,'" in *Die Botschaft und die Boten* (ed. J. Jeremias and L. Perlitt; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1981), 11–29.

³ See Konrad SCHMID, *Erzväter und Exodus: Untersuchungen zur doppelten Begründung der Ursprünge Israels innerhalb der Geschichtsbücher des Alten Testaments* (WMANT 81; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1999), 152–53, and Jan Christian GERTZ, *Tradition und Redaktion in der Exoduserzählung: Untersuchungen zur Endredaktion des Pentateuch* (FRLANT 186; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000), 357–66.

ries by several redactional links, a literary process that took place over the preexilic and exilic periods.⁴ Thus, I would like to ask: should such a formation from smaller literary units to larger ones, as in the book of Genesis, not also have happened in the book of Exodus and other parts of the Pentateuch?

1. Reconstructing a Pre-KD/KP Composition of the Book of Exodus

Unfortunately, even Blum did not really investigate the smaller pre-Priestly compositions in the book of Exodus. In his second book, he restricted himself to describing the “relief” of the late Deuteronomistic composition (KD) as the earliest perceptible literary layer.⁵ However, by doing this in great detail, Blum was able to point out the coherence in the course of events, starting with Israel’s liberation from Egypt (Exod 1–13*), its rescue at the Sea of Reeds (14*), and its protection in the wilderness (15–17). After leading Israel to God at Mount Sinai, Moses mediated a covenant between YHWH and Israel, which originally included a vision of the priesthood of all the people (19:6) and a meal in the direct presence of God (24:9–11*). But this original close relationship was destroyed when Israel renounced its God and worshipped the golden calf (32*). Only by his intercession was Moses able to avert Israel’s annihilation, and by his continuous struggle with God he moved YHWH to reveal his innermost mercy and made him ready for renewing the covenant (34:1–10*). As the broken tablets symbolized the broken covenant (32:19*), so the new tablets symbolized the renewed one (34:28*). Yet the reestablished relationship between God and the stiff-necked people was more reserved than the original one.

Thus, Blum described a coherent meaning to the exodus story, better than many supporters of the Source theory. However, Blum equally believed that the exodus story, which includes the promise of land at its beginning (3:8, 17*), could not have come to an end with this solution but must have continued into the book of Numbers until the start of the conquest of the land. According to him, KD, the redactor of the comprehensive late Deuteronomistic composition, was likewise the editor and author of the pre-Priestly exodus story and continued his work in Numbers and Deuteronomy.⁶

⁴ See Erhard BLUM, *Die Komposition der Vätergeschichte* (WMANT 57; Neukirchenvluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1984).

⁵ See Erhard BLUM, *Studien zur Komposition des Pentateuch* (BZAW 189; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1990), 9–72.

⁶ So BLUM, *Studien*, 73–218.

Blum supported his view on redactional links, which he observed in Exod 32–33*. In 32:13* Moses refers back to the promise to the patriarchs, which suggests a literary link to Gen 15:5, 18*; 22:16–17*; 26:3b–5* in style and content. The same is true for God’s promise of the land given in Exod 33:1b*. The link to the books of Numbers and Deuteronomy is given in 33:7–11*, where the tent of meeting is introduced. Indeed, this tent plays a prominent role in Num 11:11–17, 24b–30*; 12:1–10*; Deut 31:14–15, 23*.⁷ While the links back to the book of Genesis are more obscure, since Blum has acknowledged the results of Schmid and Gertz that not KD but only KP constructed the connection between the books of Exodus and Genesis – consequently, these links could only be dated post-P⁸ – Blum still insists on the existence of the pre-Priestly KD link forward to the books of Numbers and Deuteronomy.

It can be shown, however, that all these redactional links found in Exod 32–33* are secondary insertions in their contexts. After Moses reminds YHWH of the exodus (32:12*) in his intercession, arguing that the Egyptians could denounce him as a shifty demon and on this basis asks him to repent of the evil, the following reminder to God of the past promises to the patriarchs (v. 13*) constitutes a doublet, which not only comes too late after God has already been asked to repent but also is not mentioned in YHWH’s reaction (v. 14*). The divine reaction, “so YHWH repented concerning the evil,” which is reminiscent of Jer 18:8*,⁹ directly refers back to the last sentence of v. 12*, passing over v. 13*.¹⁰

The same is true for Exod 33:1b*, even though the case is somewhat more complicated. The reference to the promise of the land given to the patriarchs (v. 1b*) constitutes a syntactical doublet to v. 3a*, where the adverbial qualification אֶל-אֱרֶץ, naming the goal of Israel’s departure, has to be repeated be-

⁷ From these non-Priestly passages, which are closely interrelated in style, motifs, and content, one should separate those Priestly stories where the כבוד יהוה appears over or in the tent of meeting during severe conflicts (Num 14:10; 16:19–20; 17:7–10; 20:6–7).

⁸ See Erhard BLUM, “Die literarische Verbindung von Erzvätern und Exodus: Ein Gespräch mit neueren Endredaktionshypothesen,” in *Abschied vom Jahwisten: Die Komposition des Hexateuch in der jüngsten Diskussion* (ed. J. C. Gertz et al.; BZAW 315; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2002), 119–56. Blum accepted such a post-Priestly dating, here 140–44.

⁹ Jer 18:7–10, which is paralleled by 26:3, 13, 19; 36:3, constitutes the main concept of the second edition of the book of Jer of the late exilic period; see Rainer ALBERTZ, *Israel in Exile: The History of Literature of the Sixth Century B.C.E.* (Studies in Biblical Literature 3; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), 332–39.

¹⁰ This was already noted by Jan Christian GERTZ, “Beobachtungen zu Komposition und Redaktion in Exodus 32–34,” in *Gottes Volk am Sinai: Untersuchungen zu Exodus 32–34 und Dtn 9–10* (ed. M. Köckert and E. Blum; Veröffentlichungen der Wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft für Theologie 18; Gütersloh: Kaiser / Gütersloher Verlag, 2001), 88–106, esp. 96; see also Rainer ALBERTZ, “Die vergessene Heilsmittlerschaft des Mose: Erste Überlegungen zu einem spätexilischen Exodusbuch (Ex 1–34*),” *EvTh* 69 (2009): 443–59, esp. 454–55.

cause of the interruption.¹¹ By another insertion of the so-called “Mal’ak Edition” in v. 2*,¹² the syntactical connection was so badly broken that the Septuagint and the Vulgate felt obliged to insert new verbs in order to smooth the break.¹³ If you read v. 3* directly after v. 1a*, the syntax and the content of the sentence are perfect.

Finally, the passage that introduces the tent of meeting (Exod 33:7–11*) also interrupts the sequence between YHWH’s order for Israel’s departure (vv. 1a, 3a*), including his announcement that he will no longer go in the midst of his people (vv. 3b–6*), and Moses’ reaction to this threatening order (vv. 12–17*). Both scenes belong closely together, as can be shown by the use of the same verb, נָצַל, in v. 1a* (*qal*) and v. 12* (*hip’il*).¹⁴ Moreover, the tent of meeting is introduced in such a strange manner, as if it were meant as a future institution,¹⁵ that several scholars, like A. H. J. Gunneweg,¹⁶ J. C. Gertz,¹⁷

¹¹ The indefinite version of the adverbial qualification in v. 3a is original, in contrast to the definite one in v. 1b; see Exod 3:8, 17; Deut 6:3; 11:9; 26:9, 15; 27:3.

¹² For the Mal’ak redaction, see BLUM, *Studien*, 365–76; in little difference from him I would like to assign to it the passages Exod 14:19a; 23:23–33; 32:34aβ; 33:2; 34:11–27; Judg 2:1–5.

¹³ The LXX inserts καὶ εἰσῆλξω and the Vg. *et intres*.

¹⁴ Erik AURELIUS, *Der Fürbitter Israels: Eine Studie zum Mosebild im Alten Testament* (ConBOT 27; Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1988), 101–3, wanted to connect Exod 33:12–17 directly with 32:34*, which he ascribed to the original level of the story of the golden calf, but here a different verb (נָהַג “to lead”) is used. The connection of 33:1a on the compositional level is much closer. Already B. D. EERDMANS, *Alttestamentliche Studien*, Vol. 3: *Das Buch Exodus* (Gießen: Alfred Töpelmann, 1910), has seen that 33:12 joins with 33:6 and refers back to 33:1; similarly Bruno BAENTSCH, *Exodus – Leviticus – Numeri* (HKAT I/2; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1903), 277. The close connection between the two verses is also observed by BLUM, *Studien*, 62, but he did not infer literary-critical consequences from this observation; cf. *ibid.*, 75 n. 130.

¹⁵ Exod 33:7–11 starts with an inverted verb in the imperfect and is followed by a long series of verbs in the *perfectum consecutivum* and imperfect. Normally this structure is interpreted as a report of iterative actions in the past, which seems to be supported by Hebrew grammars, see e.g. Paul JOÜON and Takamitsu MURAOKA, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew* (2nd ed.: SubBi 27; Rome: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2008), 338–39, 337–74. But normally those iterative reports are introduced or framed by narrative sentences (Gen 2:6, 10; 29:3; Exod 17:11; 34:33–35; 2 Kgs 12:10–17), or perfective statements (Num 9:15–23); or they are penetrated with iterative temporal adverbs (1 Sam 1:3–7), or both (Num 9:15–23). Both features are lacking in Exod 33:7–11. Thus, it becomes highly questionable whether this traditional interpretation holds true. The text is taken as a reflection about future actions by Christoph DOHMEN, “Das Zelt außerhalb des Lagers: Exodus 33,7–11 zwischen Synchronie und Diachronie,” in *Textarbeit: Studien zu Texten und ihrer Rezeption aus dem Alten Testament und der Umwelt Israels* (ed. K. Kiesow and T. Meurer; AOAT 294; Münster: Ugarit Verlag, 2003), 157–69; IDEM, *Exodus 19–40* (HTKAT; Freiburg: Herder, 2004), esp. 336–39. Possibly the text wants to unfold the divine thoughts about possibilities to overcome the crisis between YHWH and his people, which are mentioned briefly in Exod 33:5.

F. Hartenstein,¹⁸ and others, have convincingly argued that it should be understood as a kind of counterconcept to the Priestly tabernacle to be constructed later in Exod 35–40. In any case, the intimate relationship between Moses and YHWH envisioned in this tent (v. 11) would make Moses' struggle about God's closeness, the main topic of 33:12–17; 34:8–9, superfluous in some way. Thus, all three redactional links in Exod 32–33 are later insertions into the exodus story.

These literary-critical results have three important consequences: First, we have to distinguish between an older exodus story in Exod 1–34* and a later Deuteronomistic redaction, which created the links back to the book of Genesis and forward to the books of Numbers and Deuteronomy. Second, the Exodus composition was not composed by KD, as Blum assumed, but by a different author, who pre-dated him. Third, the late Deuteronomistic redactor should probably be dated after the early Priestly layers of the book of Exodus.

2. Scope, Date, and Intention of the Exodus Composition

If it is true that all the links (Exod 32:13; 33:1b, 7–11) are insertions of a later redactor, the pre-Deuteronomistic and pre-Priestly exodus story would lose its most important links that extend the story beyond the scope of Exod 1–34. In addition, although there are some links to the book of Genesis in the earlier parts of the book of Exodus, R. Rendtorff has already pointed out that they are restricted for the most part to the first four chapters (Exod 1:6, 8; 3:6a β , 15, 16a β *; 4:5; 13:19) and later seem to be totally forgotten.¹⁹ Recently E. Blum has demonstrated that Gen 50:24–26; Exod 1:6, 8; 13:19 can probably be ascribed to a post-Priestly Hexateuch redaction (HexR), which not only created the motif of Joseph's bones to be buried in Shechem (Gen 33:19; 48:22; Exod 13:19; Josh 24:32) but also appears to be interested in structuring the different epochs of Israel's salvation history.²⁰ The references to the gods of the patriarchs in Exod 3:6a β , 15, 16a β ; 4:5 are not tightly tied to their contexts and may all be later insertions; their origin needs still to be clarified.²¹ Thus it

¹⁶ See Antonius H. J. GUNNEWEG, "Das Gesetz und die Propheten: Eine Auslegung von Ex 33,7–11; Num 11,4–12,8; Dtn 31,14f.; 34,10," ZAW 102 (1990): 169–80, esp. 171–75.

¹⁷ See GERTZ, *Beobachtungen*, 103.

¹⁸ See Friedhelm HARTENSTEIN, "Das 'Angesicht Gottes' in Exodus 32–34," in Köckert and Blum, *Gottes Volk am Sinai*, 157–83, esp. 158–59.

¹⁹ Rolf RENDTORFF, *Das überlieferungsgeschichtliche Problem des Pentateuch* (BZAW 147; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1970), 65–70.

²⁰ BLUM, "Literarische Verbindung," 149–51.

²¹ In Exod 3:6, the singular designation "I am the god of your father" (that means Moses' father) in v. 6a α , does not go well with the enumeration of three patriarchal deities in v. 6a β . The entire verse 3:15 looks like a doublet to v. 14. In 3:16 the reference to the god of the pa-

seems to be that in its original form the Exodus composition was self-contained. It seems to have covered the majority of the non-Priestly texts within Exod 1–34, but a more detailed study cannot be undertaken within the limits of the present article.

In order to define Exod 1–34* as an independent composition in a strict sense, it must be proven to be a coherent and self-contained unit. As shown above, the narrative sequence of the story Exod 1–34*, liberation, covenant making, apostasy, and renewal of the covenant, makes good sense. But besides that, an independent composition also needs to have a clear beginning and a clear end. Unfortunately the original beginning was lost by the Priestly editing, and the old story starts now with the statement of the Pharaoh that the people of Israel have become strong and multiplied (1:9*). Not much is lacking.²² However, the more important question is whether the story comes to a clear end in Exod 34*.

To answer this question we have to look at the central passage of this chapter. After YHWH had revealed his intrinsic mercy (Exod 34:6–7*), Moses quickly started his last intercession:

Exod 34:8 In a hurry Moses bowed to the ground and prostrated himself

9 and said: "If indeed I enjoy your favor, Adonay,
then may Adonay go in our midst,
because it is a stiff-necked people.
Forgive our iniquities and sins,
and accept us as your own possession."

10 He answered: "See, I will make a covenant.
Before all your people I will perform miracles
as have never been created before
on all the earth and among all nations.
All the people, in whose midst you are,
will see the work of YHWH
because it is frightening, what I will do to you."

Moses asked again for God's closeness, forgiveness, and a reestablishment of Israel's relationship to God. And God, shortly after having announced a covenant making, profusely promised the creation (ברא) of miracles, which had

triarchs syntactically comes too late after the statement "YHWH, the god of your fathers has appeared to me"; see already Thomas RÖMER, *Israels Väter: Untersuchungen zur Väterthematik im Deuteronomium und in der Deuteronomistischen Tradition*. (OBO 99; Fribourg, Switz.: Universitätsverlag; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1990), 350–52, 552–54. The entire verse Exod 4:5 seems to be an addition. GERTZ, *Tradition*, 254–305, has assigned all those passages to the final redaction; but that assignment needs to be clarified.

²² In Exod 1:9 the subject of the sentence is missing and the people of Israel is already presupposed. Thus, the Pharaoh and Israel should have been introduced before. The strange expression עַם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, "the people of the sons of Israel," in that verse can be explained as a Priestly conflation, which intended to align the "sons of Israel = Jacob" of vv. 1, 7 with "the people of Israel" in v. 9.

never before happened on earth, especially a divine work concerning Moses. It has often been disputed, whether and how God's answer is related to Moses' request,²³ but one can understand those miracles as confirming signs for the renewed covenant, which is, in this case, only a self-commitment of God, which means a pure promise.²⁴

For the interpretation of the whole chapter, the decisive question is: what is meant by those miracles, especially that divine work concerning Moses? Many scholars relate them to YHWH's mighty acts that would happen during Israel's future wandering in the desert and its conquest of the promised land, presupposing the literary continuity of the story told in Exodus and Numbers.²⁵ But they overlook that the divine miracles, at the end of the verse, are especially aimed at Moses. Taking the Hebrew clause, עשה עם, used here in its strict sense, which appears many times,²⁶ God will not do his miracles "with Moses" or "through Moses"²⁷ but will do a frightening miracle "to Moses."²⁸ What could this mysterious miracle to Moses be?

In the Jewish tradition, the miracle to Moses often is seen in his transfigured status, when he descended from Mount Sinai showing the shining skin of his face (Exod 34:29–32*),²⁹ and I think this is right. There are several terminological interconnections between Exod 34:10* and the final scene in vv. 29–32*, which originally stood closer together because the proclamation of

²³ See for example Julius WELLHAUSEN, *Die Composition des Hexateuchs und der historischen Bücher des Alten Testaments* (3rd ed.; Berlin: Georg Reimer 1899; 4th ed. Berlin: de Gruyter, 1963), 85; Martin NOTH, *Das zweite Buch Mose: Exodus* (4th ed.; ATD 4; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1968), 215; Brevard S. CHILDS, *Exodus: A Commentary* (2nd ed.; OTL; London: SCM Press, 1977), 612–13.

²⁴ See Lothar PERLITT, *Bundestheologie im Alten Testament* (WMANT 36; Neukirchenvluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1969), 213–19.

²⁵ See for example NOTH, *Exodus*, 215; CHILDS, *Exodus*, 612–13; J. Philip HAYES, *Exodus* (NCBC; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans; London: Marshal, Morgan & Scott, 1980), 323–24; BLUM, *Studien*, 66.

²⁶ See the frequent expression עשה חסד עם, "to do mercy to" (Gen 21:23; 24:12; Josh 2:12; Judg 1:24; 8:35, etc.); עשה טוב עם, "to do the right thing to" (Judg 9:16; Ps 119:65), or עשה רעה עם, "to do something bad to" (Gen 26:29; Judg 15:3). The statements in Pss 86:17; 126:3; Neh 9:17 come close to Exod 34:10.

²⁷ Often the expression is pressed in this imprecise way in order to make a reference to the miracles of the desert and conquest stories possible; see for example August DILLMANN, *Exodus und Leviticus* (KEH 12; Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1880), 350, who wrote: "Sie [the miracles] geschahen zum Theil durch Mose und werden daher als etwas bezeichnet, was Gott mit Mose that, d. h. was er ihm anthut, womit er ihn ausstattet und auszeichnet."

²⁸ The verse is already taken in this correct sense by EERDMANS, *Exodus*, 79.

²⁹ So Saadia Gaon, Ibn Ezra, Rashbam, and Benno JACOB, *Das Buch Exodus* (Stuttgart: Calver Verlag, 1997), 973–74; Jacob already wrote the manuscript of this commentary in 1943.

the so-called “Cultic Decalogue” in vv. 11–27* is a later insertion.³⁰ As it was announced in v. 10* that “all the people ... will see YHWH’s work” (וּרְאֵה), so it is told in v. 30* that “Aaron and all the Israelites saw (וּרְאֵה) Moses and, behold, the skin of his face shone”; and as in v. 10* the miracle done to Moses was characterized as “frightening” (נִרְאָה), so it is told in v. 30* that Aaron and the people “were afraid (וַיִּירָאוּ) to come close to him,” until Moses called and encouraged them to come closer, first the leaders and then the whole people. Thus, in Exod 34:29–32*, the announcement of v. 10* was actually fulfilled. The shining skin of Moses’ face is the extraordinary miracle by which YHWH has confirmed the renewal of the broken covenant. Moreover, the last sentence in v. 32*, “He instructed them in all, what YHWH has spoken to him on Mount Sinai” (כָּל-אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהוָה אִתּוֹ), is reminiscent of Israel’s final commitment during the ceremony of the original covenant: “All that YHWH has spoken (כָּל אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהוָה), we will do” (24:7*). Such a commitment of the people is lacking in the renewed covenant, but that accords with the one-sided self-commitment of YHWH in 34:10* and seems to have been deliberately left aside after Israel’s disobedience was proven.

Therefore we can conclude: in Exod 34:29–32* – apart from some smaller Priestly retouching in vv. 29aβγ, 31**³¹ – the original final form of Exod 34* is almost completely preserved. In contrast to that, vv. 33–35*, which transferred the miracle of Moses’ shining face, regularly hidden by a veil, into an ongoing cultic praxis, presupposes the introduction of the tent of meeting in

³⁰ So already noticed by EERDMANS, Exodus, 81–91, and extensively found by Erhard BLUM, “Das sog. ‘Privilegrecht’ in Exodus 34,11–26: Ein Fixpunkt in der Komposition des Exodusbuches?” in *Studies in the Book of Exodus* (ed. M. Vervenne; BETL 126; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1996), 347–66; cf. BLUM, *Studien*, 67–70. For Blum, the so-called “Cultic Decalogue” belongs to the postexilic Mal’ak redaction, cf. the prohibition of mixed marriages in Exod 34:15–16.

³¹ In Exod 34:31 the expression הַנְּשִׂאִים בַּעֲדָה, “the chiefs in the congregation,” recalls the similar expression הַנְּשִׂאֵי הָעֵדָה, “the chiefs of the congregation,” which is typical for late Priestly texts (Exod 16:22; Num 4:34; 31:13; 32:2). Probably here the older expression זִקְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, “the elders of Israel,” was originally used (cf. Exod 3:16, 18; 17:5; 24:1, 9), which the LXX still transmits in v. 30. The second interference can be noticed in v. 29, which includes two parentheses. The first one (v. 29aβγ), which shows some influence of Priestly style (לַחַח הָעֵדוּת) and ends with the infinitive clause מְנַדְּהוֹר מִן הַהָר, “when he descended from the mountain,” a clear *Wiederaufnahme* of v. 29aα, can be identified as a Priestly addition that intended to make sure that the tablets, which were to be laid down in the ark of testimony of the tabernacle (40:20–21), were actually brought down from Mount Sinai. Often the second parenthesis in 34:29b was regarded as the main clause of the temporal clause 34:29aα וַיְהִי בְרִדָּה (so NOTH, Exodus, 214; CHILDS, Exodus, 603; DOHMEN, Exodus, 362); but this kind of main clauses is normally constructed with a verb in the *imperfect consecutive* (cf. 4:8; 11:2; 35:22; 38:28, et al.). From thirty-one cases constructed with the preposition ב, there are only two possible exceptions to this rule (1 Kgs 8:10; 2 Chr 5:11). Thus, the main sentence follows, rather than coming before, the verse Exod 34:30.

33:7–11* and cannot be earlier than its intrusion by the late Deuteronomistic redaction.³² Thus, we can infer: Exod 34:29–32** has to be seen as the final scene of the entire pre-Priestly Exodus story. Being framed by similar phrases in v. 29* (מָהָר סִינִי) and v. 32* (בַּהָר סִינִי), it has its own solemnity and explicitly refers back to the location where all the dramatic events from Exod 19* onwards have taken place. Therefore, Exod 1:9–34:32** actually constitutes an independent composition, which is rounded out well and does not need any continuation.

If one asks for the origins of the Exodus composition, which included, of course, several older materials, the answer is not difficult. For a composition that shaped the foundation history of Israel as a story of the people's fall to apostasy and asked for the possibilities to overcome the catastrophe, only one period provides a suitable background: the period of exile, especially its latter part, when the chance for a new beginning became apparent. Such a dating is confirmed by several observations: the originally independent story of the golden calf, which uses Jeroboam's sin, the worship of the bull of Bethel (1 Kgs 12:28–30*), as a paradigm for the apostasy of the whole people, including Israel and Judah, already presupposes the national catastrophe and should be dated in the early exilic period.³³ The allusions to the terminology typical for Deutero-Isaiah (ברא in Exod 34:10) and the second Deuteronomistic edition of Jeremiah (נחם על-הָרָעָה in 32:12, 14) support such a dating.³⁴ Thus the period from about 540 to 520 B.C.E. is the most probable.

Looking for the main message of the Exodus composition against this late exilic background, we find that in Exod 32–34* the term פָּנִים “face,” be it Moses' or YHWH's, constitutes a *Leitmotiv* (32:11*; 33:14, 15*; 34:6, 29, 30*).³⁵ In 32:11*, after the apostasy to the golden calf, it is Moses who appeases YHWH's angry face by his intercession and averts Israel's annihila-

³² The passage Exod 34:33–35 was already identified as a later addition by WELLHAUSEN, *Composition*, 97. Often only vv. 34–35 are regarded as a supplement (e.g. EERDMANS, *Exodus*, 80–81; DOHMEN, *Exodus*, 374); but v. 33 already constitutes the narrative introduction of Moses' veil and therefore seems to belong to the secondary passage. In its stylistic shape including a sequence of *imperfecta* and *perfecta consecutiva* the short passage recalls Exod 33:7–11, where the divinatory function of the tent of meeting is introduced.

³³ Because of its reference to specific northern traditions, the original story of Exod 32 is often dated to the period after the destruction of the northern kingdom in the seventh century; see, for example, PERLITT, *Bundestheologie*, 158; AURELIUS, *Fürbitter*, 76–77, and HARTENSTEIN, *Angesicht*, 158. But it should be noted that the so-called sin of Jeroboam is regarded by Exod 32 as the central sin of the entire people, including Judah, thus a dating after the destruction of the southern kingdom seems to be more probable, see Rainer ALBERTZ, *A History of Israelite Religion in the Old Testament Period* (OTL; 2 vols.; Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 1994), I:261.

³⁴ See ALBERTZ, *Exile*, 318, 332–39.

³⁵ Even in the secondary passage of the tent of meeting (Exod 33:7–11) this motif is taken up by v. 11.

tion. Although a majority of the people survived the catastrophe, a severe problem remained. Israel's very close relationship to YHWH, which was constituted and celebrated in the original covenant making in Exod 24:1–11*, revealed now, after Israel had sinned, its life-threatening potential. If YHWH went further into the midst of Israel, his closeness would immediately kill the stiff-necked people (33:5*). Thus YHWH wanted to separate from his people in order to enable its survival. Only if they repented their misdeeds would he consider a solution.

Moses, anyhow, is not ready to accept God's separation from his people. He struggles with God about his willingness to accompany his people further (33:12–17*). But YHWH only hinted at a new kind of his presence:

Exod 33:14 He said: "My face will go and I will set your mind at rest."

Still, it is not clear what kind of presence that would be. Is פנים a mediating entity,³⁶ or God's facing side,³⁷ or God himself as Moses wants to understand it in vv. 15–16*?³⁸ In the theophany story in Exod 34*, the secret is disclosed somewhat. Here it is told that YHWH passed before the face of Moses when he revealed his mercy to him (v. 6*). After Moses had requested for the last time that God go in the midst of the people (בקרבו, v. 9*), YHWH announced – as we have already heard – an extraordinary miracle to Moses, who is likewise characterized as being in the midst of the people (בקרבו, v. 10*). Thus, if Moses in the final scene of the composition descended from Mount Sinai showing his face, the skin of which was shining from the close encounter with God's presence during the theophany, it becomes clear that he himself is the mysterious "face" of God hinted at in Exod 33:14*, who will be present in the midst of the people in the place of God. He represented the new, gentler kind of YHWH's presence among his stiff-necked people that would allow Israel to survive in the renewed covenant. C. Houtman wrote in his commentary: "One might say that the transfigured Moses, representative of YHWH, symbolized the presence of YHWH himself among Israel."³⁹ I would like to go even a step further: as a lively symbol of the gentle closeness of God, Moses becomes the guarantor of the renewed covenant based solely on YHWH's mercy. It is only he alone by whom the history between YHWH and his people can continue after the catastrophe, in spite of all the disloyalty of Israel. Thus, Moses is presented as the salvific mediator between Israel and

³⁶ So Thomas KRÜGER, "Einheit und Vielfalt des Göttlichen nach dem Alten Testament," in *Trinität* (ed. W. Härle and R. Pruel; Marburger Jahrbuch Theologie 10; Marburg: Elwert Verlag, 1998), 36.

³⁷ So HARTENSTEIN, *Angesicht*, 169.

³⁸ So JACOB, *Exodus*, 956, referring to 2 Sam 17:11.

³⁹ Cornelis HOUTMAN, *Exodus* (4 vols.; Historical Commentary on the Old Testament; vol. 1: Kampen: KOK, 1993; vol. 2: Kampen: KOK, 1996; vol. 3: Leuven: Peeters, 2000; vol. 4: Leuven: Peeters, 2002), 3:733.

its God for the postexilic time. As long as the Israelites remember the history and the message of Moses, as was done in the Exodus composition, they can be sure that God will be present among them. Thus, the Exodus composition directly points to the present and future of its audience, to those Israelites who survived the catastrophe of exile.

3. Consequences for the Formation of the Pentateuch

Let me finally draw some conclusions from this investigation for the formation of the Pentateuch. The thesis of a late exilic Exodus composition, which ended in Exod 34:32*, solves several difficulties, with which scholars of the Pentateuch have struggled before. First, it gives an easy answer to the question of why the extraordinary motif of Moses' shining face appears only in Exod 34* but seems to have been forgotten in the later Pentateuch.⁴⁰ The motif was the final surprise effect of a composition that originally ended here. And since the priests had a totally different concept of divine closeness bound to the tabernacle and the cult, they did not use it further. Second, the thesis can explain why the Priestly editors could accumulate their material from Exod 35* up to Lev 27* without any interruption. Obviously, after the Exodus composition ended, no pre-Priestly material existed that had to be integrated. Third, the thesis solves the problem of the lack of continuity between Exod 33–34* and Num 10:29ff*. Since, in Exod 33:1–3*, God's order of departure comes so early, the classical Source theorists regarded Exod 34* as a displaced appendix;⁴¹ for Wellhausen this Yahwistic chapter, originally constituting a parallel to the Elohist theophany story in Exod 19–20*, was "like-wise thrown in the junk room."⁴² Moreover, the ark, which is so prominent in Num 10:29–36*, is lacking in the non-Priestly texts of the book of Exodus; it is mentioned only in the Priestly texts (Exod 25:14–16, 21–22*; 40:3, 5, 20* et al.). To this riddle an easy solution can now be offered: the author of the

⁴⁰ Only the late Priestly story of Joshua's appointment (Num 27:12–23) mentions some kind of splendor connected with Moses (v. 20), of which a part should be transferred to his follower; but the Hebrew term *הוֹרֵר* used here is far from those expressions, which are describing Moses' shining face in Exod 34. Thus, if an allusion to Exod 34:29–35 is meant, as M. HARAN, "The Shining of Moses' Face: A Case Study in Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Iconography," in *In the Shelter of Elyon: Essays in Honor of G. W. Ahlström* (ed. W. B. Barrick and J. R. Spencer; JSOTSup 31; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1984), 159–73, esp. 165–68, suggested by following the midrash and the medieval Jewish commentaries, one cannot speak of a genuine continuation of the motif.

⁴¹ See e.g. Heinrich HOLZINGER, *Exodus* (KHC 2; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1900), 115.

⁴² WELLHAUSEN, *Composition*, 334; the German original runs as follows: "Exod. 34 ist die Dekalogerzählung von J. Sie ist hintangestellt und gleichsam in die Rumpelkammer geworfen."

Exodus composition deliberately did not mention the ark because in his view the divine presence was only represented by Moses. He referred to the departure from Sinai, but only in order to discuss the problem of God's companionship after apostasy, not to tell it. The author of Num 10:29–36* opens a totally different perspective on the divine leadership in the wilderness; probably he already presupposes the P-layers of Exodus and Leviticus. Fourth, it is probably the post-Priestly, late Deuteronomistic redactor who constructed the first bridge between the book of Exodus and the book of Deuteronomy by creating the first non-Priestly literary layer of the book of Numbers. As Blum has already shown, the motif of the tent of meeting, which was introduced by him in Exod 33:7–11*, constitutes the main compositional link between Exodus and Deuteronomy through Numbers (Num 11:16*; 12:4*; Deut 31:14*).⁴³

Therefore my thesis of an Exodus composition Exod 1–34**, which does not require any continuation, agrees in some way with the brilliant idea of E. Otto that the Pentateuch emerged from two different centers, according to him from P and from Deuteronomy.⁴⁴ Moreover, it strongly supports the view of T. Römer,⁴⁵ R. Achenbach,⁴⁶ and C. Nihan⁴⁷ that the book of Numbers is of late origin and functions as a bridge between the two centers. But since the bridge was built after the books Genesis, Exodus, and Leviticus were already composed by Priestly editors, I would like to call – similar to Römer and Nihan – the first of the two centers of the Pentateuch not P but the Priestly edited Triteuch. And, according to my view, it is the D-layer, already detected by Blum but now to be post-dated after P1 (similar to P⁶) and P2 (similar to HS), who created the first literary connection to the second center, the book of Deuteronomy;⁴⁸ it is not the Hexateuch redactor, to whom this activity was ascribed by Otto and Achenbach. In my view, that Hexateuch redactor

⁴³ See BLUM, *Studien*, 72–99.

⁴⁴ See just the summary of his ideas in Eckart OTTO, "Pentateuch," in *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (ed. H. D. Betz; 8 vols; 4th ed.; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 6:1089–1102, esp. 1097–1101.

⁴⁵ Thomas RÖMER, "Das Buch Numeri und das Ende des Jahwisten: Anfragen zur 'Quellenscheidung' im vierten Buch des Pentateuch," in Gertz et al., *Abschied vom Jahwisten*, 215–31.

⁴⁶ Reinhard ACHENBACH, *Die Vollendung der Tora: Studien zur Redaktionsgeschichte des Numeribuches im Kontext von Hexateuch und Pentateuch* (BZAR 3; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2003).

⁴⁷ Christophe NIHAN, *From Priestly Torah to Pentateuch: A Study in the Composition of the Book of Leviticus* (FAT II/25; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007).

⁴⁸ BLUM, *Studien*, 101–218.

Model of the Pentateuch according to R. Albertz

Date	Gen 1-11	Gen 12-50	Exodus – Leviticus	Numbers	Deuteronomy	Joshua	Judg	1 Sam – 2 Kgs
preexilic	2-11*	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>			
exilic		Gen 12-50*	Exod 1-34*	<input type="checkbox"/>	Deut 5-29*			
late exilic	P1Comp.	Gen 1 –	Exod 40 / Lev 9		DtrH: Deut 1		–	2 Kgs 25
early 5th	P2Comp.	Gen 1 –	Lev 26 (27)					
mid 5th	DComp.	Gen 1	–		Deut 34	Josh 1	–	2 Kgs 25
mid 5th	P3Comp.	Gen 1	–		Deut 34	Josh 1	–	2 Kgs 25
late 5th	Mal'akR	Gen 1	–				Judg 3	
late 5th	HexR	Gen 1	–			Josh 24		
end 5th	PentR	Gen 1	–	(P 4 and P5)	Deut 34			
early 4th	FinalR	Gen 1			Deut 34			

(HexR), which created Josh 24* as the final summary of his work, should be dated some decades later.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ For dating the postexilic formation of the Pentateuch, only some hints can be given here (cf. the table on p. 37): If P1 and P2 belong to the late sixth and early fifth centuries, the D-layer and perhaps also the first Priestly editor of the book of Numbers (P3) could be dated to the period of Nehemiah (middle of the fifth century). Since the Hexateuch redaction, which included the distribution of the land to all twelve tribes in the foundation history, conceded more significance to the adherents of YHWH in the province of Samaria, it would fit best in the decades after Nehemiah, when the high priest was Joiada, who married one of his sons to a daughter of Sanballat, the governor of Samaria, and probably also when the first sanctuary on Mount Gerizim was built; cf. Yitzaq MAGEN, "The Dating of the First Phase of the Samaritan Temple on Mount Gerizim in the Light of the Archaeological Evidence," in Lipschits et al., *Judah and the Judeans in the Fourth Century B.C.E., 157–211*. The decision for restricting the foundation document to the Pentateuch, which was connected with the redactions (P4, P5, and the final redaction), has to do with the new policy of the high priest Johanan, who reasserted Judean leadership (cf. the Elephantine papyri), came into conflict with the Persian governor (cf. the Bagoses story reported by Josephus, *Ant.*, 11:297–301). The Persians had a strong interest in pacifying the conflicts in their southwestern provinces after Egypt had overthrown Persian rule; therefore they probably supported the publication of a document that fixed a compromise between the YHWH adherents of their empire. For more details see Rainer ALBERTZ, "The Controversy about Judean versus Israelite Identity and Persian Government: A New Interpretation of the Bagoses Story (*Antiquitates* XI.297–301)," in *Negotiating Identity* (ed. O. Lipschits et al.; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, forthcoming).