

THE TRANSITION BETWEEN THE BOOKS OF GENESIS AND EXODUS*

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I realize I am not saying anything new when I describe the recent discussion about saying farewell to the Yahwist as multifaceted—almost so multifaceted as the various Yahwists presented by scholars of the last decades. The points disputed by the advocates of the Yahwist hypothesis are familiar. Texts ascribed to the Yahwist are generally considered to be multilayered, yet a consensus in explaining this widely acknowledged point is, however, not in sight. Disunity surrounds also the extent and dating of the Yahwist's work, and it is perhaps here that the differences are the most apparent. A similar polyphony in past research surrounds the characterizations of the Yahwist and his work. On the one end, there are those who still speak of a salvation-historical account drafted by a theologian from Solomonic times; on the other end, there are those who argue for a work composed by an anti-Deuteronomistic redactor in the exilic period who aimed to explain the origins of the Diaspora. Still others describe the work as an account of Israel's history written by a post-Deuteronomistic author. With respect to all the disputed points, we are not dealing with peripheral details. To the contrary, the debate concerns our fundamental understanding of the nature of the literary work.

Yet it is perhaps fairer and more helpful for the ongoing discussion when one focuses on the minimal consensus among the proponents of the thesis of the Yahwist, rather than emphasizing the dissension. This minimal consensus consists in the basic agreement that there is a running narrative thread of pre-Priestly material in the Tetrateuch.¹ By way of this thread, the Yahwist purportedly con-

*The original wording of the lecture has been maintained. In order to respond to at least some of the responses, I have added "5. The First Connection between the Patriarchal Cycles and the Exodus Narrative in P." I am grateful to Dr. Jacob Wright for help in translating the manuscript.

1. What follows does not relate to a specific version of the Yahwist thesis but rather to the minimal consensus specified above—regardless of the question whether the respective advocate of the thesis subsumes the pre-Priestly Pentateuch under the term "Yahwist."

nected the essential components of the various accounts into the transmitted sequence of historical events.² Although the end of the pre-Priestly narrative is disputed, there is a consensus that the pre-Priestly Tetrateuch created by the Yahwist comprised at least three sections: the primordial history in Gen 1–11; the patriarchal cycles (including the story of Joseph); and the exodus narrative.³ A good place to begin testing the thesis of the Yahwist is thus in the literary seams between these three sections of texts.

1. EXPLICIT OR IMPLICIT CROSS-REFERENCES: HOW DOES ONE ESTABLISH THE UNITY OF THE YAHWIST?

One can investigate the connections between the various sections of the pentateuchal narrative on various levels. Opponents of the Yahwist thesis like to focus on the *explicit* cross-references between the narrative sections.⁴ Here the situation is fortunately very clear. For some texts, like the final form of Gen 15, there is no room for doubt that they have the entire Pentateuch in view and that they secondarily integrate larger narrative units that originally did not belong together. Yet all in all there is a very small number of these redactional passages, and an increasing number of scholars consider them to be the youngest additions to the Pentateuch. Thus, I would accept the widespread view that the prolepsis of the exodus in Gen 15:13–16 represents a post-Priestly supplement to the primary stratum of Gen 15, which itself is very late.⁵ An analysis of the explicit cross-references produces, therefore, unfavorable results for the thesis of the Yahwist.

Consequently, proponents of the thesis of the Yahwist prefer an alternative approach. They treat the explicit cross-references as late attempts to augment the coherency of the preexistent narrative.⁶ In order to maintain the thesis,

2. See Christoph Levin, *Der Jahwist* (FRLANT 157; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993), 9: “Es *muß* im vorpriesterschriftlichen Material des Tetrateuchs ein redaktioneller Faden vorhanden sein, der einen beträchtlichen Teil des unterschiedlichen Stoffs erstmals zu der vorliegenden Abfolge des heilsgeschichtlichen Geschehens verknüpft hat.”

3. Representative is the view of Otto Kaiser, *Die erzählenden Werke* (vol. 1 of *Grundriss der Einleitung in die kanonischen und deuterokanonischen Schriften des Alten Testaments*; Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1992), 63.

4. Thus Konrad Schmid, *Erzväter und Exodus: Untersuchungen zur doppelten Begründung der Ursprünge Israels innerhalb der Geschichtsbücher des Alten Testaments* (WMANT 81; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1999).

5. For further bibliographical references, see Jan Christian Gertz, “Abraham, Mose und der Exodus: Beobachtungen zur Redaktionsgeschichte von Gen 15,” in *Abschied vom Jahwisten: Die Komposition des Hexateuch in der jüngsten Diskussion* (ed. J. C. Gertz et al.; BZAW 315; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2002), 63–81.

6. See David M. Carr, “Genesis in Relation to the Moses Story: Diachronic and Synchronic Perspectives,” in *Studies in the Book of Genesis: Literature, Redaction and History* (ed. A. Wénin;

they emphasize the *implicit* cross-references as well as conceptual and linguistic characteristics that represent the point of departure for postulating a unified literary work. To be sure, the discussion shows that it is much more difficult to attain unanimity in interpreting this textual evidence. Thus, the way one assesses the linguistic peculiarities of the Yahwist, which have often been catalogued,⁷ depends upon one's general approach. This applies even for the way one interprets the allusions in the motifs. I would like to mention at least one example: Gen 12:10–20 evinces a strong similarity to the accounts of the plagues in Exod 7–11.⁸ Does this text constitute a prolepsis of the exodus within a literary work comprising the patriarchal narratives and the exodus account,⁹ or does it represent an attempt to reclaim the exodus tradition for an independent corpus of patriarchal narrative?

The difficulties are due not least to a procedure in which a thesis—in this case, the existence of the Yahwist—is postulated experimentally in order to verify or—less often—to falsify it on the basis of its heuristic value for extremely complex literary evidence. Such a procedure seems unavoidable, yet it requires a cross-examination that does not presuppose the thesis in question. In our case, this means that the Yahwist thesis must prove its validity in the literary seams connecting the various sections of the pentateuchal narrative. In consideration of the emphases in current research, I will concentrate my attention on the transition from the patriarchal narratives to the exodus account.

BETL 155; Leuven: Leuven University Press; Peters, 2001), 273–95, esp. 276–83; Christoph Levin, “Das israelitische Nationalepos: Der Jahwist,” in *Große Texte alter Kulturen: Literarische Reise von Gizeh nach Rom* (ed. M. Hose; Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2004), 63–85. See these works for the following discussion.

7. A prominent example is the “Lexikon des Jahwisten” in Levin, *Jahwist*, 399–408.

8. Gen 12:17 shares the term וַיִּכּ (“stroke”) in common with Exod 11:1. The paragraph Exod 11:1–3 presupposes the integration of the Priestly document into the non-Priestly exodus narrative. See Levin, *Jahwist*, 335–39; Jan Christian Gertz, *Tradition und Redaktion in der Exoduserzählung: Untersuchungen zur Endredaktion des Pentateuch* (FRLANT 186; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000), 176–77. If Gen 12:17 depends upon Exod 11:1, then it also presupposes the integration of P into the non-Priestly exodus narrative. See Levin, *Jahwist*, 141–42. It is, however, conceivable that author of Exod 11:1 drew upon וַיִּכּ , which is not used elsewhere in the account of the plagues in Exod 7–11, from Gen 12:17 in order to refer the reader back to Gen 12:10–20.

9. Carr, “Genesis in Relation,” 278–79, and Levin, *Jahwist*, 141–42, view Gen 12:10–20 as a prolepsis of the exodus. Carr ascribes Gen 12:10–20 to the texts that combine Genesis and the Moses story at the pre-Priestly level, whereas the text is, according to Levin, later than the connection between P and the Yahwist. That Abraham, in the present form of the text, anticipates the path taken by God's people is quite evident. Nevertheless, this may not have been always the intended interpretation, inasmuch as Gen 12:10–20 is part of a series of texts that relegate the historical importance of Moses and the exodus in favor of Abraham.

2. THE TRANSITION FROM THE PATRIARCHS AND JOSEPH TO MOSES IN THE PRIESTLY DOCUMENT

On the level of P, the patriarchal narratives and the exodus account are connected by means of a tight and well-formed link. This is demonstrated by a glance at the commission of Moses in Exod 2:23a β –25; 6:2–7:7*: God's revelation to Moses is explicitly placed in continuity with the patriarchal period. According to P, God's intervention in Egypt to save his people is the direct consequence of his "covenant" with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Simultaneously, this text singles out the promise of an enduring divine relationship from the various pledges to the patriarchs in Gen 17*, and this promise is then honored in the announcement of YHWH's dwelling amidst Israel in Exod 29:45–46 (P). Insofar as it has correlated the creation account and the beginning of the Sinai pericope,¹⁰ P has interwoven the themes of creation, the patriarchs, the exodus, and Sinai into an intricate fabric.

For the sections of the pentateuchal narrative that P has so masterfully integrated, it appears that P presupposed the basic substance of the non-Priestly material. However, it does not follow from this generally accepted conclusion that the sequence and connection of the material already existed in the sense of a pre-Priestly Tetrateuch—unless one cannot imagine P being capable of such a profound intellectual accomplishment.

I would like to elaborate on this point by briefly examining the Joseph story. According to the usual division of the sources, P does not provide a version of the non-Priestly novella of Joseph and his brothers as we know it today. Instead, the succinct narrative in P concentrates on the *eisodos* of the clan of Jacob. Although this story is told quite succinctly, it is much more detailed than the non-Priestly Joseph novella. It seems, therefore, that P was cognizant of the connection between Joseph and Egypt. The extent and purpose of this connection is, however, an unsettled issue.

3. THE JOSEPH NOVELLA AND THE POST-PRIESTLY SUPPLEMENTS TO GENESIS 50

In examining the non-Priestly texts, we are voyaging into terra incognita. Nevertheless, it is widely acknowledged that the patriarchal narratives and the story of the exodus were originally transmitted separately.¹¹ This also applies to

10. For the structural parallels between Gen 1:1–2:3 and Exod 24:15b–18aa; 25–31; 35–40, see Jon D. Levenson, "The Temple and the World," *JR* 64 (1984): 275–98, 286–89; Bernd Janowski, "Tempel und Schöpfung: Schöpfungstheologische Aspekte der priesterschriftlichen Heiligtumskonzeption," *JBT* 5 (1990): 37–69, 46–67.

11. For older English literature, see, e.g., Frederick V. Winnett, *The Mosaic Tradition* (Near and Middle East Studies 1; Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1949); idem, "Re-examining

the Joseph novella. Already Martin Noth argued that the latter was conceived specifically for the transition from the patriarchal narrative to the story of the exodus.¹² Yet this thesis is undermined not only by the often noted friction between the Joseph novella and the story of the exodus but also by the problem that the Joseph novella does not concentrate single-mindedly enough on the *eisodos*, which supposedly represents this work's overarching theme. Indeed, the theme appears at times to constitute a subsidiary objective of the novella. The approaching exodus is the subject of only several passages: the paragraph in Gen 46:1–5*, which is usually ascribed to a redactional hand;¹³ the conclusion of the book in 50:22–26; and the notice in 48:21, which depends upon this conclusion.

The actual *eisodos* is portrayed only in one verse in the Joseph novella: Gen 50:14. One cannot help but notice that after this verse the narrative in 50:15–21 switches gears, so to speak, by depicting the reconciliation of Joseph and his brothers. The presentation of the brothers finding out about the death of their father in verse 15 is simply out of place directly after the presentation of Joseph and his brothers returning to Egypt at the conclusion of the extended funeral ceremonies. Verse 15 “seems to envisage a different situation at the death of Jacob from the preceding verse.”¹⁴ Thus, verse 14b attempts to resolve the chronological confusion with the gloss “after he buried his father,” which is absent in the LXX. In order to account for the literary evidence, scholars have argued that the entire reconciliation scene in Gen 50:15–21 or the burial of Jacob in Canaan has been added.¹⁵ The problem with this radical solution is that both of these paragraphs are inseparably integrated into the rest of the Joseph novella. The same cannot be said for Gen 50:14*. Within the non-Priestly text,

the Foundations,” *JBL* 84 (1965): 1–19; John Van Seters, “Confessional Reformulation in the Exilic Period,” *VT* 22 (1972): 448–59; Norman E. Wagner, “Pentateuchal Criticism: No Clear Future,” *Canadian Journal of Theology* 13 (1967): 225–32.

12. Martin Noth, *Überlieferungsgeschichte des Pentateuch* (3rd ed.; Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1966), 226–32.

13. For a different take on this text, see Hermann Gunkel, *Genesis* (HKAT 1/1, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1901), 481–82; Erhard Blum, “Die literarische Verbindung von Erzvätern und Exodus: Ein Gespräch mit neueren Endredaktionshypothesen,” in Gertz et al., *Abschied vom Jahwisten*, 119–56, here 131–32; Schmid, *Erzväter und Exodus*, 62–63. These scholars do not see a reference to the exodus here. For a diachronic analysis of Gen 46:1–5*, see Gertz, *Tradition und Redaktion*, 273–81.

14. Donald B. Redford, *A Study of the Biblical Story of Joseph (Gen 37–50)* (VTSup 20; Leiden: Brill, 1970), 31.

15. See, e.g., Levin, *Jahwist*, 310–11, as well as Ludwig Schmidt, *Literarische Studien zur Josephsgeschichte* (BZAW 167; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1986), 212–13, who ascribes Gen 50:1–11, 14* to the Yahwist and Gen 50:15–21* to the Elohist.

the return is connected to the narrative progression solely—and poorly—by means of Gen 50:8b. Whereas verse 8a speaks of the “all the household of Joseph and his brothers and the house of his father,” the notice in verse 8b presents the little ones and the cattle remaining in Egypt. It appears to be a secondary and rather unsuccessful attempt to provide a reason for the repeated trip to Egypt. On the basis of these observations, Konrad Schmid has recently proposed that Gen 50:14a (as well as 50:7b, 8b) is redactional. According to his thesis, the reconciliation scene in 50:15–21 originally followed directly after 50:11 (50:12–13 belongs to P).¹⁶ The second part of this solution seems to me quite plausible. It is undeniable that the depiction of the brothers becoming aware of their father’s death and the consequences of it, as well as the reconciliation of the brothers, is well suited to the situation of a burial. If Gen 50:14* does not belong to the primary stratum of the Joseph novella, then this work originally concluded with an account of the clan of Jacob back in Canaan.

Who, then, is responsible for Gen 50:14*? The friction between verses 14a and 15 as well as the attempt to smooth out this friction by means of the gloss in 14b indicate that the Joseph novella has undergone expansions. In general, redactors adapt themselves to the traditions that they are transmitting; we would thus expect a purely redactional notice of return after verse 21. Accordingly, Gen 50:14* belongs to a source. Because this verse is isolated within the non-Priestly text, I would assign it to P, in which a corresponding notice is missing after verses 12–13.¹⁷ There are no linguistic reasons to reject this proposal.¹⁸ On the other hand, it would be strange if precisely the Priestly Joseph story, which treats solely the *eisodos*, did not contain such a notice. Moreover, the redactional process in Gen 50 becomes much clearer if verse 14* is ascribed to P.

We may now turn to Gen 50:14, 15–22. The information with respect to the place of Joseph and his father’s house in Egypt as well as Joseph’s age in verse 22 has been ascribed to P by an increasing number of scholars, who point out the correspondence of this information to Gen 47:27–28.¹⁹ As far as the notice

16. See Konrad Schmid, “Die Josephsgeschichte im Pentateuch,” in Gertz et al., *Abschied vom Jahwisten*, 83–118. For a critical assessment of the isolation of v. 14, see John Van Seters, review of Konrad Schmid, *Erzväter und Exodus: Untersuchungen zur doppelten Begründung der Ursprünge Israels innerhalb der Geschichtsbücher des Alten Testaments*, *Review of Biblical Literature* (2000), n.p. Online: http://www.bookreviews.org/pdf/231_245.pdf; and his contribution in this volume.

17. See Walter Dietrich, *Die Josephserzählung als Novelle und Geschichtsschreibung: Zugleich ein Beitrag zur Pentateuchfrage* (BTS 14; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1989), 44 n. 118.

18. This applies especially for the change from “his (Jacob’s) sons” (vv. 12–13) to “Joseph..., he and his brothers” (v. 14a), which provides a segue from the burial of the father to death notice in v. 22b that necessarily concentrates on Joseph.

19. See Dietrich, *Josephserzählung als Novelle und Geschichtsschreibung*, 44 n. 118; Erhard Blum, *Studien zur Komposition des Pentateuch* (BZAW 189; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1990), 364 n. 14.

on Joseph's age is concerned, this conclusion is merited. Yet for verse 22a one should consider whether it does not represent a graphic *Wiederaufnahme* of 14a connecting it to Gen 50:15–21.

14a וישב יוסף מצרימה הוא ואחיו וכל־העלים אתו לקבר את־אביו
22a וישב יוסף במצרים הוא ובית אביו

If so, verse 22a would be part of the redaction responsible for the integration of P and the non-Priestly Joseph novella. This redaction would have attached the original end of the non-Priestly Joseph novella to the *eisodos* notice of P and woven it together with P by means of the *Wiederaufnahme* of verse 14a (P) in verse 22a. In this manner, the important finale of the non-Priestly Joseph novella would take place in Egypt and would function in the final redaction of the text—just as it is already in P—as the transition to the exodus narrative.

The evidence in Gen 50:22b–26 substantiates our findings. As already mentioned, verse 22b belongs to P. From the information on Joseph's age, a later redactor drew the conclusion in verse 23 that Joseph lived to see the third generation of his descendants.²⁰ In verse 26a, the original narrative strand of P resumes with the notice on Joseph's death.²¹ Whether 26a belongs to P is still an open question. The problem is complicated by the slight aberrations in the formulation of the notice on Joseph's age and the repetition in the conclusion to the notice of his death. We can easily explain both on the assumption that non-Priestly material is once again to be read together with P.²² However, in contrast to the preceding paragraph, this text does not represent a piece of the non-Priestly Joseph novella but rather purely redactional material. Although the paragraph in Gen 50:24–26 is a mixture of Priestly (v. 26a) and non-Priestly texts (vv. 24–25, 26b), on the level of the transmitted context it seems to be unified. This text reports not only Joseph's final words to his brothers but also his death, age, and (preliminary) burial. With regard to its form, we notice a chiasmic correspondence of the essential statements; this structure would topple if even one of these statements were removed.²³

David M. Carr, *Reading the Fractures of Genesis: Historical and Literary Approaches* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1996), 109–10, includes v. 26a. Rudolf Smend Sr., *Die Erzählung des Hexateuch auf ihre Quellen untersucht* (Berlin: Reimer, 1912), 108–9, argued that only the age notice in v. 22b stems from P. Levin, *Jahwist*, 315, adopts Smend's approach.

20. Levin, *Jahwist*, 316.

21. Blum, *Studien zur Komposition des Pentateuch*, 364, n. 14; Carr, *Reading the Fractures of Genesis*, 109–10.

22. Blum, *Studien zur Komposition des Pentateuch*, 364 and n. 14.

23. Following Norbert Lohfink, *Die Landverheißung als Eid: Eine Studie zu Gn 15*, (SBS 28; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1967), Erhard Blum, *Die Komposition der Vätergeschichte*

50:24	die/ visit + bring up / swear	פָּקַד יִפְקַד/מוֹת + שָׁבַע/עֵלָה niphil
50:25, 26a	swear /visit + bring up/die	מוֹת/עֵלָה + פָּקַד יִפְקַד/ שָׁבַע hiphil

Insofar as the author of this artistically composed paragraph employs the notice of Joseph's death in verse 26a, he is to be identified with the hand that reworked P in this passage. The paragraph has been composed verse for verse with a continuation in the exodus narrative and thus functions to bridge the time of Joseph to that of Moses. From all this, it follows that the text is post-Priestly.

Other observations support this conclusion; here there is space to mention only several of them.²⁴ After Gen 50:25, Joseph makes the Israelites swear to take his bones when they leave Egypt to settle in the promised land. Genesis 50:26b describes the necessary preparations for the fulfillment of the oath. The oath is then fulfilled in Exod 13:19 and Josh 24:32 with explicit references to Gen 50:25–26. Additionally, the notice in Josh 24:32 refers with the same wording to Gen 33:19, which reports that Jacob bought a piece of land in Shechem. Genesis 50:25–26 thus emerges in a literary complex whose two central features—the possession of land in Shechem and the transportation of Joseph's bones—are combined in Josh 24:32 and simultaneously have their point of departure there. One finds it difficult to deny the priority of this combination of the burial and the purchase of land, especially if Josh 24:32 presupposes an older burial tradition. Genesis 50:25–26, and Exod 13:19 treat the secondary technical problem of how the death of Joseph, which is certainly not original, is connected to the burial tradition in Shechem. Genesis 50:25–26 (and probably also 33:19) is thus formulated with Josh 24:32 in view. Moreover, the Old Testament often reports the fulfillment of pronouncements like Joseph's in Gen 50:25. It is therefore difficult to attribute Josh 24:32 to a late addition that depends upon Gen 33:19; 50:25–26; and Exod 13:19. Indeed, on the basis of their close conceptual and literary ties, these passages can be assigned to one and the same literary layer, or (Gen 33:19;) Gen 50:25–26; and Exod 13:19 may be dated after Josh 24:32. The fulfillment of Gen 50:25–26 in Exod 13:19 has been identified by

(WMANT 57; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1984), 256 (recently he has adopted a different approach; see his *Studien zur Komposition des Pentateuch*, 363, as well as "Die literarische Verbindung von Erzvätern und Exodus"); Hans-Christoph Schmitt, "Die Josephsgeschichte und das Deuteronomistische Geschichtswerk" (1997), in idem, *Theologie in Prophetie und Pentateuch* (BZAW 310; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2001), 295–308, here 296–97. More arguments for the unity of Gen 50:24–26 are provided by Gertz, *Tradition und Redaktion*, 361–63.

24. On this point, see Blum, *Studien zur Komposition des Pentateuch*, 363–64; Schmitt, "Die Josephsgeschichte," 295–300; Gertz, *Tradition und Redaktion*, 364.

various scholars as post-Priestly.²⁵ Since M. Noth, most scholars have viewed the conceptual goal and literary point of departure, Josh 24:32, as a post-Deuteronomistic supplement. V. Fritz has demonstrated the dependency of this verse on the burial traditions for Abraham in Gen 25:9 and Jacob in 50:13 as well as the depiction of Abraham purchasing the cave of Machpelah in Gen 23. These texts belong to P.²⁶ Accordingly, we should probably posit a post-Priestly origin for Gen 50:25–26—and presumably also for 33:19. The transition from the Joseph story to the exodus narrative in 50:24–26 proves to be a redactional supplement postdating the integration of the Joseph novella into P.

Now, it is of course conceivable that not only fragments of P but also non-Priestly remains of the Joseph novella have been transmitted in the post-Priestly paragraph Gen 50:24–26. In considering the various possibilities, Joseph's announcement of his death in Gen 50:24 appears as the only candidate. This notice demands a corresponding death notice. The line in verse 26a belongs, however, to P. Aside from this, verse 26 in its present form cannot be separated from the post-Priestly verse 25. Within a possible pre-Priestly context, verse 26 is accordingly precluded as a continuation to verse 24. What remains is the death notice in Exod 1:6, which has been repeatedly claimed for a pre-Priestly sequence from Joseph to Moses.²⁷ Yet Exod 1:6 connects better to the Priestly—if not post-Priestly—genealogy in Exod 1:1–5. The information on the death of Joseph and his brothers as well as the entire generation in Exod 1:6 presupposes their enumeration in Exod 1:1–5. That is also demonstrated by the likelihood that the generalizing statement on the death of the entire generation (יוסף וכל־אחיו) in Exod 1:6 has received its information from Exod 1:1b and 5a.²⁸ Conversely, the postulated direct sequence of Gen 50:24 (Joseph

25. See Gertz, *Tradition und Redaktion*, 207–9 (and the further bibliographical references there).

26. Of course one could argue that the idea of claiming land by burying ancestors in it is a widespread, cross-cultural idea. See Brian B. Schmidt, *Israel's Beneficent Dead: Ancestor Cult and Necromancy in Ancient Israelite Religion and Tradition* (FAT 11; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1994). Nonetheless, it is difficult to deny that the relevant texts in the Hexateuch must be assigned to P or an even younger stratum. Yet even when one does not follow Fritz in ascribing Josh 24:32 to a post-Priestly redaction, one must at least identify the verse with a redactional expansion of Josh 24, a Deuteronomistic text. This means that the verse must be a post-Deuteronomistic expansion. Thus one has achieved little for the attempt to ascribe Gen 50:25 to a Yahwist. What remains is only the necessity of claiming a Hexateuch perspective for this Yahwist.

27. Blum, *Studien zur Komposition des Pentateuch*, 364, sees this connection in Gen 50:24 and Exod 1:6, 7*, 8. (A fundamental revision of his own position is provided in Blum, "Die literarische Verbindung von Erzväter und Exodus" 145–51.) Carr, "Genesis in Relation," 291–93, isolates the pre-Priestly link in 50:24–25 and Exod 1:6, 8.

28. See Schmitt, *Literarische Studien zur Josephsgeschichte*, 297, as well as Gertz, *Tradition und Redaktion*, 360 (with n. 42 and the bibliographical references provided there).

announces his death to his brothers and their exodus from Egypt) and Exod 1:6 (Joseph and his brothers die) does not lack a certain tragicomedy.

4. THE EXODUS-NARRATIVE AND THE POST-PRIESTLY SUPPLEMENTS TO EXODUS I

Since we cannot discover a pre-Priestly bridge to the narrative of the exodus in Gen 50, we turn our attention in conclusion to the opposite bank, namely, Exod 1:6, 8–10. The repetition of the death notice for Joseph in Exod 1:6, as well as the genealogy of Israel's son in Exod 1:1–5, may be due to the division of the books. Yet it is also conceivable—in analogy to the transition from the time of conquest to the period of the judges (Josh 24:29 and Judg 2:8–10)—that the repetition of the death notice together with Gen 50:26 and Exod 1:8 marks the epochal transition from the patriarchal period to the time of Moses. Whatever the case may be, even here the genealogy in Exod 1:1–5 is presupposed by Exod 1:6, since it is difficult to imagine a direct sequence of both death notices.²⁹ Furthermore, verse 6 refers directly to 1b and 5a, as observed above.

With respect to Exod 1:8, one observes first that together with verse 6 the memory of the Joseph story and its *drammatis personae* has been consistently eradicated. The respect enjoyed by Joseph in Egypt and the servitude of the Israelites are mutually exclusive, and thus Joseph was removed with one stroke of the pen. Regardless of the redaction to which one ascribes this editorial activity, it constitutes solid evidence that the connection between the narratives in the books of Genesis and Exodus postdates the primary literary stratum of the texts. No one would dispute that Exod 1:8 belongs inseparably to Gen 50:24–26 (and possibly also Exod 1:[1–5,] 6). Genesis 50:24–26 has been formulated verse for verse for a continuation of the narrative in the book of Exodus. Conversely, Exod 1:8 presupposes a notice regarding Joseph's death, as indicated not least by the introduction of a new ruler as one “who did not know Joseph” (אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יָדַע אֶת־יֹסֵף, v. 8b). We have classified Gen 50:24–26 as post-Priestly. It follows that Exod 1:8 is also post-Priestly, and this conclusion is confirmed by Exod 1:9–10. That the new Egyptian ruler notices the dangers posed by the Israelites connects smoothly to Exod 1:8, yet this depiction also refers beyond this verse. Conceptually, the fear on the part of the new ruler about the increasing numbers of the Israelites requires that Israel had already become a great nation. This is reported, however, solely in Exod 1:7—a verse (or at least its oldest layer) that clearly belongs to P. Accordingly, Exod 1:9–10 presupposes P.

29. For a different view, see John Van Seters, *The Life of Moses: The Yahwist as Historian in Exodus-Numbers* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1994), 16–19.

Against this argument, D. M. Carr has objected that an author or narrator can also present new information on the lips of the *dramatis personae*.³⁰ Exodus 1:8–10 would then make sense without the help of P. Although that is certainly correct, it does not take the terminological parallels between verses 9 and 7 (P) seriously enough. Whereas the depiction of the servitude in verses 11–12 describes the growth of the Israelites with רבה “to become many” and פרץ “to spread” (v. 12), the Egyptian ruler refers in verse 9 to a “numerous and mighty” (רב ועצום) people. This statement is anticipated in verse 7 (P), and that is hardly coincidental. Scholars have treated the line “and they increased and became mighty” (וירבו ויעצמו) in verse 7 as secondary because of the evident correspondence to verse 9, which is usually attributed to the Yahwist. Yet the reasons presented for isolating a supplement within verse 7 are, in my view, unconvincing.³¹ Another observation should be given greater weight: verse 9 plays a significant role for the thesis of the Yahwist. It is supposed to function as a hinge between the patriarchal promises and the exodus. Here Exod 1:9 is read as the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham in Gen 12:2, according to which he would become a great nation. For the present context, this reading is certainly possible and probably also intended, yet it is hardly Yahwistic. The connection between Gen 12:2 and Exod 1:9 is at most conceptual, since the formulation of Exod 1:9 עם רב ועצום is not the expected correspondence to the promise of a גוי גדול in Gen 12:2. For the only Yahwistic link between the patriarchal promises and the exodus from Egypt, one would have wished for a more explicit reference.

Our findings in Exod 1:1–10 confirm our interpretation of the evidence in Gen 50. This literary bridge between Genesis and Exodus has been built by P (Exod 1:[1–5], 7, 13–14) and a younger hand (Exod 1:6, 8–10). Whether the beginning of the formerly independent non-Priestly narrative of the exodus is to be found in Exod 1:11 (J. C. Gertz), Exod 2:1 (D. M. Carr; C. Levin;

30. Carr, “Genesis in Relation,” 291.

31. For the arguments, see Gertz, *Tradition und Redaktion*, 366–67. Scholars who eliminate וירבו ויעצמו base their decisions on the fact that this expression is not typical for P. One, however, overlooks that after the removal of these two words the language does not completely comport with the rest of P’s notices for the growth of Israel. Perhaps P is not so monotonous as has been claimed. Whatever the case may be, if one treats these two words as secondary (even when there are not strong formal literary-critical arguments for this approach), one has still not achieved anything for the transition from the Yahwist to the exodus narrative. The relevant references for the putative expression are found in late Deuteronomistic passages (see Deut 7:1; 9:1; 26:5). Those who deny that the verse in its present form is the work of P must concede that it appears to be a composite of Priestly and Deuteronomistic language, which happens to be characteristic for those redactional layers that combined the Priestly document with the non-Priestly material. For a defense of this thesis, see Levin, *Jahwist*, 315, who ascribes v. 7 to a post-Priestly redactor.

K. Schmid), or Exod 3:1 (F. V. Winnett)³² is a problem for itself and is not directly related to the discussion of the existence or nonexistence of a Yahwist.

5. THE FIRST CONNECTION OF THE PATRIARCHAL CYCLES TO THE EXODUS NARRATIVE IN P

In questioning the minimal consensus that there is a running thread in the pre-Priestly material of the Tetrateuch that included at least the primordial history, the patriarchal cycles (with the Joseph story), and the narrative of the exodus, many proponents of the thesis of the Yahwist raise the question whether P represents the first comprehensive literary source of the Tetrateuch. I have embraced the popular assumption that P presented an account extending from the primordial history to the Sinai pericope and have demonstrated in my study of the transitional texts Gen 50–Exod 1 that the oldest literary connection between the patriarchs/Joseph and Moses was constructed by P. Thus, as far as one can ascertain, P deserves the recognition for the intellectual feat of both sequentially arranging the patriarchal accounts and the story of the exodus into one and the same literary context and providing a conceptual basis for the sequence. In what follows, I will attempt to add precision to the thesis as a way of response to a methodological objection and several misunderstandings.

First, according to the methodological objection I have transferred the minimal consensus of the proponents of the hypothesis of the Yahwist to the P source. My proposal is said to be the *petitio principii* that “[t]here must be a Priestly thread in the Pentateuch to have created the coherence of the whole.”³³ With respect to my assignment of the *eisodos* notice in Gen 50:14* to P, this disagreement cannot be immediately dismissed. Indeed, I have attributed the verse, which certainly appears to stem from some source, to P because it lacks a fitting place within the non-Priestly material and a similar notice is missing in P.³⁴ One may designate this argumentation as “highly speculative,” yet in contrast to the hypothesis of the Yahwist no one would deny that the explicit cross-references in P indicate that this stratum includes both the patriarchal cycles and the exodus narrative. To be sure, the well-known correspondence between creation and Sinai, as well as the covenant theology as an overall concept from Noah to Moses by way of Abraham and Jacob, requires the assumption of a Priestly sequence from the patriarchs/Joseph to Moses. For this

32. See Gertz, *Tradition und Redaktion*, 381; Carr, “Genesis in Relation,” 293–94; Levin, *Jahwist*, 317–20; Schmid, *Erzväter und Exodus*, 152–57; Winnett, *Mosaic Tradition*, 27–28; “Re-Examining the Foundations,” 18–19.

33. This approach has been taken by Levin in his very prudent response. See also n. 2 above.

34. See §3 above.

reason, I would also refer to my suggestions for the Priestly texts in Gen 50 and Exod 1 as “controlled speculation,” a discipline that has characterized (literary-) historical research from its inception.

Second, it is necessary to refine our thesis, especially when it comes to understanding the degree of originality of P’s presentation of Israel’s history. What we observe elsewhere applies also to literary history: powerful ideas, insights, and conceptions did not develop *ex nihilo* in ivory towers and then later take hold in the general consciousness. Even when their origins are occasionally difficult or impossible to determine, they represent the products of various ideas and discourses, which presuppose specific historical conditions, and they also establish themselves under contingent conditions and in unpredictable ways. Here I cannot elaborate on this basic conviction either in general or as it pertains to P; important is rather that we acknowledge a significant intellectual prehistory for P’s arrangement of the patriarchs and Moses. With respect to the general historical and intellectual background, it suffices to point out that the subsequent formation of Judaism between the exile that began with the downfall of Samaria and the early Second Temple period, on the one hand, and the formation of the earlier Pentateuch, on the other, coincide both chronologically and conceptually and are mutually dependent. (Those who propose a late date for the Yahwist or who dismiss the thesis of the Yahwist altogether agree on this point.)

Intellectual discourses from formative Judaism have made themselves felt in the various conceptions of Israel’s identity as the people of God. As prominent examples, one could cite the patriarchal cycles and narrative of the exodus, which were transmitted independently of each other, as well as (from a later time) the Priestly *unified* presentation of Israel’s origins. Because of the paucity of our sources, we cannot reconstruct all the particulars of these discourses. Nevertheless, one observes that the historical sequence of the patriarchs and Moses was a hotly disputed topic in the exilic and postexilic periods. This is explicitly the case in those texts that are cognizant of the controversial conception in P as this source was still independently transmitted. Examples of these texts are “das kleine geschichtliche Credo” in Deut 26:1–11³⁵ as well as those non-Priestly passages in Genesis that transfer the central importance of Moses and the exodus to Abraham and the patriarchal period, such as Gen 15^{*36} and perhaps also Gen

35. Jan Christian Gertz, “Die Stellung des kleinen geschichtlichen Credos in der Redaktionsgeschichte von Deuteronomium und Pentateuch,” in *Liebe und Gebot: Festschrift für Lothar Perlitt*, (ed. R. G. Kratz and H. Spieckermann; FRLANT 190; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000), 30–45.

36. For Gen 12:10–20, see nn. 8–9 above. For Gen 15, see Gertz, “Abraham, Mose und der Exodus.” It should be emphasized, however, that allusions to P within the pre-Priestly substratum in

12:10–20. Other texts such as Gen 16:1–11*³⁷ grapple in a similar way with the story of the exodus, but they do not yet appear to be familiar with the Priestly conception. They belong to the prehistory of the connection between the patriarchal cycles and the narrative of the exodus just as much as the sharp contrast between the Jacob story and the tradition of the exodus in Hos 12³⁸ as well as the juxtaposition and mingling of the patriarchs and the exodus in Second Isaiah.³⁹ Against the background of this discussion, one must refine the thesis that P was the first to connect the patriarchal and the exodus stories inasmuch as P's contribution is restricted to *the first literary work* presenting the patriarchal story and the narrative of the exodus as successive episodes in the history of Israel's origins.

6. SUMMARY

The non-Priestly Joseph novella originally concluded with the reconciliation of the brothers at the grave of their father in the land of Canaan (Gen 50:1–5a, 5b*, 6–7a, 8a, 9–11, 15–21). At this stage of the text's literary development, there is no connection to the story of the exodus. P does not offer a parallel version to the Joseph novella as we know it; instead, the succinct narrative focuses on the *eisodos* of Jacob's sons to Egypt. Similarly, the depiction of the exodus in P resumes this narrative strand and embeds it into the encompassing presentation of Israel's history (Gen 50:12–14a, 22b, 26a; Exod 1:[1–5,] 7, 13–14; 2:23aβ–25; 6:2–7:7*). In this way, P provides the earliest (and almost uninterrupted?⁴⁰) literary transition from the patriarchs and Joseph to Moses. The connection between the patriarchal stories and the narrative of the exodus was first introduced and conceptually established by P, a literary innovation that

Gen 15 should not be played down (see vv. 7, 17–18). If Gen 15* belonged to the latest material in the patriarchal narrative as it was still independently transmitted, its author was very probably familiar with the Priestly conception. The difference is that this author was writing for a different literary work.

37. Thomas Römer, "Isaac et Ismaël, concurrents ou cohéritiers de la promesse? Une lecture de Genèse 16," *ETR* 74 (1999): 161–72.

38. Albert de Pury, "Le cycle de Jacob comme légende autonome des origines d'Israël," in *Congress Volume: Leuven, 1989* (ed. J. A. Emerton; VTSup 43; Leiden: Brill, 1991), 78–96; and idem, "Osée 12 et ses implications pour le débat actuel sur le Pentateuque," in *Le Pentateuque: Débats et recherches, XIVe Congrès de l'ACFEB (Angers 1991)* (ed. P. Haudebert; LD 151; Paris: Cerf, 1992), 175–207; Reinhard G. Kratz, "Erkenntnis Gottes im Hoseabuch," *ZTK* 94 (1997): 1–24, esp. 16–17, 22–23.

39. Schmid, *Erzväter und Exodus*, 266–70.

40. That P's introduction of Moses may have been lost is considered by Gertz, *Tradition und Redaktion*, 251–52 with n. 84 (bibliography).

won the day in the subsequent traditions. Once it originated, all succeeding redactors were required to embrace this connection as the historically accurate and theologically intended sequence. Thus, the transition was embellished as P was integrated with the non-Priestly Joseph novella and the non-Priestly narrative of the exodus (Gen 50:8b, 22–26*; Exod 1:6, 8–10). This was necessitated not least by the failure of the independently transmitted non-Priestly stories to compete with a unified and continuous historical portrayal. To state our conclusion differently, the string holding the pearls of the non-Priestly pentateuchal narratives was furnished by P!