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ON THE SOURCES OF THE OLD-ENGLISH *EXODUS*

That the author of the Old-English *Exodus* used as one of his sources Avitus' poem *De transitu Maris Rubri* was first suggested by Groth in 1883.¹ This suggestion was followed up by Mürkens in his *Untersuchungen über das altenglische Exodustied*, the third section of which consists of a detailed comparison of the English poem with the Vulgate and Avitus. Mürkens sums up as follows his conclusions in regard to the sources used by the author of the *Exodus*:

Dass noch andre quellen als die Vulgata und der Avitus benutzt worden seien, ist mir nicht wahrscheinlich. Wenn an einigen stellen der dichter etwas neues hinzufügt, oder gegebenes weiter ausführt, so erklärt sich dies einfach aus seiner dichterischen natur, die sich nicht sklavisch an die quellen bindet, sowie aus seiner stark ausgeprägten, volkstümlichen eigenart, die er auch als gelehrter geistlicher durchaus nicht verleugnen kann.²

Brandl, in his recent history of Old-English literature, accepts without question the opinion that Avitus is an important source of the Old-English poem, and seems to agree with Mürkens in believing that the English poet invented the details which he did not find in the Vulgate or in Avitus. Brandl says of the *Exodus*:

. . . es behandelt den auszug der Israeliten aus Aegypten teils nach der Bibel, teils nach den lateinischen versen des Avitus *De transitu Maris Rubri* und beruft sich ausdrücklich auf *boceras* (530). . . .³ Die heimische tradition war stark genug, dem dichter eine vielfach sehr freie und nationalisierende umwandlung der quellen zu ermöglichen.⁴

The latest expression of opinion is that of Professor F. A. Blackburn, who, though he is more guarded than Brandl, does not seriously challenge the current view. He says:

In the *Daniel* the source is followed rather closely and to the exclusion of all outside matter; the *Genesis* also is in general a fair paraphrase of the original, though with some additions from other sources; but the *Exodus*

¹ *Composition und Alter der altenglischen Exodus* (Berlin, 1883), 17.

² *Bonner Beiträge zur Anglistik* (Bonn, 1899), 77.

³ *Grundriss der germanischen Philologie* (ed. 2), II, 1028.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 1029.

uses its source with great freedom and is indebted to the author's own fancy for the great mass of its details.¹

And in another place:

There are various forms of expression that suggest other Scripture passages, and Mürkens has cited a number that show a familiarity with Avitus' poem *De transitu Maris Rubri*; most of them are mere words or phrases and not entirely certain, but our poet may be indebted to this source for his conception of the pillar of cloud as a defence from heat as well as a guide.²

It is the purpose of the present paper to test the current opinion in regard to the sources of the *Exodus*, especially that form of it which is expressed by Mürkens in the quotation made above. I shall try to show, first, that the *Exodus* contains no real evidence of indebtedness to Avitus; and secondly, that a number of the most striking additions which the poet has made to the scriptural material must be credited, not to his own invention, but to sources independent of the Vulgate and Avitus.³

I

The primary source of the *Exodus* is in the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth chapters of Exodus; of these chapters, however, the poet used only about thirty-five verses. To elaborate this small amount of material into a poem of nearly six hundred lines necessitated the making of many additions. These additions are of two kinds, which I shall call respectively inorganic and organic. By inorganic additions I mean the mere elaboration by the poet of the data already contained in his primary source, additions that do not change in any important respect the characters, motives, situations, plot, or spirit of the original, but are rather embellishments, intended to give to the narrative greater clearness or interest. Such additions describe in detail objects that are merely named in the original; describe at length action that is stated in the original in bare outline,

¹ *Exodus and Daniel*, Belles Lettres Series (Boston, 1907), xix. To this edition, which has contributed so greatly to the interpretation of the text of the *Exodus*, I am indebted for constant help received in my study of the poem.

² *Ibid.*, 34.

³ I am indebted to Professor F. N. Robinson of Harvard University for the suggestion that I should attempt this investigation, for much helpful counsel given in the course of it, and for reading my proof sheets. I wish also to thank Professor G. L. Kittredge for reading my paper in manuscript, and Professor E. K. Rand for his kind response to my inquiries.

or merely implied; or describe the emotions experienced by the actors in the events related by the poet. The poet's own comments on the action he relates and the speeches he puts into the mouths of his characters are also inorganic additions, provided these comments and speeches grow naturally out of the original material. The organic additions, on the other hand, are not embellishments, or a mere drawing out of the potentialities of the original material; they augment it in such a way as to make the work as a whole not only longer, clearer, more interesting, or more beautiful than its source, but essentially different. As obvious examples of these two methods of poetic elaboration we may take *Genesis A* and *Exodus*. The additions which the former makes to its scriptural source are usually of the inorganic kind. But the latter, though making numerous inorganic additions, is notable for the large number of organic additions that it makes to the scriptural material.

In examining the problem of the indebtedness of the *Exodus* to Avitus our first question must be, what could the Old-English poet have got from the Latin poet which he did not find in Scripture or could not easily have developed out of what he did find in Scripture; or, in other words, how many of the English poet's organic additions can be explained on the hypothesis that he borrowed from the Latin poet? For the consideration of this question we must have before us these organic additions, and I shall therefore list them below in the order in which they occur in the text.¹

1. The poet says that the idols of Egypt fell down when Israel went out of Egypt:

druron deofolgyld.²

¹ The distinction between organic and inorganic additions is a relative, not an absolute, one, for some parts of a narrative are more organic than others. The test is simple. The organic portions of a narrative are those which we should include in making an abstract or outline of the narrative; the inorganic portions are those we should omit from our outline. In its practical application, however, this test is not absolute, for an abstract is not an absolute thing; it may be more or less detailed, and certain parts of the narrative would be included in a somewhat detailed abstract but omitted from a less detailed one. But the distinction between the organic and inorganic parts of a story, if not absolute, is perfectly real, and in the great majority of cases is easy of application.

² L. 47; all references to Old-English poetical texts are according to the Grein-Wülker *Bibliothek*, both as to line-numbering and text. In a few cases, however, I have adopted a different word-division or punctuation, or substituted the manuscript reading for the emendation in the Grein-Wülker text. I have also expanded "7" as "and, and use no italics.

2. The poet represents the Israelites as journeying through a hostile country, whereas the Vulgate expressly says that they made a detour to avoid traveling through a hostile land.¹

Oferfor he mid þy folce fæstena worn,
land and leodweard laðra manna,
enge anpaðas, uncuð gelad,
oð þæt hie on Guðmyrce gearwe bæron.²

3. The Ethiopians are represented as a people hostile to the Hebrews and an object of fear to them:

Nearwe genyddon on norðwegas,
wiston him be suðan Sigelwara land,
forbærned burhhleoðu, brune leode
hatum heofoncolum.³

4. The pillar of cloud is said to be a protection against heat, as well as a guide:

þær halig god
wið færbryne folc gescylde,
bælce oferbrædde byrnendne hefon,
halgan nette hatwendne lyft.⁴

5. The pillar of cloud, the Israelites, and the path of their journey are described by means of a system of nautical imagery, the pillar being called a sail, the Israelites seamen, and their road a *flodweg*:

hæfde witig god
sunnan siðfæt segle ofertolden,
swa þa mæstrapas men ne cuðon
ne ða seglrode geseon meahton
eorðbuende ealle cræfte,
hu afæstnod wæs feldhusa mæst.⁵
.
.
.
fyrd eall geseah,
hu þær hlifedon halige seglas,
lyftwundor leoht.⁶
.
.
.
Segl siðe weold, sæmen æfter
foron flodwege.⁷

See also ll. 331–33.

¹ "Igitur cum emisisset Pharao populum, non eos duxit Deus per viam terrae Philistiim quae vicina est: reputans ne forte poeniteret eum, si vidisset adversum se bella consurgere, et reverteretur in Aegyptum. Sed circumduxit per viam deserti, quae est iuxta mare rubrum": Exod. 13:17–18. All references to the Vulgate are made, for the Old Testament, according to the edition of Heyse and Tischendorf (Leipzig, 1873); for the New Testament according to the edition of Loch.

² Ll. 56–59. ³ Ll. 68–71. ⁴ Ll. 71–74. ⁵ Ll. 80–85. ⁶ Ll. 88–90. ⁷ Ll. 105–6.

6. The pillar of cloud and of fire is regarded by the poet as two, not one:

Him beforan foran fyr and wolcen
in beorhtrodor, beamas twegen,
þara æghwæðer efngeðelde
heahþegnunga haliges gastes.¹

7. The pillar is represented as not only a guide and a shelter, but also as an object of fear, as the weapon of God:

Hæfde foregenga fyrene loccas,
blace beamas, bellegsan hweop
in þam hereþreate, hatan lige,
þæt he on westenne werod forbærnde,
nymðe hie modhwate Moyses hyrde.²

8. The organization of the Egyptian army is described as follows:

Hæfde him alesen leoda dugeðe
tiredigra twa þusendo,
þæt wæron cyningas and cneowmagas,
on þæt eade riht æðelum deore;
forðon anra gehwile ut alædde
wæpnedcynnnes wigan æghwilene,
þara þe he on ðam fyrste findan mihte.³

9. The Hebrew army was divided into 12 *fedan*, each *fedā* consisting of 50 *cista* of 1,000 men each, ll. 223–32.

10. The wall of the waters stood for the space of a day:

Sæweall astah,
uplang gestod wið Israhelum
andægne fyrst.⁴

11. When the Israelites entered the sea, the tribe of Judah went first, followed next by the tribe of Reuben, and then by that of Simeon, ll. 310–53.

12. There was fighting where Judah went:

þraca wæs on ore,
heard handplega, hægstæld modige
wæpna wælslihtes, wigend unforhte,
bilswaðu blodige, beadumægnes ræs,
grimhelma gegrind, þær Judas for.⁵

¹ Ll. 93–96.

² Ll. 120–24.

³ Ll. 183–89.

⁴ Ll. 302–4.

⁵ Ll. 326–30.

13. Solomon built the Temple on the hill upon which Abraham sacrificed Isaac:

þær eft se snottra sunu Dauides,
wuldorfæst cyning witgan larum
getimbrede tempel gode.¹

14. The poet says (if the usual interpretation of the lines is the correct one) that after the destruction of the Egyptians Moses gave the Law to the Israelites on the seashore:

þanon Israhelum ece rædas
on merehwearfe Moyses sægde,
heahþungen wer halige spræce,
deop ærende: dægweorc nemnað.
Swa gyt werðeode on gewritum findað
doma gehwilene, þara ðe him drihten bebead
on þam siðfate soðum wordum.²

15. The Israelites got treasures from the sea:

heddon herereafes (hæft wæs onsæled),
ongunnon sælafe segnum dælan,
on yðlafe, ealde madmas,
reaf and randas.³

These fifteen points constitute the most striking peculiarities of the poem; Mürkens believes that two of them, numbers (4) and (8), are derived from Avitus.

That Avitus represented the pillar as a protection against the heat of the sun is unquestionable. He says:

Ecce novum dictu, caelo servata sereno
Fridiga ferventi iussa est opponere nubes
Se radio densumque parat tenuissima tegmen.
Sic circumiectis, tellus quis ardet eoa,
Aestibus ignorat genuinum turba calorem,
Vesperis ut credas leni resperegere flatu
Blanda vel umentes diffundere frigora ventos.⁴

But Professor J. W. Bright has pointed out that this notion is also expressed in Ps. 104:39, "Expandit nubem in protectionem eorum, et ignem ut luceret eis per noctem."⁵ Upon this Professor Blackburn

¹ Ll. 389-91.

² Ll. 515-21.

³ Ll. 583-86.

⁴ *Aviti Opera, Poematum*, v, 430-36; ed. Peiper. *Mon. Germ. Hist.*

⁵ *Mod. Lang. Notes*, XVII, 424. Professor Bright cites also Isa. 4:5, "Et tabernaculum erit in umbraculum diei ab aestu."

comments as follows: "The protection given by the cloud is mentioned elsewhere in the Scriptures, e.g., Num. 14:14 [et nubes tua protegat illos], but in none of the passages is it clear that the writer has in mind a shelter from heat; the connection suggests rather a defence against foes."¹ If these two passages be ambiguous, the same cannot be said of Wisd. 19:7: "Nam nubes castra eorum obumbrabat," which is part of a discourse upon God's mercies to Israel in the exodus. Nor is Ps. 104:39 really ambiguous when examined in the light of patristic commentary. The very ancient Codex Amiatinus has, instead of the reading given above for Ps. 104:39: "Expandit nubem in tentorium, et ignem ut luceret nocte."² This reading, though only a gloss that has displaced the true text, contains the interpretation sanctioned by the author of the Vulgate version. For St. Jerome's comment on Ps. 104:39 is: "Nubem et ignem, Spiritum sanctum dicit: qui nos et ab aestu diei defendit, et in nocturnis tenebris illuminat."³ Cassiodorus,⁴ St. Bruno,⁵ Haymo Halberstatensis,⁶ and Peter Lombard⁷ also say that the "protectio" was shelter against the sun. This being the accepted interpretation of the passage, it is not strange that Avitus and the author of the *Exodus* represented the pillar as they did. St. Gregory of Nyssa in his *De Vita Moysis* had done the same, saying: τοιοῦτον τὸ θαῦμα ἦν, ὡς καὶ τῆς ἡλιακῆς ἀκτίνος θερμῶς ἐπιλαμπούσης, διατείχισμα πρὸς τὸν λαὸν εἶναι, σκιάζουσάν τε τὸ ὑποκείμενον καὶ λεπτῇ δρόσῳ το φλογῶδες τοῦ ἀέρος ὑπουσιάζουσαν.⁸ The same conception of the pillar is found later in the chronicle *Flores Historiarum*,⁹ and in John Myrc's *Festiall*.¹⁰ It seems clear,

¹ Blackburn, 39.

² Heyse and Tischendorf, 614.

³ Breviarium in Psalmos, Migne, *Patrologia Latina* (hereafter referred to as "Migne" simply), xxvi, 1139.

⁴ "Nubes data est, ut solis temperaret ardorem," *Expositio in Psalterium*, Migne, lxx, 751.

⁵ "Ipse est igitur, qui nos a calore et cunctis tribulationibus protegit," *Expositio in Psalmos*, Migne, clxiv, 1103.

⁶ "Expandit nubem . . . qua protegeret eos contra solis aestum . . .," *Explanatio in Psalmos*, Migne, cxvi, 556.

⁷ "Expandit nubem in protectionem eorum [Cassiod.], ut protegeret eos contra ardorem solis," *Comm. in Psalmos*, Migne, cxc, 956.

⁸ Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, xlv, 309.

⁹ " . . . et eadem per diem nubis habens speciem, ne fessos lassitudo conficeret, ab aestus injuria defendebat," *Rolls Series*, ed. Luard, I, 13.

¹⁰ Ed. Erbe, *EETS*, 101.

then, in view of these facts, that the circumstance that both poets describe the pillar as a shelter as well as a guide is no evidence whatever that one borrowed from the other. The author of the *Exodus* could have derived his conception from the Psalter, from Wisdom, from commentaries on the Scriptures, or from oral teaching, quite as easily as from Avitus. Both poets had access, so far as we know, to the same sources of information, and their agreement in this particular proves nothing as to the indebtedness of one to the other.

Upon *Exodus* 184 (see above, number 8) Mürkens comments as follows:

Es müsste geradezu auffällig sein, dass der dichter die zahl der Egypter im verhältnis zu den 600,000 Israeliten so klein annimmt, wenn er nicht einen diesbezüglichen hinweis auf die geringe anzahl derselben . . . gekannt hätte.¹

But does the English represent the Egyptian army as a small one? Ll. 183–89 say that the Egyptian king had selected of the strength of his people two thousand famous men, who were kings and kinsmen, and that each of these led forth every male warrior that he could find in the time allowed him. Or, as Rau expresses it, “Pharao ist mit 2,000 edeln ausgezogen, von denen jeder einzelne soviel kriegler aufgeboden hatte, als die kurze frist eben erlaubte.”² Mürkens’ interpretation of the text leaves out of account lines 187–89, and is seen to be wrong when we read the passage as a whole. But if the English poet had represented the Egyptian army as a small one I do not think he could have got the idea from Avitus. As evidence of the fact that Avitus describes the army as a small one Mürkens cites the following:

Nunc ad diluvium pleno succensa furore
Sponte sua current periturae milia gentis.³

Substitit ad modicum restrictis motibus agmen.⁴

The first of these passages is quite inconclusive as evidence of the number of Egyptians who perished, for “milia” is as consistent with a very large army as with a relatively small one. And the

¹ *Op. cit.*, 72.

² *Germanische Altertümer in der ags. Exodus* (Leipzig, 1889), Diss., p. 33; cf. also A. R. Skemp, in *Mod. Philol.*, IV, 452–53.

³ Avitus, v, 4–5.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 616.

second passage merely says that the army halted for a little while. Mürkens construes the line "ad modicum agmen." But there can be no doubt that "ad modicum" is a phrase meaning "a little." It is not good classical Latin but is fairly common in the fourth and fifth centuries.¹ There is nothing in Avitus' poem that is inconsistent with the idea that Pharaoh's army was a large one.² In fact, two places distinctly suggest that it was a large force. In ll. 391-93 the poet apostrophizes the Hebrew army in these words:

Sed non haec acies acie salvabere ferri.
 Quamlibet innumeris peditum stipere catervis,
 Vnus pugnabit cunctis pro milibus auctor.

The "innumerae catervae" would naturally be the Egyptian host. The poet's description of the departure of the Egyptians is still more strongly indicative of a great army:

Progreditur collecta manus: rex ipse frementes
 Curru cogit equos, telis tamen undique saeptus
 Delituit, densam reddunt hastilia silvam.
 Concuitur pulsata rotis et pondere tellus,
 Angustavit humum latam stipata iuventus
 Conclusitque vias. quidquid virtutis habere
 Aegyptus potuit, totum mors proxima ducit.³

It is clear that the Old-English poet could not have taken from the Latin poet the idea that the Egyptian army was small in comparison with the Hebrew army, because both describe Pharaoh's host as very great. It need scarcely be pointed out that their agreement in this particular is due to the fact that they used a common source. The Vulgate distinctly implies a large force in the statement "Iunxit

¹ Examples are: from the Vulgate, "vapor est ad modicum parens, et deinceps exterminabitur," Jas. 4:15; "Nam corporalis exercitatio ad modicum utilis est," I Tim. 4:8; from other writers, "si uicti ad modicum sumus," Priscillianus, *Tract.*, iv, ed. Schepss, *Corpus Script. Ecc. Lat. Vind.*, XVIII, 60; "melius est temporalia ad modicum sufferre supplicia quam aeterna pendere et subire tormenta," Victor Vitensis, *Passio*, sec. 8, ed. Halm, *Mon. Germ. Hist.*, 60. For other references see *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*, I, 516. For "modicum" alone in the sense of "a little," cf. "Filioli, adhuc modicum vobiscum sum," John 13:33, etc. For a use of "ad" like that in the phrase "ad modicum," cf. "jussit foras ad breve homines fieri," Acts 5:34. See also Goelzer, *Le Latin de Saint-Avit* (P 1909), p. 608, "ad modicum, i.e. paulum," referring to this line.

² Mürkens, p. 72, also cites in this connection "plebs inclitya," as of l. 436, which in Peiper's ed. would be l. 438. L. 638 contains these words, but l. 438 does not. I am unable to see what bearing l. 638, "Vicerat aequoream pedibus plebs inclita vallem," has upon the point Mürkens is discussing.

³ Avitus, v, 519-25.

ergo currum, et omnem populum suum assumpsit secum.”¹ The texts therefore furnish no evidence whatever that the English poet borrowed in this particular from Avitus.

The two cases we have just considered are the only ones in which Mürkens found evidence that the author of the *Exodus* was indebted to Avitus for the organic additions that he made to his scriptural source. It has been shown that this evidence proves nothing. The other evidence cited by Mürkens consists of verbal parallels, that is, resemblances between the inorganic additions made by the two poets to their original material. These parallels are as follows:

- (a) Dæg wæs mære
ofer middangeard, þa seo mengeo for,
swa þæs fæsten dreah fela missera,
ealdwerige Egypta folc,
þæs þe hie wideferð wyrnan þohton
Moyses magum, gif hie metod lete,
onlangne lust leofes siðes.²
Procedit tandem populus moxque agmine iuncto
Diram linquit humum tenebrisque ac luctibus orbam.³
- (b) wederwolcen.⁴
. . . . cum promunt nubila nimbos.⁵
- (c) byrnende beam.⁶
flammea columna.⁷
- (d) Swa þær eorp werod ecan læddon.⁸
Effertur nigri dux agminis. . . .⁹
- (e) hæfdon hie gemynted to þam mægenheapum
to þam ærdæge Israhela cynn
billum abreotan on hyra broðorgyld.¹⁰
.
feond wæs anmod,
werud wæs wigblac, oð þæt wlanca forsceaƿ
mihtig engel, se ða menigeo beheold,
þæt þær gelaðe mid him leng ne mihton
geseon tosomne: sið wæs gedæled.¹¹

¹ Exod. 14:6.⁵ Avitus, v, 439.⁹ Avitus, v, 641.² *Exod.*, 47-53.⁶ *Exod.*, 111.¹⁰ *Exod.*, 197-99.³ Avitus, v, 366-67.⁷ Avitus, 425.¹¹ *Exod.*, 203-7.⁴ *Exod.*, 75.⁸ *Exod.*, v, 194.

Non tamen infensas patitur committere partes
 Sole sub occiduo vicinus proelia vesp̄.
 Distulit in lucem vallatus bella tyrannus,
 Et fors ardent̄es nondum conpesceret iras
 Nec servare furor potuisset foedera nocti
 Auroramque velit motis praeceḡere signis,
 Flammea ni retro subsistens forte columna
 Obiectu medio gentes discerneret ambas.¹

(f) flod blod gewod.²

Concolor et rubro miscetur sanguine pontus.³

(g) Heah ofer haeleḡum holmweall astah,
 merestream modig: mægen wæs on cwealme
 fæste gefeterod, forḡganges nep
 searwum asæled.⁴

Ergo exaltatis pendens sustollitur undis
 mox mergenda phalanx: lympharum monte levata
 Pondere telorum premitur. . . .⁵

(h) Swa gyt werḡeode on gewritum findaḡ
 doma gehwilene, þara ḡe him drihten bebead
 on þam siḡfate soḡum wordum.⁶

Inclitus egregium sollemni carmine ductor
 Describit factum, toto quod psallitur orbe.⁷

In considering these parallels we must recognize the principle that any two poems whatever that describe the crossing of the Red Sea will contain verbal parallels, even though neither author knew the work of the other. In developing poetically the scriptural material that served both poets as their primary source, Avitus and the *Exodus* poet, assuming that the latter did not know the work of the former, could scarcely fail to describe the same object or the same event now and then in a similar way. I have already shown that if Avitus' poem be a source of the *Exodus*, it is at any rate not a structural source. In the absence of structural resemblances not found in the common source of the two poems, we must subject to a rigid criticism descriptive parallels that are offered as evidence that the English poet was indebted to his predecessor. To prove this

¹ v, 532-39.

⁴ Ll. 467-70.

⁶ Ll. 519-21.

² L. 462.

⁵ v, 683-85.

⁷ v, 704-5.

³ v, 693.

the parallels must be fairly numerous and of such a character that they cannot be easily explained on any other hypothesis than that the later poet borrowed from the earlier one.

Of these parallels we may dismiss at once (*b*), (*c*), and (*d*). As to (*b*) there is no parallel at all. In the *Exodus* "wederwolcen" is used as an epithet for the pillar; in Avitus "nubila" is not used of the pillar but of clouds of a different sort altogether, which the poet contrasts with the pillar, for he says:

Nec tamen hanc nubem taetro suffusa colore
Forma dabat nec concreto sic horrida vultu,
Vt terrent, validos cum promunt nubila nimbos.¹

In (*c*) "byrnende beam" and "flammea columna" are mere synonyms of the Vulgate "columna ignis."² In (*d*) Avitus and the English poet agree merely in saying that the Egyptians were of a dark complexion; if they had agreed in calling them fair the parallel would be striking, but the agreement we have in the texts is a commonplace.

In (*a*) I can see no resemblance between the two passages except in the fact that both say that the Israelites were leaving Egypt, and imply that Egypt was a good place to leave. The *Exodus* passage is obscure, and probably corrupt, but it is difficult to see how under any interpretation we may give to the passage, it can have been borrowed from Avitus. But (*e*) is a better parallel. The *Exodus* agrees with Avitus (see above) in representing the attack of the Egyptians as deferred until dawn. This detail is not stated in the scriptural account, though something of the kind is implied in the fact that the Egyptians and the Israelites passed the night encamped near each other by the Red Sea, which we know from Exod. 14:19-20:

Tollensque se Angelus Dei, qui praecedebat castra Israel, abiit post eos: et cum eo pariter columna nubis, priora dimittens, post tergum stetit, inter castra Aegyptiorum et castra Israel: et erat nubes tenebrosa, et illuminans noctem, ita ut ad se invicem toto noctis tempore accedere non valerent.

That the Egyptians caught up with the Hebrews about sunset, found them already encamped, and deferred attack until morning is a very obvious explanation of the fact that the two armies lay in camp near each other through the night, and it is an explanation that

¹ v, 437-39.

² Exod., 13:21.

would easily suggest itself to a poet who was visualizing the incidents and weaving them into an artistic narrative.¹ There is no greater probability in the hypothesis that the English poet borrowed this detail from Avitus than in the hypothesis that he invented it independently. The other resemblances included under (*e*) are of little weight. Surely the author of *Exodus* did not need to have from Avitus the suggestion that the Egyptians were courageous (*feond wæs anmod*). Nor is there any indication that Avitus' account of the parting of the two armies suggested anything to the Old-English poet. On the contrary, a comparison of both passages with the passage cited just above from the Vulgate shows that the *Exodus* follows that account more closely than Avitus does, which would not be the case if the *Exodus* were following Avitus. The angel is not mentioned by Avitus, and the phrase "mid him" is, as Professor Blackburn notes,² a translation of the Latin "invicem." Parallel (*e*), then, cannot, either in its details or as a unit, be regarded as supporting the opinion that Avitus is a source of our poem.

In parallel (*g*) the first two and a half lines of the English passage express an idea similar to that contained in the first line and a half of the Latin. But when we compare the two passages with the corresponding passage in the Vulgate,

Cumque extendisset Moyses manum contra mare, reversum est primo diluculo ad priorem locum: fugientibusque Aegyptiis occurrerunt aquae, et involvit eos Dominus in mediis fluctibus. Reversaueque sunt aquae, et operuerunt currus et equites cuncti exercitus Pharaonis, qui sequentes ingressi fuerant mare,³

we see that neither poet has made any real addition to the picture presented to us in the scriptural narrative. So far the parallel contains no evidence of borrowing. And in the latter parts of the two passages there is no similarity if in the English we retain the reading of the manuscript. Mürkens, however, emends "forðganges nep" to "forðgange neh," on the basis of the Latin "mox mergenda."⁴ Now if we knew that the author of the *Exodus* was imitating Avitus in this place it would be legitimate to emend the Old-English, if the

¹ In Josephus also the Egyptians postpone battle until morning: 'Εν ὄψει τε γὰρ ἦσαν καὶ τῷ πόνῳ τεταλαιπωρημένοι τῆς διώξεως εἰς τὴν ὑστεραίαν τὴν μάχην ὑπερβάλλεσθαι καλῶς ἔχειν ὑπελάμβανον; *Antiq. Jud.*, lib. 2, cap. 16; *Opera*, ed. Dindorfius, P 1845, I, 76.

² Blackburn, 48.

³ *Exod.*, 14:27-28.

⁴ Mürkens, 76.

manuscript reading were clearly corrupt, with the aid of the Latin. But we have found no evidence that the poet was imitating Avitus either here or elsewhere, and such an emendation therefore begs the very question in regard to which the passage is offered as evidence. And judged on its merits, apart from the Latin, Mürkens' emendation is not convincing, for it assumes that the scribe made two errors in the half-line, whereas we cannot be certain that he made any error; "nep" may after all be a good Old-English word having some such meaning as "lacking," "deprived of."¹ Parallel (*g*) therefore cannot be regarded as lending any probability to the opinion that the author of *Exodus* copied Avitus.

In parallel (*h*) Avitus says that after the destruction of the Egyptians Moses uttered a hymn which was still sung during the lifetime of the poet. The Old-English passage, ll. 515 ff., is full of difficulties, but "eccc rædas" must mean either the Decalogue (the usual interpretation), or the song of Moses, "Cantemus Domino," recorded in the fifteenth chapter of Exodus.² In Avitus, on the

¹ Blackburn, 58.

² The passage is a very difficult one, whichever interpretation we accept. The difficulties involved in taking "eccc rædas," and "deop ærende" to mean the Decalogue are: (1) That a writer who knew the Bible as well as this poet did (for the passages he used, besides those noted herein, see Mürkens, 68-77) would not be likely to make such a blunder as that of saying that the Decalogue was given to Moses at the Red Sea instead of at Mount Sinai. (2) If "eccc rædas" is the Decalogue, so is "doma gehwiltne" of l. 520, and the lines (522-25):

Gif onlucan wile lifes wealhstod,
beorht in breostum banhuses weard,
ginfaesten god gastes cægon,
run bið gerecenod, ræd forð gæð,

are also to be understood as referring to the Decalogue. These lines appear to mean: "If the interpreter of life [i.e., the soul], the bright keeper of the body in man's breast, has the will to unlock with the keys of the Spirit ample benefits, the mystery will be interpreted, counsel will go forth." This is very difficult to apply to the Ten Commandments, for they are peculiarly ill-suited material for allegorical interpretation. If, however, "eccc rædas" and "deop ærende" are the "Cantemus Domino," and "dægweorc nemnað" means (as it very well may; cf. *Exod.* 506, *Guth.* 64): "they [i.e., "rædas"] recount, or celebrate, the day's work," ll. 522 ff. offer no such difficulty as we meet with in applying them to the Decalogue. The events of the Exodus, and the "Cantemus Domino" which celebrates them, are a favorite subject for allegorical interpretation. See, for example, 1 Cor. 10:1-2, and St. Augustine's commentary on the "Cantemus Domino" (Migne, xxxix, 1634-38), making the crossing of the Red Sea a type of baptism; St. Augustine makes of the Israelites, Moses, and the Egyptians types respectively of the Christian, Christ, and the Devil and his angels. (3) If "eccc rædas" of l. 515 is the Decalogue, we have difficulty with the passage 548 ff., beginning:

Swa reordode ræda gemyndig
manna mildost,

which seems clearly to refer back to ll. 515 ff.; for it is impossible to take what immediately precedes l. 548 as the speech of Moses. We must therefore take "Swa reordode" as resumptive, and "ræda" as equivalent to "rædas" of l. 515. If we grant this, it is

other hand, the "solemne carmen" unquestionably means the "Cantemus Domino." Now if the utterance of Moses to which the *Exodus* poet refers is the Decalogue, the two passages exhibit not a parallel, but a very striking divergence. Also, it must be observed that Avitus tells us upon what occasion the song of Moses was used in the church in his day, namely, at baptism,¹ for he says:

toto quod psallitur orbe,
Cum purgata sacris deletur culpa fluentis
Emittitque novam parientis lympha lavaeri
Prolem post veteres, quos edidit Eva, reatus.²

The English poet says nothing like this; ll. 519–21, as shown in my note above, are altogether different from what Avitus says in ll. 704–5. Nothing, therefore, can be made out of this parallel as evidence that the author of the *Exodus* copied Avitus. If both poets said that Moses announced the Decalogue on the shore of the Red Sea, or if both said that the "Cantemus Domino" was used at baptism, we might make something of it. As it is, it proves nothing.

Finally, parallel (f) shows that the two poets agree in representing the sea as stained with blood, for which there is no authority in the Vulgate. In Avitus the idea appears in one place only:

Ast alli, lassata diu dum brachia iactant,
Incurrunt enses iaculisque natantibus haerent,
Concolor et rubro miscetur sanguine pontus.³

clear that the reference is not to the Decalogue, for ll. 553–63 are the speech of Moses introduced by "Swa reordode," and this speech bears no resemblance to the Decalogue. It does, however, resemble the "Cantemus Domino," as may be seen by comparing with it Exod. 15:3, 13, 17.

Lines 519–21 are by no means inconsistent with "ece rædas" as referring to the "Cantemus Domino." They may be translated: "So still the nations find in writings the judgments which the Lord committed to him in that journey, with true words." For "domas" in the sense of "judicia" (not precepts) see *Vespasian Psalter*, *Metrical Psalter*, and *Cambridge Psalter* (*Bib. ags. Prosa*, VII), Ps. 118:7, 13, 30, 39, 43, 52, 62, etc. Or we may translate: "So still the nations find in writings the interpretations of those things which the Lord committed to him," etc. For "dom" in this sense of "meaning, interpretation" compare Dan. 143–44:

Ge sweltað deaðe, nymbe ic dom wite
soðan swefnes, þæs min sefa myndgað.

¹ The "Cantemus Domino" is not a part of the Roman baptismal office, and I have found no case of its use among the baptismal offices collected in the *Codex Liturgicus Ecclesiae Universae*, ed. Assemanus, P. and Leipzig, tom. 2, 1902, though a part of the canticle is used as a Responsorium at the end of an "Ordo Batismi Solennis," p. 107. But the testimony of Avitus seems unequivocal, and it is corroborated by Walfridus Strabus: "et fideles de lavacro ascendentes, extinctis peccatis, hymnum decantant dicentes: Cantemus Domino, gloriose enim, etc.," *Glossa Ordinaria*, Migne, cxiii, 226.

² Avitus, v, 705–8.

³ v, 691–93.

In the *Exodus*, on the other hand, the blood-stained sea is not a casual detail, but dominates the whole description of the destruction of the Egyptians. It is used as follows:

Wæron beorhhlīðu blode bestemed,
holm heolfre spaw.¹
flod blod gewod.²
ealle him brimu blodige þuhton,
þurh þa heora beadosearo wægon.³

The air even is said to be mixed with blood:

Wæs seo hæwene lyft heolfre geblanden.⁴

Now, as Professor Robinson has pointed out to me, the *Beowulf* furnishes very close parallels to the lines just quoted, not only in the language used, but also in the emphasis which the poet gives to this detail of the description. In the *Beowulf* occur the following:

Flod blode weoll (fole to sægon)
hatan heolfre.⁵
þa ðe mid Hroðgare on holm wliton,
þæt wæs yðgeblond eal gemenged,
brim blode fah.⁶
holm heolfre weoll.⁷

The resemblance of the *Exodus* lines to those of the *Beowulf*, especially *Exodus* 449 and *Beowulf* 2138, is striking, whereas the *Exodus* and Avitus' poem have in common the mere fact of blood in the water. If we knew that the author of *Exodus* was acquainted with the Latin poem, and did not know that he was acquainted with the *Beowulf*, we should not be safe in asserting that he was imitating the *Beowulf* in this particular, even though the resemblance to the English epic is greater than to Avitus. But the situation is just the reverse of that. We have found no evidence for asserting that Avitus was known to our poet, but we know that the *Beowulf* was, for *Exodus*, 58—

enge anpaðas, uncuð gelad

is quoted from *Beowulf*, 1410.⁸ The probabilities are all in favor of the opinion that the author of the *Exodus* in these descriptions of

¹ Ll. 448-49.

³ L. 572.

⁵ Ll. 1422-23.

⁷ L. 2138.

² L. 462.

⁴ L. 476.

⁶ Ll. 1592-94.

⁸ This line is but a single point of the evidence for the statement that the author of *Exodus* knew the *Beowulf*. For the full evidence, which places the matter beyond dispute, see the collections of Sarrazin, *Beowulf Studien*, 158-59, and Kail, *Anglia*, 12, 22.

the blood-stained water was imitating the *Beowulf*, and to offer them as evidence for the opinion that he was imitating Avitus is, in the absence of other unambiguous evidence to support this opinion, a mere begging of the question under debate.

Our examination of the text of the *Exodus* and of Avitus, *De transitu Maris Rubri*, has shown that the two poems contain no common structural additions to the material contained in *Exodus*, chaps. 13–15, the two which Mürkens alleged being in one case the use by both poets of a conception of the pillar of cloud which was widely current in their day and in the other case an agreement founded upon a misinterpretation of both the Old-English and the Latin text. The descriptive parallels upon which, in the absence of structural parallels, the whole case for Avitus as a source must rest, have been shown to be of no value as evidence. Of these descriptive parallels it has been shown that (*b*) is not a parallel at all; that in (*a*), (*c*), and (*g*) the substance of both the Latin and the Old-English is in the Vulgate; that (*d*) is the merest commonplace; that in (*e*) the detail common to the two poems is almost implicit in the Vulgate source, that it could have easily suggested itself independently to both writers, and that it is contained in the very widely known *Antiquities* of Josephus; that in (*f*) the Old-English poet is with much greater probability imitating the *Beowulf* than Avitus; and that in (*h*) there is a divergence instead of a parallel between the two passages. Of all these parallels only (*g*), (*e*), and (*f*) are of any weight at all, and in the case of each of these I have shown a superior probability for the opinion that the *Exodus* poet was indebted to sources other than Avitus, or to his own imagination, as against the opinion that he used Avitus as a source. In no case that we have considered have we found it more probable that the author of the *Exodus* used Avitus than that he used some other source; in no case have we found the probabilities even equal for the two views. The evidence of the Avitus parallels to *Exodus* then has no cumulative value; taken as a unit it weighs no more than the sum of its individual items—which is nothing.

It would not be difficult to show that the differences between these two poems are more remarkable than the resemblances; that the *De transitu Maris Rubri* is notable for the fact that large parts of the

narrative are given from the point of view of the Egyptians, whereas in the *Exodus* the narrative point of view is that of the Hebrew army, or of the poet himself; that Avitus portrays the situation of the Egyptians and Pharaoh with considerable sympathy, whereas to the Old-English poet they are always God's enemies; that Avitus represents the Hebrews as leaving Egypt before dawn, in the moonlight, but that the Old-English poet represents them as leaving by daylight;¹ that in Avitus the pillar first appeared in the evening as a pillar of fire, and that according to the English poet it first appeared as a column of cloud;² that in the Latin poem the pillar seems to appear at the first encampment of the Israelites, whereas in the English poem it appears at the third encampment, at Etham.³ but such an examination would require more space than can be given to it here. The burden of proof is upon those who assert that Avitus is the source of the Old-English poem, and I believe that this burden has not been lifted.

II

We must now consider the question: if the author of the *Exodus* did not use Avitus as a source, what sources did he use? As to his immediate source or sources I can give no information; the particular documents that the poet made use of, outside of the Vulgate, are unknown to me. The most that I can do is to show that for two-thirds of the organic additions which he made to the scriptural narrative as given in *Exodus* there existed in various forms literary material which the *Exodus* poet probably used. After accounting for these additions, there is a residuum of additions for which no parallels have been found in other literature, and which we may therefore, at least tentatively, credit to the imagination of the poet.

For five of his additions, passages of Scripture outside of *Exodus* are a probable ultimate source; these are numbers (4), (6), (7), (9), and (13). The scriptural basis of (4) we have already discussed. In this case, and in others, however, we have no means of knowing whether the poet derived his conception of the pillar from his own

¹ Avitus, v, 377; *Exod.*, 47.

² Avitus, v, 401 ff.; *Exod.*, 71 ff.

³ Avitus, v, 401 ff.; *Exod.*, 63 ff.; that the pillar appeared first at Etham is suggested by *Exod.* 13:20-21; compare St. Ambrose, *De XLII mansionibus filiorum Israel*, Migne, xvii, 15.

study of Scripture, or from commentaries or historical works. We can only say that the poet did not invent the detail, and that its ultimate source is the Bible. The poet's thirteenth organic addition makes the hill on which Abraham sacrificed Isaac the same as that on which Solomon later built the temple. This idea is unquestionably based on a combination of Gen. 22:2 with II Chron. 3:1, which (in the Authorized Version) are:

. . . . Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

Then Solomon began to build the house of the Lord at Jerusalem in Mount Moriah. . . .

In the Vulgate these verses appear in such a form that no connection is apparent between them:

. . . . Tolle filium tuum unigenitum, quem diligis, Isaac, et vade in terram visionis: atque ibi offeres eum in holocaustum super unum montium quem monstravero tibi.

Et coepit Salomon aedificare domum Domini in Ierusalem in monte Moria. . . .

In spite of this fact the identification of the two places was well known to ecclesiastical writers. St. Jerome says, in regard to Gen. 22:2:

Aiunt ergo Hebraei hunc montem esse in quo postea templum conditum est in area Ornae Jebusaei, sicut et in Paralipomenis scriptum est: Et coeperunt aedificare templum in mense secundo, in secunda die mensis, in monte Moria.¹

St. Augustine refers to St. Jerome upon this point as follows:

Hieronymus presbyter scripsit, se certissime a senioribus Judaeorum cognovisse, quod ibi immolatus sit Isaac.²

Bede also was acquainted with the fact:

Dicunt Hebraei esse hunc montem in quo postea templum conditum est, hoc est in monte Moria, in quo est aurea urna Jebusaei.³

The Hebrew tradition to which all these writers refer is in Josephus,⁴ and is given by Baring-Gould and Ginzberg in their collection of

¹ Quaestiones in Genesim, Migne, xxiii, 969-70.

² Quoted in Migne, xxiii, 969.

³ In Pentateuchum Comm. Gen., Migne, xci, 244.

⁴ *Ant. Jud.*, lib. I, cap. xiii; p. 26, Vol. I.

Jewish legends.¹ It was undoubtedly known to the writer of the Old-English *Exodus*.

In his description of the pillar of fire and cloud as two pillars, "beamas twegen" (the sixth addition), the poet was following a not uncommon interpretation of Exod. 13:22, which says:

Nunquam defuit columna nubis per diem, nec columna ignis per noctem, coram populo.

For Bede also speaks of two columns:

Duae quoque columnae duas Ecclesias figurant, id est Veteris et Novi Testamenti.²

St. Bruno has the same idea of the duality of the pillar:

Altera enim eos a solis ardore, altera vero a tenebris defendebat.³

And according to a Jewish tradition the pillar of fire appeared in the evening before the pillar of cloud had disappeared, so that they were never without a guide.⁴ There are early Christian authorities also for the idea that the pillar was one. Walfridus Strabus, for example, says, "in die per nubem columna monstrata est, et in nocte per ignem."⁵ The author of the *Exodus* then was merely following one of two current opinions about the pillar of cloud and of fire.

The poet's ninth addition consists in his statement that the Israelites were divided into companies of a thousand men each.⁶ This, I think, may rest upon Exod. 18:21-22:

Provide autem de omni plebe viros potentes, et timentes Deum, in quibus sit veritas, et qui oderint avaritiam, et constitue ex eis tribunos, et centuriones, et quinquagenarios, et decanos qui iudicent populum omni tempore.

The word corresponding to the Vulgate "tribunos" is in the Septuagint "χιλιάρχους." In Aelfric's translation of this passage "tribunos" is correctly rendered as "pusendmen."⁷ If the author of the

¹ *Legends of Old Testament Characters* (L 1871), I, 218; *Legends of the Jews* (Philadelphia, 1909), I, 285.

² In *Pentateuchum Comm.*, Migne, xci, 310.

³ *Expositio in Exodum*, Migne, clxiv, 263-64.

⁴ *Jewish Encyclopaedia*, X, 39 (ref. to Shab. 33b).

⁵ *Glossa Ordinaria*, Migne, cxiii, 223.

⁶ The total number of the army is given in Exod. 12:37 as 600,000 men; the division of the whole into 12 "feðan" is based upon the 12 tribes; therefore the only innovation is in the statement that each "cist" had 1,000 men. Rau, *op. cit.*, 33, thinks this is "angelsächsische Zuthat," but offers no evidence to support his statement.

⁷ *Bibliothek der angelsächsischen Prosa*, I, 145.

Exodus understood the word in that sense it may well have suggested to him the idea of representing the Israelites as organized in companies of a thousand at the time of the exodus.

Addition (7) is one of the most striking in the poem, representing the pillar of fire as liable to destroy the Hebrews unless a certain condition should be complied with.¹ It seems unlikely that the poet should have inserted this detail without some kind of authority. It is more probable that it is founded ultimately upon the "ignis Domini" of Lev. 10:2 and Num. 11:1:

Egressusque ignis a Domino, devoravit eos, et mortui sunt coram Domino.

Interea ortum est murmur populi, quasi dolentium pro labore, contra Dominum. Quod cum audisset Dominus, iratus est. Et accensus in eos ignis Domini devoravit extremam castrorum partem.

In these places the "ignis Domini" performs the office which in our poem the pillar of fire threatened to do. Now in Exod. 14:24 there is a statement that might easily be interpreted as meaning that the pillar of fire and of cloud was God's weapon against the Egyptians:

et ecce respiciens Dominus super castra Aegyptiorum per columnam ignis et nubis, interfecit exercitum eorum.

This is translated in the Douay version as follows:

And behold the Lord looking upon the Egyptian army through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, slew their host.

But it would not be a bad blunder, if one were reading an unpunctuated text, to translate it as:

And behold the Lord looking upon the Egyptian army slew their host by means of the pillar of fire and the cloud.

Num. 14:14, 15 might also have furnished a suggestion. I believe that these passages are the basis of the poet's conception of the pillar of fire as the weapon of God, but whether he derived it directly from Scripture, or got it at second-hand from a non-scriptural source, is altogether uncertain.

For three of the remaining organic additions Holthausen has already pointed out parallels.² For (1), "druron deofolgyld," he

¹ The exact nature of this condition is uncertain, for l. 124 may be interpreted in three or four different ways. But there is no uncertainty as to the meaning of ll. 120-23.

² *Archiv*, CXV, 162-63.

has parallels in Bede and Peter Comestor.¹ The same tradition is found in a slightly different form in Walfridus Strabus of the ninth century:

Ferunt Hebraei quia omnia idola Egypti contrafacta sunt nocte illa et templa, vel motu terrae, vel fluminis Nili inundatione.²

For (11), the order in which the tribes enter the sea, he cites Peter Comestor:

Et advocans Moyses singulas tribus secundum ordinem nativitatis suae hortabatur eos ut ipsum praeceuntem sequerentur. Cumque timuissent intrare Reuben, Simeon, et Levi, Judas primus agressus est iter post eum, unde et ibi meruit regnum.³

Comestor of course is at least three centuries later than the *Exodus*, and I have been unable to find any earlier parallel. But the order of the tribes as they marched into the sea is found in the fifteenth-century *Mystere de Viel Testament* in a form different from that in which it appears in Comestor,⁴ and probably, therefore, not derived from him. Now there is no likelihood that either Comestor or the author of the *Viel Testament* invented the story. And it is quite certain that neither of them got it from the Old-English *Exodus*. It seems therefore that the existence of this story in three versions, of the eighth or ninth, the twelfth, and the fifteenth centuries, all independent of each other, is good evidence that the story goes back to a date earlier than the earliest recorded version, and that all three versions go back ultimately to a common original. Holthausen's parallel, then, may be accepted as indicating, in conjunction with the

¹ He also cites Eusebius for this, but the full context of the bit he quotes shows that the parallel is not a valid one, for the temples fell before, not during, the exodus: τοῦ δὲ βασιλέως ἐπὶ ἀφρονουμένου, τὸν Μωϋσῶν χαλαζάν τε καὶ σεισμούς διὰ νυκτὸς ἀποτελέσαι . . . Συμπέσειν δὲ τότε τὰς μὲν ἑκάστας πάσας, τῶν τε ναῶν τοὺς πλείστους. Migne, *Pat. Graeca*, cxi, 733; *Praep. Evang.*, ix, 27.

² Glossa Ordinaria, Migne, cxiii, 219.

³ *Historia Scholastica*, Exodus, cap. 31; Migne, excviii, 1158.

⁴ Ed. J. de Rothschild, *S.A.T.F.*, II, 24280 ff. According to Comestor twelve paths were opened through the sea, according to the *V.T.* only one. The legend of the twelve paths is very common (see Walfridus Strabus, Migne, cxiii, 225; Rabanus Maurus, Migne, cviii, 66; Rupertus Tuitiensis, Migne, clxvii, 642; Baring-Gould, *op. cit.*, II, 102); but I have found it only in Comestor combined with the statement that the tribe of Judah entered the water first. Comestor's form of the legend looks therefore like a telescoping of two different stories, that of the twelve paths and that of Judah going first into the water, for the latter story distinctly suggests that all the Hebrews were following a single path, and is in so far inconsistent with the idea that the tribes had individual paths. The telescoping of course may have been done either by Comestor or his source, but it is clear that Comestor cannot have invented either of the stories thus combined.

other evidence, that the author of the Old-English *Exodus* did not invent addition (11). Holthausen also gives good parallels from Josephus, Eusebius, and Comestor for addition (15), the statement that the Israelites got treasure from the sea.

Addition (3), which speaks of the Ethiopians as a people hostile to the Israelites, is based, I believe, on a very old legend which tells how, in Moses' youth, the Ethiopians made war against Egypt and were defeated by an army under the command of Moses. The following passage from Josephus gives as much of the story as need be presented here:

The Ethiopians, who are neighbors of the Egyptians, made an inroad into their country, and plundered and carried off the goods of the Egyptians, who, in their rage, marched against them to revenge the insult, but being overcome in battle, some of them were slain, and the rest ran away in a shameful manner and got home safe. And the Ethiopians followed after them in hot pursuit, and thinking that it would be soft not to subdue all Egypt, they ravaged the country far and wide, and when they had tasted its sweets never left off the prosecution of the war: and as the nearest parts had not courage enough at their first approach to fight with them, they proceeded as far as Memphis and the sea, not one of the cities being able to hold out against them. The Egyptians in this strait betook themselves to their oracles and prophecies; and when God had counselled them to call in the Hebrew to their aid, the king commanded his daughter to produce Moses, that he might be their general. And when she had made the king swear he would do Moses no harm, she delivered him to the king, supposing his assistance would be of great advantage, and reproaching the priests, who, having before urged the Egyptians to kill him as an enemy, were not ashamed now to own their want of his help. So Moses, at the entreaty of Thermuthis [the king's daughter] and the king, cheerfully undertook the business.¹

This story is in the *Chronicon Paschale*,² Eusebius,³ and later writers, and seems to explain satisfactorily the rather puzzling lines of *Exodus*, 68-71.

Addition (8) tells us that the Egyptian army was composed of 2,000 bands under the command of as many "cyingas." This detail is difficult to deal with, for we do not know how many men were contained in each of these 2,000 bands, and cannot compare directly the size of Pharaoh's army as given in the *Exodus* with the

¹ Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book II, chap. x; *Works*, Bohn Library, I, 163.

² Migne, *Pat. Graeca*, xcii, 200.

³ *Praep. Evang.*, lib. 9, cap. 27; Migne, *Pat. Graeca*, xxi, 729.

figures given in the legendary accounts. According to Josephus and Comestor¹ it was composed of 600 chariots, 50,000 horsemen, and 200,000 foot. According to Jewish legend it numbered 600 chariots, 5,000,000 horsemen, and 2,000,000 foot.² It will be observed that the numbers of infantry and cavalry as given by Josephus and by the Jewish legend are simple multiples of each other; both probably go back to a common original. I think that it is also worth notice that in the Old-English poem the number of "cyningas" is a simple multiple of the number of foot-soldiers in the other two accounts. It seems therefore something more than a possibility that this figure too may go back ultimately to the same original. If the bands that composed Pharaoh's army were conceived of by the poet as of the same size as those that composed the Hebrew army, 1,000 men each, the total force would correspond exactly to the number of foot-soldiers in the legend given by Baring-Gould.

If my interpretation of ll. 515 ff. (above, pp. 14, 15) be accepted, these lines mean, not that Moses gave the Law on the shore of the Red Sea, but that he gave forth there the canticle, "Cantemus Domino," and this passage, which stands as addition (14) in the list at the beginning of this paper, is not an organic addition at all. If it does mean that Moses announced the Law at the Red Sea the addition is very difficult to account for. Professor Blackburn has suggested³ that it may be due to Deut. 1:1:

Haec sunt verba, quae locutus est Moyses ad omnem Israel trans Iordanem in solitudine campestri, contra mare rubrum. . . .

But that this should have remained in the poet's mind and that the wonderful narrative of the nineteenth and twentieth chapters of Exodus should be forgotten, seems to me very improbable.

For the remaining organic additions that the poet has made to his original material, numbers (2), (5), (10), and (12), I have found no parallels of such a kind as to indicate the existence of literary material which might have been known to the poet and have furnished the basis of the additions. This of course is not a proof that these additions were invented by the poet. It is evidence tending to such

¹ *Ant. Jud.*, lib. 2, cap. 15; *ed. cit.*, I, 75; *Hist. Schol.*, Exod., cap. 31, Migne, cxcviii, 1157.

² Baring-Gould, II, 101.

³ Blackburn, 61.

a presumption, however, and the presumption can be tested by inquiring whether these additions are of the sort that, judging from the literary qualities of Old-English poetry in general and of the *Exodus* in particular, the Old-English poet would have been likely to invent. Applying this test, it is evident that addition (2), representing the Israelites as marching through a hostile country, and addition (12), hinting at battle between Israelites and Egyptians, are thoroughly congenial to the warlike character of Old-English poetry and to the emphasis that is given to warlike details in the religious as well as in the secular epics. Addition (5), the nautical imagery used to describe the pillar of cloud and the Israelites, is thoroughly in keeping with the fondness for the sea which appears in a good deal of Old-English poetry, and which is especially conspicuous in a part of the *Exodus* that must be largely original with the poet, ll. 446–514.¹ We may with some assurance, therefore, regard these three additions as original. As to addition (10), which says that the sea-wall stood for a day, it is not of the sort that we should expect the poet to invent, and I should not be surprised to find something similar turn up in legend. There is nothing in the Vulgate to suggest it.

The present paper, I think, throws some light upon the problem of the ultimate sources of the material that composes the Old-English *Exodus*, but the problem of its immediate source is still unsolved. In the case of ten of the organic additions to the primary source we have found good evidence for believing that the poet used literary material, and that the additions were not invented by him. But in no case is there any evidence that he found this material in the exact places cited in this paper. We have found not a source or sources, but analogues and possible sources. In regard to the immediate source used by the poet there are two problems. The first is, did he find these additions already assembled in one narrative or account, or did he gather them from various places and organize them for himself? The answer to this question would throw much light upon the poet and his method of work. The second problem is, if the poet found the material already organized, was it in the form of a condensed, matter-of-fact prose narrative, or in the form of

¹ The situation described in these lines is fully contained in the Vulgate, as I pointed out above, p. 13. But the emphasis and the zest are the poet's own. The Vulgate Ps. 76:15 ff. may have been vaguely suggestive.

an artistic narrative in verse? The answer to this question also would tell us much. To these two questions I do not presume to give an answer. It is to be hoped that an answer will some day, however, be given, and that we shall find the author's immediate source if he found the material already organized. The *Exodus* is of a high degree of literary merit, and a knowledge of its actual source would enable us to see how much of its merit is due to the originality of its author and how much he owed to a predecessor. And if it should be discovered that he followed a single source with some closeness our knowledge of that source might enable us to clear up a number of the obscurities and textual difficulties in which the poem abounds.

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