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4. SOME HISTORICAL PROBLEMS

I. ALLEGED ANACHRONISMS

(a) *Camels in the Patriarchal Age*

It is often asserted that the mention of camels and of their use is an anachronism in Genesis.¹ This charge is simply not true, as there is both philological and archaeological evidence for knowledge and use of this animal in the early second millennium BC and even earlier. While a possible reference to camels in a fodder-list from Alalakh (c. eighteenth century BC)² has been disputed,³ the great Mesopotamian lexical lists that originated in the Old Babylonian period show a knowledge of the camel c. 2000/1700 BC, including its domestication.⁴ Furthermore, a Sumerian text from Nippur from the same early period gives clear evidence of domestication of the camel by then, by its allusions to camel's milk.⁵ Camel bones were found in houseruins at Mari of the pre-Sargonic age (twenty-fifth to twenty-fourth centuries BC),⁶ and also in various Palestinian sites from

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2000 to 1200 BC.⁷ From Byblos comes an incomplete camel-figurine of the nineteenth/eighteenth centuries BC.⁸ This and a variety of other evidence cannot be lightly disregarded.⁹ For the early and middle second millennium BC, only limited use is presupposed by either the biblical or external evidence until the twelfth century BC.

(b) *'Philistines' in the Patriarchal Age*

¹ Cf. Albright, *JBL* 64 (1945), pp. 287-288; *ZAW* 62 (1950), p. 315; *The Archaeology of Palestine*⁴, 1960, pp. 206-207, Also J. Bright, *A History of Israel*, 1960, pp. 72-73, and O. Eissfeldt, *CAH*², II: 26a (*Palestine in the Nineteenth Dynasty...*), 1965, p. 6.

² D. J. Wiseman and A. Goetze, *JCS* 13 (1959), pp. 29, 37.

³ By W. G. Lambert, *BASOR* 160 (1960), p. 42. No final decision can be reached until the original cuneiform tablet has been re-collated by someone competent in the Alalakh script-forms and without interests in the presence/absence of camels in this period.

⁴ See Lambert, *op. cit.*, pp. 42-43, who has to admit that the natural implication of the contexts is that of a domesticated animal.

⁵ See the *Chicago Assyrian Dictionary*, 7/I-J, 1960, p. 2b under *ibilu* and reference to text Ni(ppur) 9602:94 f. I owe this reference to the kindness of Mr. A. R. Millard. Jacobsen's reading has not been taken up by S. N. Kramer, *Proc. APS* 107: 6 (1963), pp. 506-507, iii: 24-26.

⁶ A. Parrot, *Syria* 32 (1955) p. 323.

⁷ See, for example, R. de Vaux, *RB* 56 (1949), p. 9 (= *Die hebraischen Patriarchen and die modernen Entdeckungen*, 1961, p. 59), and B. S. J. Isserlin, *PEQ* 82 (1950), pp. 50-53.

⁸ See de Vaux, *RB* 56 (1949), p. 9 n. 5 (= *Die hebr. Patr.*, p. 59 n. 5); K. A. Kitchen, *JEA* 47 (1961), p. 159 n. 1, or *NBD*, p. 182.

⁹ A fuller treatment is to appear in Kitchen, *The Joseph Narrative and its Egyptian Background* (forthcoming). The most recent collection of the archaeological data is by B. Brentjes, *Klio* 38 (1960), pp. 23-52. Hitherto, the most valuable such surveys have been those by R. Walz, *ZDMG* 101 (1951), pp. 29-51; *ZDMG* 104 (1954), pp. 45-87; *Actes du IVe Congrès Internationale des Sciences Anthropologiques et Ethnologiques*, III, Vienna, 1956, pp. 190-204.

The mention of Philistines at Gerar in the Patriarchal age is usually dismissed as an anachronism because they are otherwise named in no ancient document before *c.* 1190 BC (texts of Ramesses III in Egypt).¹⁰ But this is an argument from negative evidence and cannot therefore be relied on absolutely.¹¹ The 'Philistines' of Genesis 26 are relatively peaceful and well-Semitized, quite different in character from the alien Aegean warriors of the twelfth century BC; and we are entitled to ask whether the term 'Philistines' in Genesis 26 is not in fact a term of the thirteenth/twelfth centuries BC here applied to some *earlier* Aegean immigrants into Palestine who, like the later Philistines (Am. 9:7; Je. 47:4), had come from Caphtor (Crete and the Aegean Isles).¹² The Caphtorim of Deuteronomy

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2:23 may have been the Aegean settlers in question. Once grant this, and the supposed anachronism disappears entirely. Caphtor is the Kaptara of the Mari archives of the eighteenth century BC - the Patriarchal Age - and one of these documents actually mentions a king of Hazor in Palestine sending gifts to Kaptara.¹³ Traffic in the reverse direction at that same period is neatly proved by the occurrence of Middle Minoan II pottery at Hazor itself,¹⁴ at Ugarit in Phoenicia,¹⁵ and far inland in Upper Egypt.¹⁶ If no equivalent of 'Philistines' existed in Patriarchal Palestine, the introduction of such into the Patriarchal narratives remains an enigma. The kind of evidence utilized here has been almost entirely neglected by Old Testament scholars. Finally, if Professor C. H. Gordon's attempted decipherment of the Minoan 'Linear A' language as Semitic *were* to be substantiated,¹⁷ it would agree very well with the 'Philistine' king of Gerar in Genesis 26 bearing a Semitic name or title (Abimelech); but, of course, no weight must be attached to this unless Gordon's thesis proves to be true.¹⁸

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(c) *Tirhakah and Hezekiah*

¹⁰ For example, by J. Bright, *A History of Israel*, 1960, p. 73; or G. E. Wright, *Biblical Archaeology*, 1957, p. 40, who speaks more prudently of 'modernization'.

¹¹ Inscriptionally, we know so little about the Aegean peoples as compared with those of the rest of the Ancient Near East in the second millennium BC, that it is premature to deny outright the possible existence of Philistines in the Aegean area before 1200 BC.

¹² On Caphtor, Ugaritic *kptr* (=Kaptara), cf. C. H. Gordon, *Minos* 3 (1954), pp. 126-127. Note goods reaching Ugarit by boat from Kaptara (*i.e.*, Crete), in Nougayrol, *Palais Royal d'Ugarit*, III, 1955, pp. xxviii, 101, 107. On Egyptian *Keftiu* = both Kaptara and Crete, see J. Vercoutter, *Égyptiens et Préhellènes*, 1954, and more fully *L'Égypte et le monde égéen préhellénique*, 1956. Other references and general survey by J. Prignaud, *RB* 71 (1964), pp. 215-229 (gives too much ground to name-speculations of the Caphtor-Cilicia theory, and too little attention to the fact that *K^cretim* ('Cherethites') are a *later* term than Caphtor and Philistines).

¹³ G. Dossin in Pohl, *Orientalia* 19 (1950), p. 509.

¹⁴ Y. Yadin *et al.*, *Hazor II*, 1960, p. 86 with plate 115:12-13; A. Malamat, *JBL* 79 (1960), pp. 18-19.

¹⁵ C. F. A. Schaeffer, *Ugaritica I*, 1939, pp. 54 ff.

¹⁶ References given in H. Kantor, in R. W. Ehrich (ed.), *Relative Chronologies in Old World Archeology*, 1954, pp. 10-15; 1965 ed., pp. 20-24.

¹⁷ See C. H. Gordon, *Antiquity* 31 (1957), pp. 124-130; *JNES* 17 (1958), pp. 245-255; *Klio* 38 (1960), pp. 63-68; *JNES* 21 (1962), pp. 207-210, cf. pp. 211-214.

¹⁸ For a brief critical survey of Gordon's and other 'decipherments' of Linear A, see Maurice Pope, *Aegean Writing and Linear A*, 1964 (= *Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology*, VIII, Lund); or J. Chadwick, *Antiquity* 33 (1959), pp. 269-278. On the problem of early Philistines, see T. C. Mitchell, *NBD*, pp. 988-991, and his forthcoming monograph on *The Philistines*.

Two difficulties have been raised over the mention of ‘Tirhakah, king of Ethiopia’ (better, Kush) in connection with the campaign by Sennacherib of Assyria against Hezekiah of Judah (2 Ki. 19:9; Is. 37:9), usually dated to 701 BC.

First, Tirhakah did not ascend the throne of Egypt and Ethiopia (Kush) until 690 BC.¹⁹ Some scholars therefore assume a second Assyrian attack on Hezekiah shortly after that date.²⁰ But this is probably unnecessary, because the kingly title may merely have been added by the biblical narrator writing about the events of 701 at some time after 690, in order to identify Tirhakah to his readers. It should, perhaps, be stressed that this kind of prolepsis cannot be classed as an ‘error’ (as some Old Testament scholars do), because it is a common practice of Ancient Oriental writers to refer to people and places by titles and names acquired later than the period being described. Precisely this usage occurs in Tirhakah’s own Kawa stela IV: 7-8, when it says of *prince* Tirhakah: ‘*His Majesty* was in Nubia, as a goodly youth... amidst the goodly youths whom His Majesty King Shebitku had summoned from Nubia...’ If Isaiah and Kings are in ‘error’, so is Kawa IV, an undoub-

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tedly first-hand document! A similarly clear example of prolepsis is found on a legal stela of the seventeenth century BC in which an official is referred to at least twice as ‘Count of Nekheb’ before actually attaining this post.²¹ We do the same today, *e.g.*, when we speak of Abraham as coming from ‘Mesopotamia’, a Greek term from at least fifteen centuries later than the Patriarch!²² No-one calls this an ‘error’. And the occasional similar practice of the biblical writers need not be so described either.

Secondly, and more recently, a suggestion by Macadam²³ that Tirhakah was only nine or ten years old in 701 BC has gained wide currency in Old Testament studies as proving that Tirhakah could not have gone to war in 701 BC. A much improved treatment of the Kawa texts by Leclant and Yoyotte,²⁴ published in 1952, alters this completely and would allow Tirhakah to be about twenty or twenty-one years old in 701 BC, which makes him quite old enough to act on behalf of his brother, King Shebitku, by leading an army to defeat in Palestine. This has so far almost entirely escaped the notice of Old Testament scholars.

¹⁹ This date depends on the new date 664 BC (*not* 663) for the beginning of the Twenty-sixth Dynasty in Egypt (R. A. Parker, *Mitt. d. Deutsch. Arch. Inst. Kairo* 15 (1957), pp. 208-212; E. Hornung, *ZÄS* 92 (1965), pp. 38-39), and on a twenty-six-year reign of Tirhakah (Parker, *Kush* 8 (1960), pp. 267-269). There is no ground for accepting a six-year co-regency of Tirhakah with Shebitku (*cf.* G. Schmidt, *Kush* 6 (1958), pp. 121-130, esp. 123-127), excluded in particular by the express words of Tirhakah himself (stela Kawa V:14-15): ‘I was crowned at Memphis, after the Falcon (=Shebitku, his predecessor) had flown heavenward’ (regular euphemism for a king’s decease).

²⁰ Recent treatments of this problem, with references, include J. Bright, *A History of Israel*, 1960, pp. 282-287, and in *Maqqél Shâgedh* (FS Vischer), 1960, pp. 20-31; H. H. Rowley, *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 44 (1962) pp. 395-431, and (slightly revised) in his *Men of God*, 1963, pp. 98-132; also S. H. Horn *AUSS* 4 (1966), 1-28, a very useful survey, but his apodictic claim (p. 2) that it was ‘impossible’ for Tirhakah to lead an army in 701 BC is itself vitiated by his uncritical acceptance of Macadam’s theories, and failure to grasp the true significance of Leclant and Yoyotte’s treatment of the Kawa texts (*cf.* note 24, below).

²¹ *Cf.* lines 19 and 21 of text in P. Lacau, *Une Stèle Juridique de Karnak*, 1949, and p. 34.

²² On the origin and early history of this term, see J. J. Finkelstein, *JNES* 21 (1862), pp. 73-92.

²³ Based on inscriptions from the temple of Kawa in Nubia; see M. F. L. Macadam, *The Temples of Kawa*, 1, 1949, pp. 18-20.

²⁴ Published in *BIFAO* 51 (1952), pp. 17-27.

The underlying chronology may be baldly summarized as follows.²⁵ In 716 BC, Sargon II mentions Shilkanni (=Osorkon IV, 'Akheperre') as king of Egypt,²⁶ but by 712 BC he is dealing with a 'pharaoh' of Egypt who is also ruler of Kush - who therefore is no Libyan kinglet²⁷ but a Nubian king, and in fact Shabako, not Piankhy, since the latter did *not* rule north of the Thebaid and Abydos, and had no contact with the Assyrians

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on his one great raid into northern Egypt against Tefnakht. As Shabako appears to have conquered all Egypt by his second year,²⁸ Piankhy must have died by 713 BC at latest (717/716 BC at earliest). As Tirhakah was a son of Piankhy, biologically he could *not* be only nine in 701 BC (born four to seven years posthumously?).²⁹ Egyptian foreign policy was one of neutrality to Assyria under Shabako,³⁰ but changed in 701 when Egyptian forces came out in support of Judah, as reported by Sennacherib. The basic political situation was the same as previously - hence the change of policy reflected in the cuneiform sources is best attributed to a new man in control in Egypt, Shebitku. The latter was probably king in 702/701, and Tirhakah would then be summoned to his brother's court as a youth twenty years old.³¹ Once again, the evidence repays closer, more patient study than is often accorded to it.

II. FALSE IDENTIFICATIONS

(a) *David* and 'Dawidum'

In the Mari texts of the eighteenth century BC, a word *dawidum* was interpreted³² as 'general' or 'commander', and compared with the name 'David'. It must be said that such a meaning for 'David' would have been quite attractive. The explanation found ready acceptance in Old Testament studies, coupled with the further suggestion that 'David' was perhaps a name or

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title adopted by the Hebrew king and was not his original name.³³

²⁵ For a fuller statement on the chronology of the Twenty-fifth Dynasty, see Kitchen, *The Third Intermediate Period in Egypt* (forthcoming).

²⁶ Cf. H. Tadmor, *JCS* 12 (1958), pp. 77, 78; on the name-form Shilkanni, cf. W. F. Albright, *BASOR* 141 (1956), p. 24.

²⁷ Certainly not Tefnakht or Bekenranef, who never ruled Kush or southern Upper Egypt.

²⁸ He was in control at Memphis by then (Serapeum datum), cf. J. Vercoutter, *Kush* 8 (1960), pp. 65-67 (whose dates BC are too low).

²⁹ Macadam's calculation depended on (i) an assumed six-year coregency of Tirhakah and Shebitku, which is pretty certainly erroneous (cf. note 19, p. 82, above), and (ii) on referring Tirhakah's age of 20 (Kawa stela V:17) to 690/689 BC, whereas it is ten or twelve years earlier (just after Shebitku's accession).

³⁰ Shabako repatriated lamani of Ashdod at Sargon's request in 712 BC (cf. Tadmor, *JCS* 12 (1958), p. 83 and references; text in *ANET*, p. 286); sealing of Shabako from Nineveh (Tadmor, *op. cit.*, p. 84).

³¹ Kawa stela V:17. Shabako's thirteen or fourteen years in Egypt (fourteen or fifteen in Nubia) may be placed in 716/5-702/1 BC (and 717/6-702/1, respectively); fuller details in *Third Intermediate Period*.

³² G. Dossin, *Syria* 19 (1938), pp. 109 f., and *Mélanges Dussaud*, II, 1939, p. 981 n. 1.

³³ For example, M. Noth, *History of Israel*,² 1960, p. 179 n. 2 (following W. von Soden, *Welt des Orients* 1:3 (1948), p. 197).

However, this attractive theory must now, alas, be discarded. First Kupper³⁴ noticed the curious fact that this supposed word for 'general' or the like was virtually restricted to one kind of context: *dawidam daku*, 'killing the commander' (of a defeated enemy). No modern insurance company would ever have issued a policy on the life of a *dawidum*! Then Tadmor (following Landsberger) pointed out that in fact *dawidum* is merely a phonetic variant of the common Babylonian word *dabdum*, 'defeat'; *dawidam* (or *dabdum*) *daku* merely means 'to defeat' (an enemy). The whole tissue of theory woven round the name 'David' is thus left without any foundation in fact, and must be abandoned.³⁵ The name 'David' may thus simply mean 'beloved' or be derived from a word for 'uncle' as formerly thought.³⁶ This example well illustrates with what care we must scrutinize even the most tempting identifications.

(b) 'Solomon's Stables'

Ever since their discovery, the two blocks of Iron Age stables found at Megiddo have been connected by modern writers with Solomon's buildings mentioned in 1 Kings 9:15-19 - hence the name 'Solomon's stables'.³⁷ However, the precise date of these fine stables has always been subject to certain difficulties, archaeologically. As a result of Yadin's careful study of parts of the Megiddo ruins,³⁸ two distinct series of remains can now be clearly distinguished. First, there is the superb North Gate, with its 'casemate' walls and two citadels, which clearly

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belong to Solomon's reign; secondly, we have the stables, associated with a *later* solid and recessed city wall, which in fact may be dated to the period of Omri and Ahab. What happens to 1 Kings 9? Nothing, because in fact, as far as Hazor, Megiddo and Gezer are concerned, 1 Kings 9:15 only makes a general mention of building having been done. This is well illustrated by the genuinely Solomonic remains discovered at these three sites. Then, separately, 1 Kings 9:19 mentions Solomon's store-cities and cities for chariots and horsemen, without actually naming them. Thus 1 Kings 9 does not in fact imply the existence of stables of Solomon at Megiddo at all, although this was hitherto assumed by most writers (including the present one). It illustrates the need to be sure that we correlate what the biblical text states, not what we think it states, with other data.

³⁴ *Les Nomades en Mésopotamie au Temps des Rois de Mari*, 1957, pp. 58-62, esp. p. 61.

³⁵ H. Tadmor, *JNES* 17 (1958), pp. 129-131; cf. *Chicago Assyrian Dictionary*, vol. 3/D, 1959, pp. 14-16 on *dabdû*.

³⁶ See J. J. Stamm, *VTS*, VII, 1960, pp. 165-183, for a full discussion.

³⁷ R. S. Lamon and G. M. Shipton, *Megiddo I*, 1939, pp. 44, 59, 61; G. E. Wright, *Biblical Archaeology*, 1957, p. 132; many other works likewise.

³⁸ Y. Yadin, *BA* 23 (1960), pp. 62-68 (esp. p. 68); *The Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 1963, p. 289 and figure.