



The Canaanites

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THE CANAANITES.

THE fact that the Hittites were a non-Semitic people raises the question whether other Canaanite tribes may not have been also non-Semitic. It is often assumed, without any very evident grounds, that the Bible represents all these people to be Semitic. On investigating this question I have been much struck to find how many names connected with the Canaanites have either no derivation in Hebrew, or one which is extremely forced and improbable, whereas the large majority of geographical names and the personal names of Semitic personages have well-known and simple derivations.

This question is one of difficulty, requiring very sound knowledge both of Hebrew and also of the older non-Semitic languages, and although I put my notes in order months ago, it would be premature to attempt an exhaustive treatment of the subject. It is generally recognised that the study of Assyrian, Babylonian, and Akkadian will have in time a very important influence in modifying existing views as to Hebrew, and as to the Old Testament, and it seems to me that part of the inquiry will be into the names of the Canaanite tribes and of their towns, which have no Semitic derivation. I will here briefly point out a few of the more striking results of the researches already made.

Ham.—In Hebrew, "hot," or "black," has been compared with Khammu, a name of Anu, the Akkadian Anna (or Ana), the heaven god.

Cush.—The son of Ham; in Hebrew, "dark" has been connected with the name of the Cossoei, or Kassî, an Altaic tribe. In Akkadian, *Kus*, or *Kusu*, also means "shadow," or "dark." *Cusu* was one of the fourteen Babylonian gods.

Towns of Nimrod.—These appear in several cases to have Altaic names, Babylon, or Babilam, Mr. Pinches believes to be non-Semitic (Babylonian Record, No. 4, p. 54.) Erech is probably Eri-ek, or Ur-uk, "great city." Akkad is the word whence the Akkadians or "mountaineers" were named. Shinar Lenormant would connect with the Sumeri, or "river dwellers" (though some hold this word to be Semitic). Calneh is rendered Kal-anna ("fortress of Anu") by Professor Sayce, or may be simply Kal-na, "high fortress." The name of Nineveh also is possibly Altaic.

Philistines.—Hitzig believed these people to be Pelasgic, in which case they would apparently be Altaic, which may agree with their being uncircumcised. The root, *Palas*, with the formant of agency, *ik*, or with the Semitic plural, gives us Pelas-ik and Pelesh-im. Pal in Akkadian means a "sword," and also "a chief," and the *is* or *sa*, is a personal suffix.

The towns in the Philistine country, Ascalon, Ekron, Gath, Ashdod, Gaza, have not always a good Semitic derivation, especially Ascalon. Saph and Goliah are also Philistine names not translated. Saph may be connected with the name Sap-ak for a Susian deity, and (as noted by Rev. C. J. Ball) with Sap-lel, the Hittite chief. Ishbibenob is another curious Philistine name. Goliah may be connected with Gal, or perhaps Gal lu,

"great man," in Akkadian. Akish and Maoch, kings of Gath, have no Semitic derivation, and the termination in *och* or *uk* suggests an Altaic origin, while Ak in Akish may mean "king."

Phœnicia.—While the Phœnician race of historical times was certainly Semitic, there is reason to suppose that a non-Semitic population also inhabited Phœnicia. Many of the Phœnician deities mentioned on the monuments (in the Corpus of Semitic Inscriptions, whence I have extracted a list) have no evident Semitic derivation. Tammuz, Ashtoreth, and Nergal, worshipped in Phœnicia, were Akkadian deities originally. Tzid, Baal Sillek, Bod, Anath, Tanith, Melcarth, Abset, all present difficulties as Semitic words. Chemosh, who seems to have been worshipped in other countries besides Moab, may also have been non-Semitic. On a well-known seal his name appears as כמשי, and has been very generally recognised in the name Carchemish (the Hittite capital), Kar in Akkadian meaning "fortress."

Hittites.¹—It has been said that the Bible and the monuments are not in accord, the former making the Hittites Semitic, but the latter non-Semitic. It is certain that Hittites with Semitic names are mentioned in the Bible, but it is worthy of note that the Hittites of Hebron in Abraham's time appear to have had non-Semitic names. Mamre and Aner have no good or recognised Semitic derivation. Anak is rendered "long necked," and Ephron "belonging to a calf," which are renderings hardly superior to the attempts of the worthy Cruden. Now Anak is a well-known Akkadian sound; An-ak, "great god," or "chief-king," a name of the god Nebo; and from Anak the Anakim (who were perhaps the Anaukas of the Egyptian monuments) were named. On the other hand, when we find Esau's Hittite wives with Semitic names we must not forget that they were descended from an earlier alliance of Ishmael with the Hittites, and were thus apparently of a mixed stock—the same mixed stock which existed contemporaneously in Babylonia—Arab Tatar, or Semitic Turanian.

Hivites.—The Khuim, or Hivites, may perhaps be connected with the Kui, a tribe mentioned on cuneiform monuments. Khu and Ku not only in Akkadian, but also in various Finnic dialects, signify "man" and "high."

Esau.—Esau's own name has been connected with the Akkadian Usu by Mr. Tomkins. Usu signifies originally "red" (Us, "blood," Usu, "sunset"), and thus seems to be the Altaic name of which the Semitic form was Edom, or "red"—Esau's other name.

Toi.—The King of Hamath in David's time has a name rendered by Hebraists "wandering," a very improbable derivation for a royal name.

¹ As regards Hittite pigtails: the Chinese pigtail and "peach," or partial shaving, is not an ancient Chinese custom. It came in with the Tatars from the West, being an early Tatar fashion. It is among the Manchu Tatars that the nearest approach in grammatical structure to the Akkadian has been recognised by Lenormant.

In Altaic languages *Ta* means "powerful," or "noble." In Hittite royal lists we find *Ta-Tar* and *To-Tar* as kings.

Girgashite, a word apparently non-Semitic, may be connected with the word *Kerek* for "fortress," which occurs in various Altaic languages, and with *Kur-ak*, "mountain," also an extant Altaic word.

Sinite, "the inhabitant of Sin" (סין), recalls the name *Sinai*, and the desert *Sin*, or *Zin* (צין or צין), which names have no good Semitic derivation. I would suggest a connection with the Akkadian *Zin*, "desert." In this case the name *Sinai* is the non-Semitic word for which *Horeb* ("dry," or "desert") is the Semitic equivalent, and *Horeb* was the other name of *Sinai*. It is worthy of notice that the Hittites are not the only Canaanite people mentioned on the monuments. The Amorites (*Amaur*), and perhaps the Hivites (*Kui*), possibly also the Zemarites (*Samalli* of the cuneiform texts), may be added.

Rephaim, a word used for giants, and also for ghosts, is made equivalent to *Nephilim*, which Lenormant has shewn to mean "giants," as a Semitic word. The word, though with a Semitic plural, may perhaps be connected with the Akkadian *Rip*, a "warrior" or "hero."

Zamzummim.—This word is thought by some writers to be a clerical error for *Gamgummim*. This recalls the tribe of the *Gam-gami* mentioned in cuneiform texts, the original root, *Gam*, meaning to "bend," or "subdue."

Amalekites.—The name of this tribe also seems to be non-Semitic. Since the Semitic *K* and the Akkadian *G* are often equivalent, *Amalek* might mean *Amal-ge*, "dweller below," as the tribe inhabited the lower plateau of the Sinaitic peninsula under the Judean mountains. *Agag*, the Amalekite king, has a name also of non-Semitic appearance, perhaps derived from the root *ag*, "strong," in Tatar and other Altaic languages, as in the Akkadian *Agga*, "strong," and *ak*, "male," or "king." "Higher than *Agag*" in this case assumes a special meaning, viz., "higher than the high one" (cf. Num. xxiv, 7). *Agag* may have been an Amalekite dynastic name. *Amalek*, as a child of *Esau*, would be connected with the Hittites (see Gen. xxxvi, 12), but the tribe is also mentioned in connection with *Abraham's* times (Gen. xiv, 7).

Avim (Deut. ii, 23), an early tribe whose name perhaps survives at *Beit Auwa*, east of *Philistia*, may perhaps be the same as the *Amu* of Egyptian monuments, since the א and מ are hardly distinguishable in early times. *Balaam* belonged to the *Beni Amu* (Num. xxii, 5; cf. Deut. xxiii, 4), on the *Euphrates* at *Pethor*. The translation of *Balaam's* name "devourer") as a Semitic word seems hardly satisfactory.

Og (Deut. iii, 11) was a giant, and his name may be compared with the Altaic *ug* or *uk*, meaning "big."

Sirion, the Sidonian name of *Hermon*, may also be compared with *Sorakte*, "snowy mountain" in Etruscan, the Altaic root *Sir* meaning to "shine" or to be "white."

Araunah or *Ornan*, the Jebusite king, might be conjectured to mean *Eri-unu* or *Ur-nun*, both meaning "chief of the city." The two forms have thus the same signification.

Gog and *Magog* suggest the Altaic root, meaning "fierce" or "mighty," found in Tatar languages. In this case Ma-gug means simply "land of Gog."

Tubal and *Meshech* have been identified with the Tuplai and Muscai of the cuneiform monuments. Meshech may perhaps be derived from *Mas-ak*, "great warrior," as in Akkadian.

Patriarchal names.—Lenormant some time since connected Seth with the deity Set. Lamech and Enoch have no very certain Semitic etymology, but might in Akkadian be rendered *Lam-ak* and *Enu-uk*, "great hero" and "great lord." Some double names also may be so explained (as Esau and Sinai above noted—in Hebrew Edom and Horeb), and the forms Sarai and Sarah might thus be explained, as Sar ("prince") is both Semitic and also Akkadian. The influence of the Altaic languages on that of the Semitic race in Babylonia is very generally recognised, and a good many Altaic words in the Bible are already admitted by general consent, of which a list may be convenient.

Old Testament.	Altaic.	Meaning.
Accad (country)	Akkad.. ..	"Highland."
Arioch (king)	Eri-Aku	"Moon worshipper."
Babylon (city)	Babilam	
Calneh (city)	Kal-na.. ..	"High fortress."
Haran (country)	Kharran	"Road" or "height."
Chedorlaomer (king) ..	Kudur-Lagamar ..	"Worships Lagamar."
Erech (city)	Ur-uk	"Great city."
Magog (country)	Ma-gug	"Land of Gog."
Media (country)	Ma-de.. ..	"Inner land."?
Moloch (Deity)	Mul-ge	"Lord beneath."
Shinar (land)	Su-meri ?	"River people."
Tammuz (Deity)	Tam-zi	"Sun spirit."
Tartak (Deity)	Tar-tak	"Lord of the stone."
Tidal (Thargal) King ..	Tar-gal	"Great chief."
Ur (city)	Ur	"Foundation."

The study of the Canaanites on these principles will lead us perhaps to a better understanding of the earlier books of the Bible. It not only shows that there is no discordance between the Old Testament and the monuments as to the original stock whence the Canaanites were derived, but it also serves to explain in a very simple and natural manner the reasons for the antagonism between the Hebrews and the Canaanites. In race, in language, in customs, in religion, the Canaanite and the Hebrew race were opposed.

At the same time it is certain, from monumental sources, that there was a large Semitic population in Palestine at the time of the conquest, and we should expect this from the Old Testament account, since the children of Lot, of Ishmael, and of Keturah were spread abroad,

as well as the half-bred descendants of Esau. It is clear, from the monuments and from the account of Abraham's transactions with the Hittites of Hebron, that the mixed population of Canaan was in an advanced state of civilisation. There were cities and landowners, traders, architects, and metallurgists in Canaan at a time when the Hebrews were yet nomadic, and the Hittites, long before Joshua, almost equalled the Egyptians in culture and power. In later times the word Canaanite appears to have been thought equivalent to merchant (Job. xli, 6 ; Prov. xxxi, 24). The importance of the great Altaic stock, of which the Canaanites were a branch, is becoming more and more evident. There seems to be reason to suppose that Altaic tribes reached Egypt and left their mark on the Egyptian language. Thus the Philistines in the Bible are said to have been of Egyptian origin, and, on the other hand, appear to have been Pelasgic or Altaic. The same stock existed in Italy as Etruscans, in Spain as Iberians. The Siculians, Ligurians, Aquitainians, and Silures, belong to the same stock, as do the early tribes of Asia Minor. In Europe the Aryans drove out or absorbed these early Turanian tribes, and in Western Asia the Babylonians, Assyrians, Phoenicians, and Hebrews, partly exterminated, partly absorbed, the Altaic tribes known as Akkadians, Sumerians, Kassî, Hittites, &c. Yet, to the early civilisation of these very tribes they themselves owed in great measure their own advance in literature, in trade, in metallurgy, and in many other elements of primitive civilisation.

C. R. CONDER.

THE HITTITE LANGUAGE.

DURING the last quarter my attention—as far as professional work leaves me time—has been directed to the one objection to the proposed identification of the Hittite language as Altaic, which can be considered important. It has been urged that the sounds attaching to cuneiform emblems do not represent Akkadian words, but only syllables forming part of Akkadian words, just as in Egypt the syllables were derived from words not monosyllabic. That, for instance, the syllable *Ma* attaching to the emblem for “country,” is not to be taken as a word, but as a syllable derived from the word *Mat*. Lenormant held a different opinion. He regarded *Mat* as a contraction of *Mata*, a derived word composed of the old *Ma*, “country,” + *ta*, a suffix, and it is certain that the root *Ma* forms the word for country in many Altaic languages.

In order to ascertain how far it is possible to make sure of the pronunciation of the ideograms and of the existence of monosyllabic words in Akkadian, it appears to me that the only safe way is to carry on that comparison with living languages on which Lenormant relied, and which Dr. Isaac Taylor successfully applied to the case of Etruscan. For this