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GEN 10:13-14: AN AUTHENTIC HEBREW TRADITION
CONCERNING THE ORIGIN OF THE PHILISTINES

The Masoretic Text of Gen 10:13-14 (cf. 1 Chr 1:11-12) reads as follows:

*ûmišrayim yālad 'et-lûdîm wě'et-'ānāmîm
wě'et-lěhābîm wě'et-naptûhîm: wě'et-patrûsîm
wě'et-kaslûhîm 'ăšer yāš'û miššām pēlišîm
wě'et-kaptôrîm*

¹³And Mizraim begot the Ludim, the Anamim, the
Lehabim, the Naphtuhim, ¹⁴the Pathrusim, the
Casluhim – whence the Philistines came forth –
and the Caphtorim.

Older translations of the Bible such as *KJV*, *RSV*, and *JPSV* rendered these verses similarly, sticking to their general policy of not deviating from MT.

More recent English versions have not followed this practice, and thus we note a change regarding Gen 10:14:

NAB ... the Pathrusim, the Casluhim, and the Caphtorim from whom the Philistines sprang.

NEB ... Pathrusites, Casluhites, and the Caphtorites, from whom the Philistines were descended.

NJPSV ... the Pathrusim, the Casluhim, and the Caphtorim, whence the Philistines came forth.

In each case, the words *wě'et-kaptôrîm* have been transposed from the end of the sentence to a position preceding the phrase *'ăšer yāš'û miššām pēlišîm*. The *NAB* and *NEB* textual margins give no indication of this transposition, but the published notes of each version explain the rationale for it.¹ The *NJPSV* margin states "*I.e., the Cretans; moved up for the sake of clarity; cf. Amos 9.6 [sic]*", with the published notes giving further clarification.²

¹*Textual Notes on the New American Bible* (Paterson, N.J.: St. Anthony's Guild, n.d.) 328; and L.H. Brockington, ed., *The Hebrew Text of the Old Testament: The Readings Adopted by the Translators of the New English Bible* (Oxford and Cambridge: Oxford University Press and Cambridge University Press, 1973) 2.

²H.M. Orlinsky, ed., *Notes on the New Translation of the Torah* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1970) 84.

The rationale for this change is obvious: most prominently in Amos 9:7 but also in Jer 47:4 and probably in Deut 2:23, the Biblical writers refer to the emigration of the Philistines from Caphtor, i.e., Crete.³ Modern scholars, who have identified the Philistines as a segment of the Sea Peoples (based mainly on hieroglyphic *prst*), have accepted this Israelite tradition as correct. Accordingly, there has been a trend to rearrange Gen 10:14 so that it echoes the Philistine origins on Crete. This is reflected in the above translations from recent years,⁴ as well as in many commentaries on Genesis.⁵

While such a rearrangement of MT may at first glance seem easily justifiable and indeed not very radical, closer investigation of the text deems it unnecessary. It is not that I reject the identification of Caphtor with Crete nor that I do not attest to the veracity of the Israelite tradition recorded in Amos 9:7. The problem is that modern scholars have rearranged the text not so much because of our basic knowledge about the Caphtorim, but because of our total lack of knowledge about the Casluhim.⁶ If it could be shown that there is a connection between the Philistines and the Casluhim – as MT implies – then the transposition become gratuitous.

Who, then, were the Casluhim? To answer this question, we need first look at the context of vv. 13-14. All of the nations listed are in some way⁷

³The consensus of Egyptologists, Assyriologists, Bible scholars, and Cretan scholars is to identify Egyptian *kftyw* (Keftiu), Akkadian *kaptaru*, and Hebrew *kaptôr* with Crete; see J. Vercoutter, *L'Égypte et le monde égéen préhellénique* (Cairo: Impr. de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 1956) *passim*; CAD 8 (K) (1971) 191; W.F. Albright, *From the Stone Age to Christianity* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1957) 216; and R.W. Hutchinson, *Prehistoric Crete* (Hammondsworth; Penguin, 1962) 106-111. Attempts to locate Caphtor elsewhere (see R. de Vaux, *The Early History of Israel* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1978) 504-507 for bibliography, to which add J. Strange, *Caphtor/Keftiu: A New Investigation* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1980) are not convincing. The terms *kftyw/kaptaru/kaptôr* may occasionally have referred to the Aegean area in general, but certainly Crete is the locale usually intended.

⁴See also *JB*; *TEV*; *The Bible: An American Translation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948); *La Sainte Bible* (Paris: Les éditions du Cerf, 1956); *Die Bibel* (Freiburg: Herder, 1966).

⁵G. von Rad, *Genesis* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961) 143; E.A. Speiser, *Genesis* (AB; Garden City: Doubleday, 1964) 64, 68; R. Davidson, *Genesis 1-11* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973) 103; and B. Vawter, *On Genesis* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1977) 147. Already in earlier commentaries one can find the suggestion to transpose “and the Caphtorium”, e.g., S.R. Driver, *The Book of Genesis* (London: Methuen, 1906) 124. The transposition is also accepted by J.C. Greenfield, “Caphtor”, *IDB* I, 534; de Vaux, *The Early History of Israel*, 504; Strange, *Caphtor/Keftiu: A New Investigation*, 35; and *BHS*, ad loc.

⁶A notable exception is U. Cassuto, *From Noah to Abraham* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1964) 207, who states: “textual harmonization by force – by arbitrary change of wording – fails of its purpose.”

⁷Geographic, linguistic, political, ethnographic, historical, etc. The issues concerning the composition and structure of Genesis 10 are well known and will not be discussed here in any detail.

connected with Egypt. Of the first three names, only the Lehabim may be identified with any certainty; they are the Libyans, Egypt's neighbor to the west.⁸ Various theories have been proposed to identify the Ludim and the Anamim, but at the present state of our knowledge we must conclude that we simply do not know who they are.

The three names which follow have in common a most striking vocalic similarity: *CaCCûCîm* (C = consonant), as if they in some way form a triad. This is not to suggest that the Masoretic vocalization must be original, rather that a tradition must have existed which linked the three in some manner. Of these three names the most easily recognizable is *pat-rûsîm* which must be a Hebraization of the Egyptian *p3 t3 rsy* "the south land", i.e., Upper Egypt.⁹ We may similarly parse *naptûhîm* as a Hebraization of the Egyptian *n3 pth* "those of Ptah", i.e., the Memphites or Middle Egyptians because Ptah was the local god of Memphis. As far as I am able to tell, the only 20th Century commentator to suggest this analysis of *naptûhîm* was Benno Jacob, though even he listed it as but one of several possibilities.¹⁰ The first savants to propose *naptûhîm* = Memphites were apparently August Knobel and G.M. Ebers, both cited by Jacob, but unfortunately their works are unavailable to me.¹¹

The third member of our triad is *kaslûhîm* and even though all attempts to identify them have failed, the analysis of its two partners presented above should solve the riddle. If the Pathrusim are the Upper Egyptians as all agree and the Naphtuhim are the Middle Egyptians as I have suggested, then the Casluhim must be the Lower Egyptians, i.e.,

⁸Driver, *Genesis*, 123; J. Skinner, *Genesis* (ICC; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910) 213; B. Jacob, *Das erste Buch der Tora: Genesis* (Berlin: Schocken, 1934) 285; Vawter, *On Genesis*, 146; and A.H. Gardiner, *Ancient Egyptian Onomastica* (2 vols; London: Oxford University Press) I. 121*.

⁹Driver, *Genesis*, 124; Skinner, *Genesis*, 213; Jacob, *Genesis*, 285; and Speiser, *Genesis*, 68. Note that the Egyptian demonstrative or definite article *p3* comes before the noun in conformity with Egyptian syntax; see A.H. Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar* (Oxford: Griffith Institute, 1957) 87; and J. Černý and S.I. Groll, *A Late Egyptian Grammar* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1978) 46. The same holds for the following discussion re *naptûhîm*.

¹⁰Jacob, *Genesis*, 285.

¹¹According to Jacob, Knobel's analysis may be found in A. Dillmann, *Die Genesis* (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1892), plus, I assume, in Knobel's own work, *Die Genesis* (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1860), Jacob does not mention which of Ebers' works to consult though I assume it is his *Aegypten und die Bücher Mose's* (Leipzig: W. Engelmann, 1868). W. Spiegelberg, "NPTHYM (Gen X, 13)", *OLZ* 9 (1906) 276-279, identified the Naphtuhim with Lower Egypt, and his theory is accepted by Strange, *Caphtor/Keftiu: A New Investigation*, 36. The total picture presented in the present article makes Spiegelberg's suggestion unlikely.

those of the Delta.¹² Unfortunately, no Egyptian term can secure our identification of the Casluhim and Lower Egypt,¹³ but this should not detain us if there is still more evidence to support our conclusion (see below). The Biblical text therefore reads that the Philistines came from the Nile Delta. Coupled with the tradition recorded in Amos 9:7, we may assume two stages of Philistine migration, first from the Delta to Crete and then from Crete to Israel.

The evidence I have in mind to support this conclusion is mostly archaeological. The greatest of all Cretan archaeologists was Sir Arthur Evans whose *The Palace of Minos at Knossos* remains the basic work for all aspects of the Cretan Bronze Age. One of Evans' main conclusions was that the flowering of Minoan high civilization resulted from a migration from Egypt to Crete. It is worth quoting him directly:

... the indebtedness of Crete to late pre-dynastic and proto-dynastic Egypt is now substantiated by a cumulative mass of evidence.¹⁴

In every way Cretan culture shows Egyptian influence. A complete list of such influences would be impossible but here may be mentioned artwork, pottery, figurines, burial customs, dress, hair-styles, the double axe, bows and arrows, shields, glass, faience, metalwork, agriculture, seals, writing, toilet articles, and architecture. To discuss but one item in some detail, the houses of the Minoans were built without permanent hearths and with plenty of exposure to the outdoors. This points to a southern, i.e., Egyptian, origin of the Minoans. These palace builders of Bronze Age Crete were accustomed to the scorching heat of Egypt and not to the much colder and more severe winters of their new home.¹⁵

More important than simply presenting evidence for a migration from Egypt to Crete is the realization from which part of Egypt these settlers came. A glance at the map will naturally suggest Lower Egypt first, and

¹²Obviously, this threefold division of Egypt does not accord with the usual division of the Nile Valley into Upper Egypt and Lower Egypt. But Memphis is at the junction of the two lands and thus at times may have been considered a part of both or better still belonging to neither. If our interpretation of Pathrusim, Naphtuhim, and Casluhim is correct, then Memphis (Naphtuhim) would be the focal point between Upper Egypt (Pathrusim) and Lower Egypt (Casluhim). The paramount role which Memphis played throughout Egyptian history (beginning with Menes himself) probably explains why it occurs first among the three in MT.

¹³The various proposals, none of which has met with general acceptance, are summarized by Strange, *Caphtor/Kefitu: A New Investigation* 36, n. 145.

¹⁴A. Evans, *The Palace of Minos at Knossos* (4 vols.; London: Macmillan, 1921-1936) II. 28.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, II. 21

again Evans' finds confirm this supposition. A number of artifacts excavated on Crete bear particular resemblance to artifacts from the Nile Delta. This led Evans to refine his theory of the Egyptian origin of the Minoan civilization. He concluded:

The evidence as a whole seems to be best explained by the suggestion already made that some settlement in the Island of the earlier Delta people had actually taken place, perhaps as a result of Mena's Conquest. It may have been reinforced from time to time by later immigration.¹⁶

The reader who wishes to delve further into this question may not only consult Evans' own massive work but also more recent and less imposing volumes.¹⁷

The archaeological evidence here reviewed goes a long way to defending the tradition recorded in MT that the original homeland of the Philistines before Crete was Egypt.¹⁸ We still do not have a sound etymology for Casluhim – and none will be offered here – but its identification with Lower Egypt seems most probable if not absolutely certain.

We may even go further, for MT states not only that the Philistines originate in Lower Egypt, but that the Caphtorim in general came from Egypt. The same evidence which has been cited to demonstrate the Philistines' origin in Egypt may also be invoked to show the authenticity of the tradition concerning the Caphtorim. That is to say, whether we speak in the specific terms of the Philistines coming from the Casluhim or in the general terms of the Caphtorim coming from Mizraim, Gen 10:13-14 is wholly borne out by Cretan archaeology. There is no need to go into the various theories surrounding the Philistines, especially as they relate to the Caphtorim. Suffice it to say that Crete was a cosmopolitan place with a variety of people inhabiting it, a fact mentioned by Homer in *Od.* 19.172-179. As the Bible uses the terms, "Caphtorim" apparently refers to the general Cretan population and "Philistines" seems to refer to a segment of that population which made its way to Israel. Whether we should

¹⁶Ibid, II. 45.

¹⁷J.D.S. Pendlebury, *Palace of Minos: Knossos* (London: Max Parrish, 1954); W.S. Smith, *Interconnections in the Ancient Near East* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965) 131-134; F. Schachermeyr, *Ägäis und Orient* (Vienna: Hermann Böhlau Nachf., 1967) 30-64; and S. Hood, *The Minoans* (New York: Praeger, 1971). Especially helpful is Schachermeyr's "Chronologische Übersicht" on pages 62-64.

¹⁸Based on 1) differences between the armaments of the Minoans known to us from Cretan excavations and the armaments of the *prst* or Philistines known to us from Egyptian art, and 2) evidence deduced from the Phaistos Disk, Gardiner (*Ancient Egyptian Onomastica*, I, 200*-205* especially 204*) concluded that it is "certain that Crete was not the original home of the Philistines." He believed it was impossible to determine where the original home was, but the evidence I am citing shows it to have been the Delta of Egypt.

identify either or both of them with the Minoans is a moot point. The term “Minoan” after all is an artificial invention of Sir Arthur’s and is used out of convenience; no such ethnonym is attested in all of ancient literature.

There is still more evidence relevant to the connection between Crete and Egypt. If Evans’ conclusion is correct, then we should not be surprised to find Egyptian names in the onomasticon of Crete. C.H. Gordon has noted the “Egyptian names, especially those ending in Re, are common” in the Linear A texts.¹⁹ Here may be cited *ne-tu-ri-re* = *ntry r’* “Re is divine”, *ra-na-re* = *rn r’* “name of Re”, *a-ra-na-re* = ‘3 *rn r’* “great is the name of Re”, and *a-re* = ‘3 *r’* “Re is great”.²⁰ Such names corroborate the archaeological evidence and bolster the veracity of the Israelite tradition recorded in Gen 10:13-14.

Finally, we may present what is perhaps the best evidence for defending the MT of Gen 10:13-14, namely, the origins of the Ugaritic god of arts and crafts Kothar-wa-Hasis, as reflected in the Ras Shamra texts. I refer most of all to the phrase concerning this deity in *UT*nt: VI:14-16:²¹

kptr ksu t̄bth
ḥkpt arš nhlth
 Kptr is the throne on which he sits
 Hkpt is the land of his inheritance

The first place, *kptr*, is to be equated with *kftyw/kaptaru/kaptôr*, i.e., Crete. The second place, *ḥkpt*,²² is to be analyzed as Egyptian *ḥwt k3 pth* literally “house of the soul of Ptah” = “temple of Ptah”, originally re-

¹⁹C.H. Gordon, *Evidence for the Minoan Language* (Ventnor, N.J.: Ventnor, 1966) 31.

²⁰Ibid, 31, 38-39; and C.H. Gordon, “*Mi-ru-su-ra-re* (HT 117: a:4-5)”, *Studi Micenei ed Egeo-Anatolici* 11 (1970) 58-59.

²¹The same words occur elsewhere in the Baal and Anat cycle but in each case they must be partially restored. See also *UT* 2 Aqht V:30-31, where Kothar-wa-Hasis is referred to as *b’lhkpt* “lord(s) of Hkpt”.

²²In *UT* ‘nt:VI:13, the variant *ḥqkpt* occurs.

ferring to Memphis in particular but later expanded by non-Egyptians to mean the entire Nile Valley.²³

However we are to interpret this phrase, it once again points to a relationship between Crete and Egypt, this time in a literary text. The Cretan locale of Kothar-wa-Hasis is not surprising since his Greek counterpart, Hephaistos, is also associated with that island.²⁴ But the climactic parallelism shows that before dwelling on Crete, Kothar-wa-Hasis came from Egypt; implicit in the expression *arš nhlth* is the notion of the original homeland. No doubt the Ugariteans recognized the superiority, originality, and provenance of Egypt in the world of arts and crafts; thus their god of arts and crafts originates there. Furthermore, our word for Egypt in the above passage is not the usual one (*mšrm*), rather it contains allusion to Ptah, the Egyptian god of arts and crafts.

We may even be bold enough to suggest that the path of Kothar-wa-Hasis from Egypt to Crete to Ugarit is also indicative of the travels of man. Ancient myths often depict human actions, so that a movement through the East Mediterranean such as Kothar-wa-Hasis' may reflect the same migrations among men. The general picture which emerges is one of common migrations from Egypt to the Aegean to the Levant during the Bronze Age. This holds for the Philistines of the Bible, for the folk implied in Ugaritic lore, and presumably for various other peoples.²⁵

²³For the native Egyptian form, see R.O. Faulkner, *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian* (Oxford: Griffith Institute, 1976) 166; and Gardiner, *Ancient Egyptian Onomastica*, II, 124*. In the Amarna letters the form appears as *Hikuptah* = Ugaritic *hkpt*. The Amarna and Ugaritic transcriptions of the Egyptian form reveal that the first *t* was lost in actual pronunciation; cf. Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*, 34, n. 1a; and Černý and Groll, *A Late Egyptian Grammar*, 6. Similarly, the Ugaritic orthography reflects the loss of the final laryngeal, a phenomenon paralleled in Hebrew *pôtipar* where the final element is Egyptian *r*. The first to equate *hkpt* with Egypt was W.F. Albright, "Recent Progress in North-Canaanite Research", *BASOR* 70 (1938) 22. See also H.L. Ginsberg, "Two Religious Borrowings in Ugaritic Literature (Conclusion), II, The Egyptian God Ptah in Ugaritic Mythology", *Orientalia* 9 (1940) 39-44; T.H. Gaster, *Thespis* (New York: Henry Schuman, 1950) 155-156, 281; J.C. de Moor, *The Seasonal Pattern in the Ugaritic Myth of Ba'lu* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Verlag Butzon & Bercker Kevelaer, 1971) 51, n. 52; and most importantly O. Eissfeldt, "Ugaritisches", *ZDMG* 98 (1944) 84-94. In past years, Gordon has opposed the identification of *hkpt* and Memphis (see his "The Glyptic Art of Nuzu", *JNES* 7 [1943] 263; and *UT*, 396), but recently he has concurred with the standard opinion (personal communication); cf. C.H. Gordon, *Ugaritic and Minoan Crete* [New York: Norton, 1966] 58, n. 24, 125, n. 83). In passing it may be noted that Greek *Aiguptos* whence English "Egypt" is also derived from *hwt k3 pth*.

²⁴Cf. C.H. Gordon, *The Common Background of Greek and Hebrew Civilizations* (New York: Norton, 1966) 236.

²⁵We may posit the people alternatively known as Danaoi in Greek and Dan in Hebrew as another such group. Greek tradition holds that their eponymous ancestor Danaos hailed from Egypt. From the Aegean they migrated to Israel where they were incorporated into the tribal league as Dan. For the first part of this migration, see most conveniently E. Hamilton, *Mythology* (Boston: Little Brown, 1940) 281. For the second part of this migration, see my contribution (section 4) to Y. Arbeitman and G. Rendsburg, "Adana Revisited: 30 Years Later", *ArOr* 49 (1981), 150-152 and the bibliography cited there.

The true character of the East Mediterranean in the 2nd Millennium B.C. and earlier is only beginning to be realized. Peoples from all of its shores (Græce, Egypt, Anatolia, Israel, etc.) were often on the move,²⁶ with Crete its natural focal point. The Hebrews were a part of that world and their tradition concerning the origin of the Philistines need not be questioned. Evidence of three types – archaeological, onomastic, and literary – demands our retaining the received text of Gen 10:13-14.²⁷

Additional Note

Although I consider the above analysis the preferred approach, it is worth noting another path which yields the same conclusion regarding the veracity of Gen 10:13-14. As is well known, the Philistines arrived on the coast of Canaan only after being repelled from Egypt. They had attacked Lower Egypt during the 8th year of Rameses III (c. 1190 B.C.E.), were defeated by this Pharaoh's forces, and then migrated to the area between Gaza and Ashdod. Assuming our identification of Casluhim with Lower Egypt to be sound, Gen 10:13-14 might be referring to these events. The Philistines had indeed come forth from the Casluhim, in the sense that this was their military zone before arriving in Canaan. Whether we accept my first analysis, presented in detail above, or this second analysis, briefly outlined here, our conclusion remains the same: Gen 10:13-14 is an authentic Hebrew tradition concerning the origin of the Philistines and there is no need to emend the Masoretic Text.

²⁶Thus the migrations could go the other way too, i.e. from the Levant to Crete, as implied by the Homeric tradition which recognizes the Phoenix as the grandfather of Minos (*Il.* 14.321-322).

²⁷This conclusion was previously noted by David Neiman (*apud* Gordon, *Ugarit and Minoan Crete*, 29-30) and incorporated by Gordon into his general discussion of the Minoans (*Ibid.*, 29-39). My contribution offered here is a detailed expansion of Neiman's and Gordon's statements, and received its impetus most of all from the Bible translations which have appeared in recent years.