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THE PHILISTINES IN CONTEXT: THE TRANSMISSION AND APPROPRIATION OF MYCENAEAN-STYLE CULTURE IN THE EAST AEGEAN, SOUTHEASTERN COASTAL ANATOLIA, AND THE LEVANT

The complexity and extent of regional interconnections between the Aegean and the Levant during the final centuries of the Bronze Age are well documented in both the textual and archaeological record (e.g., Cline 1994; Cline and Harris-Cline 1998; Gitin, Mazar and Stern 1998; Karageorghis and Stamopolidis 1998; Stampolidis and Karageorghis 2003; Laffineur and Greco 2005). The appearance of Mycenaean-inspired material culture in the east reaches its peak during the late 13th and 12th centuries BCE, coinciding with the crisis and eventual demise of this Age of Internationalism at the end of the Late Bronze Age. Associated with the widespread Aegeanization of Cyprus and the Levant during this period are several peoples mentioned in New Kingdom Egyptian texts whom modern scholars collectively refer to as the "Sea Peoples." The most notorious of these peoples are the biblical Philistines long associated with the appearance of Aegean-inspired material culture at several 12th century urban centers located in the southern coastal plain of Canaan.

At the heart of the ensuing scholarly debate is the identity, origin and wider historical implications of the transmission and diffusion of 14th–12th century BCE Mycenaean-style material culture from its mainland Greek production centers eastward. A majority of scholars continue to endorse the view that the appearance of Mycenaean-style artifacts in the eastern Aegean, Cyprus, and the Levant commenced with trade relations with mainland Greece in the 14th–mid-13th centuries, eventually leading to Mycenaean colonization and migration at numerous sites in the eastern Mediterranean. The sudden appearance of Mycenaean-inspired material culture in significant quantities at key sites corresponding to the Philistine Pentapolis cities (cf. Joshua 13:2–3) is seen as the culmination of this process of transmission and appropriation of Aegean culture in the east, founded literally upon the ruins of the preceding Late Bronze Age. However, does the spread of locally produced Mycenaean-style material culture, especially pottery, actually reflect the movement of peoples from the west Aegean to the east? Or, does it attest to a more complex process of east-west interaction that resulted in the transmission of Mycenaean-inspired practices and ideologies and in the creation of regionally defined "Aegeanized" cultures?

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Following classical and biblical traditions, many scholars postulate that the Philistines are to be identified as a migrating people from the west Aegean (e.g., Dothan 1995; 1998; 2000; 2003; Stager 1991: 36–37; 1995: 337; Mazar 1988; Betancourt 2000; Yasur-Landau 2003a and 2003b).[1] This population movement gained intensity toward the end of the Late Bronze Age, coinciding with the crisis and ultimate demise of the Mycenaean palace system that struck the region during the final decades of the 13th and early 12th centuries BCE. I contend that this "Mycenaeanization" of the east Aegean and select regions of the Levant, including sites along the southern coastal plain of Canaan, was the consequence of a complex and nuanced process of long-term cultural interaction between lands surrounding the east Aegean and the Levant. Over the course of the 14th and 13th centuries BCE, continuous contact between the Mycenaean world and the east Aegean and Cyprus produced a fusion of west Aegean elements and indigenous customs. The result was the formation of regionally defined "Aegean-style" cultures that selectively adopted and incorporated Mycenaean-inspired traditions to suit local tastes and indigenous traditions.

In the case of the Philistines, therefore, the appearance of a locally produced Aegean-style material culture was not the result of large scale emigration from mainland Greece or western Aegean islands triggered by disaster. Rather, in my view, the Philistine presence along the southern coastal plain of Israel was the culmination of an intentional colonization by prosperous and enterprising migrating groups from the east who had appropriated Mycenaean-inspired cultural styles to varying degrees over the course of the 13th and early 12th centuries. These newcomers to Canaan's southern coastal plain were closely connected to an "Aegeanized" and prosperous 12th century east, most likely Cyprus and/or Cilicia and parts of the eastern Aegean.

'Mycenaeanization' of the East during 14th–12th Centuries BCE: An Overview

To place the Philistine phenomenon in its larger regional context, in this section I will briefly discuss key sites and regions in the eastern periphery of the Mycenaean world and neighboring regions where noteworthy quantities of Mycenaean-style material culture have been discovered. The focus of this discussion will be the appearance of Mycenaean-style pottery, both imported and locally produced. These regions include the eastern Aegean islands bordering the western coast of Anatolia, coastal Anatolia, Cyprus, and the Levant. In my discussion, I will use the term Aegean-style or Aegeanizing when referring to those Mycenaean-style vessels which were produced in the East Aegean, Cyprus or Levant.

[1] For a "seaborne" migration, see Barako (2003), contra Yasur-Landau (2003a and 2003b), who supports a land-based migration. Mendenhall (1986: 541–42) proposes both a sea and land migration.

The East Aegean Islands

This region, defined by Mountjoy (1998) as a component of her "East Aegean–West Anatolian Interface,"[2] is key to our understanding of the transmission and diffusion of Mycenaean material culture. The most extensively investigated islands include Lemnos, Lesbos, Psara, and Chios in the northeast, and Rhodes and Kos in the southeast or Dodecanese. Based on the fragmentary archaeological evidence and the appearance of Mycenaean IIIA:2–IIIB pottery, some of which was apparently of local production, Privitera (2005: 234) has suggested that these islands served as "intermediary stations along the trade routes that linked the Greek mainland to Anatolia, Propontis and Thrace" (see also Cultraro 2005: 244, who notes that trade relations with mainland Greece were established as early as the Middle Bronze Age). Thus far, only small amounts of 12th century Mycenaean IIIC (hereafter Myc IIIC) pottery have been recovered (see Privitera 2005, for a recent summary).

The southeastern Aegean Dodecanese islands represent a case study of significant Mycenaean influence that appears together with Minoan, Cypriot, Anatolian and indigenous elements. Several sites on Rhodes and Kos were important centers during the Late Helladic period. Of special interest are the Late Helladic (hereafter LH) cemeteries in the region of Ialysos, on Rhodes (see summaries by Girella 2005 and Karantzali 2005 for relevant bibliography). Based on the burial customs in these cemeteries and their associated finds, Girella (2005) has identified three main cultural phases: LH I–II represents a period of Minoan settlement; LH IIB/IIIA: 1–IIIB is a period marked by Mycenaean presence with pronounced Cypriot and Anatolian influences; and the LH IIIC is characterized by the development of a new ideology and increased Levantine and Anatolian contacts.[3] In addition to the evidence from Ialysos, a more recently excavated 14th–12th century cemetery at Pylona, near Lindos on Rhodes, follows a similar pattern of "Mycenaeanization": imported Myc IIIA, followed by locally produced and imported Myc IIIB pottery and local Myc IIIC ceramic assemblages (Karantzali 2001). Based on the evidence excavated thus far on both the islands of Rhodes and Kos, there are no clear-cut signs of destruction or devastation during the course of the thirteenth century BCE (LH IIIB), such as occurred in the Argolid

[2] Mountjoy (1998: 33) defines the East Aegean–West Anatolian interface as "an area which forms an entity between the Mycenaean islands of the central Aegean and the Anatolian hinterland with Troy at its northern extremity and Rhodes at its southern end." According to her, the "Mycenaeanization" of this interface region is not due to colonists from the Greek mainland, but to an increased acculturation process during which "the local inhabitants of the east Aegean became absorbed into the Mycenaean culture adopting Mycenaean burial customs and pottery to produce a hybrid culture of their own" (Mountjoy 1998: 37).

[3] See also Karantzali (2005), who notes that the LH III material culture was not totally "Mycenaeanized", but rather reflects a combination of Minoan, Anatolian, Mycenaean and local traditions, and concludes that Ialysos served as a major trading center rather than a Mycenaean colony.

and elsewhere on the Greek mainland. The rich finds in the twelfth century LH IIIC cemeteries indicate that Dodecanese sites were continuously occupied throughout the LH IIIC period and witnessed a time of prosperity (e.g., Desborough 1964: 154–56; Benzi 1988: 262; Macdonald 1986; however, see also Mee 1982: 89–90, who claims that Ialysos was destroyed at the end of the LH IIIB).

Western Coastal Anatolia

Beginning in the north, the key site for our discussion is the extensively excavated site of Hisarlik, identified with the legendary city of Troy. During the most recent series of excavations at the site, Korfmann discovered a lower city that extended beyond the extensively excavated citadel, confirming Troy's position as a major regional capital that held a significant position in the trade networks of the Late Bronze Age.[4] Provenience studies of Myc IIIA and IIIB pottery from Troy have also revealed that already in the fourteenth century BCE Mycenaean-style pottery was being locally produced at Troy, strongly suggesting a gradual "Mycenaeanization" of aspects of the Late Bronze Age material culture of the northeastern Aegean (Mountjoy 1997; 1999; Mommsen, Hertel, and Mountjoy 2001; Pavúk 2005; see Becks 2003 for a recent summary of 13th and 12th century Troy). These results parallel those from provenience studies of Mycenaean-style pottery recovered from other sites in the eastern Aegean region (see below). Following the breakdown of the Mycenaean palace system, and the reduction in direct trade contacts with mainland Greece during the 13th – 12th centuries BCE, connections between the eastern Aegean as far north as Troy and the Levant, as evidenced by the appearance of imported grey Trojan ware, continued on Cyprus and at several sites in Canaan (Allen 1991; 1994; Killebrew 1996: pl. 8:1).

Continuing southward, important assemblages of Mycenaean-style material culture are well documented at numerous Late Bronze Age sites along the western Anatolian coast. Particularly noteworthy are the sites of Iasos, Miletus and Musgebi. For a majority of scholars, the appearance of noteworthy quantities of Mycenaean-style material culture was the result of mainland Greek settlers arriving in the region (e.g., Furumark 1950; Desborough 1964: 152–58; 161–63; Mee 1982; 1988; and most recently Niemeier 1998; 2005). Niemeier has gone so far as to propose "a zone of Mycenaean settlement to the south of the west coast of Asia Minor between the Halikarnassos/Bodrum peninsula to the south and Miletus to the north and on the offshore islands between Rhodes to the south and Kos, possibly also Samos to the north. At the different sites the portion of the natives living together with the Mycenaean overlords may have differed" (2005: 203). However, Mountjoy (1998: 37) has argued vigorously for a gradual process of acculturation by east Aegean populations, rather

[4] See the monograph series, *Studia Troica*, for annual reports of recent excavations. For a recent discussion of Late Bronze Age Troy, see Latacz (2004). For a critique and recent analysis of Korfmann's excavations at Troy and recent bibliography, see Easton et al. (2002).

than Greek colonization, resulting in a hybrid east Aegean Mycenaean culture (see also Benzi 2005: 206, regarding the process of Mycenaean acculturation at Iasos).

Cyprus

Strategically located, Late Bronze Age Cyprus served as a regional "middleman" connecting the eastern Mediterranean coastline and the Aegean. It was an increasingly influential player in the international relations of the eastern Mediterranean, especially during the 13th and 12th centuries BCE. The combination of rich copper resources and its ideal geographic position enabled the island to play a leading economic role during the Late Cypriot (hereafter LC) IIC and IIIA throughout the eastern Mediterranean.[5]

The presence of significant quantities of Mycenaean-style material culture on Cyprus during the LC IIC provides indisputable evidence that close relations existed between Mycenaean Greece and Cyprus during this period. This has led to the suggestion that small numbers of Mycenaean Greeks already inhabited Cyprus in the 14th and 13th centuries, perhaps at emporia in the harbor towns of eastern and southern Cyprus (e.g., Karageorghis 1982: 78; 1992: 137; for a comprehensive discussion of Mycenaean pottery on Cyprus, see van Wijngaarden 2002: 125–202). According to this view, following the destruction of LC IIC centers, migration from Greece increased during the ensuing LC IIIA. These disturbances are traditionally attributed to invasions by "Achaeans" or "Sea Peoples" (see Karageorghis 1982: 82–83; 1984; for the two-wave theory, see Karageorghis 1990; for a discussion of the role of the Sea Peoples on Cyprus, see Muhly 1984).

However, the archaeological evidence on Cyprus during the final decades of the thirteenth century is no longer as clear-cut as previously believed. Notions of widespread destruction at sites dated to the end of the LC IIC are increasingly questioned. Re-evaluation of the archaeological evidence from Enkomi, Hala Sultan Tekke, Kition, and the more recent excavations at Pyla-Kokkinokremos and Maa-Palaeokastro, for example, have revealed a more complex transition between the end of the LC IIC and the following LC IIIA. What is increasingly clear is that the end of the LC IIC was not uniform throughout the island: some sites were abandoned, some were continuously inhabited, and others were rebuilt. Several of the "hallmarks" of the Aegean-style Late Cypriot IIIA culture, including locally produced Mycenaean-style pottery, hearths, bathtubs, ashlar masonry, and other well-known features traditionally interpreted as representing the arrival of a new group of people, typically referred to as Achaean Mycenaean colonists, already appear in the LC IIC period, and often have local, Levantine or Anatolian antecedents.[6]

[5] Regarding the significance of bronze on Cyprus at the end of the Late Bronze Age, see Muhly (1996), Pickles and Peltenburg (1998), and Sherratt (2000).

[6] For a summary of the archaeological record regarding Mycenaean – Cypriot interactions during the Late Cypriot II, see Cadogan (2005). For a recent discussion of the LC IIC/IIIA transition, see Iacovou (forthcoming), and Steel (2004: 187–213)

Based on this evidence, Sherratt (1991: 191–95; 1992), one of the first scholars to challenge this interpretation, has suggested that the appearance of significant quantities of locally produced Myc IIIC-style pottery and its associated assemblages was the result of a more gradual adoption of Mycenaean-style material culture by a largely indigenous population. As traced by Antoniadou (2005), the widespread distribution pattern of imported Mycenaean wares (and later their local Aegean-style imitations) suggests that imports were "well integrated into the local systems of meaning and patterns of behaviors" (2005: 75). These observations tend to support a more graduate acceptance and integration of Mycenaean-style material culture by indigenous Cypriots, who eventually developed their own local tradition of Aegean-style wares and material culture that came to characterize LC IIIA assemblages. As explored below, these largely indigenous "Aegeanized" peoples in the east Aegean and Cyprus no doubt played a key role in the transmission of the Mycenaean-inspired Aegean-style material culture, technology and ideology that spread to select areas in Cilicia and the Levant during the 12th century BCE.

Cilicia

During the 13th century BCE, southeastern coastal Anatolia formed part of the Hittite Empire. Limited archaeological excavations in Cilicia reveal a break with the Late Bronze Age Hittite-influenced cultural tradition following the demise and destruction of the Hittite capital at Hattuša (Jean 2003). Although the region remains largely unexplored, five sites—Kilise Tepe (Hansen and Postgate 1999), Soli Höyük (Yağci 2003), Mersin (Jean 2003: 83–84), Tarsus (Goldman 1963) and Kinet Höyük (Gates forthcoming)—are key to understanding the transition between the Late Bronze and Iron Ages. At several sites, such as Kilise Tepe, Soli Höyük and Tarsus, the appearance of locally produced Myc IIIC Early and Middle pottery that closely resembles assemblages found on Cyprus during the 12th century indicates a close relationship to Cyprus following the collapse of the Hittite Empire (see French 1975: 55; Sherratt and Crouwel 1987; Mountjoy 2005b: 86). Most recently, surveys in the Gulf of Iskenderun have revealed a similar transition from the 13th to 12th centuries. At Dağılbaz Höyük, surveyed in October 2006, Late Bronze Age pottery in a Hittite tradition is followed by 12th century Aegean-style wares, including Myc IIIC pottery with a matt painted decoration that is very similar to Cilician, Cypriot and Philistine examples.[7]

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for a recent summary. The gradual introduction of locally produced Mycenaean pottery already in the 13th century has been confirmed by provenience studies (e.g., Catling 1986), but see Karageorghis's most recent treatment of this transitional period (2002: 71–113), which continues to support a clear-cut transition from LC IIC to LC IIIA, marked by the arrival of Mycenaean Greek colonists to Cyprus.

[7] The survey of the Gulf of Iskenderun is part of a five year survey project. It is sponsored by the Pennyslvania State University and Bilkent University, Ankara. Participants during the 2006 season included A. E. Killebrew, G. Lehmann, M.-H. Gates, B. Halpern, B. Cockson and A. Çadan.

Tarsus is one of the most extensively excavated Bronze and Iron Age sites in Cilicia. Unfortunately the excavated area was disturbed, with few architectural remains. The resulting ceramic assemblage from the late 13th and early 12th century levels is mixed due to the confused stratigraphy, as shown in the final reports (see Goldman 1956: 203–9; for a recent analysis of the transitional 13th/12th century pottery assemblage, see Ünlü 2005). Following the destruction of Late Bronze Age Tarsus, the majority of utilitarian Cilcian monochrome wares continued to appear alongside a new element: locally produced Aegean-style ceramics similar to the Myc IIIC Early and Middle assemblages known from Cyprus and Ekron (for the most recent analysis, see Mountjoy 2005b: 86). The style may have been introduced from Cyprus, perhaps indicating closer links with the island and continued trade relations with northwest Syria during the 12th century BCE (Goldman 1963: 93–95; Yakar 1993: 17–18).

Levant

One of the most intriguing regions relevant to our discussion is the northern Levantine coast during the 13th and 12th centuries BCE. Several new excavations and recent publications have examined the Mycenaean-style pottery at key sites along the coast of Syria and Lebanon (Bell 2005; du Piêd, this issue). Most noteworthy is the Mycenaean ceramic assemblage at Tell Kazel, which spans the Late Bronze–Early Iron period, and resembles types found at Ras Shamra/Ugarit (Badre 2006). Significant quantities of traditional imported mainland Greek Myc IIIA Late and Myc IIIB pottery and LC II wares were recovered from the Late Bronze II levels.[8] A dearth of imported Mycenaean wares characterizes the transitional Late Bronze–Iron Age levels at Tell Kazel. However, locally produced Aegean-style pottery does begin to appear in stratified levels above the ruins of the Late Bronze Age city (Badre et al. 2005: 30). This pottery includes an Aegean-style type peculiar to the region that has been termed "Amurru style", and which appears alongside Handmade Burnished Ware (Badre 2006: 82–89; Capet, this volume).

A somewhat different scenario characterizes the southern Levant. Two phenomena can be observed during the closing decades of the 13th and early 12th centuries. At several northern sites, such as Tel Nami, Beth Shean, Akko and Keisan, small quantities of imported simple style Myc IIIB Late and Myc IIIC Early pottery appear in transitional Late Bronze/Iron I levels, following the cessation of imported mainland Greek Mycenaean and traditional LC II wares (Artzy 2005: 357–58; D'Agata et al. 2005; Mountjoy 2005a). These transitional Late Bronze/Iron I vessels, belonging to a group that is also found in Cilicia and Cyprus, are usually closed vessels. The most common vessel form is

[8] See Badre et al. (2005), regarding the mainland Greek (mainly from Mycenae/Berbati) provenience of the majority of the Myc IIIA–B pottery at Tell Kazel. A few vessels originate from Crete. See also Bell (2005) for regional patterns of trade in the northern Levant based on the distribution of imported Mycenaean style pottery and its derivatives.

the stirrup jar. Provenience analyses indicate that they were produced on Cyprus (see Gunneweg and Perlman 1994; Killebrew 1998: 162; D'Agata et al. 2005). Contact with Cyprus during the Iron I period is also evidenced at Tel Dor. Lacking the locally produced 12th century Aegean-style ceramic assemblages that characterize many settlements to the north and south, Dor illustrates the cultural fragmentation and regional variations that typify the eastern Mediterranean during the 12th century BCE (Gilboa, this issue).

Significant quantities of locally produced Aegean-style assemblages, including decorated Myc IIIC Early and Middle pottery, are well documented at such sites as Ekron, Ashdod and Ashkelon, and most probably Tel Safit (Gath) (see Killebrew 2000; 2005: 219–30; Dothan and Zukerman 2004 for detailed discussions of these assemblages). The majority of these are table wares or utilitarian kitchen wares (in contrast to the assemblage of closed vessels generally associated with imported luxury Mycenaean or Aegean-style wares, as outlined above and in Killebrew 1998). These sites, attributed to the Philistines in the biblical account, provide textual evidence for the ethnic identification of the Philistines as producers of this non-indigenous material culture.

Early Philistine Settlement in the Southern Coastal Plain

The analysis of Aegean-style ceramic and material cultural assemblages found at sites associated with the Philistines in the southern coastal plain together with an analysis of the relevant Egyptian and biblical texts form the foundation for our archaeological and historical interpretations of the Philistines. Based on the clear Mycenaean inspiration of Philistine material culture, scholars have traditionally looked westward to mainland Greece as the source of this Aegean-style material culture. More recently, however, it has become increasingly evident that the closest material cultural parallels, both typologically and stylistically, are found on Cyprus, in Cilicia, and in the east Aegean/west Anatolian interface. But how "Mycenaean" is the locally produced Aegean-style material culture in its southern Levantine Philistine context? In what follows, I will briefly highlight the Aegean-style features of this new culture that are usually identified as Philistine in an attempt to answer the what, when, where, why and how of the Philistine phenomenon (see Killebrew 2005: 197–246, for a detailed discussion and comprehensive bibliography).

Pottery

Locally produced Aegean-style pottery, both the decorated fine wares and undecorated plain wares and cooking wares characterize 12th century Philistine sites. These pottery assemblages have been studied extensively in recent publications (e.g., Killebrew 2000; 2005: 219–30; Dothan and Zukerman 2004). This Aegean-style pottery assemblage is best represented at Ekron, where a well-stratified section of the early Iron I city was excavated in Field INE. As I have noted in earlier publications (e.g., Killebrew 2000; 2005: 230), the matt monochrome

and undecorated plain wares find their closest parallels in shape, decoration and technology with Cypriot and Cilician assemblages, especially those from Enkomi.

In addition to this signature ceramic repertoire, several Aegean-style architectural features, installations, and artifacts previously unknown in Canaan make their first appearance at select early Iron I sites typically associated with the Philistines. They share an Aegean-inspired origin. However, as I will note below, the most abundant and appropriate parallels are found on Cyprus and at several coastal Anatolian sites.

Hearths

Unknown in the southern Levant during the preceding Late Bronze Age, fixed hearth installations first appear during the 12th century at early Philistine sites. Prior to their appearance in Philistia, they are well-documented in Asia Minor, in the east and west Aegean, on Cyprus, and in Cilicia during the second millennium BCE. The hearth makes its debut in the classic megaron hearth-rooms of Asia Minor and Crete. They occur later on the Greek mainland, Cyprus, Cilicia and Philistia, hinting at the complex multi-directional nature of Late Bronze Age cultural interaction. The earliest hearths at Tel Miqne-Ekron are rectangular in shape and appear to be domestic in function. Later hearths are generally circular in shape (see Karageorghis 1998; 2000: 266, for a general discussion; Barako 2001: 14–15; Table 2, and Killebrew 2005: 210–16, for parallels and a discussion of the hearths at Philistine sites). Although much has been made of the relationship of the Philistine hearths to those found on the Greek mainland (e.g., Dothan 2003: 196–201), the closest parallels to the more modest circular, rectangular, or square domestic hearths typical in Philistia are found on Cyprus.

Bathtubs

Stone and terracotta bathtubs were common in the Aegean during the second millennium, and later on Cyprus during the LC IIC and IIIA periods. In recent literature, these installations have been interpreted as bathtubs for bathing, or for use in purification rites (for a detailed discussion, see Dothan 2003: 202; Karageorghis 2000: 266–74). More recently, Mazow (this issue) has argued convincingly that some of these tubs were used either for scouring or fulling wool, supporting her view that the Philistines were involved in the large-scale production of a variety of craft industries, including textile and pottery production.

Lion-headed Cups

Lion-headed cups make their first appearance in the southern Levant during the Iron I period. Several cups in the shape of a lioness are known from sites associated with the Philistines, including Tel Miqne-Ekron, Tel Safit (Gath) and Tell Qasile (see Meiberg forthcoming, for

a detailed discussion). These vessels are traditionally compared with lion-headed rhyta from Bronze Age contexts on mainland Greece and Crete (Dothan 1982: 231; Barako 2000: 523). However, as pointed out by Meiberg (forthcoming), several morphological and functional features of these vessels distinguish them from west Aegean prototypes. These include the lack of an opening for the flow of liquids, a feature which is present in west Aegean rhyta, thus pointing to the northern Levant and Anatolia as the source of inspiration. These observations provide irrefutable evidence that the lion-headed cups found at Philistine and other southern Levantine coastal sites were part of a longstanding Anatolian and North Syrian tradition.

Incised Scapulae

Several examples of incised bovine scapulae have been recovered from Iron I levels associated with the Philistine settlement at Tel Miqne-Ekron and Ashkelon (Dothan 1998: 155).[9] Dozens of incised scapulae are known from Cyprus, where they have been found in cultic contexts at several LC IIIA sites (Webb 1985). Although their function remains undetermined, it has been suggested that incised scapulae were used either for divination (Webb 1985: 324–28), or as parts of musical instruments (Karageorghis 1990: 159). I am unaware of evidence that scapulomancy was practiced in the Late Bronze Age Mycenaean world.

Female Figurines ("Ashdoda")

The majority of figurines recovered from Iron I levels at Philistine sites are female, suggesting that a goddess played a major role in the cult of Iron I Philistia. Numerous scholars have noted the Mycenaean inspiration of Ashdoda (for comparative Mycenaean female figurines, see Dothan 1982: 234; Yasur-Landau 2001: Table 1). However, no less significant sources of inspiration may be found in LC IIC–IIIA contexts.[10] Equally convincing is a suggestion by Singer (1992: 432–50) that these figurines should be identified with the Anatolian mother goddess Kubaba/Kybele. Based on the comparative material, and the lack of exact parallels to Ashdoda, she is best understood as a hybridization of Aegean, Anatolian and Cypriot styles and influences (see also Morris 2001, for a discussion of Late Bronze Aegean east-west interactions and Anatolian contributions to Greek religion).

Cuisine

Changes in cuisine mark the transition from the Late Bronze to Iron I levels at Philistine sites. Both the faunal evidence and the appearance

[9] Scapulae have also been found in Iron I contexts at Tel Dor. See Stern (1994: 96, fig. 409; 2000: 199, fig. 10.6), who associates them with the Sikila, another group of Sea Peoples.

[10] Already in LC II, bird-headed female figurines were fashioned out of Base Ring ware.

of Aegean-style table wares and cooking pots signal significant changes in dietary practices. With the establishment of urban Iron I 12th century settlements at both Tel Miqne-Ekron and Askhelon, pig bones, which are rare in Late Bronze Age contexts, suddenly account for over 15% of the assemblage. This shift highlights an increase in the consumption of pig and cattle at the expense of sheep and goats that is not paralleled at contemporary Iron I sites outside of the southern coastal plain (Hesse 1986: 21–22, Table 4; Hesse and Wapnish 1997: 148; Barako 2001: 21, note 17; see also Lev-Tov 2000, for a recent analysis of faunal remains from Tel Miqne-Ekron). However, caution is advised regarding the use of this evidence to determine a distinctive Philistine ethnic identity, since pork consumption was widespread throughout the Bronze Age Aegean, Anatolia and Europe.[11] Examined in its broader cultural context, the noteworthy rise in pork consumption at several southern coastal plain sites associated with the Philistines does provide additional support for the migration of peoples whose origins lay outside of Canaan.

The Philistines in Their Eastern Mediterranean Context

As the above discussion demonstrates, the Philistine phenomenon associated with the sudden appearance of locally produced Aegean-style material culture was part of a broader social, political and economic breakdown and cultural fragmentation that characterized the entire eastern Mediterranean during the 12th century BCE. Scholarly interpretations have traditionally attributed the appearance of Aegean-style material culture to one of two general processes of cultural transmission and change: [12] diffusion (the transference of new cultural traits from one group or location to another, including through migration),[13] and indigenism (indigenous evolutionary, or immobilist, transmission).[14]

Two types of diffusion, stimulus and complex (see Rouse 1986: 11–14), are relevant to this discussion. Stimulus diffusion is the most common form of cultural transmission, and refers to the transmission of information, ideas or elements of material culture, usually as a result of trade relations, or limited small-scale immigration over

[11] In the Aegean, the sign for pig appears in Linear B tables at Knossos (Chadwick, Killen, and Olivier 1971:45–46) and Pylos (Bennett 1955:247–48; Chadwick 1973:205–6). For Anatolia, see Hongo (2003: 259), Ikram (2003: 286–89), and von den Driesch and Pöllath (2003). For Europe, see Lev-Tov (2000: 221–23).

[12] See Renfrew and Bahn (2000: 461–96) for an overview of various approaches to cultural change. For the transmission of culture in the eastern Mediterranean, see Clarke (2005a and 2005b) and Phillips (2005).

[13] See Dothan (1982; 1989; 1998), Mazar (1985; 1988), Stager (1991; 1995), Killebrew (1998; 2003), Bunimovitz (1998), Barako (2000; 2001), and Yasur-Landau 2003a and 2003b. For an alternative view that supports a more limited migration over a protracted period of time, see Finkelstein (2000).

[14] See Brug (1985: 201–5), Bunimovitz (1990, and later revised view in 1998), Bauer (1998), Drews (1998), Sherratt (1998), and Vanschoonwinkel (1999). Several of these interpretations are based on out-dated archaeological information.

time. I would argue that the gradual adoption, or transculturation, of Mycenaean-style material culture, and its local production at sites in the east Aegean and Cyprus during the second half of the 13th century BCE, can best be explained as the result of stimulus diffusion. Complex diffusion, on the other hand, represents the transmission of an entire set of traits and ideas to another culture or region during a relatively short period of time. This less common form of diffusion is usually associated with large-scale population movements, migrations, conquests, colonization, and the forced displacement or transfer of populations (Tilly 1978). The sudden appearance of an entire complex of Aegean-style material culture in the southern coastal plain of Canaan testifies to a significant migration of peoples bearing an Aegean-style material culture. Of the various possible types of migration, the available textual and archaeological evidence suggests that colonization was a prime factor responsible for the appearance of the biblical Philistines along the southern coast of Israel.[15]

The Philistines, therefore, should be seen as one of the "winners" who emerged in the wake of the disintegration and fragmentation of the Late Bronze Age world system. Following the cessation of trade relations and imports from the west Aegean during the final decades of the 13th century BCE, economic relations continued between the Levant, Cyprus, and the east Aegean well into the 12th century (Sherratt 1998; 2003). At several Cypriot and coastal Anatolian sites, Myc IIIB pottery was already being manufactured locally during the 13th century. This gradual adoption and production of Mycenaean-style material culture in the east Aegean and on Cyprus can be attributed to the impact of long term economic, cultural, and social ties that flowed in a multi-directional manner between east and west, and which increased in intensity as Egyptian and Hittite influence waned in the east. This interaction undoubtedly included the small-scale immigration and movements of peoples, resulting in a gradual diffusion of cultural traits, technology and ideology, and the creation of a diffused Aegean-style culture in the east (regarding the impact of this multi-directional cultural contact on the Argolid, see Maran 2004).

In the early 12th century, by contrast, the appearance of a locally produced Aegean-style Philistine material culture in the southern coastal plain was the consequence of a large-scale movement of the more prosperous descendants of these Mycenaeanized eastern populations, now able to flourish, having been freed from "superpower" domination. The Philistines, therefore, are best defined as the descendants and inheritors of the highly sophisticated and cosmopolitan culture of an Aegeanized Late Bronze Age world.

[15] I follow van Dommelen's definition, which states that colonization is "the presence of one or more groups of foreign people in a region at some distance from their place of origin (the 'colonizers'), and the existence of asymmetrical socioeconomic relationships of dominance or exploitation between the colonizing groups and the inhabitants of the colonized regions" (1997: 306). What distinguishes colonization from other forms of political, economic or ideological imperialism is the establishment of colonies in a distant land.

Although we cannot discount violent encounters as one means of cultural transmission, the adoption of Mycenaean-style culture in the east clearly was gradual, fueled by the economic world system operative in the eastern Mediterranean during the Late Bronze Age. The collapse of the Mycenaean palace system and demise of regional imperial powers undoubtedly encouraged the additional dislocation and movements of peoples, some fleeing disaster and others seeking opportunity, profit and adventure. Many of these peoples probably originated from Cyprus and other archaeologically less explored peripheral areas in the east. The establishment of prosperous urban centers in 12th century Philistia was just one consequence of a highly complex reorganization of the fragmented remnants of the Late Bronze Age, a golden era that is dimly remembered in the accounts of Homer, and formed the foundations of the later biblical world.

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