

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-19162-3 - The Philistines and Aegean Migration at the End of the Late Bronze Age

Assaf Yasur-Landau

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

**THE PHILISTINES AND AEGEAN MIGRATION AT THE END
OF THE LATE BRONZE AGE**

In this study, Assaf Yasur-Landau examines the early history of the biblical Philistines who were among the Sea Peoples who migrated from the Aegean area to the Levant during the early twelfth century BCE. Creating an archaeological narrative of the migration of the Philistines, he combines an innovative theoretical framework on the archaeology of migration with new data from excavations in Greece, Turkey, Cyprus, Syria, Lebanon, and Israel and thereby reconstructs the social history of the Aegean migration to the southern Levant. The author follows the story of the Philistine migrants from the conditions that caused them to leave their Aegean homes to their movement eastward along the sea and land routes, to their formation of a migrant society in Philistia and their interaction with local populations in the Levant. Based on the most up-to-date evidence, this book offers a new and fresh understanding of the arrival of the Philistines in the Levant.

Assaf Yasur-Landau is Senior Researcher at the Leon Recanati Institute for Maritime Studies, University of Haifa. He has edited three volumes and published numerous articles on the archaeology of the Levant and interactions between the Aegean world and the Levant, including the Philistine migration, with an emphasis on the investigation of the personal lives of ancient people.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-19162-3 - The Philistines and Aegean Migration at the End of the Late Bronze Age

Assaf Yasur-Landau

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

THE PHILISTINES AND AEGEAN
MIGRATION AT THE END OF
THE LATE BRONZE AGE

ASSAF YASUR-LANDAU

University of Haifa



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-19162-3 - The Philistines and Aegean Migration at the End of the Late Bronze Age

Assaf Yasur-Landau

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore,
São Paulo, Delhi, Dubai, Tokyo

Cambridge University Press

32 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10013-2473, USA

www.cambridge.orgInformation on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521191623

© Assaf Yasur-Landau 2010

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2010

Printed in the United States of America

*A catalog record for this publication is available from the British Library.**Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication data*

Yasur-Landau, Assaf.

The Philistines and Aegean migration at the end of the Late Bronze Age / Assaf Yasur-Landau.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-521-19162-3 (hbk.)

1. Philistines – History. 2. Philistines – Migrations. 3. Philistines – Antiquities. 4. Social archaeology – Aegean Sea Region. 5. Aegean Sea Region – Emigration and immigration – History. 6. Middle East – Emigration and immigration – History. 7. Land settlement – Middle East – History – To 1500. 8. Aegean Sea Region – Antiquities. 9. Middle East – Antiquities. 10. Bronze age. I. Title.

DS90.Y37 2010

933 – dc22 2009028632

ISBN 978-0-521-19162-3 Hardback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party Internet Web sites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such Web sites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-19162-3 - The Philistines and Aegean Migration at the End of the Late Bronze Age

Assaf Yasur-Landau

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

TO ARIEL AND YONATAN

*Als das Kind Kind war,
ging es mit hängenden Armen,
wollte der Bach sei ein Fluß,
der Fluß sei ein Strom,
und diese Pfütze das Meer.*

from Peter Handke *Lied vom Kindsein*

When the child was a child
It walked with its arms swinging,
wanted the brook to be a river,
the river to be a torrent,
and this puddle to be the sea.

CONTENTS

<i>Acknowledgments</i>	<i>page xi</i>
INTRODUCTION	1
Uncharted Areas and Blind Spots in the Archaeology of the Philistines	2
The Aim of the Present Study	7
1 THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL IDENTIFICATION OF MIGRATION AND OTHER RANGES OF INTERREGIONAL INTERACTIONS	9
Establishing the Course of Inquiry	9
Describing Interactions and the Parameters of Interaction	10
Defining <i>Deep Change</i>	13
The Archaeological Identification of Migration, When Treated	
As a Range of Interregional Interactions	14
Migration and Deep Change in Domestic Assemblages	15
Deep Change and Innovation Processes	17
Demonstrating Deep Change: Case Studies for the Influence of Migration on Behavioral Patterns and Material Culture	19
Causality of Migration	30
Conclusions	32
2 SETTING THE SCENE: THE MYCENAEAN PALATIAL CULTURE AND THE OUTSIDE WORLD	34
Social Complexity in the Mycenaean Palatial System	35
Aegean Peoples and Mediterranean Geography	38
Thirteenth-Century Aegean Maritime Capabilities and Interregional Interactions	44
Palatial Administration and Aegean Migration and Colonization of the Late Thirteenth to the Early Twelfth Century BCE	54
3 THE TWELFTH-CENTURY-BCE AEGEAN: POLITICAL AND SOCIAL BACKGROUND	58
Changing Rulership and the Decapitation Theory	58

	Social Complexity in Selected Aegean Sites in LHIIIC	60
	Regional Aspects of Rulership in the Twelfth Century	81
	The Change in Imagery and Ideology between LHIIIB and LHIIIC	83
	Conclusions	95
4	PRECONDITIONS FOR MIGRATION	97
	Push and Pull Factors Affecting Migration	97
	Twelfth-Century-BCE Sources of Information	102
	The Maritime Option	102
	The Land Option	114
	Conclusions	120
5	ALONG THE ROUTES	122
	Investigating Routes and New Populations	122
	The Aegean Hearth	123
	Cooking Activities	124
	Cyprus: Interactions along the Sea Route	138
	Western Anatolia: The Expansion of the East Aegean Koine	154
	Cilicia and the Amuq: The Land Route from Southeastern Anatolia to Syria	158
	The Syro-Phoenician Coast: Along the Sea and Land Routes	164
	Through the Egyptian Lens	171
	The Origin of the Attackers	180
	Conclusions: Twelfth-Century Interactions along the Routes	186
6	STRICTLY BUSINESS? THE SOUTHERN LEVANT AND THE AEGEAN IN THE THIRTEENTH TO THE EARLY TWELFTH CENTURY BCE	194
	Mycenaean Imports to the Southern Levant	194
	Merchants and Mercenaries: Foreigners in Late Bronze Age Canaan	204
	Conclusions: Strictly Business?	214
7	THE MATERIAL CULTURE CHANGE IN TWELFTH-CENTURY PHILISTIA	216
	From Canaan to Philistia	216
	The End of the Bronze Age–Iron Age Transition in the Philistine Sites	220
	Behavioral Patterns As Indicators of Interaction with Aegean Population in the Southern Levant	227
	Cooking Installations: Hearths, Ovens, and <i>Tabuns</i>	234
	Form, Function, and Variability in Cooking Traditions	238
	Assessing the Degree of Change	240
	Patterns of Use of the Pottery Assemblage: Storing and Serving Food and Drink in Aegean and Local Styles	241
	LHIIIC-Style Pottery: Local Production of Traded Pottery or a Domestic Assemblage?	243
	Serving and Storage Vessels in the Local, Canaanite Tradition	255

<i>Contents</i>	* ix
Cypriot (and Egyptian?) Shapes	262
The Nature of the Aegean-Style and Canaanite Ceramic Repertoires in Philistia	262
Pottery Production and Technology	264
Textile Production	267
The Organization of Domestic Space	270
Conclusions: Philistine House, Philistine Migrants	279
8 THE PHILISTINE SOCIETY AND THE SETTLEMENT PROCESS	282
Settlement Patterns in Philistia	282
Economy	295
Trade	300
Ceremonial and Cultic Activity	302
Elite in the Pentapolis	307
Literacy and Administration	308
The Role of Women in the Aegean Migration	313
Social Stratification in Twelfth-Century Philistia	315
Chronology and the Paradigm of Unified Migration	315
The Origin of the Migrants	325
Conclusions	330
9 A SHORT HISTORY OF THE AEGEAN IMMIGRATION TO THE LEVANT	335
A Land Much Divided: The World that Created the Aegean Migration	335
A Family Portrait with an Ox Wagon: On the Routes to the East	336
The Arrival	338
The Settlement	340
Aegean Life Abroad: The Making of Philistia	342
<i>Bibliography</i>	347
<i>Index</i>	383

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In my teens, I participated, for several seasons, in the Tel Miqne/Ekron excavations, directed by Trude Dothan and Seymour Gitin. Their enthusiasm for archaeology and the amazing discoveries of the early Philistine life at the tell inevitably paved my way to archaeology and sparked my long-lasting interest in the Philistines.

The initial research for this book stemmed from my Ph.D. dissertation at Tel Aviv University. I am indebted to my advisers, Israel Finkelstein, Irad Malkin, and Shlomo Bunimovitz, for their enormous help and encouragement. Generous grants from Malcolm H. Wiener and from the Greek Ministry of Education enabled my stay in Athens for two years, which changed the course of my life.

Numerous advances in the study of the Philistines and the postpalatial Aegean world occurred during the six years that have elapsed since I completed my dissertation. These include the publication of a considerable volume of new excavation data from the entire eastern Mediterranean, which essentially required that this research be rewritten before it was published. Most of the revisions were made during my stay as a postdoctoral Fellow at the Semitic Museum of Harvard University. I am most grateful to Lawrence E. Stager, the director of the museum, for his kind hospitality and for his valuable remarks on several chapters of the book. My stay at Harvard University was supported by a Fulbright Post-Doctoral Fellowship and a grant from the Rothschild Foundation.

I am indebted to the scholars, colleagues, and friends who have read and commented on the entirety or parts of different versions of this book. Among them are Daniel Master, Stephie Nikoloudis, Krzysztof Nowicki, Jeremy Rutter, and Itamar Singer. Eric H. Cline has shown true friendship by reading the manuscript twice. During the preparation of this book I have also benefited from the kind advice of many colleagues and friends, among them are David Ben-Shlomo, Yoram Cohen, Yuval Gadot, Ayelet Gilboa, Aren Maeir, Laura Mazov, Michael Press, Itzik Shai, and Alex Zukerman.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-19162-3 - The Philistines and Aegean Migration at the End of the Late Bronze Age

Assaf Yasur-Landau

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Inbal Samet has put much skill and effort into the English editing of the manuscript.

Beatrice Rehl of Cambridge University Press has walked me through the long process of preparing the manuscript for publication with admirable patience. Her comments, as well as those of two anonymous reviewers, have greatly improved this book.

This book was published with the support of the Israel Science Foundation.

Finally, I wish to thank my family for years of understanding. I am grateful to my parents, Ronit and Isaac Yasur-Landau; my brother, Daniel; my sister, Dana; my wife, Shelly; and my sons, Yonatan and Ariel, for their unconditional love and support of my archaeological dream and for putting up with piles of loose papers, dusty sherds, and excavation equipment over the years.