A SIKIL INTERLUDE AT DOR:

AN ANALYSIS OF CONTRASTING OPINIONS

by

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SUMMARY

This paper analyses the opposing views regarding the presence or absence of the Sikil at Dor in Palestine during Early Iron Age 1. Textual sources claim that the Sikil were pirates who came from the west and settled in Cyprus. Egyptian sources point to a Sikil presence at Dor.

Some scholars regard the Egyptian sources and archaeological finds at Dor as evidence of a Sikil settlement at Dor. Others maintain that there is a continuity of ceramics at Dor from Canaanite to Phoenician. Though there were foreign influences at Dor during Early Iron Age 1 which point to newcomers, they propose that these newcomers probably came from Cyprus. No archaeological record of a Sea People-presence at Dor has been discovered.

This study textually traces the Sikil from the Aegean to Cyprus, Egypt and finally to Dor and a theory is presented that the Sikil originated in the Aegean, temporarily settled in Cyprus and finally at Dor.

Key terms:

Archaeology; biblical archaeology; eastern Mediterranean; southern Levant; northern Palestine; Mediterranean coast; Carmel coast; Sharon region; Dor; Sea Peoples; Sikil.

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Abbreviations

AASOR: Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research

AJA: American Journal of Archaeology

BA: The Biblical Archaeologist

BAR: Biblical Archaeology Review

BASOR: Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research

ca: circa

EA: El Amarna (refers to the numbering of the Amarna Letters)

IEJ: Israel Exploration Journal

Ir: Iron

JBL: Journal of Biblical Literature

JNES: Journal of Near Eastern Studies

LB: Late Bronze

Myc: Mycenaean

PhB: Philistine Bichrome

SHRDN: Sherden

SKL: Sikil

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to Myra, Willem and Ayelet as a small gesture to show my appreciation for their unselfish assistance, advice and contributions.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

' I spent up to the 4th month of the Summer season in Tanis. And Ne-su-Ba-ne-Ded and Ta-Ne-Amon sent me off with the ship captain Mengebet, and I embarked on the great Syrian sea in the 1st month of the 3rd season, day 1. I reached Dor of the Tjeker, and Beder, its prince, had 50 loaves of bread, one jug of wine, and one leg of beef brought to me.' (The Journey of Wenamun to Phoenicia: Pritchard 1955:26).

This report of the journey of Wenamun together with the Onomasticon of Amenemope contain the only references in the existing texts of the era linking some of the 'Sea Peoples', the Tjeker or Sikil[1], the Philistines and Sherden to particular places or regions and the Sikil in particular to Dor. The Egyptian sources referred to them as 'foreigners from the Sea' (Mazar 1992:302). This resulted in the modern name 'Sea Peoples' used by scholars to describe the confederation of peoples, mentioned individually or jointly in the ancient texts such as the Amarna Letters, the Hittite and Ugaritic texts, the Stele of Merneptah, the inscriptions and reliefs on the walls of the mortuary temple of Ramesses III at Medinet Habu, the Papyrus Harris, the Onomasticon of Amenemope and the Report of Wenamun. This modern name was coined by Gaston Maspero (1846-1916) during 1881 when he called them *'peuples de la mer'* (Nibbi 1975:3).

The term 'Sea People' has also been described as a loose term to cover the Indo-European peoples who migrated through the Middle East and across the Mediterranean during the second millennium BCE. A shifting confederation, constantly seeking land to occupy. They made ferocious efforts to invade Egypt during the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Dynasties but were repulsed (Geddes & Grosset 2001:420).

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[1]Various authors offer their own pronunciations of the term *Ṯk* (the term used in the Egyptian texts): Mazar (1992:303,306) = Tjekel or Shkl; Goedicke (1975:27) = Zekel; Bikai (1992:134; Breasted 1962:201) = Thekel; Gordon (1992:192) = Tcheker; Barnett (1975: 376) =Tjakkar; Pritchard (1955:26) = Tjeker; Breasted (1906:201) = Tjekker: Stager (1998:337) & Stern (2000a:20) = Sikils; Gilboa (2005)= S*K*L etcetera. Henceforth, unless quoting, I will give preference to 'Sikil' to conform with the current usage at Tel Dor.

1.1 DEFINING THE PROBLEM

Various considerations come to mind when the phenomenon of the 'Sea Peoples'[1] becomes the subject of investigation. Did they really exist as maritime peoples or was the use of a fleet during the time of Ramesses III merely a minor diversion in and coincidental to their total military strategy? Were the versions of Merneptah and Ramesses III regarding their strength and composition correct or exaggerations (keeping in mind the exaggerated version of Ramesses II regarding the outcome of the battle at Kadesh against the Hittites)? Did Ramesses III in fact defeat the Sea Peoples or did he merely follow the example, set by many other Egyptian rulers, to take credit for the feats of earlier rulers, in this instance a glorified version of Merneptah's repulsion of the Sea Peoples?

Where did these Peoples originate from? Was it western Anatolia and if so, is there a *nexus* between their emergence and the remnants of the Trojan War? Were they displaced peoples from the Aegean or the Adriatic or were they from further a field? Were they merciless and uncivilised marauders who brought an end to the relative stability and prosperity of the Middle and Late Bronze Ages which led to the alleged 'Dark Age' of Iron I? Were they merely peoples establishing themselves in areas disrupted as a result of a steady decline which had already started at some time during the Late Bronze Age or at the end of the Middle Bronze Age? Was the whole region during the Late Bronze Age like a tree which has a normal exterior but with a rotten core?

Did the effects of the Trojan War culminate in the demise of the Hittite empire? In view of the desperation reflected by Canaanite rulers in some of the Amarna letters, was the loss of the Egyptian empire, so brilliantly wrought by Thutmoses III and to a lesser degree by Horenheb, the direct or indirect result of the actions of Amenhotep IV (Akhenaten)? Phrased differently, were the Trojan War and the Amarna period two of the

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[1]Silberman (1998b:268-275) gives an exposition of the various approaches towards the phenomenon of the Sea Peoples from the mid nineteenth century to the present day, but it is beyond the scope of this study.

main contributors to the end of an era, the decline and ultimate annihilation of the powerful city states of the Bronze Age? Questions in this regard abound, but answers are elusive. Acceptable solutions to some of these riddles, and many more regarding the era, may never be found. Although archaeology has shed some light and may still do so in future, it seems that in the end most of the answers will be mere speculation, but speculation based on the best available evidence.

It is impossible, within the scope of this study, to discuss all the stated questions or even to attempt finding suitable answers in an endeavour to solve the problems raised by them. In order to concentrate on this study one has to accept and rely on the educated guesses and conclusions of the majority of scholars who investigated each particular question.

As regards the Sikil in particular, it should at the outset be noted that there are currently two schools of thought regarding the presence of the Sikil at Dor. The first school (which prevailed during the past few decades and is still going strong) maintains that the Sikil settled at Dor for a period of approximately 150 years during Early Iron Age I. The second and more recent school maintains that there is no real archaeological evidence linking the Sikil to Dor.

I would, therefore, define the problem that I intend addressing here, as follows: 'Is there enough evidence, textual and/or archaeological, to prove any one of the two schools of thought regarding the presence or absence of the Sikil at Dor during Iron Age I, right?'

1.2 ADDRESSING THE PROBLEM

It is not possible to study the Sikil in isolation without taking cognisance of the question of the Sea Peoples in general. In the texts (as discussed in Chapter 3) the Sikil are mentioned individually as well as in context with other peoples who (excluding the Philistines) pose a problem for scholars regarding their origins and ultimate fate. The origin of the Philistines themselves is a matter of intensive debate and seems to be

enshrouded in the overall mystery of the Sea Peoples. The possibility has even be raised that the Philistines were a collective name for all the Sea peoples who settled in the southern Levant (Stern et al 1995a:8). Both the Sikil and the Philistines (as well as other mysterious peoples) are however mentioned as cooperating partners in some of the Egyptian texts and it seems as if they were separate peoples, but that some sort of relationship existed. This relationship could not have been purely coincidental and indicates that they had something in common. The logical conclusion would be that they had either originated from the same geographical region or that they had settled in the same geographical region (or both). As regards the settlement in the same region we know that the Philistines finally settled on the southern coastal plain (Mediterranean coast) of Palestine and that the Sikil and Sherden allegedly (according to the Onomasticon of Amenemope) settled further north along the same coast.

If the attacks on Egypt by the Sea Peoples were made at a time when the Philistines had already settled in Palestine, it would also follow on a balance of probabilities that the Sikil were from the same region. It is highly unlikely that peoples from different geographical regions would cooperate to such an extent that they would jointly invade a foreign country. The Libyans being involved in the attacks is an important factor, for it is improbable that foreign raiders from the Mediterranean would be allied to a local people and fight together both in the Libyan cause and their own. It is much more plausible that all the peoples involved are from the Near East (Nibbi 1975:5).

According to the Stele of Merneptah the allies of the Libyans were circumcised while the Libyans were not, which fact determined whether their phalli were cut off as trophies of war after the victory of the Egyptians (Gardiner 1947:122,196). This is, in my opinion, a clear indication that the Libyans' allies, the Sea Peoples, hailed from the same area and that they adhered to the same social and/or religious practises.

Nibbi (1975:4) points out that the attackers of Egypt were referred to as hailing from the 'northern hill-countries', a name only given to the western Asiatic city states and to no other states. This illustrates, in my opinion, that they were from the same region. If they had originally come from the Aegean, it seems that they had already settled in western Asia or on Cyprus (as will be discussed in detail below) by the time that they attacked Egypt.

The fact that a portion of the offensive group consisted of a maritime force operating from the Mediterranean[1], indicates that at least some of the attacking forces were maritime peoples situated somewhere along the eastern Mediterranean coastline or an island such as Cyprus. This scenario, however, does not exclude the possibility that some of the allies of the Libyans were dislocated people from the Aegean, western Anatolia or somewhere else and that they were looking for new land to settle. I am merely stating that cooperation between the Libyans and peoples already settled, albeit perhaps temporarily, in Cyprus or western Asia, for instance the southern Levant, is much more plausible than an alliance with marauders from the sea. A further factor exemplifying this point is the reliefs from Medinet Habu (see below) depicting *inter alia* women and children moving by land.

The assertion that the Sea Peoples, at the time of the attacks on Egypt, most likely hailed from Cyprus or western Asia, does not imply that they had always been from that region. As will be discussed later, at least some of them, in all likelihood, originated from somewhere in the Mediterranean before settling in Palestine (like the Philistines, Sikil and Sherden according to the Onomasticon of Amenemope).

The particular region in the Mediterranean from which they originated will form the subject of a later chapter. Suffice to state at this stage that all indicators point to the

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[1] Some scholars are of a different opinion and suggest other origins for the fleet than the Mediterranean. Nibbi (1975:4) proposes that they might have come from islands in the Nile Delta where she maintains Asiatic peoples had settled. For purposes of this study I intend following the vast majority of scholars that the fleet originated in the Mediterranean.

Aegean (Vagnetti 2000:319) and perhaps the western part of Anatolia with Cyprus as a stopover. Should they originate from the Aegean, one would expect the initial material culture of their places of settlement to conform with the material culture of their place of origin (the Aegean) prevailing during that particular era.

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Having defined a problem and selecting means to address the problem would, however, be to no avail if there is no purpose behind the study. We know that the Philistines were one of the Sea Peoples mentioned in conjunction with the Sikil and that the probabilities favour the Aegean as the original home of the Philistines. There are also such similarities between the material cultures of Philistia, and the Aegean of the 12th and 11th centuries BCE, that all probabilities favour the Aegean as the original home of the Philistines.

This similarity also extends to Cyprus during the relevant period. It is at this stage not clear if the Philistines immigrated directly from the Aegean to Philistia or if they had a temporary stopover at Cyprus. I, therefore, intend creating a model, based on the material cultures of the three regions, which can be applied to establish what should be expected in terms of material culture at a site suspected to be a settlement of the Philistines.

It, however, does not follow necessarily that the material cultures of the Philistines and the Sikil (or for that matter any of the other Sea Peoples) would be similar. On the other hand, if one could establish that they originated from the same area during the same period, there ought to be some similarities to fit such a model in general terms and to use that model to develop further models for the other Sea Peoples.

The question may be asked why it is necessary at this stage to do yet another study on the Sea Peoples? The answer lies in the fact that this is not an investigation of the Sea Peoples *per se*. Ever since the discovery of the Report of Wenamun, scholars were in

disagreement whether it is based on a factual history or whether it is pure fiction. Comprehensive studies have been made of the Philistines, especially during the past decade, by scholars such as Stager, Cross, Finkelstein, Trude and Moshe Dothan and others.

Very little is known about the Sikil and references made to them are generally made in conjunction with other groups such as the Philistines, the Sea Peoples in general, the demise of the Hittite Empire, Ugarit and a history of Sicily. Very seldom does one find all the textual references to the Sikil contained in one document and then only in a very cursory manner.[1]

The decisive factor, in my opinion, is the prevailing conceptions pertaining to the presence of the Sikil at Dor during Iron Age I. As will be discussed later in this study, there are convincing arguments, despite a lack of abundant archaeological evidence, that a foreign people (probably the Sikil) indeed occupied the site during Early Iron Age I (after ousting the Canaanites to be in turn be defeated by the Phoenicians), albeit for a very short period.

On the other hand there are equally convincing arguments that, measured in terms of archaeological finds, especially ceramics, there is no interlude between the occupation of the Canaanites and the Phoenicians, the latter being Canaanites who became a maritime people. With these two approaches in mind, I think it is important to look afresh at all the evidence pertaining to both the Sikil and Dor before reaching any conclusions. Such an approach should be objective and without any sentiment based on either textual or archaeological evidence in isolation, but to consider both in conjunction and against a developed model.

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[1] In this regard see for instance O'Connor 2000:85-102; Yon 1992:111-122; Ahlström 1993:282-332 and Stager 1998:332-348.

CHAPTER 2

THE CITY OF DOR AND ITS TELL

2.1 TEL DOR[1]

Tel Dor is identified with Khirbet el-Burj on the Carmel coast, situated about twenty one kilometres south of the present day city of Haifa and 10 kilometres north of Caesarea (Stern 1997:128). It is rectangular, approximately 15 metres high and covers a surface area of approximately 14 hectares. Situated on the seashore of the Eastern Mediterranean on the northern coast of Palestine it actually forms a peninsula which was much more prominent when it was still inhabited (Stern 2000a:77 and see below).

On the southern, western and northern sides are three bays which formed natural harbours, thus enabling ships to seek shelter in an alternative harbour should the wind affected them in one of the other harbours. It seems that in the thirteenth century BCE a lagoon ran on the eastern and southern sides of the tell almost surrounding the tell and allowing ships to moor anywhere in the lagoon. The lagoon gradually silted up from the thirteenth to the tenth centuries and the inhabitants of Dor had to cut a channel on the western side to enable ships to reach the lagoon and southern harbour.

Still later the sea-level rose, the coastline receded further and islands, where the coastline had run previously, were formed. During the 11th century BCE the sea-level began to recede again, the lagoon was fully silted up, and the landing place (southern harbour) was joined to the built-up area at the south of the tell with a resultant lessening of the city's maritime activity (Raban 1987:125-126). Stern (2000a:98 avers that the reason for the decline in maritime activity was the destruction of the Sikil city at Dor.

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[1] The word 'Tel' is used for place names such as Tel Dor and Tel Aviv, according to the Hebrew usage; 'tell' is used to denote tells in general according to English usage and for Arabian place names.

Figure 1: Map of the coastal cities of the eastern Mediterranean in Biblical times.

(Stern 2000a:24)

Figure 2: Tel Dor in modern context.

(http://www.sas.upenn.edu/~ekondr at/Dormap.html)

Figure 3: Tel Dor seen from the air. The red letters denote excavation areas.
(http://www.sas.upenn.edu/~ekondrat/Dormap.html)
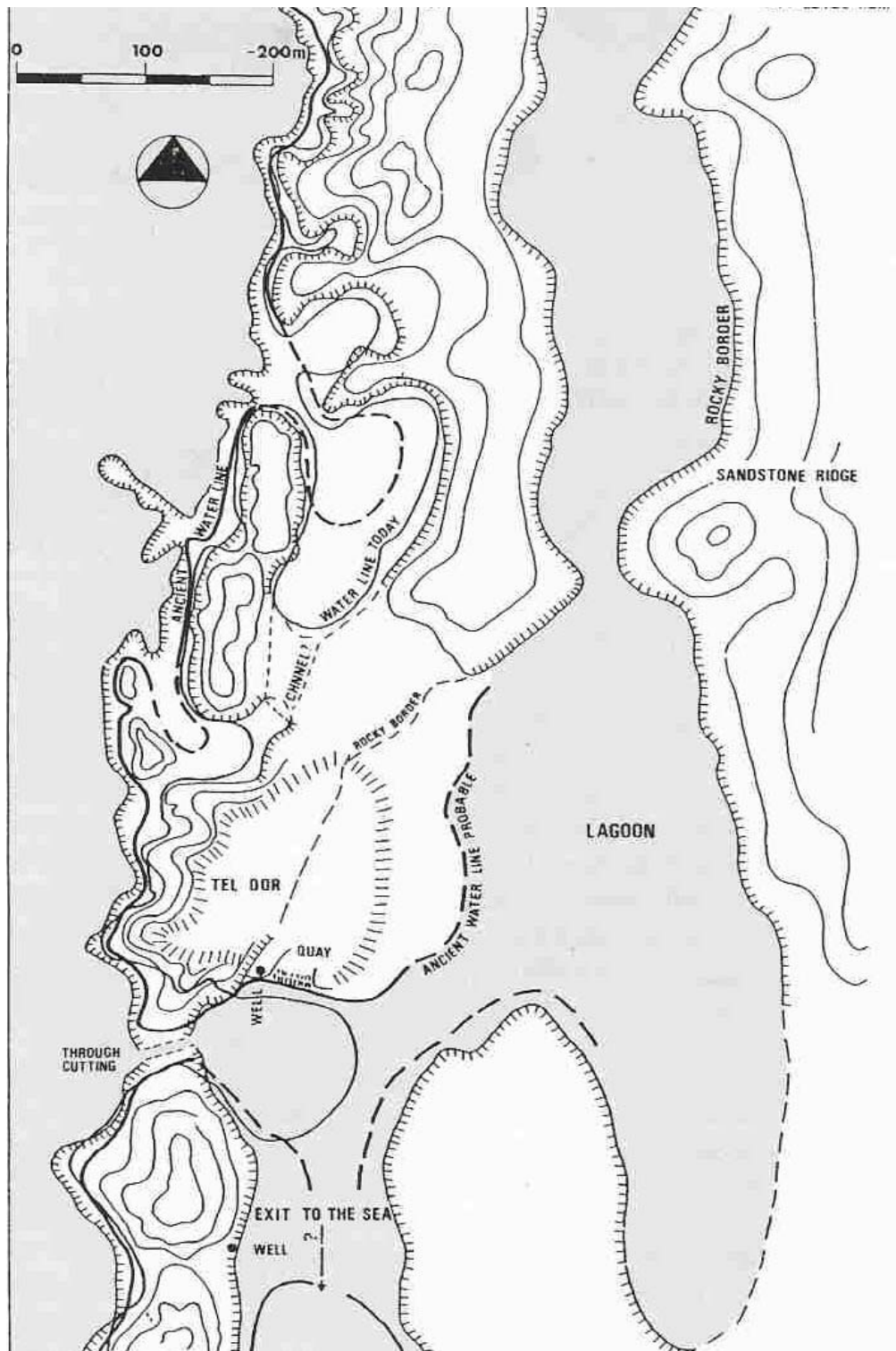
Figure 4: A comparison between water lines at Dor during the 13th century BCE, the 10th century BCE and today.

(Stern 2000a:100)

2.2 THE CITY OF DOR

The city of Dor is identified with D-jr of Egyptian sources, biblical Dor, דור or דאר and classical–Roman Dora Δωρα/Δωρος (Sharon and Gilboa forthcoming). It had one of the few good natural ports along the coast of Israel and was at the crossroads between the Mediterranean cultures to the west and those of the ancient Near East in all relevant periods (from the Bronze to the Byzantine). According to Greek and Latin sources, Dor was situated between the Carmel range and Caesarea. The Tabula Peutingeriana places Dor eight Roman miles north of Caesarea, while Eusebius gives the distance as nine Roman miles. As a result of these sources the location of ancient Dor can almost certainly be placed at the site of Khirbet el-Burj, the present Tel Dor.

Its story is largely a commercial one, as the ancient seaport city of Dor was host to the trading activities of a number of civilizations or cultures around the Mediterranean world in ancient times.

Dor was an important port and administrative centre for Canaanites, the Sikil (according to Wenamun), Israelites, Assyrians, Phoenicians, Greeks and Romans. Established as a regional capital by Solomon, it was conquered by the Assyrians in 732 BCE and became the capital of the Assyrian province of Duru. During the Hellenistic period the city was an important fortress and commercial centre. It continued to serve in this cape-city through the Roman period. When Herod the Great built the harbour at Caesarea, the commercial importance of the city declined, while remaining a city and later a religious centre under the Byzantines until the 7th century CE. Finally, in the 13th century CE, a Crusader castle was built on the site (Sharon and Gilboa forthcoming).

We first read of Dor in Bible in Joshua 11:2 when the northern kings mobilised and united to fight against Israel. Although it is mentioned in Joshua 12:23 that Joshua

defeated the king of Dor, we read in Judges 1:27 that the Israelites, represented by the tribe of Manasseh, failed to drive out the people living in Dor and that the Canaanites were determined to stay in the region. Still later (1 Kings 4:11) we learn that Solomon appointed his son-in-law, Ben-abinadab, as district governor of Dor. These references to Dor are, however, not the earliest textual references to the city. In the Nubian city of Amara-West the remains of a temple of Pharaoh Ramesses II (13th century BCE) was uncovered. An inscription containing a list of 104 Asiatic names were discovered which names places in the Negeb, Edom, the city of Dor, and some think even Jericho (Horn 1953: 201-203).

According to the initial archaeological finds during 1923/1924, Dor was founded as early as the 20th century BCE (Middle Bronze Age IIA). It was a Canaanite city which occupied the site for nearly a thousand years until about 1200 BCE. During that period the Canaanites dominated the entire region, Palestine, Phoenicia, Syria and Trans-jordan. Canaanite material culture, known from scores of excavations throughout the region, is exceedingly rich and varied. This was especially true during the Late Bronze Age (1500–1200 BCE), after the Egyptian conquest of Palestine, when far-flung international trade and Egyptian domination had a strong influence on local culture. The most prosperous representatives of this culture seem to have been concentrated in the coastal cities and their immediate hinterland, cities like Ugarit, Byblos, Megiddo, and Dor.

 Future excavations may produce more evidence of Canaanite Dor; however, because of the great depth of these remains, the present excavations have not yet reached the strata in which they lie. Even after 25 excavation seasons, little information about the Canaanite city was uncovered, except in a few spots near the sea that helped to establish the existence of the city at such an early date.

The finds from these levels include not only much Middle and Late Bronze pottery, but also some Egyptian seals. More than 50 percent of the pottery was imported, mostly from the west, Minoan, Mycenaean and Cypriot ware (Stern 1993a:3). The Canaanites, during the Middle Bronze Age II, were exceptional engineers, building great fortified cities. They were also enterprising merchants and in that era appear to have had a maritime capability. A fourteenth century Egyptian tomb painting depicts Canaanite merchant ships unloading cargo. Lovely decorated pottery imported from Crete and Cyprus testify to Canaanite interest in luxury items (Schoville 1994:176-178).

According to Stern (1993b:8-19) Phoenician Dor, built on the remains of the Sikil city, was at least the equal of the four major Phoenician cities, Byblos, Tyre, Sidon and Arwad, in both size and importance. But in contrast to these other major Phoenician cities, Dor's outstanding state of preservation affords an unparalleled opportunity to study a major Phoenician harbour town on the eastern Mediterranean coast, from the beginning of Phoenician development in the late 11th century BCE to its end in the late Hellenistic period (64 BCE). He is confident that this is the largest Phoenician city in a good state of preservation.

CHAPTER 3

TEXTUAL SOURCES RELATING TO THE SEA PEOPLES IN GENERAL AND THE SIKIL IN PARTICULAR

3.1 INTRODUCTION

One finds that already in the Late Bronze Age during the Amarna Period (1348-1336 BCE), corresponding to the reign of Akhenaten (Amenophis IV) as reflected in the Amarna Letters, that Egypt was in the process of losing its hold on its empire and in particular the Canaanite city states.

Textual and archaeological evidence indicate, however, that the final quarter of the thirteenth and the ensuing twelfth century BCE were extremely eventful and all peoples in the Near East and its vicinity were affected by far-reaching changes in the region, though it appears that some regions were less affected than others. The biggest disruptions seem to have occurred in the eastern Mediterranean, in the Aegean and Anatolia. In Syria and the Levant, the coastal cities were more severely affected than the inland areas. We see the total collapse of the Mycenaean and Hittite empires and the decline of Assyria and Egypt as powers in the Near East (Markoe 2000:23). The exact causes for the changes are difficult to establish and it seems various factors were involved affectting various places and thus no single cause can be blamed for the widespread disruption in that part of the world. It is clear, however, that the Near Eastern world in 1050 BCE was extremely different from what it had been in 1250 BCE (Van de Mieroop 2004:179-180).

Archaeological researches have not only revealed the massive and widespread destruct-tions of the era but also the subsequent changes in the material culture of the new settle-ments. The tendency amongst the majority of scholars has been to explain this pheno -

menon as mass immigration of peoples of which the Sea Peoples were considered to be the main stream (Nibbi 1975:1).
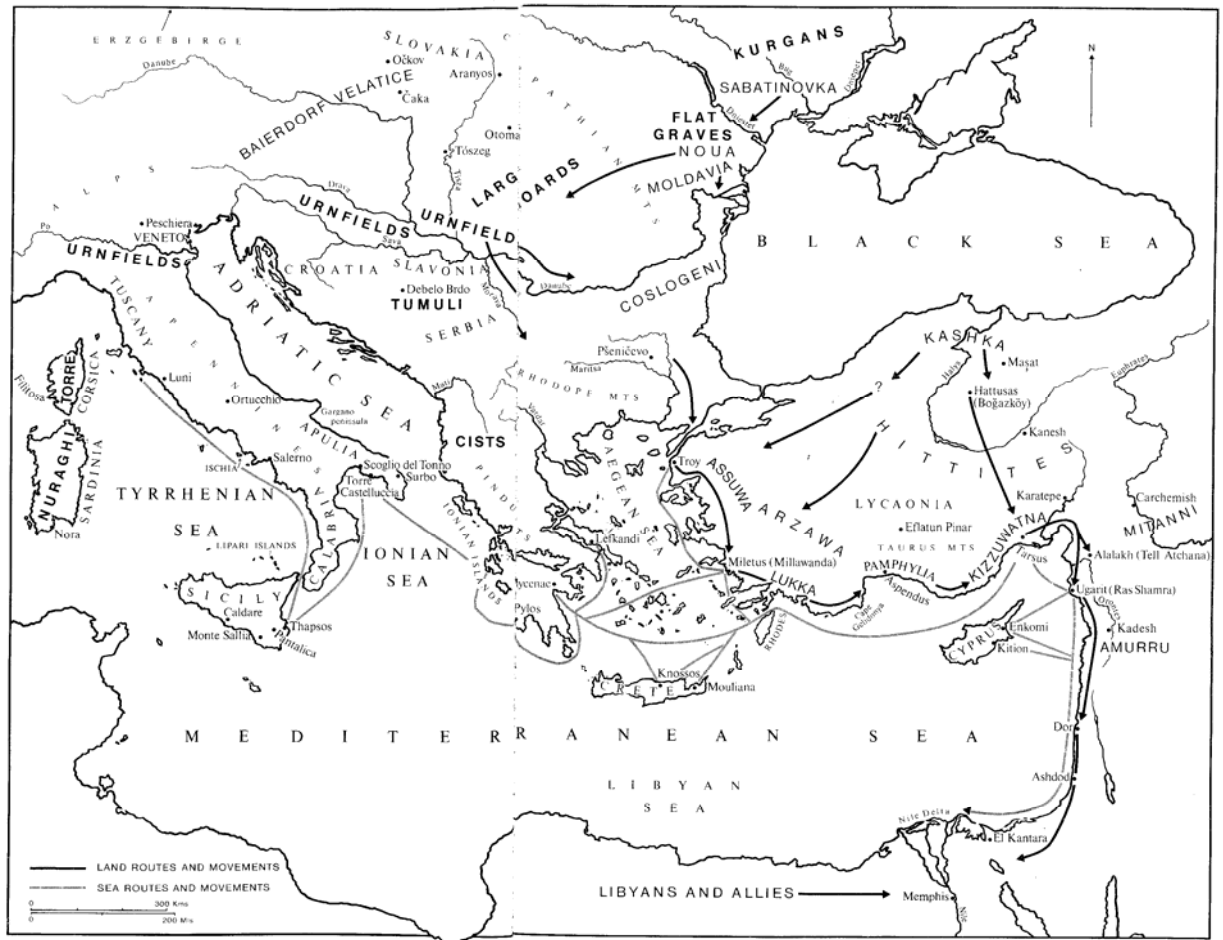
Figure 5: A general map which includes the central and eastern Mediterranean during the 13th and 12th centuries BCE with possible immigration routes of the Sea Peoples. (Sandars 1985:14-15)

In Assyria and Babylon poor harvests, political unrest and continuous attacks by the Elamites in the south led to a decline in their influence in the region, especially the Assyrian power in Syria. During that period there was a growing ascendance of semi-nomadic groups, such as the early Israelites in Palestine and the Arameans in Syria. In the latter country, the decline of the Assyrian power and the end of the Hittite authority had a dramatic negative effect on overland trade and led to the demise of key inland commercial centres such as Kamid el-Loz (Markoe 2000:26).

During the first quarter of the 12th century BCE a series of droughts affected north-east Africa and led to poor harvests in Egypt with a devastating effect on that country's

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economy. After the reign of Ramesses III, Egypt completely lost its western Asiatic empire and the resultant loss in foreign revenue intensified the weakening of the country's economy. The settlement of the Philistines and probably the Sikil and the Sherden along the Mediterranean coast of Palestine was catastrophic to Egypt's commerce with southern Anatolia and the Levant, thus depriving Egypt of the mineral resources of Anatolia. It seems that by the reign of Ramesses VI (1153-1145 BCE) there was no more any maritime commerce between Egypt and Phoenicia (Markoe 2000:25).

Many scholars have blamed the Sea Peoples for being the main factor in these upheavals and thus contributing towards the initiation of the 'dark age' at the end of the Late Bronze Age in the Eastern Mediterranean region. As various factors were involved, this contention appears to be grossly unfair, but according to Markoe (2000:23) it seems that these foreigners at least contributed in part to this collapse. This is, however, not the contention of the majority of scholars in the field, who hold that the Sea Peoples resulted from the upheavals rather than contributing to it (see below). The 'Sea Peoples' in general as a concept does not fall within the scope of this study and I intend to treat the textual evidence regarding the subject in a cursory manner to serve as background for the main purpose, thus concentrating on the Sikil in particular. The historical sources include Ugaritic, Egyptian, Hittite, Hebrew and Greek sources (Oren 2000:xvii), but for purposes of this study (concentrating on the Sikil) the Ugaritic, Hittite, and Egyptian, sources are relevant and will be discussed in detail.

The texts identify the Sikil as one of the 'Sea Peoples' of the ancient Near East. The Sikil took part in the battle against the Egyptians in year eight of Ramesses III. They, along with the Philistines, were a major group depicted in the reliefs at Medinet Habu, portraying the battle (Pritchard 1955:262-263). The Sikil, as already pointed out, are also mentioned in the Wenamun story of the 11th century BCE.

Although the evidence presented does not remove all doubt, scholars point out that most of the evidence on the origins of the Sikil people suggests they came from, or shared a culture with the people of the Aegean or at least with Cyprus. The archaeological evidence leads to the conclusion that the Sea Peoples in general were not simply raiders, plundering established cities, but instead a group looking for a place to settle. The Sikil, however, as will be discussed later, may have been pirates and therefore an exception.

3.2 UGARITIC SOURCES

Ugarit (Ras Shamra) was situated in northern Syria, a maritime city with a strategic location less than a kilometre from the port of Minet el-Beida on the eastern Mediterranean coast and 4 kilometres from the Ras Ibn Hani promontory. It was actually situated at the crossroads of the economic activity of the region during the 12th century BCE. Its position on the Mediterranean permitted trade relations with Mycenaean Greece, Cyprus, the coastal areas of Anatolia, Palestine and Egypt. It was also situated at the junction of the route connecting these Mediterranean regions with inland Syria and the Hittite regions, the Euphrates and Mesopotamia (Caubet 2000:35).
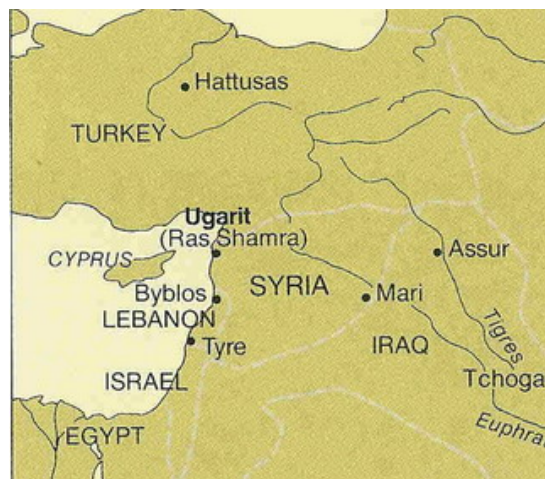
Figure 6: Location of Ugarit in northern Syria.
(Reader's Digest: 80)

During the late 13th century BCE, Ugarit was facing great danger from the west from the advancing Sea Peoples. The city was not sufficiently fortified and had neither the military capacity nor the naval force to repel an incursion from the sea. Amongst its

allies, Cyprus had already been invaded by the Sea Peoples (probably the Sikil), while the Hittites and the king of Carchemish were also struggling against the Sea Peoples and could not render assistance to Ugarit. Just before the fall of Ugarit during the twelfth century BCE, the Hittite king wrote inter alia to an official of the Ugaritic king, Ammurapi (Letter RS 34.129): 'I gave orders to (your king) regarding Lanadusu, who was taken captive by the Šikilayū, who live on ships….Now you (are to) send Landusu, whom the Šikilayū captured here to me. I will ask him about the manner of the Šikila and, afterwards, he can return to Ugarit' (Stager 1998:337; Gray 1967:146).
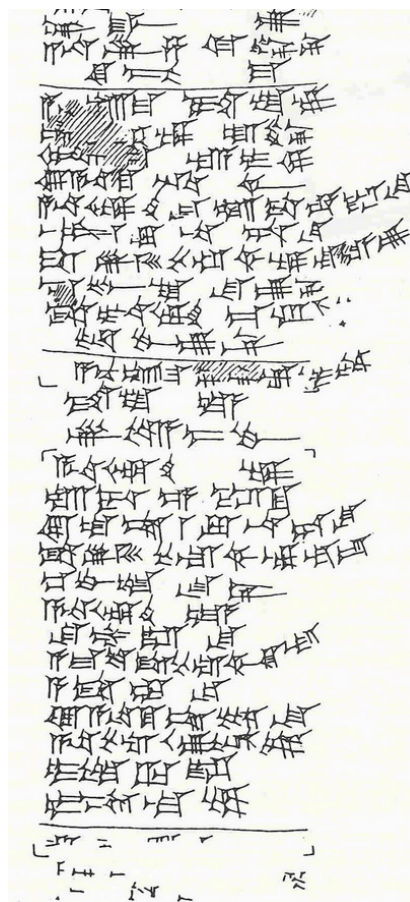
Figure 7: Letter RS 34.129 mentioning the *Sikilayu*
'who live on boats'.
(Yon 1992:116)

According to Stern (2000b:198), this implies that the Sikil are depicted here as pirates 'who live on ships.' They terrorised the coastal waters of Ugarit before it fell to them about 1195. BCE. Stager (1998:337) states that this text written by a Hittite in cuneiform Akkadian is a vivid account of the Sea Peoples' activities not long before the

explosions which Ramesses III recorded in his 'War against the Peoples of the Sea', where also the Sikil are mentioned as part of the Sea Peoples' confederation[1].

These descriptions answer partially at least one of the questions raised in paragraph 1.2 above, for it seems that at least one of the Sea Peoples, the Sikil, was a maritime people.

3.3 HITTITE SOURCES

The history of the Hittite civilization is known mostly from cuneiform texts found in the area of their empire, and from diplomatic and commercial correspondence found in various archives in Egypt and the Middle East. I will deal comprehensively with the history of the Hittites as an example to illustrate the strength of the Sea Peoples as an invading power to succeed in destroying this once mighty empire. Around 2000 BCE, the region centered in Hattusa, that would later become the core of the Hittite kingdom, was inhabited by people with a distinct culture who spoke a non-Indo-European language. The name "Hattic" is used by Anatolianists to distinguish this language from the Indo-European Hittite language, that appeared on the scene at the beginning of the 2nd millennium BCE and became the administrative language of the Hittite kingdom over the next six or seven centuries. "Hittite" is a modern convention for referring to this language. The native term was Nesili, i.e. "In the language of Nesa" (Hoffner 2004:132-134).

The early Hittites, whose prior whereabouts are unknown, borrowed heavily from the pre-existing Hattian culture, and also from that of the Assyrian traders. in particular the cuneiform writing and the use of cylindrical seals.

The early history of the Hittite kingdom is known through tablets that may first have

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[1]The attacks of the Sikil are more fully described in Chapter 3.3 below.

been written in the 17th century BCE but survived only as copies made in the 14th and 13th centuries BCE. These tablets collectively are best known as the Annitta-texts after a king by that name (Hoffner 1994:128). The founding of the Hittite Empire is usually attributed to Hattusilis I, who conquered the plain south of Hattusa (from where he ruled all the way to the outskirts of Yamkhad (modern-day Aleppo) in Syria. Mursili continued the conquests of Hattusilis, reaching through Mesopotamia and even ransacking Babylon itself in 1595 BCE. The next monarch of any note following Mursili I was Telepinus (ca. 1500 BCE), who won a few victories to the southwest, apparently by allying himself with one Hurrian state (Kizzuwadna) against another (Mitanni). His reign marked the end of the 'Old Kingdom' and the beginning of the lengthy weak phase known as the 'Middle Kingdom', whereof little is known. One innovation that can be credited to these early Hittite rulers is the practice of conducting treaties and alliances with neighbouring states; the Hittites were thus among the earliest known pioneers in the art of international politics and diplomacy. With the reign of Tudhaliya 1, the Hittite Empire re-emerges from the fog of obscurity. During his reign (c. 1400), he vanquished the Hurrian states of Aleppo and Mitanni, and expanded to the west (Gurney 1967:107-108).

Another weak phase followed Tudhaliya I, and the Hittites' enemies from all directions were able to advance even to Hattusa and raze it. However, the Empire recovered its former glory under Suppiluliumas I (ca 1350 BCE), who again conquered Aleppo, reduced Mitanni to tribute under his son-in-law, and defeated Carchemish, another Syrian city-state.

After Suppiluliumas I, and a very brief reign by his eldest son, another son, Mursilis II became king (ca 1330 BCE). Having inherited a position of strength in the east, Mursilis was able to turn his attention to the west, where he attacked Arzawa and a city

known as Millawanda in the coastal land of Ahhiyawa. Hittite prosperity was mostly dependent on control of the trade routes and metal sources. Because of the importance of Northern Syria to the vital routes linking the Cilician gates with Mesopotamia, defence of this area was crucial, and was soon put to the test by Egyptian expansion under the ambitious Pharaoh Ramesses II. Although his own inscriptions proclaimed victory, it seems more likely that Ramesses was turned back at the Battle of Kadesh by the Hittite king Muwatallis, successor to Mursilis II. This battle took place in the 5th year of Ramesses II (ca 1275 BCE by the most commonly used chronology) (Gurney 1967:-209; Kempinski 1979:28-35).

Urhi-Teshub, the son of Muwatallis, took the throne as Mursilis III, but was quickly ousted by his uncle, Hattusilis III after a brief civil war. In response to increasing Assyrian encroachments along the frontier, he concluded a peace and alliance with Ramesses II, presenting his daughter's hand in marriage to the Pharaoh (Gurney 1967:209).

The "Treaty of Kadesh" between Ramesses II and Hattusilis III was a non-aggression pact and one of the oldest completely surviving treaties in history and it fixed their mutual boundaries in Canaan, and was signed in the 21st year of Ramesses II (c. 1259 BCE) (Harris 2001:44).

The Sea Peoples had already begun their push down the Mediterranean coastline, starting from the Aegean, and continuing all the way to Philistia, taking Cilicia and Cyprus away from the Hittites en route and cutting off their coveted trade routes. Both Hittite and Ugaritic documents tell of bitter naval battles near the shore of Cyprus and the Cilician coast between the Hittites and the Peoples of the Sea. The victories of the latter are confirmed by destruction layers in Hittite sites in both Anatolia and Syria. In attacks remarkably similar to those later described by Ramesses III as regards the

attacks on Egypt by the Sea Peoples, the Hittite king, Suppiluliuma II (ca 1207-1178), in his military record described how the Hittite Empire was attacked both by sea and land: 'The ships of the enemy from Alasia met me in battle at sea three times…When I reached dry land again. The enemies from Alasia came in multitude against me for battle….'(Singer 2000:27). It seems, therefore, that at this stage the Sea Peoples (probably the Sikil) had already invaded and conquered Cyprus and was using the island as a base to attack the rest of the Hittite Empire. This left the Hittite homelands vulnerable to attack from all directions, and Hattusa was burnt to the ground sometime around 1180 BCE in the wake of the mass migrations associated with the Sea Peoples. At the same time the Hittite Empire suffered from a protracted drought. The convergence of these elements led to the destruction of the Hittite Empire at the time of S   uppiluliuma II, the last Hittite king. The Hittite Empire thus (ca 1178 BCE) vanished from the historical record (Gurney 1967:109).

Figure 8: The Hittite Empire during the last half of the Fourteenth Century BCE.

(http://www.crystalinks.com/hittites.html)
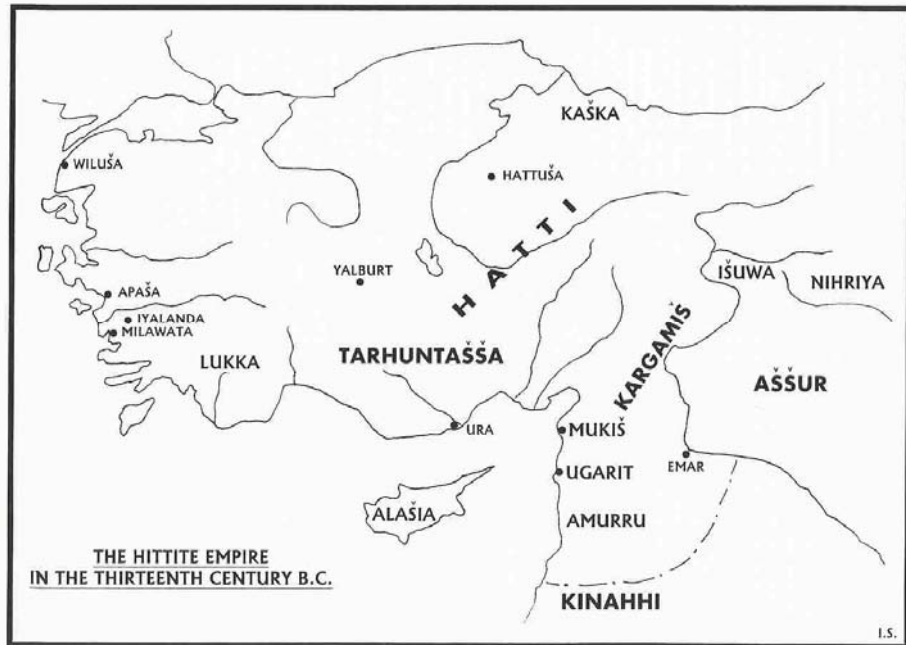
Figure 9: The Hittite Empire during the Thirteenth Century BCE.
(Singer 2000:23)

If one reads the Hittite texts referring to the Sea Peoples, the enemies from Alasia (Cyprus), in conjunction with the Ugaritic sources (see above), these enemies in all probability were the Sikil. It seems, therefore, that the Sikil were, during the decline of the Hittite empire, a formidable maritime force operating in the eastern Mediterranean. The base from where they operated appears to be Cyprus, but it is not clear exactly when they had taken the island from the Hittites. As a result of continual droughts, dissension at the periphery of the empire, and pressure from outside forces such as the Sea Peoples and the Phrygians, a Hittite population arrived in Canaan at the beginning of the 12th century BCE. The refugees or emigrants settled in several Canaanite cities.

3.4 EGYPTIAN SOURCES

3.4.1 INTRODUCTION

The Sea Peoples are mentioned in various Egyptian texts either as a confederation of peoples or as individual groups. It starts in the fourteenth century BCE during the Amarna-period and continues well into the New Kingdom (1570-1085 BCE [Ions 1997:141]). Sometimes they are depicted as enemies of Egypt and/or its vassal states

and on other occasions some of them are used as mercenaries in the Egyptian army or sent as forced labour to Canaan (Finkelstein 2000:159). During the reign of Ramesses II, Sherden served in the Egyptian army against the Hittites at the battle of Kadesh.

3.4.2 THE AMARNA LETTERS

The Amarna letters consist of clay tablets. The archive of Amarna letters begins about the thirtieth year of Amenophis III and extend to approximately the first year or so of Tutankhamun. During the 14th century BCE, Amenophis IV (Akhenaten) moved the capital of Egypt from Thebes to Akhetaten (the modern name being el Amarna), where he kept the correspondence of his father (Amenophis III) and his own. It consists of 350 letters on clay tablets. They were discovered in the late 1880's by Egyptian peasants (Moran 1992: xiii).

During the Amarna period the Near East was dominated by a group of 'Great Kings': the Egyptian pharaoh, the king of Mitanni, the king of Babylonia, the king of Assyria, and the king of the Hittites. The Great Kings are represented in about 50 of the letters. Two independent states, not quite of Great King status, are also represented in the letters. One of these is Arzawa, and the other is Alashiya, generally identified with Cyprus (Cohen & Westbrook 2000:6-8).

There were also numerous city-states under the influence of the Great Kings. The rulers of these city-states were referred to as 'mayors' by the Egyptians, and they essentially served as vassals to the Great Kings (Murnane 2000:107). The correspondence between these vassals (mostly situated in Canaan) and the Egyptian king generally consists of requests for aid or affirmations of loyalty. It is in the vassal correspondence that the Sea Peoples appear most frequently. The Amarna letters provide the earliest historical evidence of the Sea Peoples, mentioning some of the Sea Peoples and the way in which

they are depicted are confirmed by later historical information and archaeological evidence.

The ethnic groups, now classified as Sea Peoples, mentioned in the Amarna letters are the Sherden, the Denyen and the Lukka. Documents from the time of Ramesses II depict the Sherden as mercenaries of the Egyptians and the Lukka were later known as pirates from western Anatolia (Redford 1992:243; Sandars 1985:107). The Sherden are also mentioned *inter alia* in the Merneptah stele and the Denyen in the Medinet Habu-inscriptions. The Amarna letters examined below, come from three different authors: Rib-Hadda, Mayor of Gubla, Abi-Milku, Mayor of Tyre, and the King of Alashiya.

A type of person referred to as *Širdanu* appears in three of the extant letters, all of them from Rib-Hadda of Gubla (or Byblos). Moran (1992:393) remarks that this term 'probably has nothing to do with the Sherden of later Egyptian texts.' However, he makes this statement without any explanation. The two words are so similar, that one cannot ignore the possibility of a connection. EA 81 (Moran 1992:150-151) is a plea from Rib-Hadda to the Egyptian pharaoh (probably Akhenaten) for aid in a dispute with ᶜAbdi-Aširta, the ruler of Amurru and another vassal of the Egyptians. Rib-Hadda states that 'a *širdanu* of whom I know got away to ᶜAbdi-Aširta.' One gets the impression that the *širdanu* were perhaps a type of mercenary soldier working for the vassals of Egypt.

EA 122 and 123 (Moran 1992:201-202) are two different versions of the same letter, so they need not be discussed separately. Again, as in EA 81, they concern Rib-Hadda's plea for aid against an attacker. This time the offender is the commissioner Pihura. Pihura has 'killed *širdanu* people. Here it also seems as if the *širdanu* were acting in some military capacity.

In only one letter, EA 151 (Moran 1992: 238-239) is there a reference to the Denyen, written by Abi-Milku of Tyre. The letter contains a typical demand for aid against an attacker (Zimredda of Sidon). Abi-Milku announces that the king of *Danuna* died; his brother became king after his death and this letter suggests that the *Danuna* were a notable group with a king and that they had their own country. He also describes that fire destroyed the palace at Ugarit, a textual proof of the archaeological evidence regarding the destructions that characterised the end of the Late Bronze Age.

In EA 38 (Moran 1992:111-112) a group, called the Lukki, appears in a single letter from the king of Alashiya to an Amarna pharaoh: '…men of Lukki, year by year, seize villages in my own country.' This scenario corresponds with the picture in later documents of the Sea Peoples, in particular the Sikil, as wandering raiders.

3.4.3 THE MERNEPTAH STELE

The Merneptah stele is an Egyptian monument constructed to glorify the achievements of Pharaoh Merneptah (1213-1203 BCE), the successor to Ramesses II. It is a 2.3 meter-high basalt monument, written in hieroglyphics, set up at Merneptah's mortuary temple at Thebes to commemorate a victory in a campaign against the Labu and Meshwesh, Libyans and their Sea People allies, the Sherden, the Lukka, the Ekwesh, the Teresh and Shekelesh (Sandars 1985:105-106) during the fifth year of his reign (1207 or 1219 BCE depending upon the dating adopted), boasting not only this success, but celebrating a broad conquest of Asiatic peoples. A short portion of the text is devoted to a campaign in the Levant. It is also widely known as the 'Israel stele', as it is the only Egyptian document generally accepted as mentioning 'Israel', thus becoming the first known documentation of Israel. It is on the reverse side of a stele originally erected by the ear-

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[1] Dothan (1982a:1n5) states that W F Albright also did not agree to the reading *Sherden* in the Amarna Letters.

lier Egyptian king Thutmose III, but later inscribed by Merneptah and its text is mainly a prose report with a poetic finish, mirroring other Egyptian New Kingdom stelae of the time.

Figure 10: The Merneptah Stele.
(Bongioanni, Coce & Accomazzo 2001:186)

3.4.4 MEDINET HABU RELIEFS

When studying the Sea Peoples, scholars turn to one of the most detailed and well known texts concerning the Sea Peoples, the wall reliefs and inscriptions from Medinet Habu. Medinet Habu is a mortuary temple that was constructed for Ramesses III at Thebes, in Upper Egypt. The temple decoration consists of a series of wall reliefs and texts telling of the many exploits of the king, from his campaign against the Libyans to, most importantly, his war against the Sea Peoples. The texts and reliefs that deal with the Sea Peoples date to year eight of Ramesses III's reign, approximately 1186 BCE, when, according to the reliefs and the texts, Egypt was attacked by the Sea Peoples from the sea as well as on land and according to the inscriptions and reliefs were repelled and defeated both on land and at sea. The significance of these texts is that they provide an account of Egypt's campaign against the "coalition of the sea" from an Egyptian point

of view. In the inscriptions, Ramesses alludes to the threat the Sea Peoples posed, as can be seen in this portion of text:

'…the foreign countries made a conspiracy in their islands. All at once the lands were removed and scattered in the fray. No land could stand before their arms from Hatti[1], Kode, Carchemish, Artawa, and Alashiya on being cut off (at one time). A camp was (set up) in one place in Amor[2]. They desolated its people and its land was like that which has never come into being. They were coming forward toward Egypt, while the flames were prepared for them. Their confederation was the Peleset, Tjeker, Shekelesh, Denyen and Weshesh, lands united' (Medinet Habu, Year 8 inscription, Pritchard 1955:262; Wilson 1969:262). Here, once again, is textual evidence of the invasion of Cyprus by the Sea Peoples. In my opinion Cyprus was a key factor in the whole saga of the Sea Peoples and the name of this island crops up continuously throughout this study.

It is important to note that a chronological sequence regarding the Sea People emerges in the texts. In the Ugaritic and Hittite texts we read of the attacks by the Sea Peoples, mainly the Sikil. The Medinet Habu inscriptions confirm such attacks and the defeat of the peoples of those regions by the Sea Peoples. According to these inscriptions, therefore, it seems that the attacks on Egypt were made after the destruction of the Hittite Empire and Ugarit.

The inscriptions also specify the seven groups which were involved in the "confederation" of Sea Peoples. The main inscription mentions five names: Peleset, Sikil, Shekelesh, Denyen and Weshesh. Other inscriptions also mention the Sherden and

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[1]Hatti was the Hittite Empire, Kode the coast of Cilicia and northern Syria, Carchemish the city on the Euphrates, Arzawa somewhere in or near Cilicia and Alashiya probably Cyprus (Pritchard 1955:262)

[2]According to Pritchard (1955:262) Amor was probably on the north Syrian plain or in Coele-Syria. From a chronological point of view it makes sense that after the fall of Ugarit, the Sea Peoples mustered their forces in northern Syria before attacking the Egyptian forces by land and by sea.

Teresh partaking in the invasion (Mazar 1992:304). This is the only text that mentions both the Shekelesh and the Sikil (Tjeker) as separate peoples. From the other texts one would be tempted to conclude that they might have been the same people.

Although the text and reliefs give the impression that the Egyptians were facing a great and strong military presence, it is possible that the battles described at Medinet Habu were not one coherent event, but were actually small skirmishes between the Sea Peoples and the Egyptians at different intervals that were conflated in Ramesses' account into two grandiose battles (Cifola 1988:275-306). Some scholars are of the opinion that Ramesses actually appropriated the victory of Merneptah over the Sea Peoples for himself. This is not such a farfetched idea if one looks at the similarities between the two versions (in this regard see Redford 2000:11). Cifola (1988:305-306) concluded that, due to the vague manner in which the northern enemies were described, they could not possibly represent one force, and were probably never joined into a clearly defined confederation (O'Connor 2000:94). The Medinet Habu inscriptions are also significant for their artistic depictions of the Sea Peoples. These provide valuable information about the appearance and accoutrements of the various groups, and can lend clues towards deciphering their ethnic backgrounds (Redford 1992: 251).

From the textual evidence on the temple walls, it appears that the Peleset and the Sikil made up the majority of the Sea Peoples involved in the year 8 invasion. In the artistic depictions, both types are depicted wearing a fillet, from which protrudes a floppy plume and a protective piece down the nape of the neck. Their armament included long swords, spears and circular shields, and they are occasionally shown wearing body armour.[1]

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[1]The similarity between the dress, arms and ships of the Sea Peoples on the reliefs and those of the Mycenaean-Aegean peoples of that period will be pursued further in Chapters 4, 5 and 6.

Other groups, such as the Shekelesh and Teresh, are shown wearing cloth headdresses and a medallion upon their breasts. The weaponry that they carried consisted of two spears and a simple round shield. The Sherden soldiers are most obviously armoured in the artistic depictions, due to the thick horned helmets that adorn their heads (Redford 1992: 252). Although the majority of the Sea Peoples are clean-shaven, there are a few bearded Philistines and Sikil among the captives. These bearded figures show a remarkable resemblance to two contemporary artistic depictions found at Enkomi in Cyprus. These two figures are important in placing the Sea Peoples in relation to Cyprus (Mazar 1992:305).

The land battle and naval battle scenes provide a wealth of information on the military styles of the Sea Peoples. The reliefs depicting the land battle show Egyptian troops, chariots and auxiliaries fighting the enemy, who also used chariots, very similar in design to Egyptian chariots. Although the chariots used by the Sea Peoples are very similar to those used by the Egyptians, both being pulled by two horses and using wheels with six spokes, the Sea Peoples had three soldiers per chariot, whereas the Egyptians only had one, or occasionally two. The charioteers of the Sea peoples wear 'feather helmets'. Foot soldiers armed with lances, long swords and round shields, are depicted in groups of four (Mazar 1992:305).

The land battle scenes also give the observer some sense of the Sea Peoples' military organisation. According to the artistic representations, the Philistine warriors were each armed with a pair of long spears, and their infantry was divided into small groups consisting of four men each. Three of those men carried long, straight swords and spears, while the fourth man only carried a sword. The relief depicting the land battle is a massive jumble of figures and very chaotic in appearance, but this was probably a

stylistic convention employed by the Egyptians to convey a sense of chaos. Other evidence suggests that the Sea Peoples had a high level of organisation and military strategy (O'Conner 2000:95).
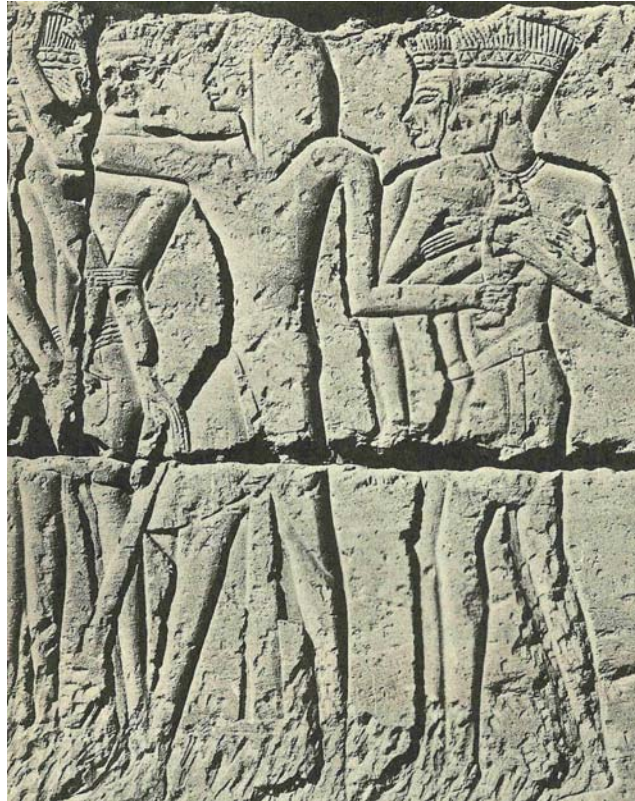
Figure 11: An Egyptian is leading two prisoners from the SeaPeoples, who are beardless and wear high feathered helmets. (From the reliefs at Medinet Habu)

(Pritchard 1969:19)

A striking feature of the land battle scene is the imagery of ox-pulled carts carrying women and children in the midst of a battle. These carts seem to represent a people on the move (Sandars 1985:120), thus migrants and not merely military invaders (Mazar 1992:305). These oxcarts, as Yadin (1963:339f) points out, are identical to those still in use today in Anatolia and in the Middle East. Stager (1998:341) believes that the ox-carts and charioteers involved in the land battle could have been supplied from their base in southern Canaan whereto they were brought by war- and transport ships. According to this theory, the Philistines had already been established in the Pentapolis area in Philistia at the time when other parts of the country were dominated by the Egyptians

and Canaanites (Ussishkin 1998:217). I tend to agree with this theory, rather than adhering to the perception, from the Onomasticon of Amenemope (see below) that, as a result of their defeat, the Sea Peoples, including the Philistines, were settled by the Egyptians in Canaan. This scenario probably also applies to the Sikil and Sherden.

Figure 12: A scene from the land battle on the Medinet Habu-reliefs showing inter alia ox-carts, women and children. (Nibbi 1975:111)

The other famous relief at Medinet Habu regarding the Sea Peoples is of the naval battle. This scene is also shown in a disorganized mass, but as was mentioned earlier, was meant to represent chaos, again contradicting the Egyptians' descriptions of the military success and organisation of the Sea Peoples. The naval battle scene is valuable for its depictions of the Sea Peoples' ships, their dress and their armaments. The Egyptians and the Sea Peoples both used sails as their main means of naval locomotion. However, interestingly, the Sea Peoples' ships appear to have no oars, which could indicate new navigation techniques (Dothan 1982a:7). Their square sails are furled as if the ships were stationary during the battle (Figures 13 and 15).

Another interesting feature of the Sea Peoples' ships is that all the prows are carved in the shape of bird heads, which has caused many scholars to speculate an Aegean origin for these groups. Wachsmann (2000:121) states: 'The Sea Peoples' ships at Medinet

Habu so closely parallel what we know of Mycenaean galleys that in our present state of knowledge we cannot differentiate between their construction. Either the ships in use

Figure 13: Schematic representation of the naval battle depicted on the mortuary temple of Ramesses III at Medinet Habu.

(Stager 1991:35)

by the Sea Peoples were Mycenaean, or such ships were patterned closely on Mycenaean prototypes.' According to Stager (1998:338-339) this depiction of Sea Peoples' ships closely resembles a boat painted on a Mycenaean IIIC krater from Tiryns (Figure 14).

Figure 14: Mycenaean IIIC krater from Tiryns depicting a 'bird boat.'

(Stager 1998:339)

Figure 15: Detail from a large scene of the naval battle between Egyptians and Sea Peoples depicting one of four Egyptian ships which are engaged in battle with five enemy vessels (from Medinet Habu). (Pritchard 1969:114)[1]

Redford's (1992:251-52) conclusions from the reliefs at Medinet Habu suggest a connection to the Aegean. He also notes that the ships identified as 'Sikilare' more in the Aegean style than any other. The Sikil warriors are depicted in what he calls 'Hoplite-like plumes' on their helmets, often identified as Greek. These helmets have a horizon-tal band bearing various geometric ornaments; above the band there are vertical lines, possibly depicting leather strips. In another scene, captives with such headdress are identified as Philistines, Denyen and Sikil. On two other ships warriors wear horned helmets, the gear normally worn by the Sherden (Mazar 1992:304). The Sikils fight with short, straight swords, long spears, and rounded shields, Aegean style equipment.

Medinet Habu is still the most important source for understanding the Sea Peoples, their possible origins, and their impact on the Mediterranean world. To this day, no other source has been discovered that provides as detailed an account of these groups, and this mortuary temple still provides the only absolute date for the Sea Peoples.

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[1]The Egyptian ship consists of a crescent-shaped keel, a single mast topped by a crow's-nest just above the yard arm with its furled sail. A row of oars and a large paddle used as a rudder. In contrast with ships of the Sea People where the prows end in birds' heads, the prow of the Egyptian vessel ends in the head of lioness which holds the head of an Asiatic in her mouth.

3.4.4 PAPYRUS HARRIS

'I (Ramses III) extended all the boundaries of Egypt; I overthrew those who invaded them from their lands. I slew the Denen in their isles, the Thekel and the Peleset were made ashes. The Sherden and the Weshesh of the sea, they were made as those that exist not, taken captive at one time, brought as captives to Egypt, like the sand on the shore.' (Papyrus Harris, par 403, as quoted by Breasted 1962:201).

The Papyrus Harris, now located in the British Museum, comes from Thebes and is an important source for the history of the early Twentieth Dynasty. It is the largest extant ancient Egyptian papyrus and dates to early in the reign of Ramesses IV, the successor of Ramesses III. The document is unique not only in its size, but also in its remarkable abundance of valuable historical documentation. The Papyrus Harris is essentially a summary of the important events of Ramesses III's reign, prepared by Ramesses IV, but written from the point of view of Ramesses III.

Breasted (1962:92) divides the Papyrus into seven basic sections. The first is an introduction stating the ending date of Ramesses III's reign, along with his name and titles, and the purpose and dedication of the document (Breasted 1962:110-111). The next three sections detail the contributions made by the king to the townships of Thebes, Heliopolis and Memphis, respectively, along with dedicatory prayers to the gods of these towns and lists of donations made by the king to the local temples (Breasted 1962: 111-177). Following is a general section detailing the king's contributions to smaller temples (Breasted 1962:177-191), and a summary of the total contributions made by Ramesses III (192-198). Section VII is the historical section, recounting the accession of the king, his organisational policies, his military campaigns, and his death (Breasted 1962:198-206).

The Sea Peoples are mentioned in the historical section in the context of the northern wars of year 8 of the reign of Ramesses III. (Breasted 1962:201). Ramesses describes

the northerners as invaders of Egypt's borders, and describes their place of origin as 'islands.' The specific peoples mentioned in the text are Dauna, Sikil (Tjakker), Peleset, Sherden and Weshesh. The Sherden and Weshesh are singled out as being 'of the sea,' which is consistent with their depiction in other sources of the time as oceanic nomads and pirates (Redford 1992: 244). This of course also applies, according to the Ugaritic sources, to the Sikil.

3.4.6 THE ONOMASTICON OF AMENEMOPE

The Onomasticon of Amenemope is a collection of nine different manuscripts, attributed to Amenemope, son of Amenemope. These manuscripts, now scattered in various museums throughout the world, were found and purchased in different localities in Egypt during the last two centuries. Virtually nothing is known concerning Amenemope except that he was a 'scribe of sacred books in the House of Life.' These manuscripts have been dated to the end of the reign of Ramesses IX.

A resettlement program by Ramesses III of the Sea Peoples after his defeat of them, is set out in the Onomasticon which mentions those areas settled by the Sea Peoples in Canaan that were within the sphere of Egyptian influence. The three Sea Peoples included are the Philistines, the Sikil and the Sherden. Ashkelon, Ashdod, and Gaza are listed as cities situated in the territory controlled by the Philistines. The emphasis Amenemope gives to these three Philistine cities suggests that this territory still served as an Egyptian line of defense, and that the Philistines at this time were still, at least nominally, under Egyptian rule (Dothan 1982b:21). According to Dothan (1982a:4) the Onomasticon gives a reasonably accurate picture of the demographic situation on the Palestinian coast at the end of the Twentieth and the beginning of the Twenty-first Dynasty. It indicates that the Philistines settled on the southern part of the coast and the Sikil further north, but where exactly the Sherden settled is not revealed. It presents a picture of a disintegrating Egyptian Empire which left a vacuum in the region, allowing

Asiatics and others to challenge its dominance over the area of Canaan (Dothan 1982b:21). I am of the opinion, however, that for logistical reasons, these Sea Peoples had settled in Canaan before the attacks on Egypt.

3.4.7 THE REPORT OF WENAMUN

The Wenamun papyrus containing the Report of Wenamun, now in the Moscow Museum, was found at el-Hibeh in Middle Egypt and dates to the Twenty-first Dynasty (11th century B.C.), shortly after the events in the story. This is a story by Herihor with the permission of Smendes I, prince of Tanis.

It is the tale of the experiences and trials of an Egyptian official who sailed from the city of Tanis in Egypt to Byblos to buy cedar wood around 1100 BCE. 'Within the month I reached Dor, a harbour of Zeker' (Goedicke 1975:149) (The term _Tkr_ (Sikil), appears in three places in the Report). There he is robbed of the gold and silver he had brought in payment for the cedar wood by one of his own crew who fled to the city of Dor. He requested the king of the Sikil, Beder, to turn over the robber but his request was in vain. Penniless he proceeded to Tyre and finally to Byblos. Without money he is received in diffident fashion by the Byblian prince Zekerbaal, who demanded payment be sent from Egypt before the order for the timber could be filled. Wenamun complied and sent a message to Egypt and the messenger came back with gold, silver, clothing, linen and ox hides. Zekerbaal, after receiving partial payment, was pleased and ordered the timber to be cut and delivered to Wenamun. As Wenamun prepared to depart he is intercepted by 11 Sikil ships which have been sent to capture him. Zekerbaal interceded on Wenamun's behalf and the latter managed to escape, but his ship is then driven off course by a storm to Cyprus, where he is met at the port by an unnamed Cypriot queen. Here the account breaks off (Goedicke 1975:158).

Herm (1975:48) interprets the sudden appearance of the Sikil ships at Byblos as a show of force to convince Wenamun that they should transport the timber to Egypt rather than he himself. I cannot agree with this contention, for there are no indications in the text for such a conclusion. The Sikil merely said to Zekerbaal: 'Restrain him! Do not send ships with him to Egypt' (Wenamun's Report XXVIII) and 'Assign to us who comes from those ships, beat the one whom you are sending to Egypt as our enemy!' (Wenamun's Report XXX) (Goedicke 1975:157). The cause of the animosity is not revealed, but it seems as if the Sikil (Wenamun left Dor penniless and without any restraint from the Sikil) waited until his ships were loaded before attempting to capture them in an act of piracy.

Goedicke (1975:28) states that the term *Tkr* is used in this report to designate a country and not a people and that Dor is actually specified as 'harbour of Zeker' (sic), but there can be no doubt that it is identified with the ethnic term *Tkrw* (Zekuru), thus the Sikil people. He regards the Sikil as part of the indigenous Semitic population of Palestine in contrast to the Philistines who were a foreign people. He bases his conclusions on the 'facts' that 'There is no biblical evidence that this area was ever occupied by foreign immigration or occupation, just as the archaeological excavations at Dor did not produce any "foreign" evidence.' Goedicke, however, when he wrote the book in 1975, based his conclusions on the archaeological evidence on the findings of the 1923/1924 expedition (Goedicke 1975:132 n 31), which, as discussed below in Chapter 8.1.2, mainly concentrated on the Hellenistic and Roman Periods.

Stern (2000b:198) regards the tale as based on an official report and that it makes it clear that the Sikil were settled at Dor and that they operated a large fleet from its harbour. The report reveals much about maritime trade and politics (and possibly the maritime attack on Egypt) in the Levant in the early eleventh century BCE. The disres-

pectful way in which Wenamun is treated by Beder and Zekerbaal reflects the changed political circumstances of the period (Herm: 1975:47). Dor and Byblos are at this stage not subservient to Egypt. The self-confidence of Beder and Zekerbaal reflects a spirit of independence of the Sikil and the Phoenicians (Markoe 2002:27; Bikai 1992:132).

Figure 16: Map of Wenamun's journey

(http://nefertiti.iwebland.com)

CHAPTER 4

THE AEGEAN FACTOR

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Although the Aegean and the Mycenaeans do not form part of the Near East, they were an integral part of the system of the eastern Mediterranean. It seems that the Mycenaeans from the fifteenth through the thirteenth centuries BCE were a powerful people with massive fortresses and palaces built in places such as Mycenae and Tiryns and who attacked and destroyed Troy during the 13th century BCE. Towards the end of the 13th century BCE the Aegean world experienced a dramatic turning point in history followed by a process of major cultural transformation. The palaces were destroyed and this brought an end to the first high civilisation of the Greeks (Deger-Jalkotzy:1998 114). Around 1200 BCE, soon after such destruction the entire Mediterranean region (including the Greek mainland, the Aegean islands, Anatolia, Palestine and Egypt) became destabilised[1]. Civilizations were destroyed and cities devastated (Aharoni 198:14-16).

The archaeological evidence also shows that the Aegean society after the end of the 13th century BCE was in a phase of decline and downfall. Not all of these destructions are attributable to natural disasters or accidents, some were clearly the result of human action. Although the majority of scholars ascribe to the theory that this collapse was mainly caused by external factors, such as droughts or foreign invasion, Doumas (1998:129-130) proposes that it is rather the result of internal processes which the societies were unable to prevent, influence or reverse. According to Doumas no archaeological evidence indicating natural disasters or external incursions has been discovered., the collapse of the Mycenaean palatial system seems to have been caused

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[1] French (1998:2) has traced the relevant destruction of Mycenae to the second half of the 13th century BCE.

by internal factors, such as quarrels and strife.

These destructions were followed by a dramatic loss of population in the affected areas. What caused this diminished population? Some may have been killed during the upheavals which caused the end of the era of the Mycenaean palaces. The majority, however, seem to have fled their homelands for safer places of refuge (Deger-Jalkotzy 1998: 117). This mass emigration does not apply solely to the Mycenaeans but also to other peoples of a general Aegean background. According to Deger-Jalkotzy (1998:122) the ceramic records show that the initial movement of the Mycenaeans took them only as far east as the Cyclades and possibly Rhodes. Other peoples of a general Aegean background had, during the upheavals, ventured as far east as Cyprus. Kopcke (1998: 99) take it as proven that Cyprus was invaded at that time by people with western taste and western expertise.

Despite the upheavals and destructions, one may still ask why there was such a mass movement of peoples which ended up inter alia in Cyprus and on the eastern shores of the Mediterranean? Doumas (1998:130) argues that the collapse of the Mycenaean palace system also heralded the end of the monarchical system in Greece, which did not return to Greece for many centuries until the rise of the monarchs from Macedonia. The internal turmoil, therefore, resulted not only in destruction but also in a transfer of power. Those who had previously wielded power, had no longer a place in the region and had no option but to emigrate.

In order to reach far-off destinations such as Cyprus and the eastern Mediterranean coast, one may logically ask how did they get there? In this regard the small Aegean islands would have played a major role. The people from these islands had always been renowned for their experience as seafarers, who during the bygone era had transported Mycenaean merchandise and were well acquainted with the lands of the eastern Medi-

terranean. It would be a reasonable assumption that they carried the refugees from the Aegean on their journey eastward (Doumas 1998:130).

One would expect that a large influx of newcomers would not have been welcomed in all the regions where the refugees intended to settle and that the local inhabitants would have defended their territories fiercely. The attackers were, however, in all probability veterans from the Trojan War (Sandars 1985:186), who had no other choice but to be ruthless in their quest for a place to settle and their wanderings and raids gave birth to the concept of the Peoples from the sea or in modern parlance to the 'Sea Peoples.'

We know that one of the Sea Peoples, the Philistines, settled on the southern part of the eastern Mediterranean coast, and all indicators point to their origins being rooted in the Aegean[1]. Another group of the Sea Peoples, the Sikil, settled, according to the Onomasticon of Amenemope, north of the Philistines' settlements on the eastern Mediterranean coast and built the harbour at Dor, one of the oldest harbours in the Mediterranean. According to maritime archaeologist Avner Raban, who has been conducting underwater excavations at the site, the harbour installations are the first in Palestine that can be definitely attributed to one of the Sea Peoples. Raban has observed the harbour's many resemblances to harbour installations in Crete and in Cyprus (Stern 1998b :47)[2].

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[1] Niemeier (1998:17-65) argues that, despite recent claims by scholars such as Zangger, Mellaart and Singer that the Sea Peoples came from Western Anatolia, there is no evidence at all for western Anatolian settlement in the southern Levant and that all archaeological evidence indicates an origin of the Sea Peoples (at least for those settling between Akko in the north and Gaza in the south) from the Mycenaeanized Aegean (probably via Cyprus). This argument will not be pursued further in this study. I accept that the Sea Peoples who settled or allegedly settled in the southern Levant originated in the Aegean for reasons discussed below.

[2] For a further discussion of Raban's theories see Chapter 8.1.4 below.

Although the evidence presented so far does not remove all doubt, it seems that most of the evidence on the origins of the Sikil people suggests they came from, or shared a culture with the people of the Aegean. The archaeological evidence leads to the conclusion that these people were not simply raiders, plundering established cities, but instead a group looking for a place to settle

4.2 MYCENAEAN-AEGEAN MATERIAL CULTURE

By nature human beings are conservative and as a rule do not adapt quickly to sudden changes in their environment. They tend to adhere to known factors and adaptation to the new is usually a gradual process. When they are forced into an emigration process, especially one of mass emigration, they take their customs and acquired knowledge with them. The way they live their everyday lives will initially not be altered as far as the new environment will allow them to continue with their accustomed lifestyle. This applies to factors such as their basic architecture, their religion and religious practices, the way they dress, their fashions, the application of their trades et cetera. In short, at least initially, they will adhere to their old ways and, therefore, one would expect the material cultures of their old and new homes to be similar (allowing for environmental variations), if not identical, if they settle in considerable numbers in the same area or region.

In order to establish if there was an influx of Sea Peoples from the Aegean in general and Mycenae in particular into Cyprus and the Levant during the 12th and 11th centuries BCE, it follows that one would first have to study the prevailing Mycenaean-Aegean material culture of that period. I do not intend giving an extensive exposition of such material culture but deem it essential that the main features be highlighted.

New forms of Mycenaean pottery appeared after the fall of the palace system. Although it is based on previous types, there were stylistic changes and regional differences be-

tween various production centers. During the two centuries which followed the catastrophic events in the Aegean, the chronology and archaeology of the region are divided into three periods: late Helladic (LH) IIIC, Submycenaean (SubMyc) and Protogeometric (PG) (Deger-Jalkotzy 1998:114). Of the various crafts that flourished previously only two seemed to have survived the fall of the palatial centers, pottery-making and bronze-work. The relevant Mycenaean pottery during the period at hand is called Late Helladic IIIC Middle Phase (*circa* 1190-1050 BCE), the style identified and associated more clearly with Aegean influence in the eastern Mediterranean. In the archaeology of the southern Levant these pottery are called Mycenaean IIIC-pottery. There is a renaissance in pattern-painted pottery, much of it bearing representational rather than purely abstract motifs, in a variety of regional styles: Close Style (Argolid), Octopus Style (eastern Attica, Cyclades, Dodecanese), Pictorial or Fantastic Style (Lefkandi), Fringed Style (Crete). Non-Mycenaean handmade and burnished pottery disappears at some sites but appears to persist at others. Scenes depicting dancing and hunting came to the fore while scenes of warriors become increasingly popular, both as foot-soldiers, as chariot-borne troops as well as on ships (Deger-Jalkotzy 1998:1125).

One subgroup, called Mycenaean IIIC:1b was especially common in Cyprus. This pottery is typically Mycenaean in form: monochrome brownish black paint was applied on a light, sometimes greenish background to depict typical Mycenaean motifs such as spirals, various geometric patterns, birds and fish (Mazar 1992:307).
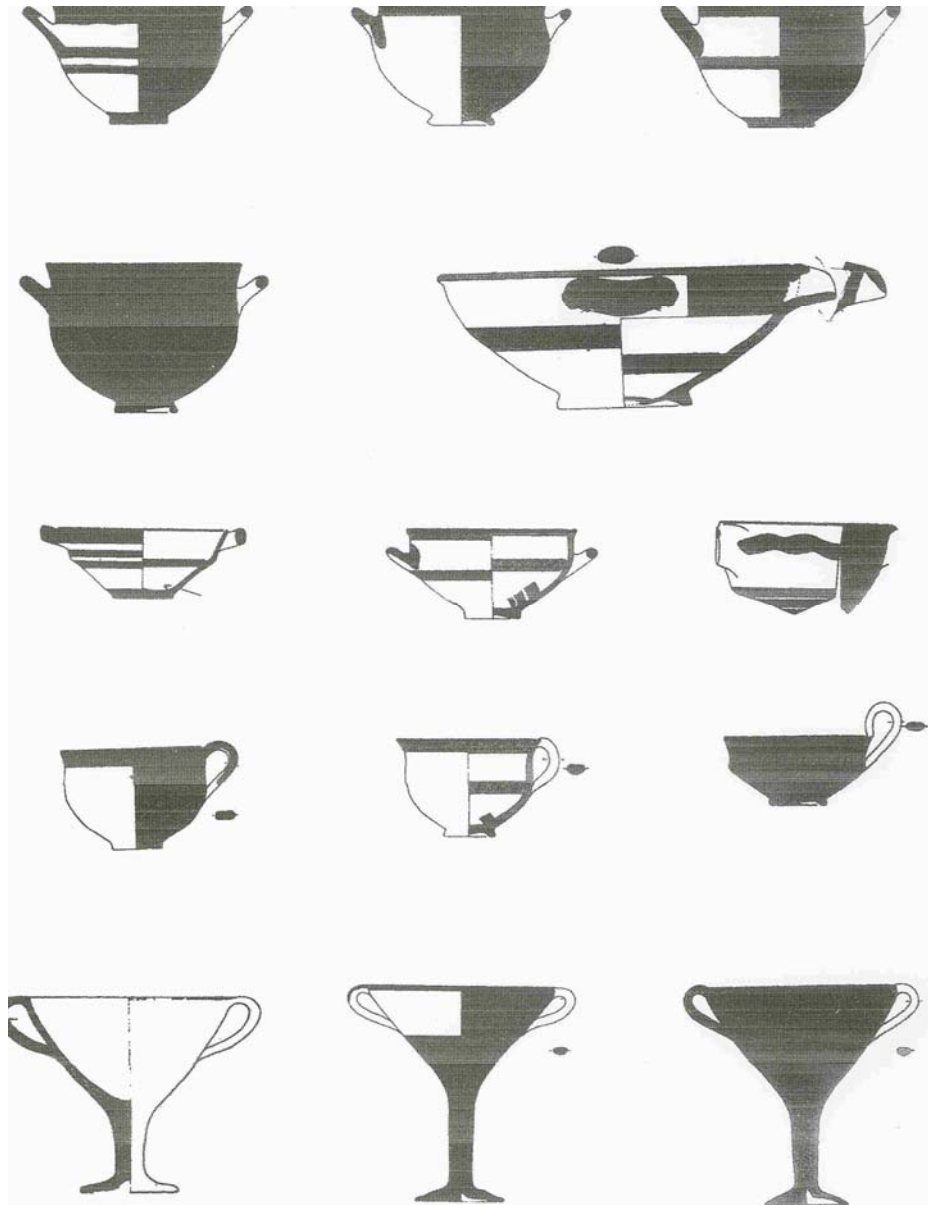
Figure 17: LH IIIC pottery from Greece

(Deger-Jalkotzy 1998:120)
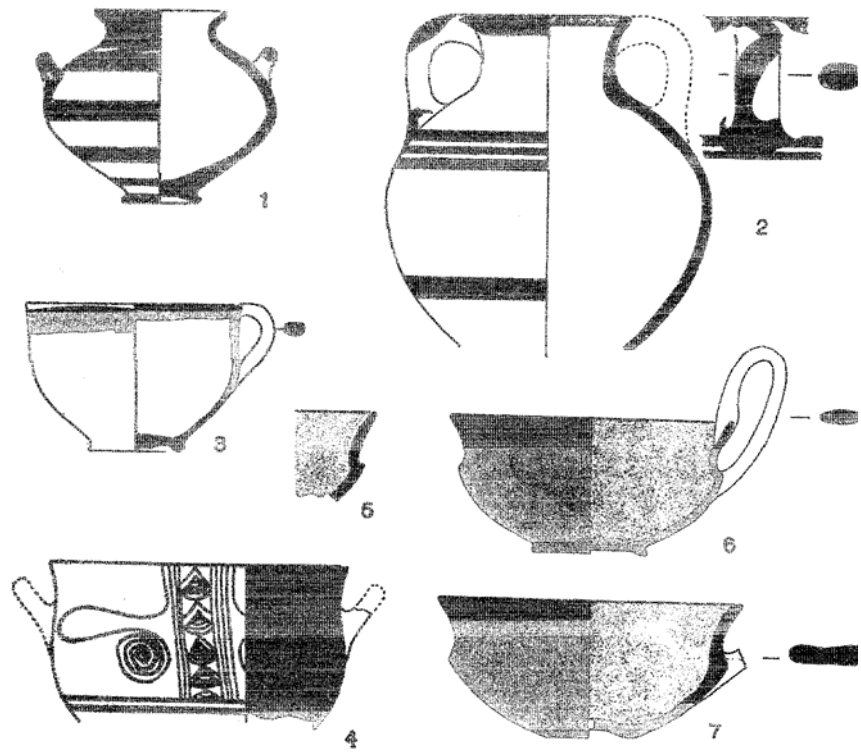
Figure 18: LH IIIC Early pottery from Lefkandi

(Deger-Jalkotzy 1998:123)
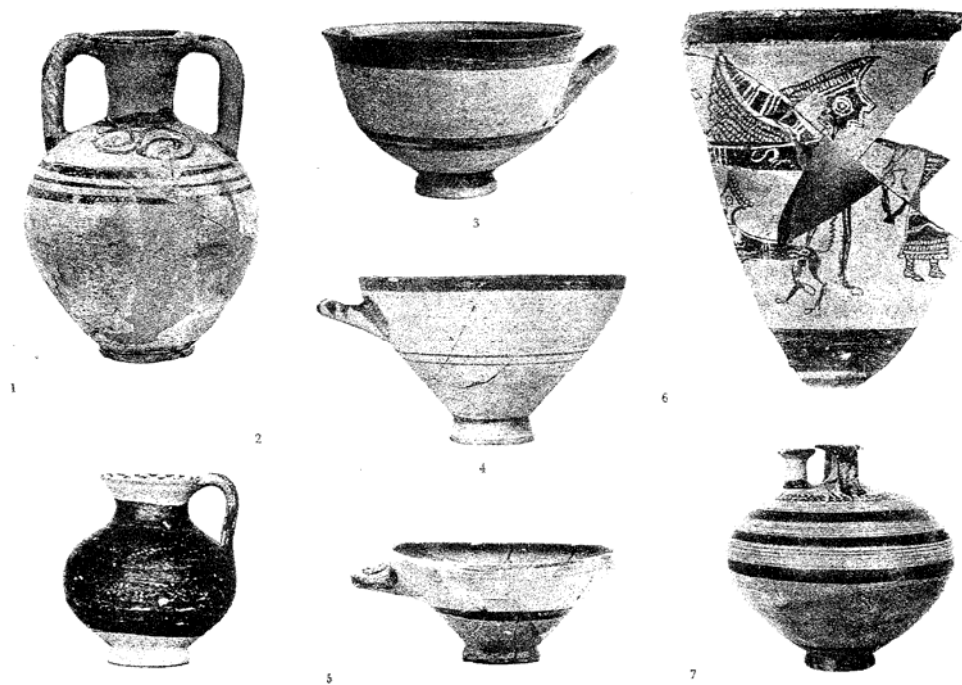
Figure 19: LH IIIC Middle pottery from Lefkandi

(Deger-Jalkotzy 1998:123)

Figure 20: LH IIIC pottery from Rhodes

(Deger-Jalkotzy 1998:121)

CHAPTER 5

AN INTERLUDE AT CYPRUS?

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Any study made about the Sea Peoples in general and more in particular the Philistines or Sikil cannot ignore the role that the island of Cyprus seemed to have played in their migration (See Vagnetti 1998:73). This island, called Alasia in the ancient texts, seems to be one of the key factors in tracing the migration of Aegean-Mycenaeans/Sea Peoples. The Syro-Palestinian coast and Cyprus were the only regions in the eastern Mediterranean where urbanisation was revived in the 12th century BCE (Iacovou 1998:135). We read in Hittite and Ugaritic texts that the island was taken from the Hittites by the Sea Peoples (probably the Sikil) and that naval battle between the Hittites and the Sikil were conducted in the vicinity of Cyprus. Archaeological records show that the emigration from the Greek mainland and the Aegean islands led in all proba-bility inter alia to Cyprus. When Wenamun had to flee the Sikil at Byblos he ended up in Cyprus and was received by the queen of the island. Sandars (1985:170) suggests a connection of the Sea Peoples to the hero Teucer (from western Anatolia), the traditional founder of Salamis on Cyprus. She further contends that the Sikil settled in the country around Dor after the attack on Egypt in 1186 BCE and that they have a better right than the Philistines to a maritime reputation.

There may be differences of opinion regarding the origins of the Sea Peoples, but the prominence of Cyprus cannot be denied. It is situated strategically on the main sea routes between Egypt and Anatolia and Greece and the Levant and even Mesopotamia.

5.2 SETTLEMENT OF AEGEANS

As related above, there was a mass emigration eastward from the Greek mainland[1] and the Aegean islands. The consequences of this emigration, according to the traditional view exemplified by scholars such as Karageorghis and Iacovou, are revealed in the archaeological records of Cyprus and the Syro-Palestinian coast. It seems that the island itself received large numbers of Aegean immigrants until it was totally Aegeanised during the 11th century BCE. The coming of the Sea People to Cyprus in the early 12th century BCE appears to be only one episode in a long succession of cultural influences and immigration from the Aegean world (Bunimovitz 1998:109). The cultural affinity between these settlers in Cyprus and the Philistines, who settled on the southern Palestinian coast, is so obvious, that one can state beyond reasonable doubt that they originate from the same region[2] (Doumas 1998:131-132). From the archaeological evidence it is clear that *circa* 1200 BCE revolutionary cultural changes occurred in Cyprus. According to Karageorghis (1998:276) these changes were the result of the appearance of a new ethnic element in Cyprus (See also Åström 1998:82-83). On Cyprus this element is called the Achaeans but in the Levant they are normally referred to as the Sea Peoples. He cites two examples of such innovations, which had previously been part of the Aegean world, brought to the island and also to the Levant. The first one is a particular type of freestanding hearth situated in the centre of a big hall, where people could sit on benches along the walls. Similar hearths have been discovered at Ekron (Tel Miqne) in Philistia dating to the 12th and 11th centuries BCE, as well as at

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[1] Sherratt (1998:292-313) approaches the Aegean/ Cyprus/ Levant-question from an economic perspective and blames international trade as the cause of the revolutionary changes that occurred during the relevant period. Cadogan (1998:6-160 alleges that foreign influences played no major role in Cyprus during the 13th century BCE. King 2000:290 pleads for a balance between local development and foreign influences.

[2]For a more detailed discussion about the Philistines and whether they emigrated directly to the Palestinian coast or whether they had a temporary stopover at Cyprus, see the next chapter.

Ashdod and Ashkelon (Karageorghis 1998:279-280). Dothan (1997:102) also points out that two similar hearths were found at Tel Miqne (Ekron) and: 'More than an architectural element, however, the hearth represented a tradition that reflected the social structure and habits of everyday life in the Aegean (and Cypriot) palaces and shrines as seen at the Mycenaean palaces of Pylos…, Mycenae…, and Tiryns….' She also emphasised (1997:103) that only one other hearth has ever been found in Canaan, at the Philistine temple at Tell Qasile. This hearth has a central circular depression with a platform paved with storage jar fragments, for which parallels are known from Enkomi in Cyprus. As regards hearths, therefore, there is a clear connection between the Aegean, Cyprus and one of the Sea Peoples, the Philistines.

Another feature which appeared during the 12th and 11th centuries BCE in Cyprus concerns bathrooms and bathtubs, which had been used in the Aegean, where they mostly occur in association with household architecture over a long period from the early 2nd millennium down to the 12th century BCE. Karageorghis (1998:280-281) states that similar bathrooms and bathtubs have been discovered in the Levant at Tel Miqne, Ashdod, Tel Abu Hawam and Tel Dan.

Although these two examples are discussed by Karageorghis, he states that he only does so because these features are not normally highlighted when comparisons are made of the material culture of the Aegean, Cyprus and the Levant during the 12th and 11th centuries BCE. In both the Levant and Cyprus new ceramic styles (e.g. Mycenaean IIIC:1b) are introduced, new monuments and sanctuaries appeared as well as new types of bronze weapons as well as items of personal use such as the fibula. Architectural changes include 'cyclopean walls', the 'dog-leg gate' and the 'shaft grave'; in the field of religion the 'horns of consecration' were introduced (Karageorghis 1992:81; 2000:-256-270).

There is, however, a remarkable resemblance between the early LH IIIC pottery in Greece (Figures 17 and 18) and the Late Cypriot III A (Mycenaean IIIC) pottery (Figures 21 and 22). This leads to a conclusion by Deger-Jalkotzy (1998:117-122) that the Late Cypriot IIIA pottery began at a time when the LH IIIC pottery in the Aegean was already well on its way. From this she concludes that the mass emigration from the Aegean to Cyprus took place much earlier than is normally accepted, thus before the final collapse of the Mycenaean palace-system. Those who emigrated after the collapse only reached as far as the Cyclades and possibly Rhodes. For purposes of this study, this argument is irrelevant. I have no intention of trying to pinpoint at what stage during the Mycenaean turmoil the migration took place. I want to establish that such a migration did occur and that some of these migrating peoples reached and settled Cyprus and ultimately regions of Palestine. For this purpose the comparative examples presented by Deger-Jalkotzy serve as corroboration of the first leg of the journey, the movement from the Mycenaean world to Cyprus. The final leg would be to compare the Palestinian archaeo-logical record of the Late Bronze/Early Iron Age 1 of Palestine with that of the Aegean and Cyprus. At this stage we already know that the ships that the Sea Peoples (probably the Sikil) used, were similar to those used in the Aegean. Their arms and clothing also appear to be Mycenaean.

Deger-Jalkotzy in comparing the pottery from Greece (Figures 17 and 18) with those from Cyprus (Figures 21 and 22) states (Deger-Jalkotzy 1998117-122) as follows: '…note the conical kylikes with monochrome interior, the carinated bowl with horizontal handle and linear decoration, as well as the closed shapes with horizontal bands. LH IIIC pottery from Rhodes (Figure 20), too, compares well with this Late Cypriot III A assemblage (Figure 21), but note that both the Rhodian and Cypriot one-handled conical caps find their parallels in LH IIIC Middle specimens found e.g. at Lefkandi Phase 2a

(Figure 19).' It should also be noted that the Middle phase refers to the period of final collapse of the Mycenaean system.
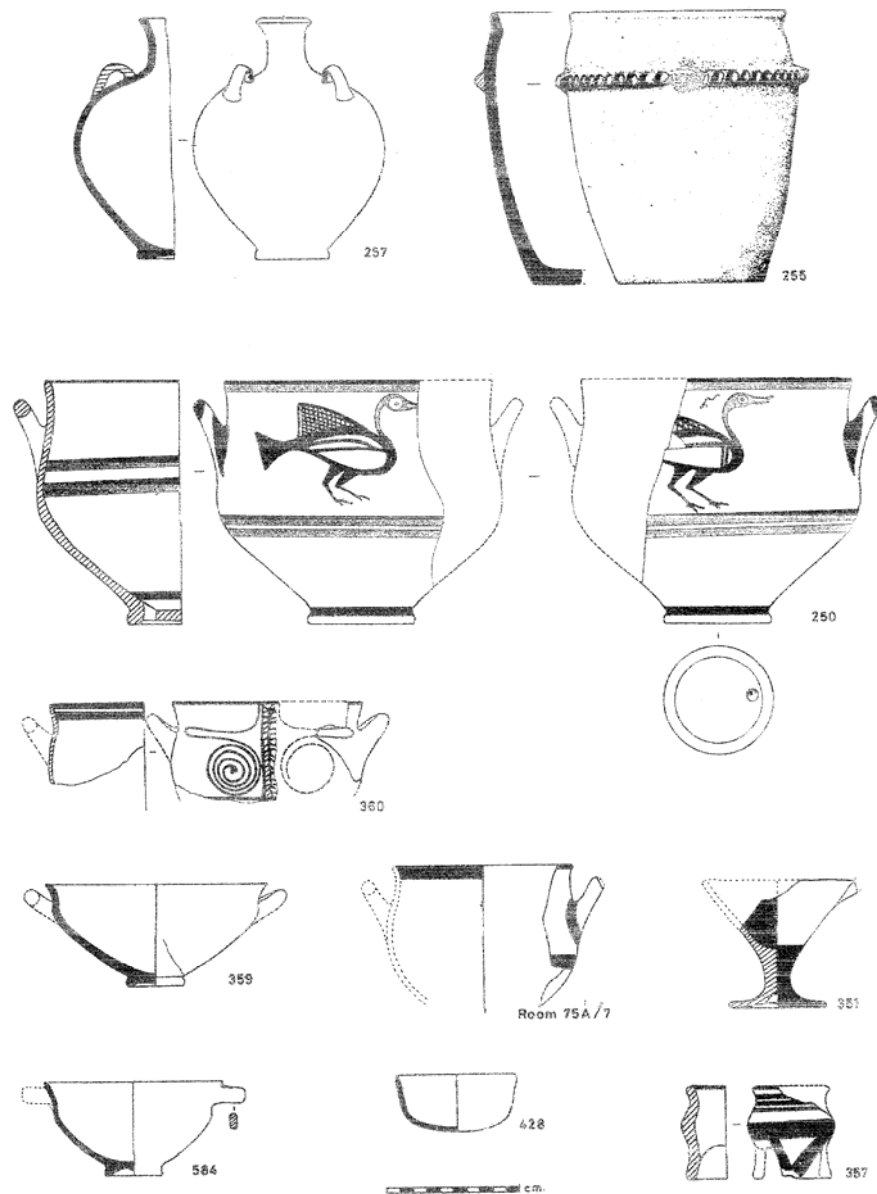
Figure 21: Late Cypriot IIIA (Mycenaean IIIC) pottery from Maa-Palaiokastro

(Deger-Jalkotzy 1998:118)
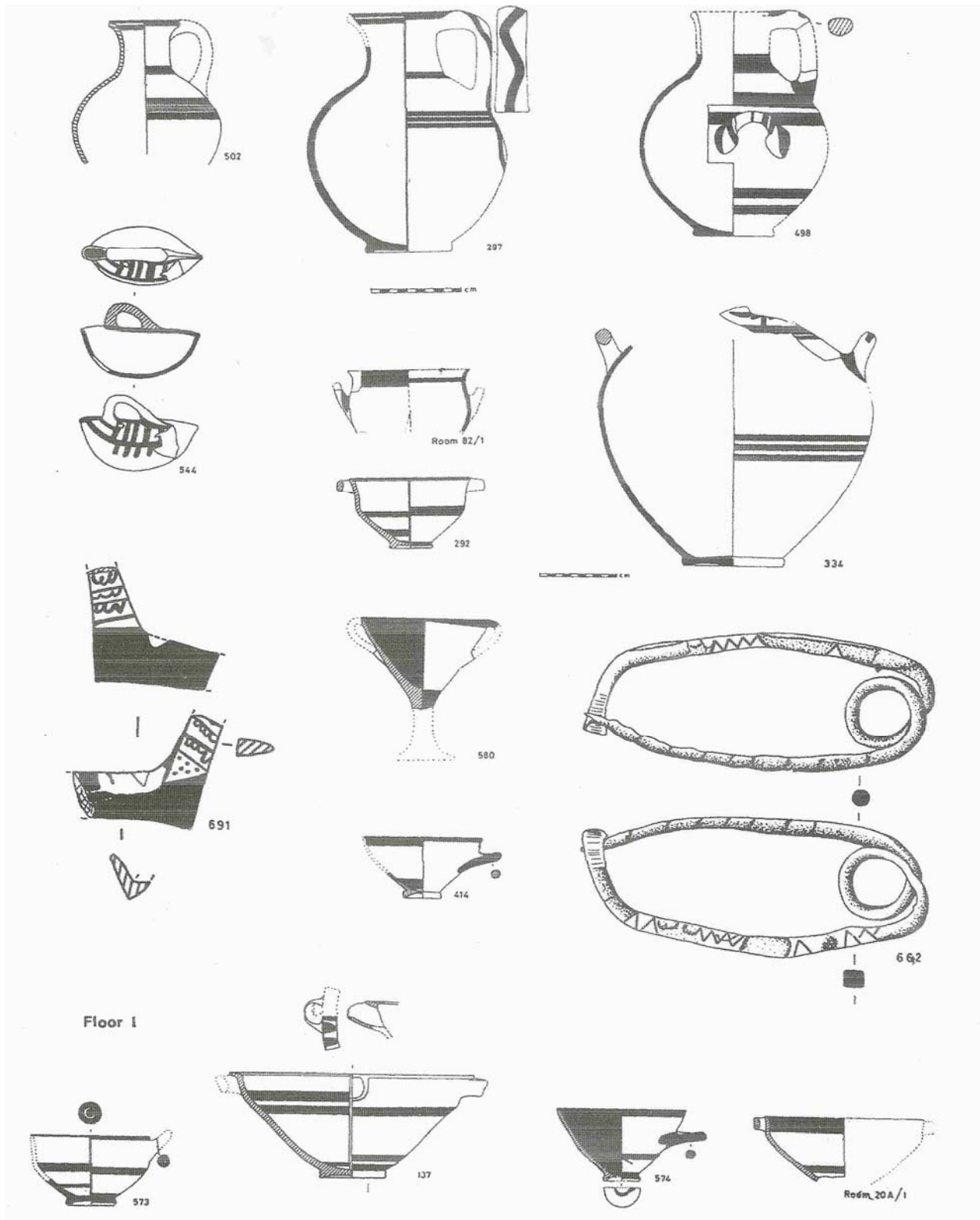
Figure 22: Late Cypriot IIIA (Mycenaean IIIC) pottery from Maa-*Palaiokastro*

(Deger-Jalkotzy 1998:119)

The previous exposition represents the traditional view regarding settlement patterns in Cyprus resulting from two alleged waves of settlement during the Late Bronze Age to the Early Iron Age I. This view has in recent years been challenged. The basis for the new direction of thought seems to be an erroneous equation between material culture and ethnic groups. " Does it really take a Mycenaean to use or even make a Mycenaean pot?' (Leriou sa:6). They argue that it is an erroneous platform to deduce from specific groups of artifacts specific ethnic groups as such. The fact that Mycenaean pottery are present in Cyprus does not lead to an inevitable conclusion that it resulted from Mycenaean invasions. Hall (1997:111-142) points out that cultural contacts, including migrations and invasions occur with virtually no perceptible change in the material record. These perceptions of equating material culture as such with ethnic groups resulted in a variety of mistakes being made in respect of the classification of material culture and in particular ceramics. Thus a scholar like Kling (1989I1991) demonstrated that the so-called Mycenaean IIIC1b pottery, which have been regarded as the most convincing evidence of the Mycenaean migration to Cyprus, are not always distinguishable from the local painted Mycenaeanising ceramics.

What alternatives do these scholars propose about events in Cyprus during the Late Bronze Age to the Early Iron Age I? Sherratt (1998:292-313) approaches the Aegean-/Cyprus/Levant-question from an economic perspective, rather than an archaeological one and blames international trade as the cause of the revolutionary changes that occurred during the relevant period. Cadogan (1998:6-160) alleges that foreign influen-ces played no major role in Cyprus during the 13th century BCE. King (2000:290) pleads for a balance between local development and foreign influences. These new views are not to be disregarded, but they are not yet coordinated and for purposes of this study, which is not intended to concentrate on Cyprus, I will accept the traditional views.

CHAPTER 6

THE PHILISTINES

6.1 INTRODUCTION

One of the basic laws of archaeology is to work from the known to the unknown. It stands to reason that if one intends to find similarities in the Levant of the early Iron Age 1-material culture of the Aegean, keeping the 'Sea Peoples' in mind, one should start with the Philistines. Not only is the Philistines the best known of the Sea Peoples but their material culture has been thoroughly researched and is therefore a known factor.

At the end of the Late Bronze Age and the beginning of Iron Age 1, whichever sources are used, one finds that diverse cultures coexisted side by side in Canaan. There were the remnants of the once mighty Canaanites, whose big city-states were declining or had already been devastated by invading peoples; the various Israelite tribes were in the hill country of Ephraim and Judah; the Philistines and (according to Egyptian textual evidence and the interpretation of archaeological evidence by some scholars) other Sea Peoples[1], including the Sikil and Sherden, in the coastal areas and finally the presence of the Egyptians, whose influence was in its final stages of decline (Trude Dothan 1998:148).

As early as 1836 CE, the famous French linguist J F Champollion recognised the Peleset, referred to in the manuscripts of Medinet Habu and the Onomasticon of Amenemope, as Philistines (Nibbi 1975:3) and this, despite a few dissenting views, has been the contention of most of the historians and archaeologists, who have made an in depth

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[1]Ussishkin (1998:215) even speculates that some of the Sea Peoples could have been responsible for the destruction of the Stratum VIIA-city at Megiddo

study of the Philistine, their history and material culture. We do not know what the word 'Philistine' means or from which language it derived. If we had known, we might have been closer to unravel the mystery of the beginnings of the Philistine people. In the Hebrew Bible the word is regularly written *P^elištīm*, singular *P^elištī,* which occurs 228 times; twice **P**^e*lištīyim* and the term *pĕlešet* eight times. *P^elištī(m)* is usually rendered as *allophuloi* ('strangers' or 'foreigners') in the Greek versions and less frequently as *phulistiim.* In the Egyptian texts they are referred to as *prst* ('Peleset') and in Assyrian sources as *pilisti* and *palastu* (Howard 2004:231). The territory which they inhabited during the time of their struggles with the Israelites, is known as **'eres P^elištīm** 'the Land of Philistines' or in poetical passages, simply **Pelešeth** 'Philistia' (Stewart Macalister 1965:1).

It should also be noted that of all the Sea Peoples, so vividly described in other texts, the Hebrew Bible only tells us of the Philistines. In view of the fact that they are depicted as the chief antagonists in Israel's struggle to invade and conquer the plains and coastal cities of Canaan, the emphasis placed on them makes a lot of sense.

6.2 ORIGINS

6.2.1 BIBLICAL SOURCES

In my opinion a good starting point to establish the origins of the Philistines would be the Bible, for the simple reason that until not so long ago the Bible was our main source of information regarding the Philistines. In the Bible they are portrayed as foreign invaders and settlers who conducted protracted wars with the Israelites. Whilst the Israelites initially settled the hill country of Canaan, the Philistines settled the coastal area and mainly in the cities of the Philistine Pentapolis: Ashkelon. Ashdod, Ekron, Gath and Gaza.

Trude Dothan (1982a:13) states that the biblical sources pertaining to the origin of the Philistines are few and often unclear. The earliest appears in the 'Table of Nations' in Genesis 10:14: 'Pathrusites, Casluhites and Caphtorites, from whom the Philistines came.'

In other biblical references the Philistines appear as synonymous with or parallel to the Cherethites (that is, Cretans); hence it is clear that they were thought to have a common ethnic origin. Zephaniah equates the land of the Philistines with the nation of the Cherethites (Zph 2:5), and for Ezekiel the two names are also synonymous (Ezk 25:16). The most direct biblical references to Philistine origins are found in Amos 9:7 and Jeremiah 47:4, where Caphtor is mentioned as their homeland. The term *Caphtor* occurs in cuneiform in several languages as *Kaptara* and in Egyptian texts as *Keftiu* and that can be identified with Crete and its environs (Howard 2004:232). Various biblical traditions suggest that the Caphtorites are to be identified with the Cherethites, or at least with some of them. According to one such tradition, the Caphtorites were among the Sea Peoples who settled on the southern Palestinian coast. Thus the biblical sources (with the exception of the 'Table of Nations') identified Caphtor with Crete and suggested that the Philistines originated in Caphtor-Crete (Dothan 1982a:13).

Another biblical source, which is sometimes ignored and which, in my opinion, is a direct pointer to the origin of the Philistines, we find in the story of David and Goliath, in particular in 1 Samuel 17:4-8, 17. In this passage Goliath is described as armed like a Mycenaean warrior: bronze helmet (*Kôba* is non-Semitic); coat of mail (*širyôn* is non-Semitic); bronze leggings (*mishâ* is non-Semitic); scimitar (*kîdôn,* curved sword with convex cutting edge); bronze javelin (*hânît)* with thong and ring for slinging (King & Stager 2001:228; Yadin 1963:265-266, 354-355).

I conclude that regarding the authors of the Bible, one can safely state that the Philistines came to Canaan from the Aegean Sea world, most likely the island of Crete.

6.2.2 OTHER TEXTUAL SOURCES

We have already encountered the Philistines in the Medinet Habu reliefs and the Onomasticon of Amenemope. There are, however, other textual sources such as Greek and Assyrian sources, but being of a much later period than the ones we are presently, concerned with, it will serve no purpose to refer to them. It is imperative to look closely at the Egyptian sources (see Chapter 3.4 above) which not only give clues to their origins, but also what happened to them after the battle related in the Medinet Habu inscriptions and reflected in the reliefs.

6.2.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

The end of the Late Bronze Age in Canaan is usually identified by the disappearance of Mycenaean IIIB and Late Cypriote IIB pottery types (Killebrew 2000:233). During that period, according to Dothan (1997:96), the Philistines arrived in Canaan from the Aegean as hostile invaders at the beginning of the 12th century BCE, destroying the Canaanite cities that lay in their path. They settled on the ruins, or became mercenaries in Egyptian-controlled garrison towns. The archaeological finds at Ashdod, Ekron (Tel Miqne), Tel es-Safi, Beth Shemesh, Ashkelon, Gezer, Beth Shean and Megiddo validate this contention. They also established settlements on virgin soil, as is the case of Tell Qasile.

The cities of the Philistine Pentapolis excavated so far: Ashdod, Ashkelon and Ekron (Tel Miqne), indicate that Canaanite cultural traits were not entirely wiped out, but there is a clear dividing line between one period with its specific economic, social, political and cultural traits and the beginning of another, characterised by a highly sophisticated urban civilization, based on Aegean traditions. These excavated cities all reveal similar patterns of settlement, urbanisation processes, culture, cult practices, metallurgy, distinctive ceramics and glyptics, which can be called Philistine/Sea Peoples' culture (Dothan 1998:148-149). The Aegean roots are also reflected in fortifications,

sophisticated town planning and architectural features such as the adaptation of the megaron plan and the hearth in different configurations such as cultic and domestic (Trude Dothan 2000:145).

It would be an exercise in futility to even endeavour discussing all the archaeological evidence pertaining to the link between the Philistines and the Aegean-Mycenaeans in detail for purposes of this study. Suffice to state that the material culture of the Philistines have clear and definite Aegean connections (Betancourt 2000:297). Not until the reign of Ramesses III (1182–1151 BCE) do we find the locally made Mycenaean-style pottery in the Levant diverging from the earlier and purer Mycenaean prototypes. This reflects a change from trade items coming from comparatively few production centers in the Mediterranean world to locally manufactured pottery at a number of regional centers (Stager 1991:30).

Philistine pottery shows a remarkable resemblance to the Mycenaean style, but the similarities are not confined to ceramics. As a result of the characteristics of pottery it is advisable to use it as a starting point, for it is more useful than architecture, metalwork, terracotta figurines, religious influences or other cultural traits. It is fragile and has no intrinsic value after it has broken; it is widely distributed; it is easily recognisable and it can be studied by regional styles (Betancourt 2000:297)

Mazar (1985:105) states positively that we '…do not hesitate to see in the Palestine immigration, part of the same wave of civilized immigrants from the Mycenaean world who settled in Cyprus in the 12th century.' Why are scholars such as Mazar, Trude Dothan, M Dothan, Stager and others so positive about the Aegean-Mycenaean origins of the Philistines? It seems that the most telling factor is the continuance of the Mycenaean ceramic-style such as monochrome Mycenaean IIIC:1b pottery, which was locally manufactured. At the Philistine cities Ashdod and Ekron, pottery identical with that found in Cyprus (Mycenaean IIIC:1b) together with imported Cypriot pottery and

Mycenaean pottery from the Aegean was uncovered in the earliest settlement levels of the Philistines (Ashdod Stratum XIII and Ekron Stratum VII). This represents the transitional period from Canaanite to Philistine cultures. At both sites it was discovered in a level directly succeeding the last Late Bronze level and the younger levels are identified as the Sea Peoples/Philistine cities. The first appearance of Mycenaean IIIC:1b pottery at Ekron and Ashdod represents the arrival of a new cultural element in Canaan. Monochrome Mycenaean IIIC:1b pottery, which was locally made, appears at this time throughout the eastern Mediterranean. It points to the immigration of people with a common cultural background manifested in their pottery (Iacovou 1998:336).

Figure 23: Mycenaean IIIC:1b (monochrome) pottery from Ekron
(Dothan 1998:152)

This seems to be especially true to the ceramic finds at Ekron and Ashdod in Philistia and those of Sinda, Enkomi and Kition in Cyprus (Dothan 1989:5). Neutron activation analysis has shown that the Mycenaean IIIC:1b pottery found at Ashdod and Ekron was also produced locally (Mazar 1992:307). I will concentrate on Ekron with occasional reference to other Philistines cities such as Ashdod en Ashkelon. The first urban Iron

Age settlement at Ekron coincides with the appearance of Mycenaean IIIC:1b pottery. At about 1200 BCE the character of ceramics at Ekron changed dramatically with a complete disappearance of imported Mycenaean pottery from the Aegean and Cypriot pottery, whereas the locally made Mycenaean IIIC:1b ceramics appear in abundance in Stratum VII during the first third of the 12th century BCE. This pottery is extremely close in style to that of the invaders who had occupied and rebuilt cities in Cyprus (Iacovou 1998:336). It can be referred to as the initial phase of pottery development by the Philistines. From there through strata VI and V one can follow the development through the second and third parts of the twelfth century and up to the middle of the 11th century, of the full-fledged Philistine bichrome pottery[1].

Stratigraphic excavations at Ekron and Ashdod have made possible the establishment of a relatively clear stratigraphic sequence through which the initial appearance, the flourishing and the subsequent assimilation of Philistine pottery can be observed. At Ekron and Ashdod there is a clear well-stratified sequence of different ceramic assemblages. After the initial monochrome phase,[2] bichrome pottery is introduced with new elements; the second phase represents solely Philistine bichrome pottery and in the third phase bichrome pottery persisted but burnished red slip pottery became dominant in the ceramic assemblages (Dothan 1998:159).

The great similarity between the Mycenaean IIIC:1b pottery in Philistia and that in Cyprus, and its appearance in both areas in large quantities, imply settlements of migrants with common origins. According to Mazar (1992:307): 'The logical conclusion, therefore, is that the Philistines were a group of Mycenaean Greeks who immigrated (sic) to the east, clashed with the Egyptians … and later inhabited Philistia.'

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[1] Philistine bichrome pottery is a development from the Aegean style Mycenaean IIIC:1b monochrome pottery to a characteristic Philistine style where the pottery is decorated in two colours, black and red.

[2] The relatively large quantities of Mycenaean IIIC:1b sherds at Ekron parallel their frequency at Ashdod (Dothan 2000:153).
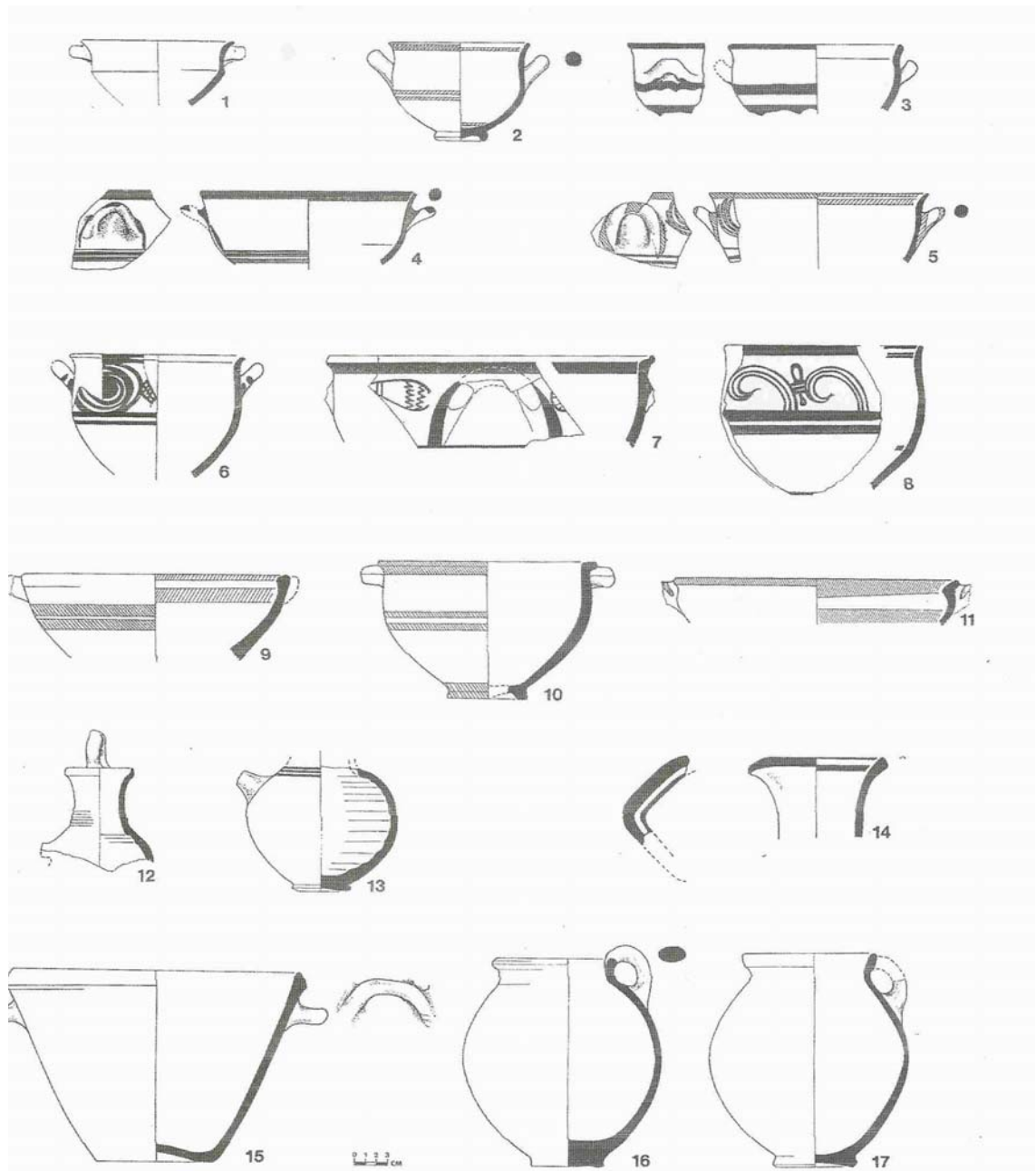
Figure 24: Assemblage of Mycenaean IIIC:1b (monochrome) pottery from Ekron: 1. carinated bowl with strap handle; 2-4. bell-shaped bowls with painted stripes; 5. bell-shaped bowl with concentric circles and painted stripes; 6. bell-shaped bowl with spiral rhombus and painted line decoration; 7. large bowl with painted bands and decorated loops; 8. bell-shaped bowl with painted stripes and stem decoration; 9. deep bowl with strap handles and linear decoration; 10. deep bowl with strap handles and linear decoration; 11. carinated bowl with strap handles and linear decoration; 12. feeding bottle with basket handle; 13. feeding bottle with spout; 14. large jug with pinched rim and linear decoration; 15. kalatos; 16-17. cooking jugs.

(Dothan 1998:153)
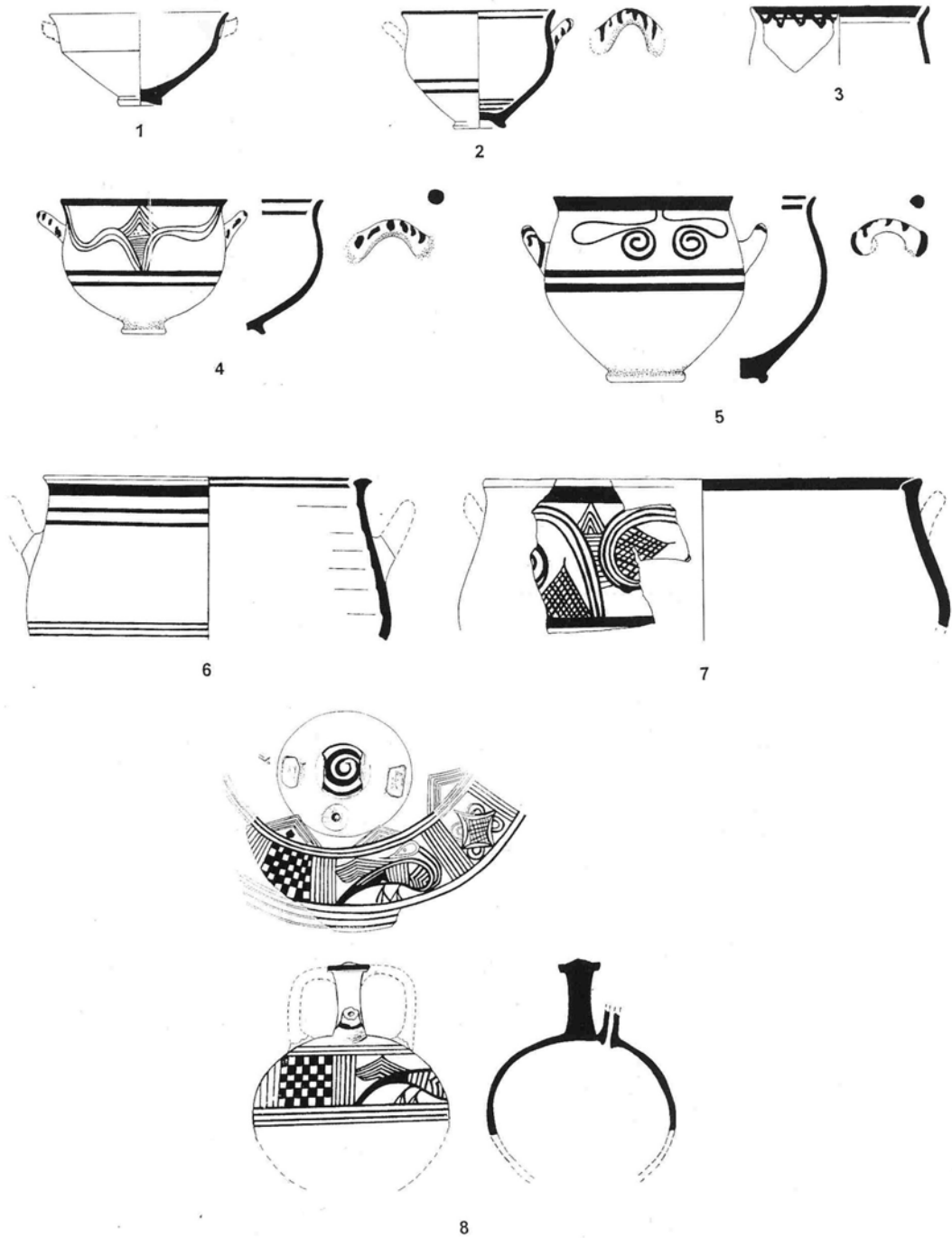
Figure 25: Tel Miqne (Ekron) Field IV, Stratum VII: Assemblage of Mycenaean IIIC:1b pottery

1. Strap-handled carinated bowl; 2. bell-shaped bowl, band decoration; 3. bell-shaped bowl, suspended 'half-circles' motif; 4. bell-shaped bowl, antithetic tongue motif; 5. bell-shaped bowl, antithetic spiral motif; 6. krater, band decoration; 7. krater fragment, closed-style stemmed spiral motif; 8. stirrup-jar, close to Mycenaean IIIC:1b stirrup-jar from Ialysos; part of a group of complete vessels found on floor of Stratum VIIb.

(Dothan 2000:154)
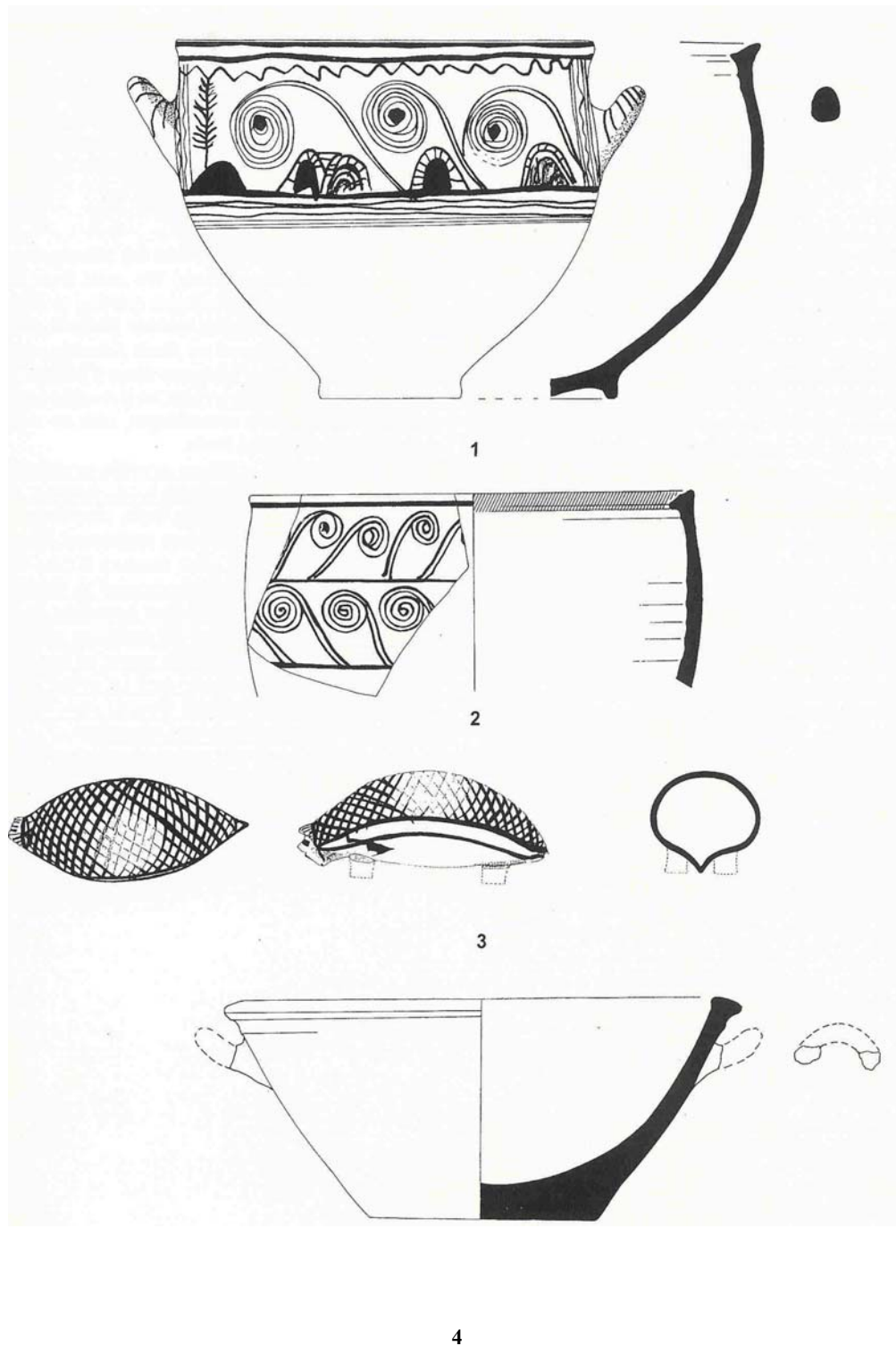
Figure 26: Tel Miqne (Ekron), Field X, Stratum VII: Assemblage of Mycenaean IIIC:1b
pottery

1. Krater-part of a foundation deposit; 2. krater fragment; 3. hedgehog zoomorphic
   vessel. This is the first example known in Mycenaean IIIC:1b, continuing a tradition
   of zoomorphic vessels of this type well known in the Mycenaean pottery tradition;
   4. lekane

(Dothan 2000:155)

As indicated earlier, the similarities between Philistia, the Aegean world and Cyprus are not confined to ceramics. In the previous chapter regarding Cyprus, I have pointed out the similarities between hearths and bathrooms in the Aegean world, Cyprus and Philistia. There are other elements in the material culture of the new immigrants to Philistia which were stylistically Aegean and not the material transference of objects or the results of trade.

At Ekron the Philistines destroyed the Canaanite settlement which had been confined to a 10-acre acropolis and then continued to rebuild and extend the city until it reached a size of 50 acres. This expansion was carried out according to a master plan and in tradition familiar to the initial settlers: an industrial area adjacent to the fortifications, a central area with monumental public buildings and shrines, and domestic areas (Dothan 1998:152). Mazar (2000:222, 228) alleges that there are not only architectural similarities between the Aegean and the Levant (regarding the Philistines), but it seems that temple architecture points to continuation of the local Canaanite tradition, although there is a resemblance between the temples of Tell Qasile and those of Mycenae and Phylakopi (on the island of Melos). Figurines in Palestine suggest Aegean origins but other cult objects point to relations with Cyprus, adoption of local Canaanite traditions and new inventions. Cow scapulae (found at Ekron and Dor) are attested to in religious contexts in Cyprus. The same Cypriot link applies to bi-metal knives excavated at Tell Qasile and Tell Miqne (Mazar 2000:227) and at Dor, as will be discussed below.

The time has not arrived to say the final word on the Philistines. It is clear however that the Iron 1 inhabitants of sites such as Tel Miqne (Ekron) and Ashdod, had a completely different origin from the preceding Late Bronze Age residents. It appears that they came as well-organised and relatively prosperous colonisers, representing a large-scale immigration, with clear roots in the Aegean (Killebrew 2000:244).

CHAPTER 7

DEVELOPING A MODEL FOR A SIKIL SETTLEMENT IN PALESTINE

7.1 INTRODUCTION

I have emphasised that it does not follow necessarily that the material culture of the Philistines and the Sikil would be similar. As Tubb (2000:182) declares: '…it cannot be assumed that all groups of the Sea Peoples would necessarily have developed the same style of pottery as the Philistines…' This may be a *non sequitur,* but, on a balance of probabilities, I believe that it has been established that both peoples originated from the same region and that there was a close relationship between them. In view of the Onomasticon of Amenemope, both peoples settled on the Mediterranean coast of the southern Levant and if we take the interpretation of that document by some of the leading scholars in the field seriously, the Sikil settlement was adjacent to the Philistine settlement. We know that the Philistines occupied the southern part of the Palestinian coastal plain and the way their settlement is described in the Onomasticon leads to the reasonnable conclusion that the Sikil settled in the Sharon immediately north of the Philistine territory. In any event, if one wants to develop a model to establish the presence or absence of the Sikil at Dor, one, in the first instance, has to work from the premises that the textual evidence and the interpretation of such evidence is correct. This implies not only that the Sikil and the Philistines originated from the same region, but also that they settled in the same new region and that they had a lot in common, not only as regards their expansive prospects, but also in respect of their material culture.

In order, therefore, to develop a model to prove or disprove a Sikil settlement in Palestine, I believe that it is inevitable, despite the cautionary remarks made at the beginning of this chapter, to use the known material regarding the Philistines, in particular apply-

ing our knowledge gained at Ekron (Tel Miqne) and to a lesser extent Ashdod, as a starting point for such a model.

7.2 A BASIC FRAMEWORK FOR A MODEL

We have only the reliefs of Medinet Habu as direct evidence of the way the Sikil soldiers dressed, the type of arms they used and what their ships looked like. After more than three thousand years, one cannot reasonably expect to find any remnants of such objects. It is, however, obvious that for a people, whether they are Philistines, Sikil or Sherden or any other people, to settle a new country in such numbers that they are able to defeat and drive out the existing inhabitants, a mass migration (including women and children) from their previous homeland is required. As discussed above, there should be close similarities between the material cultures they left behind and their initial material culture in their new home.

According to Stager (1998:332-333) certain criteria must be met to make a convincing archaeological case for a mass migration of peoples from one homeland to another:

1. There must be a clear distinction between the culture of the immigrants and the existing culture of the local inhabitants or other foreign cultures in the new area of settlement. In general one can look at behaviour patterns of the previous inhabitants and the behaviour of the new settlers. When a group of settlers replace an existing group, the nature of the replacement should be established. In the event of an invasion the previous culture should be replaced by the new one, for example in the form of a destruction and resettlement by the new settlers as happened in places like Ashdod, Ashkelon, Ekron and Ibn Hani. Sometimes, like at Ugarit, it takes the form of destruction and abandonment, or, as at Tell Qasile, settlements are found *de novo* after invasion.

2. The origins of the immigrant must be located and the material cultures of the old and new settlements compared and established that the material culture of their place of origin is in the initial stages the dominant material culture in the new area.

3. It is also important to trace which route of migration was followed and to establish if in terms of archaeology, history and geography, it was a plausible route. If it was a route by sea, it should be investigated if the immigrants had the shipping technology and transport capacity for such a mass movement of peoples and their belongings. On the other hand if they were supposed to have traveled overland: 'a spatial temporal distribution of the material culture should indicate the path and direction of large-scale migrations' (Stager 1998:333).

With these criteria as a framework, one should be able to develop a model to trace the migration and settlement of the Philistines and apply it as a basic indicator for the migration and settlement of other Sea Peoples in general and the Sikil in particular. Although one would expect similarities between the material cultures of the Philistines and the Sikil, we know from archaeological evidence that the Sikil were a major maritime people whereas the Philistines were not to the same extent. The Philistine-model would, therefore, have to be adjusted to provide for features unique to a maritime people, such as the nature of their ships and the architecture of harbour works.

7.3 DEVELOPING A PHILISTINE-MODEL

In view of what is known from the evidence, both textual and archaeological, I suggest that the following features are to be expected in respect of a Philistine settlement in the Levant:

1 An invasion evidenced by destruction and resettlement of an existing town or city replacing the existing material culture (of the Canaanites) by a new material culture

or (as happened at Qasile) the establishment of a new town or city with the new material culture.

2   The initial new material culture should be based on Aegean (or Cypriot) originals such as Mycenaean ceramics, especially the locally manufactured Mycenaean IIIC:1b-pottery and Aegean (or Cypriot) architecture.

3   Although it is not certain if the Philistines emigrated directly from the Aegean or via Cyprus, I am of the opinion that for reasons stated, the Cyprus-factor cannot be ignored. An invasion of the Levant would have been much easier using Cyprus as a springboard than a direct immigration from the Aegean. A direct immigration would include women, children and various personal belongings. This is feasible in terms of an invasion by land but highly unlikely when it is a maritime invasion. The fact that the Philistines settled on the southern coastal plain of Palestine and not further north suggests *prima facie* a maritime route from the Aegean via Cyprus. A route by land would have left clear traces of their journey and progress through regions such as southern Anatolia and the northern Levant. I submit that there is as yet no archaeological evidence linking the Philistines with such an overland migration.

7.4 DERIVING A SIKIL MODEL

In my opinion, the Philistine model, with a few modifications, can be applied for all the Sea Peoples, including the Sikil. We know from Ugaritic and Hittite sources that the Sikil came from the west and probabilities favour the Aegean. We also know that at one stage they operated from Cyprus. How should the Philistine model be modified to serve a Sikil migration? I propose the following:

1. The Sikil, in contrast to the Philistines, were a renowned seafaring people. According to the Ugaritic sources, they were pirates. I would even venture to say that their conduct as portrayed in the Report of Wenamun, amounted to that of pirates. In my

opinion they would rather invade and settle existing towns than establishing new ones.

2. The Ugaritic sources depict them as 'living on ships' and being pirates; thus one would not expect them to carry too much of their original material culture, especially ceramics, with them. They would rather make use of their captured booty.

3. Again, being a seafaring people, they would move by sea and invade from the sea and settle coastal towns, rather than towns inland. As in the Philistine model, I propose that the movement of women and children as well as belongings, if moved by sea from Cyprus, rather than from the Aegean, would be much more feasible.

4. One would, however, expect them to take their knowledge of shipbuilding and harbour works with them and apply it in their new environment. Thus in a scenario where they originated in the Aegean, temporarily settled at Cyprus and finally settled on the northern Palestinian coast, their harbour works in all three regions should have a close resemblance. This should also apply to architecture in general.

5. From the Hittite sources we know that the Sikil invaded Cyprus and operated from there in further attacks on the Hittite Empire and probably other places such as Ugarit. In view of what was said above and depending on their period of stay, they should adapt to the existing material culture of Cyprus.

6. Consequently the Sikil would most probably import the Cypriot material culture to a new place of settlement. One would, however, expect this material culture to replace the existing material culture of their new place of settlement, unless they did not completely drive out the local population and live side by side with them.

CHAPTER 8

EXCAVATIONS AT TEL DOR

8.1 EARLIER EXCAVATIONS

8.1.1 INTRODUCTION

Preliminary archaeological evidence during the 1980's from Dor initially supported Wenamun's claim of Sikil settlement. Tel Dor was, however, first investigated in the 1920's (two seasons in 1923-24), by John Garstang, on behalf of the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem. J. Leibowitz excavated in the lower town around the tell in 1950 and 1952 on behalf of the Israel Department of Antiquities. From 1979 to 1983 Claudine Dauphin excavated a church east of the tell. Avner Raban excavated harbour installations and other constructions mainly south and west of the mound in 1979 - 1984. Underwater surveys around the site were carried out by Kurt Raveh, Ehud Galili Shelley Wachsman and Saen Kingsley (Stern 1995:4-7).

8.1.2 THE 1923-1924 EXPEDITION

In 1923-24 two seasons of excavations were carried out at Dor under the auspices of the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem headed by J. Garstang (this early expedition excavated at a time when archaeological methods were not as sophisticated as they are today). Unfortunately, almost nothing from this excavation was published, so not much information about the results are available (Stern 1995:4). It seems, however that most of the finds were made in respect of the Roman and Hellenistic periods (periods outside the scope of this study). During 1923 trial trenches were opened and some were enlarged during 1924, one each on the western and southern slopes of the tell. In the southern trench, above the site's southern bay, the earliest deposits uncovered by

Garstang, on bedrock, were dated to the Late Bronze Age (Garstang's 'Steps' G and F). Above these steps, 'Step' E comprised both Late Bronze and early Iron Age pottery. This 'step' also comprised a layer of ash, in which, according to Garstang, early Iron Age Pottery was found. This ash layer seems to correlate with the major early Iron Age I destruction uncovered in the later excavations in other excavation areas (see below). The most typical ceramic form of Step E and the subsequent D, according to Garstang, were sharply-carinated jars, which in the opinion of Sharon and Gilboa (forthcoming) may, according to the description (they were not illustrated), be recognised as the late versions of 'Canaanite jars' typifying in this area the Iron1b horizon, but it is unknown where exactly they were found in relation to Garstang's ash layer. Within step E, see-mingly above and later than the ash layer, a massive boulder wall was constructed, of which Garstang uncovered the western face. This wall (the 'Bastion') was later excavated both by Raban and by Stern (see below) (Sharon and Gilboa forthcoming).

The excavators came to the conclusion that the first settlement was established at the beginning of the Late Bronze Age. This settlement was subsequently destroyed during the 13th century BCE with the next occupation level during Iron Age I (Stern 1995:4). It should again be emphasised that these conclusions were made without modern archaeo-logical techniques and based solely on evidence excavated in the trial trenches and without a detailed study being made.

8.1.3 THE EXPEDITION OF 1950 AND 1952 AND
THE EXPEDITION OF 1979-1980 AND 1983

During 1950 and 1952 an expedition by J. Leibovitz, on behalf of the Israel Department of Antiquities, conducted a search around the tell and uncovered certain sections. No layers from Iron Age I were uncovered and the results are, therefore, irrelevant for purposes of this study. The expedition of 1979-1980 and 1983 under the directorship of

Claudine Dauphine concentrated on the area of the Byzantine church, which is situated south-east of the tell, and which also falls outside the scope of this study (Stern 1995:7).

8.1.4 UNDERWATER AND RELATED EXPLORATIONS

Underwater explorations have been carried out on a large scale by Kurt Raveh, Ehu Galili, Shelley Wachsman and others and they still continue. More important, however, for purposes of this study, is the large-scale exploration of port installations conducted under the directorship of Avner Raban of the University of Haifa (Stern 1995:7). Between 1980–1984 Raban dug several probes on the beach at the southern bay and on the south slope of the tell – to the south and southeast of Garstang's trench, east of Garstang's massive wall. He divided the features uncovered into several phases: The earliest of these consist primarily of the remains of a quay flanked by structures/surfaces composed of large flat ashlars, all laid as rows of headers, sloping into the bay (these structures underwent a few constructional alterations corresponding, according to Raban, to a rise in sea level), further built quays, an ashlar-built well on the very western fringes of the excavation area, and possibly some hewn beach-rock plates. Raban dated this earliest phase to the 13th – mid-12th century BCE. To the second main phase, dated to the mid-12th century, were attributed the construction of the massive wall (W69), which Raban interpreted as a retaining wall, and an elevation in both the well and at least one of the quays. In a third phase, dated *ca.* 1100 BCE, this quay was partly dismantled and a higher platform was constructed in its stead. A retaining 'sea wall' is postulated to have protected structures on the lee side of the area, which included, *inter alia*, a slab-built drainage channel uncovered just east of the well, and the well itself (its last phase of use). These alterations, according to Raban, were a response to topographical changes, which exposed Dor's southern beach and installations to the surge.

Above these was built a massive wall, a long retaining wall running east–west along the southern slope of the tell, also constructed to protect the settlement's southern margins. No other meaningful architectural remains related to this wall, and Raban suggested that the harbour, and in fact possibly the entire southern waterfront may have been abandoned then. This wall, in turn, was later replaced by a massive structure constructed of huge limestone boulders, and dated to the early 10th century BCE (Sharon and Gilboa forthcoming).

Raban discovered that during the latter part of the 13th century BCE and for the next two centuries, the sea gradually rose from about one meter below the present modern sea level (MSL) to about half a meter above it. He describes this period as one of extensive maritime-related building activity on the southern side of the city, with a flourishing maritime activity around 1100 BCE (Raban 1995:350). The close resemblance of these features (a series of repetitive quays) of the 12th century BCE harbour at Dor and similar features in harbours in Cyprus, especially at Kition, and the northern coast of Syria led to Raban's conclusion that these quays were the contribution of maritime technical know-how by new settlers from the west, the 'Sea Peoples' (Raban 1998:429).

In my opinion, these conclusions of Raban are very important if we keep in mind that the Sikil, according to the Hittite sources 'came from the West' and settled, at least temporarily, at Cyprus. Being a seafaring people and using Cyprus as a base, one would expect them to build harbours in Cyprus or at least improve the existing ones. If they, or a portion of them moved from Cyprus to Dor and improved the harbour at Dor, there should be close resemblances between Dor's harbour and some of those on Cyprus.
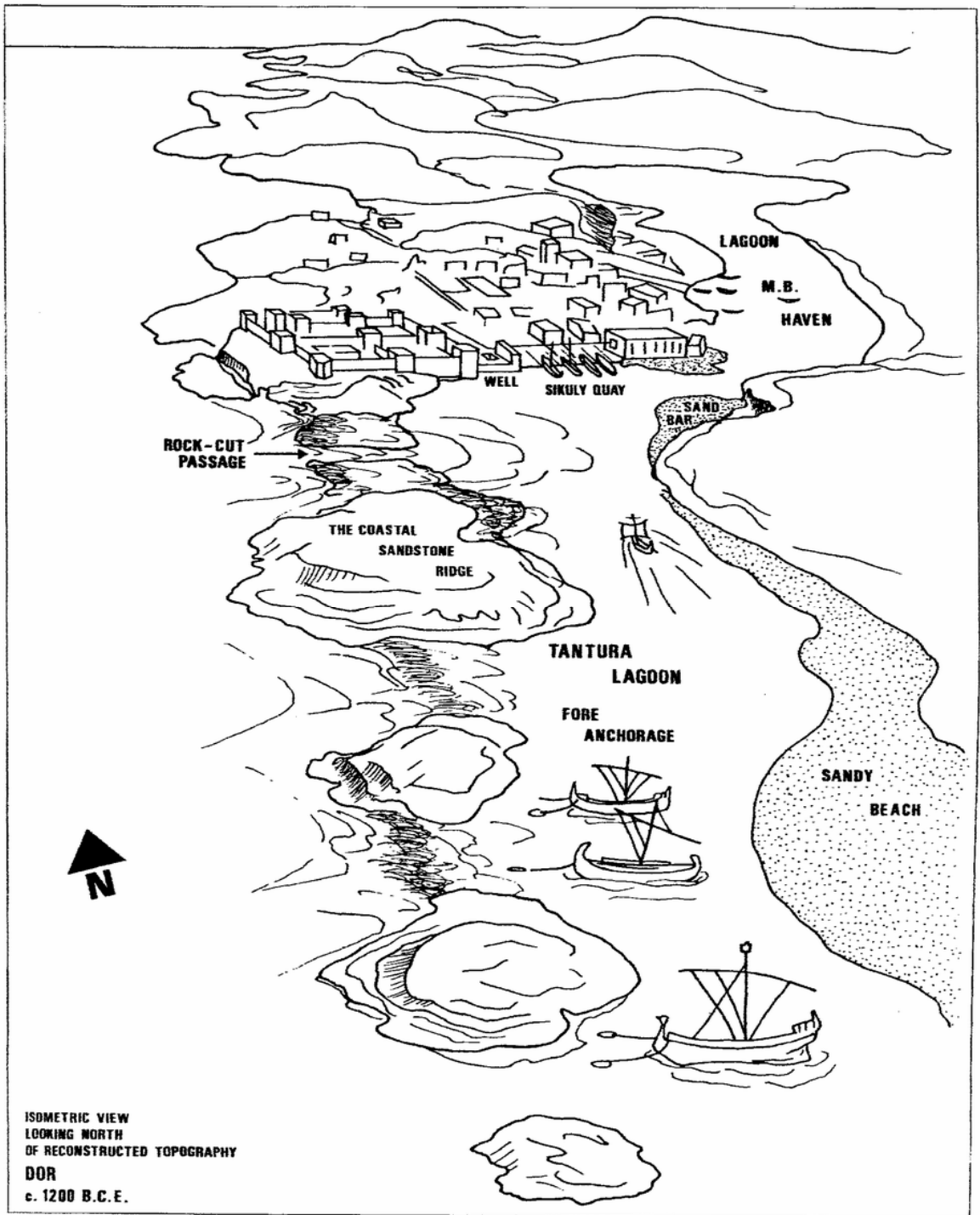
Figure 27: Sketch plan of Dor around 1200 BCE

(Raban 1998:431)

CHAPTER 9

LATER EXCAVATIONS

9.1. 1980-2002: THE SEARCH BEGINS

9.1.1. INTRODUCTION

Renewed excavations at Tel Dor started at the beginning of 1980 with a trial dig, and during the summer of that year the actual excavations were initiated with Professor Ephraim Stern of the Institute of Archaeology of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem as director (Stern 2000a:69) and were continued until 2002 as exploratory excavations, although Stern himself left the scene during 2000, after having conducted 20 seasons of excavations at the tell. Various areas were excavated, some of them down to Iron Age levels. Seven main areas were excavated during the period from 1980 to 2001. Three of the areas- C, A and B, running north to south, are at the eastern fringe of the mound; Area D is on the southern slope above the south bay and flanking Garstang's trench; Areas F and E are on the western slope of the mound and Area G is in the center (Stern 1997:129).

During 1995 the final report pertaining to Areas A and C of Tel Dor was published (Stern et al 1995a & 1995b). In this report Stern stated his reasons for choosing that particular site to be excavated. He admits that his decision was based on considerations connected with his own particular field of interest:

'Any archaeologist who undertakes a large-scale excavation at a specific site does so for a variety of reasons; his decision is usually based on considerations connected with his particular field of interest. This was also the case for the decision to excavate at Dor' (Stern 1995:8).

Stern states that there were indications that buried within the site were the remains of four different cultures: The Canaanites, the Sikil, the Phoenicians and finally the Greeks and Romans. Overriding importance may be assigned to the study of two of these peoples: the Sikil 'of whom we are in complete ignorance and whose material culture is unknown' and the Phoenicians (Stern 1995:8).

9.1.2 THE CASE FOR THE SIKIL

Why was such an emphasis placed on the possible presence of the Sikil at Dor. I think this question can best be answered in Stern's own words. He states (Stern 1993a:25) that scholars are almost completely in the dark as to the material culture of the Sikil and '... the Egyptian sources and the archaeological evidence all provide information about Philistine controlled settlements in southern Palestine and their five great cities there. The northern border of Philistia was at Tell Qasile… Farther north at Dor, a city of the Sikils (according to the Egyptian "Tale of Wen-Amon"), excavations have revealed not only the Sea Peoples' harbour but also their fortifications and glacis of the 12th century B.C.E. (see also Stager 1991:34). The Sikil lived in the northern Sharon plain and the Sherden lived still further north, in the Acre valley. This conclusion is supported by other archaeologists excavating in the area. At Tel Zeror, near Hadera, ... excavators .. have uncovered Mycenaean IIIC pottery, which is usually associated with the Sea Peoples. The excavators of both sites believe that these sites were conquered by the Sherden, a name that may be associated with Sardinia in the same way that Sikil is associated with Sicily' (Stern 1993a:25).[1]

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[1] I want to point out and to emphasise that the purpose of this study is the analysis of contrasting opinions regarding the presence or absence of the Sikil at Dor. In order to avoid misinterpretation when referring to the viewpoints of the relevant scholars, I sometimes used their own words *verbatim*. Throughout, however, I gave credit to them as the authors of the said viewpoints and the words used. For example if the heading of a chapter reads 'Gilboa's 1998-article' or 'Gilboa's 2005-article', it follows that the contents of that chapter refer to the content of that article and where possible, I used her own words to describe her viewpoint and the reasons for her conclusions. The same *ratio* applies to other relevant scholars such as Stern and Sharon.

According to Stern, the main purpose of the expedition was to elucidate the history and national culture of the Phoenicians (Stern 1995:8). Notwithstanding this assertion, it seems as if a strong secondary purpose was to establish and prove the existence in Palestine of a second group of the Sea Peoples (besides the Philistines), thus the use of the words: 'overriding importance may be assigned to…the Sikil…and the Phoenicians.' Stern made some positive statements regarding the Sea Peoples, but admitted that very little is known about the Sikil. He states that the Sikil, whose historical context forms an intermediate phase between the early Canaanites and their Phoenician descendants, were the dominant element at Dor for about 150 years. Furthermore, as was also claimed by Stern in the 1993 article, three of the Sea peoples settled in Palestine: Philistines, Sikil and Sherden (from south to north) (Stern 1995:8).

Thus, although the two published final reports of the excavations at Tel Dor only pertain to Areas A and C, it appears from its contents that the contention was (after 15 years of excavations) that the existence of the Sikil at Dor was accepted as a fact and not mere speculation based on the Wenamun Report, despite what appears to be very scanty archaeological evidence of the presence of any of the Sea Peoples, including the Sikil. Statements made in the 1995 Report (as shown above) include the following:

(a) 'The Sikil…were the dominant element at Dor for about 150 years.'

(b) '…the Sikil who occupied the area of Dor.'

Despite the official position, Sharon and Gilboa (forthcoming) maintain that unofficially 'the "*SKL* question" has been a subject of debate among the Dor team ever since early Iron Age remains began to be found in the mid-1980's. Pros and cons of various views were endlessly hashed…'

Stern (1993a:25) acknowledges that the relationship between the Sikil and the Philistines is an unknown factor. In the texts only the inscriptions at Medinet Habu and the Onomasticon of Amenemope place them in some sort of relationship. It has not yet been established conclusively where either one of them originated, thus one is not in the position to state with certainty that their original material cultures were similar or if each had its own distinctive character that could in some measure clarify the perplexing problem of the origin of the Sea Peoples in general and of the Sikil in particular: 'We are not yet in a position to answer questions like these. In many areas we have not yet reached what would be Sikil strata. In areas where we have reached these levels, the remains are still puzzling' (Stern 1993a:24). This particular article was written by Stern more than 13 years ago and it seems that during the interim the excavations at Dor have not shed further light on these questions, at least as far as published material, including interim reports and articles, goes. No further final reports have been published after those of 1995, which only pertained to Areas A and C, which are situated on the eastern side of the tell and the furthest removed from the sea and the harbour areas.

It should be kept in mind that the Sikil were represented in the texts as a maritime people and they would inhabit the areas closest to the harbour(s) especially Areas D1 and D2. In these two areas, only one section at the southeastern side of Area D2 was excavated to a level where traces of Sikil presence could be expected. During the 2006 season the southern portion of Area D1 was reopened as Area D5 and in certain sections the levels of Iron Age I were reached, but the results have not yet been analysed and published. In Area D2, excluding the section on the south-eastern side previously excavated, the levels of Iron Age II have been reached and the 2006 results will, therefore, be of no assistance in solving the Sikil-problem. As regards the Bronze Age city, allegedly destroyed by the Sikil (see below), its discovery, keeping the size of

Bronze Age cities in the region in mind, seems an easier goal to obtain than finding evidence of a people who allegedly occupied the city for only a short period of time.

9.1.3 EVIDENCE OF A SIKIL PRESENCE

What is the evidence from Tel Dor regarding the Sikil that can be deduced from the published material and on which Stern bases his conviction about their presence?

In 1997 Stern (Stern 1997:130) admitted that no Mycenaean IIIC sherds had yet been uncovered, which fact implies, although not directly admitted by Stern, that some doubt regarding the Sikil-presence at Dor might have been present, but it seems that during 1998 Stern still firmly believed that it was only a matter of time before the Sikil-city would be reached: 'On the tell, we will soon be excavating the town associated with the Sikil-built harbour. We already know that this settlement was destroyed in the mid-11th century BCE or perhaps even a bit earlier. It was soon replaced by a Phoenician town, suggesting that the Phoenicians destroyed the Sikil settlement' (Stern 1998b:47). Stern's assertion about the Phoenician destruction is based on the fact that an abundance of Phoenician Bichrome ware were discovered during the period which immediately follo-wed the destruction (Gilboa 2005:51). In particular it seems that Stern (2000a: 345-351; 2000b: 198-200) bases his conclusions on finds made in Areas B1, F and G at Tel Dor. Excluding the south-eastern portion of Area D2, these areas are the only ones where the excavators at Tel Dor got down to possible Sikil-levels. In Area B1, Iron Age 1 (1200-1000 BCE) is represented by two levels, Phase B1/13 and Phase B1/12. Phase B1/12 dates to *circa* 1050-1000 BCE and, according to Stern (2000b:199), represents the city of the Sikil. Area B1 is situated in the south-eastern section of the tell and abuts the eastern city wall which is in fact an immense fortification wall which dates to the 12th century BCE. In the period of Iron Age I below the floors of Phases B1/11 and B1/10, a thick layer of ash, sometimes nearly two meters thick, was encountered and it was

attributed to the burning of the Sikil city. This destruction was wide-spread and also encountered by the excavators in areas E, F and G, which indicates, according to Stern, that the Sikil city probably extended over the entire area of the mound. The fire was so fierce that it oxidised the mud bricks and shattered the limestone used in the buildings. This destruction stratum in Area B1 was sealed at the bottom by floors on which pottery from the 2nd half of the 11th century BCE, say about 1050 BCE, were found. In the same area two rooms were excavated and Stern (2000b:199) claims that much of the material, recovered from the two rooms, attests to the presence of the Sea Peoples at Dor. Some of the pottery appear to be Philistine Bichrome pottery (Figure 29). According to Sharon and Gilboa (forth-coming) this pottery was imported from Philistia. Most of the pottery, dating to the second half of 12th and the beginning of the 11th centuries BCE, however, was locally manufactured. This includes pottery ascribed by Stern to the Sikil (Figures 30 and 31) as well as a decorated lion-headed rhyton (Figure 33), of the type known from Philistine sites as Ashdod, Tel Miqne (Ekron), Tell Qasile, Tel Gerisa, Megiddo, Tell es-Safi and Tel Zeror (Figures 34 to 35). Cow scapulas, incised along the upper edges with parallel lines and attributed to the Sea Peoples, have also been found at Tel Dor (Figure 32). Such scapulas are known from Philistine settlements such as Ekron and also from Cyprus. They were used probably as musical instruments and also for purposes of divination (Stern 2000b:199). In Stratum XII a giant decorated clay pithos was discovered which could be dated to the second half of the 12th and first half of the 11th centuries BCE and which may have originated in the West (Stern 2000a:94).

Stern (2000a:345-389) calls the period of excavations during 1993-1999 'The Seven Years of Plenty.' In that period areas (a section of D2 and G) were excavated to Iron Age I levels. In Area G, according to Stern, no less than three consecutive 'Sikil' settlement layers were found (Phases 9, 10 and 11) which indicate that the Sikil-occupation

of Dor was much longer than previously thought, the Early Sikilian layer dating probably from 1200 to 1150 BCE.

Area G, a residential-cum-household-industry section in the center of town, contains an almost unbroken sequence from the Late Bronze Age (Phase G/12) to the Iron Age IIA (Phase G/6a). Phase G/9 was destroyed by a massive fire, though the houses were quickly rebuilt along the same lines and continued to be used with some changes through Phases G/8–G/6 (Gilboa and Sharon forthcoming).

In stratum 9 (Phase G/9) sections of what appears to be a large public building were excavated with the remains of a cult place in the north western end (Figure 30). These remains consist of six bowls, including two votives, a goblet with red lines, a chalice with two horizontal handles, and decorated with thin white slip and a red band, and a small fenestrated cult stand complete with bowl on top. On one side of the stand is a cut-out of a human figure, apparently dancing, the fenestrations on the other side have cut-outs of different figures, but as a result of poor preservation, they are difficult to identify. Stern (2000b:201) avers that this vessel has no close parallels in the repertoire of the region and its closest parallels come from sites known to be inhabited by Sea Peoples.

A room which resembles a kitchen was found in the southern part of Area G beneath a burnt layer similar to that which sealed the 'Sikil' layer in Areas B1 and F. In the centre of this room a clay table, approximately 3 metre long, apparently for the preparation of dough, was uncovered. It parallels later Phoenician and Greek tables of a similar kind. Next to it was a round basin, attached to its side, probably to hold flour. Around the table and in adjoining rooms, in a thick ash layer, a large assemblage of pottery was found, including local ware, such as Canaanite commercial jars, pilgrim flasks with red concentric circles, juglets and pixides in the tradition of the Late Bronze Age. There

were also Philistine bichrome and monochrome pottery of the type common in the northern coastal region, western Galilee and the western Jezreel valley, decorated with classic patterns. Next to them was found the bone handle of a knife, the head of which is shaped in the form of a ring (Figure 36). Stern (2000b:201) states that this handle undoubtedly belongs to a group of identical knives with bronze nails that are well known from Iron Age I strata in Philistine sites such as Tel Miqne (Ekron) (Figure 37), Tel Far'a (S), Tell Qasile and others and from contemporary sites in the Aegean and Cyprus. As regards the finds at Tel Miqne, Dothan (1997:101) describes it as follows: 'Among them was a complete iron knife affixed by bronze rivets to an ivory handle with a ring-shaped pommel…Three additional ivory knife handles of the same type were found in Ekron (Tel Miqne)…The insertion slot of one of them still bore traces of its iron blade and could be traced to the first half of the twelfth century BCE, thus linking it to the initial settlement of the Philistines at Ekron…Similar knives with ring-shaped handles have been found in Cyprus and the Aegean.'

Other relevant pottery in area G, which indicate an earlier date, were fragments of a large pithos with relief decorations similar to the one found in Area BI, a decorated beer jug and fragments of other jugs not previously encountered amongst finds from Israel.

According to the interim report of 2004 of the Tel Dor excavations, a phytolith floor, dated to the early part of the Iron Age I in area G, was investigated. The scant pottery in this room included a fragment of a strainer jug, similar to one found in the southern part of area D2. This pot was taken by some as representative of Sikil ceramic industry (a.k.a The Sikil pot, or Zorn ware).

Stern (2000a:97) believes it was the Sikil who built the harbour at Dor, one of the oldest harbours in the Mediterranean. According to maritime archaeologist Raban (as discussed in more detail in paragraph 8.1.4 above), the harbour installations are the first in

Palestine that can be definitely attributed to one of the Sea Peoples. Raban, as already indicated above, has observed the harbour's many resemblances to harbour installations in Crete (at the Minoan site of Mallia), in Cyprus (at Kition) and the northern coast of Syria (Stern 2000a:97-98).

These finds led Stern to believe that this is evidence of a Sikil settlement. The evidence may not prove a massive Sea People settlement, but does prove at least some presence at Dor. This contention prevailed pretty much uncontested for nearly two decades.

Stern (2000b:98-208) argues that the Aegean, Aegean-type and Philistine-type objects and attributes found at Dor in Iron Age I levels, should be identified as representing the 'material culture of the Sikil and consequently that similar phenomena in other sites in northern Israel should be interpreted as the material manifestations of other "non-Phili-stine Sea Peoples."' More specifically, according to this hypothesis four periods are clearly distinguished and three cultural transformations occurred at the culmination of the Late Bronze Age and the start of the Early Iron Age at Dor. At the end of the Bronze Age the Canaanite city is invaded and the population replaced (or at least augmented-to and ruled-by) the Sikil. Some time after Wenamun's alleged visit to Dor, Phoenicians destroyed and take over the 'Sikil' city. Phoenician culture soon became dominant at Dor and remained so for 800 years (even after the city was conquered in turn by the Israelites, the Assyrians and later the Babylonians) (Sharon & Gilboa forth-coming).

Formally it may not have been Phoenician after these conquests, but culturally it was (Sharon & Gilboa forthcoming). According to this theory, it appears, therefore, that at Dor during the Late Bronze Age/ Early Iron Age 1, was invaded on at least three occasions: the Sikil invading the Canaanite city; the Phoenicians taking the city from the Sikil, while the Israelites in turn took over from the Phoenicians. Depending on the

level of force required during each invasion and whether destruction of the city accom-
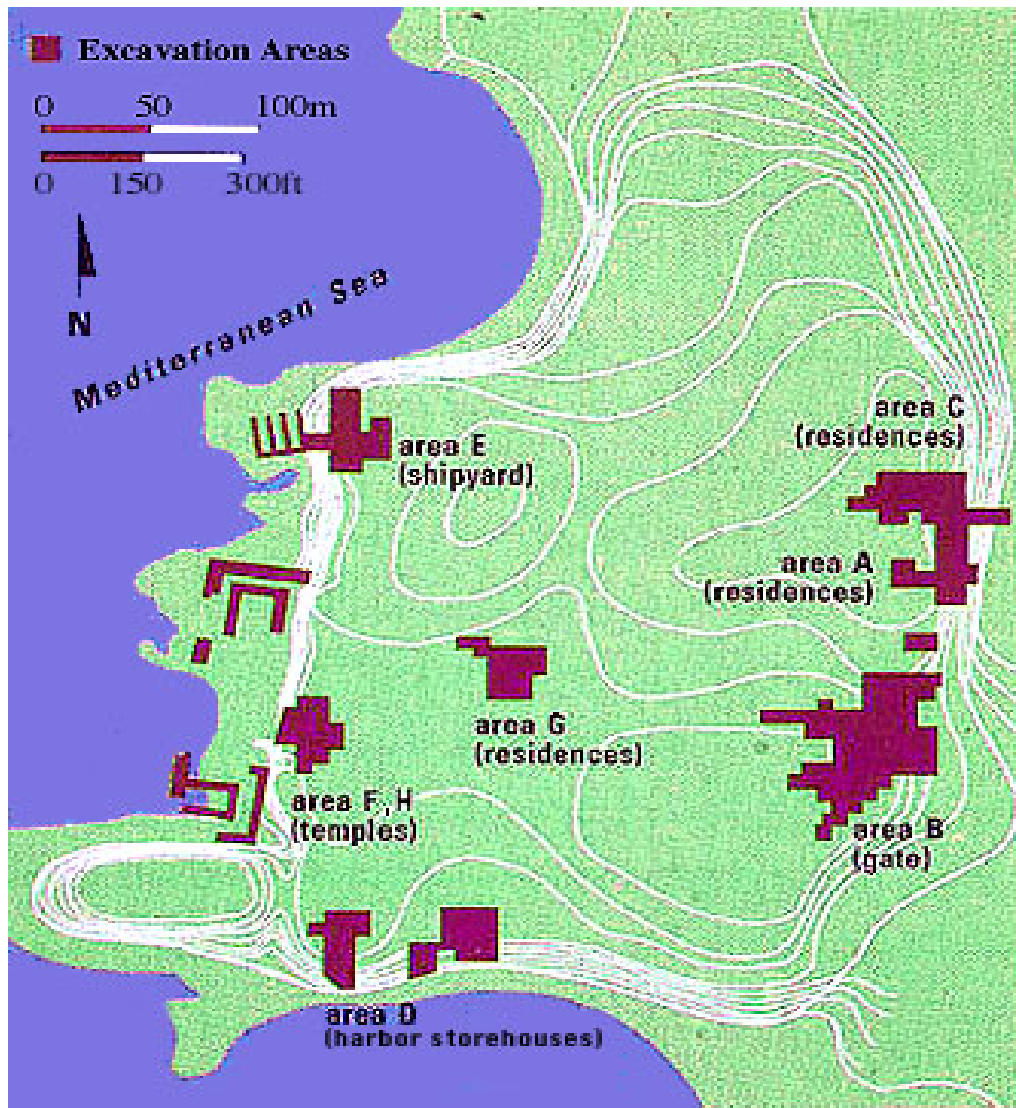
Figure 28: Tel Dor indicating the various excavating areas.

(http://www.sas.upenn.edu/~ekondrat/Dorchart.html)

panied the invasion, the layers of destruction should be traceable The numbers of the Sikil, who were supposed to have resided at Dor, are unknown, so it is futile to speculate if they inhabited the whole area covered by the tell or only a portion of it, despite Stern's opinion in this regard. Only a relative small portion of the tell has so far been excavated and during the past twenty six years of excavations, only a few Late Bronze Age strata in Area G, without really revealing the Bronze Age city of the Canaanites (referred to in the reports of the 1923/1924 expedition), have been

uncovered. We do not know if the Bronze Age city was destroyed, but it is clear that another Sea People, the Philistines, first destroyed and then rebuilt the cities in Philistia. A Sea People (probably the Sikil) completely destroyed Ugarit and one would expect the same at Dor. I am of the opinion that the relationship between the Bronze Age city, whether it was destroyed or not, and the Early Iron Age 1 city, is an important link in establishing the presence or absence of the Sikil and if they were present whether they occupied the city by themselves or coexisted with the Canaanites.

Stern developed a model to illustrate the periods of presence of the Sikil and Phoenicians at Dor as represented in the strata of Areas B[1] and G (Stern 2000b:201).

Area B[1]	Area G	Date
IX–Phoenician	6–Phoenician	
X–Phoenician	7–Phoenician	1050–1000 B.C.E.
XI–Phoenician	8–Phoenician	
XII–Late Sikilian	9–Late Sikilian	1150–1050 B.C.E.
	10–Early Sikilian	1200–1150 B.C.E.

Figure 29: Two pieces of about four pieces of Philistine Bichrome pottery discovered at Tel Dor and ascribed by Stern to the Sikil.

(Stern 2000a: Plate I)

Figure 30: Pottery from the cult place in Area G ascribed to the Sikil.

(Stern 2000b:200)

Figure 31: Pottery discovered at Tel Dor and ascribed by Stern to the Sikil.

(Photo: Author, Dor Museum)

Figure 32: Cow scapula with incised decoration from Tel Dor.

(Photo: Author, Dor Museum)

Figure 33: Lion-headed rhyton from Tel Dor.

(Photo: Author, Dor Museum)
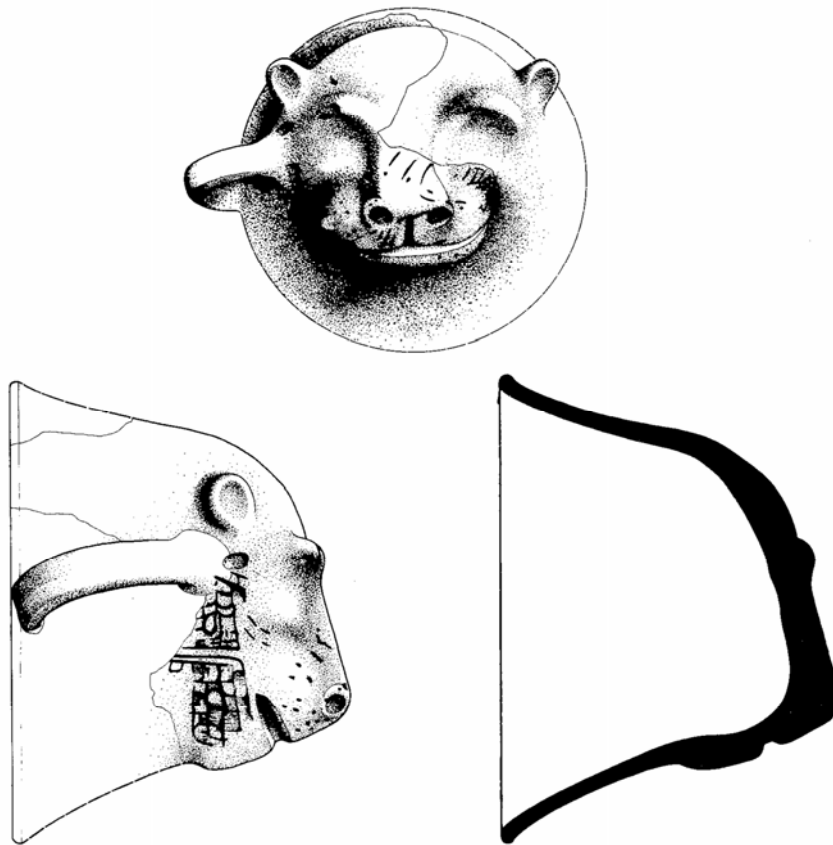
Figure 34: Lion-headed rhyton from Tel Zeror.

(Trude Dothan 1982:232)
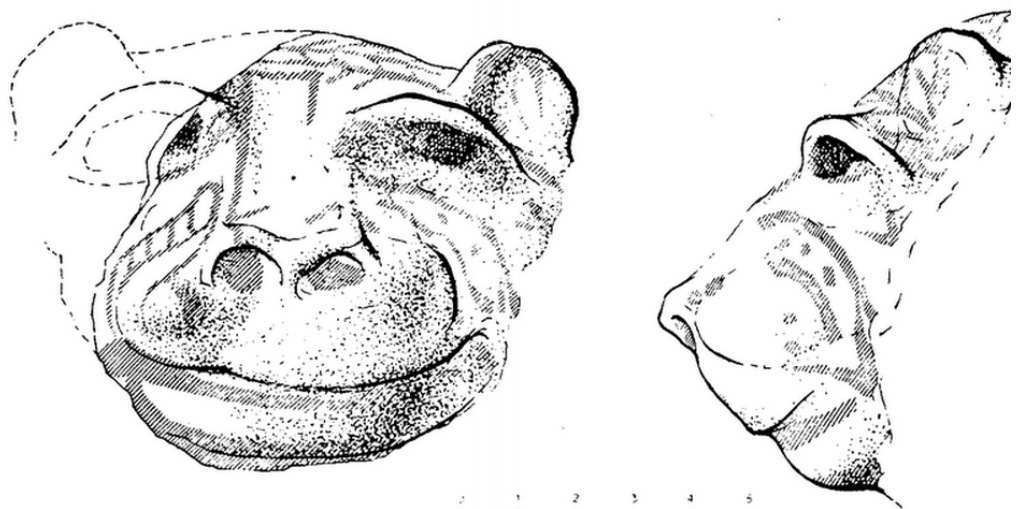
Figure 35: Lion-headed rhyton from Tell es-Safi.

(Trude Dothan 1982:232)

Figure 36: Bone handle of an iron knife from Tel Dor.

(Photo: Author, Dor Museum)
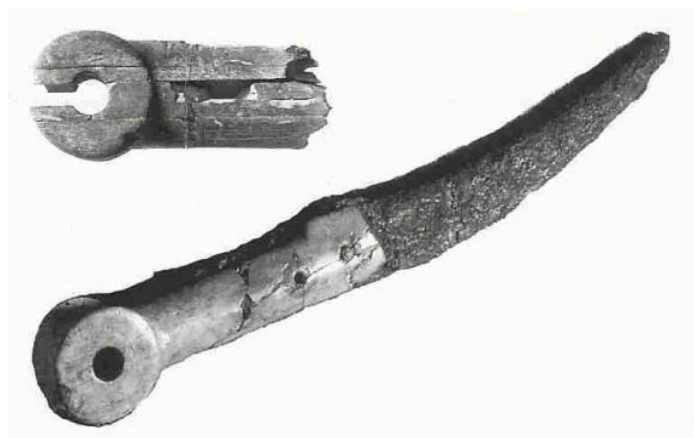
Figure 37: Same knife handle (top) as in Figure 36 with similar

complete knife from Ekron.

(Stern 2000a:349)

During 2000 Stern (Stern 2000a: 345-346) was still very positive about the presence of

the Sikil at Dor.[1] It seems as if this was the general contention amongst some of the

leading archaeologists of the time.[2]

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[1] See also Stern 1993a; 1993b and1998a. Even as late as 2002 Stern held firm to his belief in the presence of the Sikil at Dor (Stern 2002a and 2002b) and there seems to be no reason to suspect that he has changed his mind since that date.

[2] See for instance Marshall 1996:280; Mazar 1992:327 and Stager 1998:338. The latter states: 'The Sikil sailed down the coast and landed at Dor… There they destroyed the Late Bronze Age City of the Canaanites and built a new and much larger city on the ruins. During Stage I the Sikil fortified Dor with walled ramparts, including glacis construction and built a fine harbour of ashlar blocks for their ships.' There is as yet, however, no evidence of the Sikil sailing down the coast and destroying the city.

CHAPTER 10

EXCAVATIONS SINCE 2003: A CHANGE OF DIRECTION.

10.1 INTRODUCTION

What is the current contention prevailing at Tel Dor regarding the presence of the Sikil at the site during the dark ages? In 2003, under the joint directorship of Dr Ilan Sharon of the Institute of Archaeology of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Dr Ayelet Gilboa of Haifa University, a new expedition was launched. During June to August 2006 at Tel Dor, I attended lectures of the said directors, read their published and unpublished papers and had personal discussions with them, other directors as well as key staff members. The impression I got, is, that although there is a measure of scepticism regarding such presence, the possibility has not been totally discarded. The new directors apparently had a fresh look at the site without any preconceived ideas and discussed the future of the excavation at the tell. 'It was resolved to operate as a large consortium of international scholars focusing on specific problems. Rather than pursue any one person's agenda, the aim is to integrate multi-focal research perspectives, and engage in multi-vocal professional dialogues pertaining to issues of inter-regional and inter-cultural reciprocity within the southern Phoenician littoral, and between it and inland Israel, Philistia, Cyprus and the Mediterranean seaboard.'[1] The spectrum was thus broadened considerably. As regards the possibility of Sikil-layers, the excavations during the current period, excluding the temporary reopening of Area F during 2004, referred to above, have not yet reached those levels except maybe in Area D5 (which results are not yet known). Unfortunately, due to the political situation in northern Israel, which developed during the period of the 2006 excavation and led to diminished personnel, some sections of Area D5 had to be closed down prematurely.

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[1] Information obtained from the Internet Website of the Dor Project at http://www.hum.huji.ac.il/dor

The new Expedition under the auspices of Sharon and Gilboa has not only altered the goals of the excavations, but has also brought a fresh approach regarding the presence of the Sikil at Dor to the fore. After more than twenty years of search for the elusive Sikil at Dor, the time had come to sit back and reconsider the whole question, despite the previous positive attitude by the excavators at Dor, especially that of Stern, but from which Sharon and Gilboa did not officially disassociate themselves, if one takes at least the final report of Areas A and C of 1995 in consideration. In a recent statement, however, they aver that 'the question of the Sikil has been a subject of debate among the Dor team ever since early Iron Age remains began to be found in the mid-1980's. Pros and cons of various views were endlessly hashed in the almost-nightly "kiosk-seminars" at the expedition's camp in Pardes-Hanna. Were the texts (the Report of Wenamun and the Onomasticon of Amenemope) connecting the Sikil to the southern Levant, in particular Dor, reliable and clear sources and were the texts collaborated by the archaeo-logical evidence?' (Sharon and Gilboa forthcoming). It seems, therefore, that despite the impression of unanimity created in the official reports, the excavators were divided amongst themselves regarding the issue of a Sikil presence at Dor.

10.2.1 THE SIKIL PRESENCE QUERIED

Rather than pursuing Stern's theory about the violent upheavals at Dor during the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age 1 where Sikil replaced Canaanites, Phoenicians conquered the Sikil to be in turn defeated by the Israelites, Sharon and Gilboa (forthcoming) currently (and apparently for quite a while) adhere to the theory 'that the cultural se-quence at Dor is characterized by continuity rather than upheavals, and that it essen-tially documents the gradual transformation of the Late Bronze Age Canaanite culture into the Iron Age Phoenician one, and that foreign 'Sea People' impact on the local material culture should be understood differently than hitherto proposed.' In order to substantiate this theory, various papers have been published (or are currently forth-

coming) by Sharon and Gilboa, either jointly or individually (Gilboa). Since 1998 Gilboa has endeavoured to develop a theoretical model to provide for alternative solutions to the 'Sikil-material' at Dor.

9.2 DEVELOPING A NEW THEORY

Gilboa (2005:47), by way of introduction, refers to the traditional approach: 'Conventionally it is held that of the various "Sea Peoples" mentioned by the Egyptians, three settled on the Canaanite coast, and thus Sea People domains in the Levant are divided into three: Philistines in the south, Sikila/Tjekker (henceforward *SKL*) roughly along the Sharon Plain and Carmel coast, and Sherden (*SHRDN*) mainly in the Akko Plain.[1] This traditional view is based on the Onomasticon of Amenemope where the settlements of the Sherden, Sikil and the Philistines are listed in that order from north to south along the Mediterranean coast of Palestine.

Gilboa, however, correctly cautions that this alleged north-south arrangement of 'Sea People' in the Onomasticon is not clear and no geographical order is stated. Despite the abundance of evidence regarding the settlement of the Philistines, little evidence regarding the other two groups has been discovered. Although Tel Zeror has been 'identified' as a possible Sikil settlement, this assumption resulted from its location in the Sharon Plain rather than from the material culture of the site. Mazar (1992:326) relates the burial customs which were practised at Tel Zeror to similar Philistine burial practises observed at Azor, but attributes the former to the Sikil 'whose center was at nearby Dor'.

The proximity of Tel Dor, according to Gilboa, seems to play a significant role in establishing the inhabitants who were buried at Tel Zeror and Gilboa's statement seems to be justified in respect of Mazar's deductions.

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[1] See in this regard Mazar 1992: 305–6; Stager 1998:327; Dothan 1982a:296; Stern 2000a:89; Stern 2000b: 198 and Tubb 2000:189.

Dothan (1982a:229) also suggests that this site might have been by the Sikil 'who were settled in nearby Dor.' She, however, bases her suggestion not solely on the proximity of Tel Dor but also on the material culture, especially the material culture of strata XI-X. Although some scholars link the pottery from the cemetery at Tel Zeror with the Philistine ceramic culture, some of the pottery, such as oil lamps with closed nozzles are unique in Palestine pottery.[1] She concludes that the material culture represented in strata XI-X of Tel Zeror attests that the site was occupied by one of the Sea Peoples, probably the Sikil.

Stager (1998:338), with reference to inter alia Stern, Mazar and Raban makes some very bold statements regarding Dor, which are justifiably being criticised by Gilboa. He states: 'The Sikils sailed down the coast and landed at Dor, identified as a city of the Sikils in the eleventh-century Egyptian Tale of Wen-Amon …There they destroyed the Late Bronze Age city of the Canaanites and built a new and much larger city on the ruins. During Stage 1 the Sikils fortified Dor with walled ramparts, including glacis construction…and built a fine harbour of ashlar blocks for their ships…' For his assertions regarding the fortification of Dor, he relies on Stern (1992) and for the harbour on Raban (1987). There are, however, no sources quoted for the suggestions that the Sikil 'sailed down the coast' and 'they destroyed the Late Bronze Age city of the Canaanites and built a new and much larger city on the ruins.' If one considers the Hittite and Ugaritic sources that the Sikil previously operated in the Mediterranean off the coast of Cilicia and that a trail of destruction was left, probably by the Sea Peoples, all along the north-eastern and eastern Mediterranean coast, including the destruction and abandonment of Ugarit, it may be a reasonable assumption that the Sikil at some stage sailed south if it is established that they did in fact later settle at Dor. It also

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[1] It is interesting to note that a lion-headed rhyton was discovered here which is similar to finds made at Tel Dor as well as at Tell es-Safti, Tell Jerishe, Tell Qasile and Megiddo (Dothan 1982a:229-233). (See Chapter 9.1.3 and figures 33-35 above)

follows that, since they are described as participants in the attacks on Egypt a few years after their presence in northern waters had been recorded, they had moved southwards during the interim. Logistically it would not have been possible to attack Egypt if their home base was too far removed from the area of operations.

Gilboa (2005:50) correctly points out that the Late Bronze Age town (as discussed above) has not been located yet and that there are no grounds for the suggestion that it was violently destroyed. She agrees with the scenario that the Early Iron Age town was significantly larger than its predecessor and was immediately fortified. "Not only were the relevant fortifications uncovered, but the Late Bronze Age town has not been uncovered in areas where the excavations went below the remains of the 'Sikil' city. It is crucial to assess the date of the development of the latter city and the limited data at hand does not point to a development at the beginning of the Early Iron Age, but rather to a period when Philistine Bichrome pottery was already in existence' (Gilboa 2005:50). As far as the Sikil are concerned, I wholeheartedly agree with Gilboa.

In a recent article (Sharon and Gilboa forthcoming) (which will be discussed in more detail later in Chapter 10.4.4). the authors also contend that the local material culture at Dor is 'a single cultural sequence and that the essential process it marks, is a gradual transition from Late Bronze Age "Canaanite" to Iron Age "Phoenician", though it is coloured by an unmistakable Cypriot impact.'

Sharon and Gilboa are of the opinion that valid objections to a 'Sea People'-settlement at Dor could be raised on two grounds:

Their first reason refers to the geography of the region. The majority of definitions of the term 'Phoenicia' place the southern border of that entity at the tip of the Carmel, thus just north of Dor, or sometimes even further to the north, north of the 'Akko plain. Culturally, however, it appears 'that the clear-cut boundary of a single material-culture-

zone lies south of Dor. The results of the provenience analysis show that all the diagnostic Phoenician wares were indeed manufactured (also) at Dor. Thus, if "Phoenicianess" to the material culture at Dor is denied, the ability to identify any material-culture-attributes as "Phoenician" is *ipso facto* undermined' (Sharon & Gilboa forthcoming).

A second reason is based on the chronology of the region.[1] 'It is impossible to draw a temporal line and state categorically at what moment in time is it justified to distinguish "Phoenician" material culture from "Canaanite". 'As regards this early date, ethnic, linguistic or religious definitions for "Phoenicianism" won't do, as there are few clues as to the language, cultic (or any other type of) behaviour, much less selfascription of either the inhabitants of Dor nor parts further north for the beginning of the Iron Age.'

The authors propose the following mental experiment to try to delineate 'Phoenician' from 'Canaanite': 'Let's start at a period where we may all agree that the material culture of the northern littoral is "Phoenician", and then work our way backwards, step by step, to a period where we can all agree that the local material culture is "Canaanite". Is there any stage at which it would be appropriate to stop and declare that from this point it would be appropriate to call the material culture henceforward "Phoenician" (or "Israelite" or "Aramean" etc.)? We hold that if any one period may claim that distinction then the Ir1a forms the end of processes we usually associate with Canaanite culture, and the root of new ones which will come to fruition in the Phoenician realm.'

They concede that there are some foreign (mainly Cypriot) influences on the local material culture, but maintain that it does not necessarily follow that all Aegean-

[1]In another article by the same two authors (Gilboa and Sharon 2003:7-80) they propose a new chronology for southern Phoenicia. It entails (1) a construction of a framework of relative chronology (including a new terminological framework for Phoenicia) based on a comparative study of ceramics, illustrated and explicitly discussed; (2) the establishment of absolute dates for this framework, based on 14^C determinations; and (3) determination of the network of intra-, inter- and super-regional contacts, to reconstruct cross-cultural synchronisms (for a somewhat similar approach), but employing different data. This new chronology is an alternative to the traditional biblical-historical chronology of the Levant or other alternatives based on the Egyptian chronology or to base a new chronological scheme on Philistia and the southern coast. It would, however, serve no purpose to discuss this proposal in detail in this study.

Mycenaean type finds point to Aegean origins. According to them Mycenaean IIIC:1b early pottery were during this period independently manufactured in Mycenae, the Aegean islands, Cyprus, Anatolia and the southern Levant as well as other regions. Sporadic finds of pottery of this kind at Dor do not as such lead to the conclusion that there was a Sikil-settlement at Dor and that the inhabitants of Dor at one time was one of the 'Sea Peoples' (this is a contradiction to the earlier allegation that no Mycenaean IIIC:1b pottery have been found at Dor). They maintain that in order to seek foreign influences at Dor there is no reason to go any further than the neighbouring island, Cyprus. The excavations at Dor have delivered no evidence which necessitate the seeking of a homeland further west, thus the Aegean. In their opinion there appear to be no mass settlement of people at Dor at the beginning of the Iron Age and the only evidence of a mass immigration of people in the Levant during that period seem to be the process evident in Philistia.

'We have proposed herein a different reading of early Iron Age material culture at Dor. Even without polemics upon the valence of the Pots = People equation, it is possible, it seems, for long time associates to form rather different interpretations of a basic characterisation of the site they have all been excavating at for twenty years. Therein may lie the predicament in which archaeology finds itself at the beginning of the third millennium.'

Finally Sharon and Gilboa suggest that at least part of the difference between archaeologists in reading Early Iron readings at Dor stems from the way basic questions are phrased and the way archaeologists view the role of their discipline within the historical sciences. 'If the question that is posed is: "Given that there was a 'Sea People' migration to the Levant, and that Dor is the capital of the *SKL* – how would one define '*SKL*' material culture?" The answer: "monochrome pottery with spirals, bimetallic knives, notched scapulae" etc. might be indeed appropriate. If, however, the question is

phrased: "If it were not for the serendipity of Mr. Golenischeff acquiring a papyrus in Cairo one fine day 111 years ago (referring here to the Report of Wenamun), would anyone have even suspected that '*SKL*' inhabited Dor in the early Iron Age?" Our answer is: "probably not". But perhaps what we might try to do is redefine our understanding of the nature of the phenomena subsumed under this label.'

I cannot agree with the authors' final remarks regarding the value of Wenamun's report. One can ask the same question in respect of Homer's *Iliad.* If the *Iliad* was not written and if Heinrich Schliemann did not believe the contents as being factually correct, would the site of Troy ever have been discovered or rather if the site was discovered would anyone ever have suspected that this was once a city called Troy, inhabited by Trojans and that the city was once destroyed by the Mycenaeans? The answer would be the same: Probably not. The same argument applies to all the archaeological sites which would either never have been discovered and/or identified if it had not been for textual evidence, including biblical references.[1]

The views of Sharon and Gilboa regarding the presence or absence of the Sikil at Dor are in some measure echoed by Vansteenhuyse (1998:75). He ventures cautiously into the fray by stating that the problem of the inhabitants of the Dor-region during the transition period from the Late Bronze age to Iron Age I has not yet been solved, inter alia because of a lack of sufficient data, but the available evidence 'certainly does not confirm the hypothesis of the Sikil.' He, therefore, by implication, does not exclude the possibility, but he proposes that all existing material from surveys should be restudied in conjunction with future material that a better view of settlement patterns can be established. In my opinion this is a moot suggestion. One cannot comprehend a highly professional team of scientists, as evidenced by the excavators at Dor, to do otherwise

[1]Fritz (1994:29) states that the Bible still remains the most important literary source of place names in ancient Palestine. Herr (1997:115) goes further: 'Despite its limitations, the Bible still remains our best extra-archaeological artifact. It often helps us give names to things we find, from statues of gods to agricultural items.' During the 19th century CE Edward Robinson used the Bible as reference to name places in Palestine and most of those names are still used today (Silberman 1998a:13, 23; Mazar 1992:10).

in my experience and in my experience it is an ongoing process.

He also suggests that smaller sites resulting in smaller excavations should be chosen to give archaeologists a better view of economic activities, such as agriculture in the area surrounding Dor. In my opinion this would serve no real purpose for Vansteenhuyse seems to ignore a very important geographical fact. Previous research suggested that in ancient times the tell have been cut off from its hinterlands by a shallow lagoon and swamps on the east, thus making it a peninsula, virtually an island (Raban 1995:350). According to Sharon and Gilboa (forthcoming) this area now covered by sand 'was previously a wetland, even along the present coast, and only the ingression of the sea during the last thousand years or so brought in the sands. Unlike the coastal swamps that dried up at around ± 8000 years ago, the swamps between the Coastal Ridge and the Highway Ridge survived till the 20th century CE, when they were artificially dried up. Thus today's landscape of bountiful agriculture may be misleading. As recently as the beginning of this century, the Kebara swamps, just south-east of Dor, impeded habitation, cultivation and travel in the Sharon plain. Some readings of the ancient written sources infer a similar situation in the Late Bronze and Iron Ages. Archaeo-zoological findings from the relevant strata at Dor lend credence to this view.'

Vansteenhuyse's next suggestion that more attention should be given to the study of household pottery instead of only to the decorated pottery is, in my opinion, even more contentious. Without being too critical of the author, it seems a very superficial observation of the pottery-studies at Dor, where all indicative pottery are attended to and all the pottery (at least in my experience) from sealed areas are examined.

As a final practical suggestion he proposes that the pottery study in general should move away from its purely typological research. Statistical analysis of all recovered sherds, their spatial analysis et cetera are necessary methods which are not used yet. I agree with this suggestion (except for the notion to analyse 'all recovered sherds', which

would not only be impractical, but virtually impossible in terms of available resources) and it seems that since this dissertation was written, big strides have been made in this direction.

As a sort of theoretical suggestion Vansteenhuyse proposes that more attention should be given to the study of migration processes in the eastern Mediterranean. I whole-heartedly agree with this general contention. Unfortunately, due to various reasons, not the least being current political barriers, comprehensive studies of migratory patterns in the region of the eastern Mediterranean are not always a viable proposition. He, how-ever, goes further and makes the allegation that a similar lack of interest in general processes is visible in explaining the change of elite in the beginning of the Iron Age. The simple model from the research on the Philistines, a new elite coming in and opposing its material culture, has no theoretical background at the moment. It is not clear if the author refers to a model explaining the immigration of the Philistines *per se* or a Philistine-based model used to explain a migratory process at Dor. If the former is intended, then, in view of the momentous work (now I am not only referring to pure archaeological research) done by scholars such as the Dothans, Finkelstein, Stager and others, this allegation is not only bold, but grossly unfair. If the second is intended it corresponds with my own views on this matter, but, in view of the recent work done by Sharon and Gilboa, it seems that the machinery has already been set in motion.

10.4 REASONS FOR DISSENTING VIEWS

10.4.1 INTRODUCTION

I have indicated in the previous chapter that Stern's view is that the Bronze Age Canaanite city was probably destroyed by the Sikil and that the latter group rebuilt the city during the early Iron Age 1. In the context of the texts, particularly the Medinet

Habu reliefs and texts and the Onomasticon of Amenhope, one would assume that the Philistines and the Sikil settled in Palestine about the same time.

Although Gilboa (2005:50) admits that the Early Iron Age city at Dor was significantly larger than its Bronze Age predecessor and that it was fortified, she is, as already indicated above, of the opinion that it did not occur at the very beginning of the Iron Age, but at a time when Philistine Bichrome pottery was already in existence. The development of Philistine pottery from Mycenaean IIIC:1b to a fully fledged Bichrome pottery over a period of approximately a century, would suggest a similar type of development by the Sikil. Gilboa states that there is in Phoenicia (I read her statement here as meaning that one should see Phoenicia in its widest context with its southern border south of Dor, rather than the traditional accepted border situated somewhere north of 'Akko) a conspicuous continuity in Late Bronze-Early Iron Age pottery. 'Significantly, the pottery in the postulated SKL and SHRDN territories (respectively Dor, Tell Keisan and 'Akko) clusters with that to the north and east, and not with regions to the south. No significant changes whatsoever may be observed in the composition of the ceramic assemblages, parallel to those, for example in Philistia or the highlands' (Gilboa 2005:54). As a general rule tableware are undecorated while commercial ware such as flasks, certain jars and strainer-spouted jugs were carefully and meticulously painted.

10.4.2 GILBOA'S 1998-ARTICLE AS STARTING POINT

In the 1998-article, Gilboa discusses three facets of ceramic assemblages: the process of evolution from destruction to post-destruction assemblages; their relationship with other Iron Age I coastal assemblages and their overseas connections. She asserts that she does not deal with the possible ethnical connections of these assemblages. Possible ethnical connections as alternatives to Sikil origins are dealt with in later articles (Gilboa 2005; Sharon and Gilboa forthcoming), with which I shall deal in due course.

According to Gilboa 'both the destruction and post-destruction pottery assemblages are quite ordinary and the variety of forms very small. Almost all the destruction bowls (Figure 38:1-9) are variants of the same basic type with profiled upper walls and rims and correspond clearly with Bronze Age tradition. Most, but not all, have red bands on their rims. There is also a second, much less frequent type (Figure 38: 10-11), simple, slightly carinated bowls with no real rim moulding and red paint on the rims. Numbers l2-13 in Figure 38 reflect the general shape of the kraters.'

'In the earliest post-destruction loci there are still some profiled bowls (Figure 39:1-2), most of them quite degenerate (Figure 39:3-5) and almost none decorated. The vast majority of bowls here and down to the 10th and probably 9th century are the simple, slightly carinated bowls with almost no base or rim treatment (Figure 39:6-16), that were very infrequent before the destruction. Only very rare examples are decorated with red paint on the rim or, towards the end of the sequence, with Bichrome decoration or red slip (Figure 39:14-17).

Most of the kraters are of one (coarse) type (Figure 39:18-20), resembling the coarse, destruction type. The only decoration on the destruction pottery is red, consisting mainly of concentric circles. Other than the red bands on the bowl rims, it appears regularly on small containers, mostly flasks and strainer-spouted jugs (Figure 40:4, 7-14), some very coarse (e.g. Figure 40:10), but most thin sided, and on some jars (Figures 40:1-3, 43:4).

In the earliest *loci* post-dating the destruction (Figure 41) there are still some red-circled containers, but these are soon outnumbered by Bichrome containers of a very distinct, coarse but wet smoothed or burnished and carefully decorated variety. Towards the end of Iron I these are replaced by the mat-painted Bichrome variety-flasks, spherical jugs and strainer-spouted jugs (Figure 42).

Three main jar types, all clearly of Late Bronze Age tradition, are represented in the destruction. The straight-shouldered ones (Figure 43) are the most abundant, some of them red circled. This is also the main type that travelled overseas. In addition to these are a few collared-rim, so-called 'Tyrian' pithoi with plastic wavy-line decoration and Egyptian jars.' (Gilboa 1998:414-415). Although Gilboa does not discuss the post-destruction jars, she points out that it is important to note that they are clearly evolved from the destruction straight-shouldered variety. The vast majority are undecorated.

It seems, therefore, that as far as may be deduced from the pottery of the post-destruction period, which for all intents and purposes seems to tally indigenous Canaa-nite pottery, no break of any sort can be discerned between destruction and post-des-truction pottery. Gilboa (1998:415) asserts 'that one can follow, almost step by step, the gradual evolution of the different pottery forms, the degeneration of the assemblage as a whole and, on the other hand, the special effort invested in shaping, and above all, deco-rating, a few, specific, container types, mainly large and small flasks/jugs, strainer-spouted jugs and to a lesser extent, jars. This pattern remains constant pre- and post-destruction. When viewed in continuum with Late Bronze Age assemblages elsewhere (LB strata at Dor have not yet been reached), these developments become even more conspicuous. I would add a cautionary note in this regard: it is good comparison to look at destruction and post-destruction levels, but a final judgement should be reserved until the Late Bronze strata have been reached.'

According to Gilboa (1998:415), 'the pottery development at Dor during the Late Bronze Age and Early Iron I is strikingly dissimilar to the pottery culture of Philistia at the time. The specific types are different, the nature of the decorated assemblages there are differ-rent and likewise the nature of their change. A dozen or so Philistine-type sherds were uncovered at Dor, most in mixed contexts (mostly postdating the

destruction) and only one possible such sherd in the destruction level itself.' Gilboa (1998:415) points out that it is actually quite surprising to see how little material from Philistia reached Dor throughout Iron 1. 'On the other hand ceramic phenomena and evolution similar to those observed at Dor are evident in Phoenicia at such sites as Tyre, Sarepta, Tell Keisan and Tell Abu Ha-wam. In the last two southern Phoenician sites, the pottery types are nearly identical.

The general character of the post-destruction assemblage provides the ceramic context for the initial evolution of Phoenician Bichrome ware. The first vessels to bear the Bichrome decoration are small containers, flasks and spherical jugs of various sizes, strainer-spouted jugs and possibly also jars. All these were vessels used in long-distance trade. The fact that only these vessels bore decorations among otherwise mundane and undecorated ceramic production, clearly indicates that they functioned solely as trade promoters, which may perhaps point to where the initiative for this trade may be sought. However, this pattern is not new. It is a direct continuation of the pattern manifested by the monochrome containers. The vessels are decorated, though their shapes have evolved and a second colour has been added. Only the decoration of jars may have been abandoned (though a few post-destruction Bichrome sherds apparently belong to jars). Only later, in the 10th century and in the 9th century BCE did the Bichrome decoration spread to other vessels, mainly bowls, but other forms as well (small jars and chalices for example, and probably assumed additional functions and meanings. This development is also manifested in other Phoenician sites' (Gilboa 1998:418).

'In terms of the destruction levels at Dor, no vessels of Cypriot origin were identified, but such wares were found in abundance towards the end of the post-destruction sequence around 1000 BCE. These wares consist mainly of open shapes and the quantities found surpass anything uncovered elsewhere in Israel '(Gilboa 1998:418).

'The continuous sequence of the general pottery assemblage at Dor is also true for contemporary contexts at Tell Keisan (Stratum 9), for Tyre (Stratum XIII) and Sarepta (Stratum E2)' (Gilboa and Sharon 2003: Figures. 2–17, tables 2–20).

Although Gilboa asserted in this 1998-article that she does not deal with the ethnical connections of the ceramic assemblages, it is quite clear that a foundation is laid for a theory advocating a continuation of the Late Bronze Age Canaanite material culture at Dor to well into Iron 1. In contrast to the new (even revolutionary) developments in material culture during Early Iron 1 in regions such as Philistia, there are (according to Gilboa) no similar changes at Dor during that period. The logical conclusion (at least from the contents of Gilboa's 1998- article), therefore, should be that there was no settlement of a foreign people, e.g. the Sikil or any section or group of the Sea Peoples at Dor. On the other hand, Gilboa (see above) points out that there are an abundance of vessels of Cypriot origin around 1000 BCE. Unfortunately Gilboa, in accordance with the general tenure of this particular article, refrain from postulating if they were impor-ted or locally manufactured, unless one deduces that by using the words 'Cypriot origin', she implies that they were imported. She may of course also imply that the style originated in Cyprus.

Figure 38: Destruction bowls and kraters from Dor.
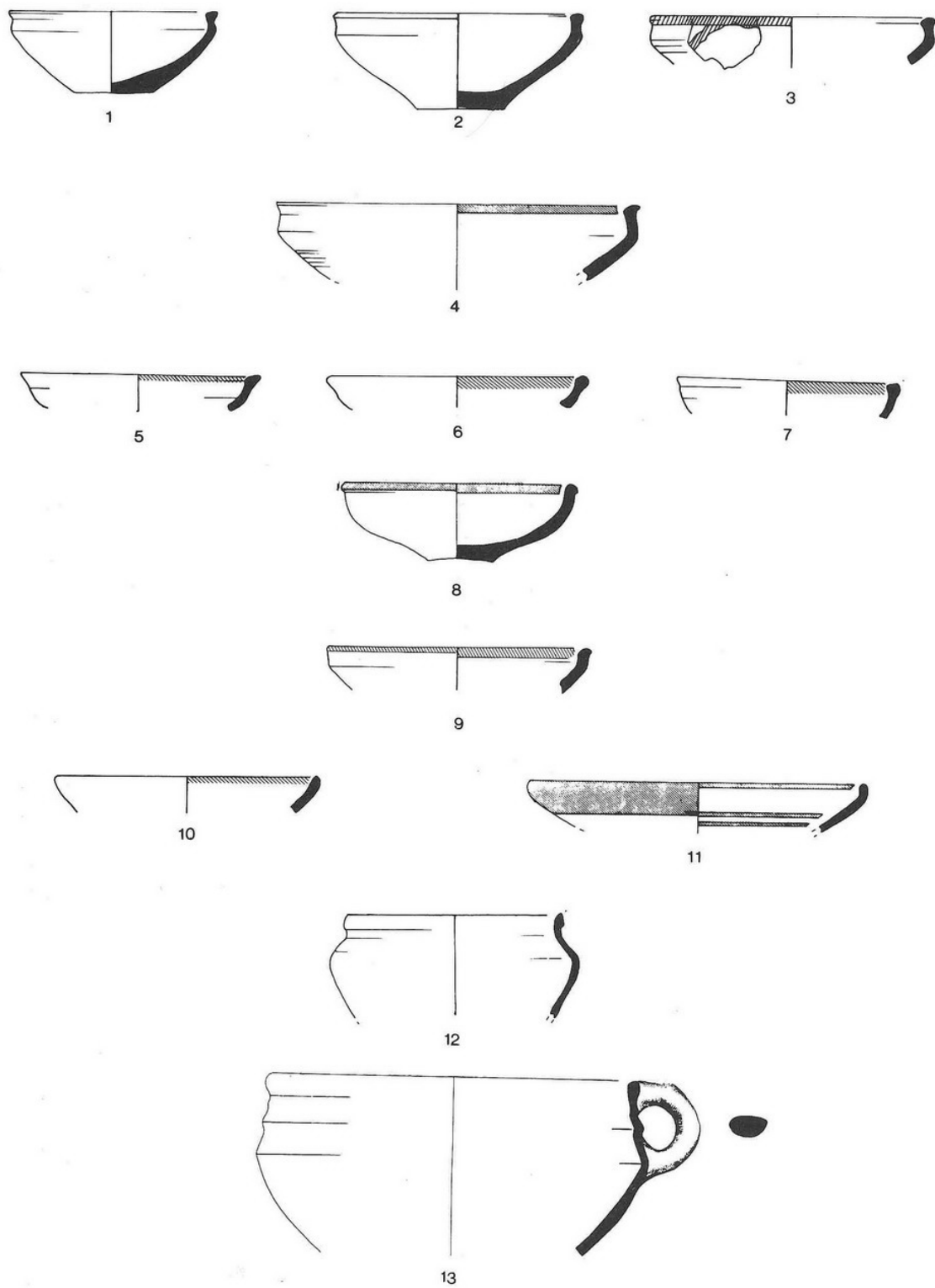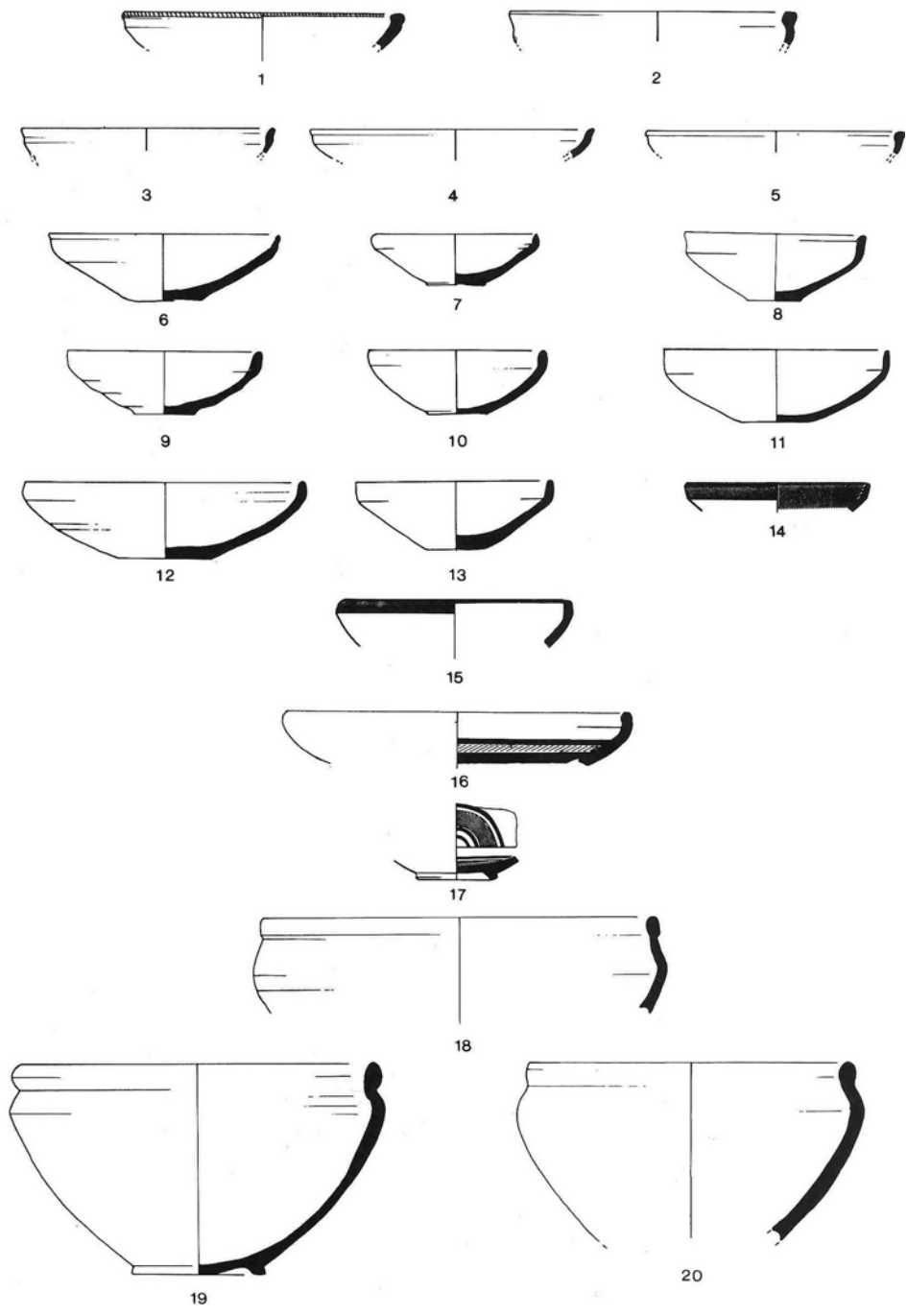
(Gilboa 1998:415)

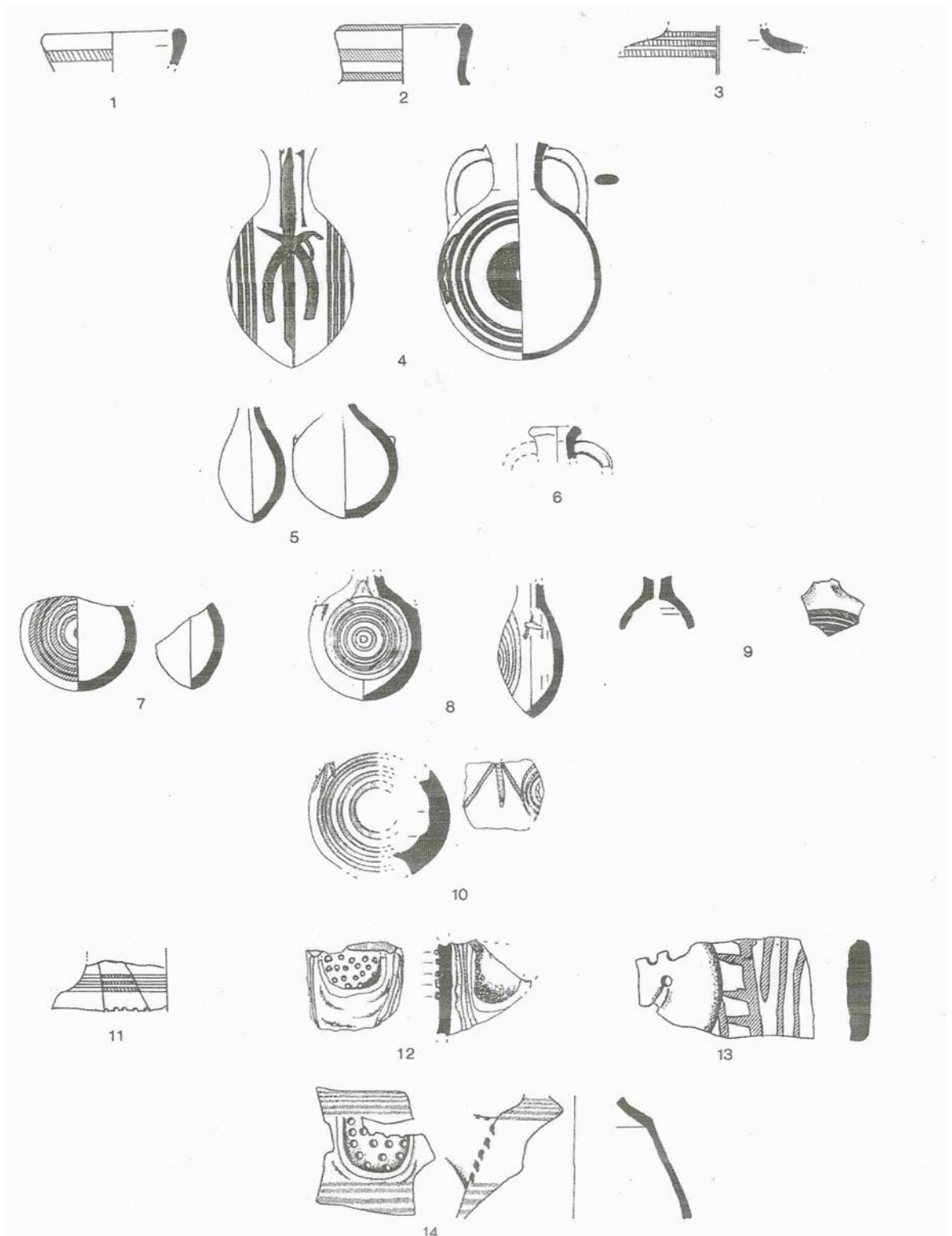Figure 39: Post-destruction bowls and kraters from Dor.

(Gilboa 1998:416)

Figure 40: Destruction containers from Dor.
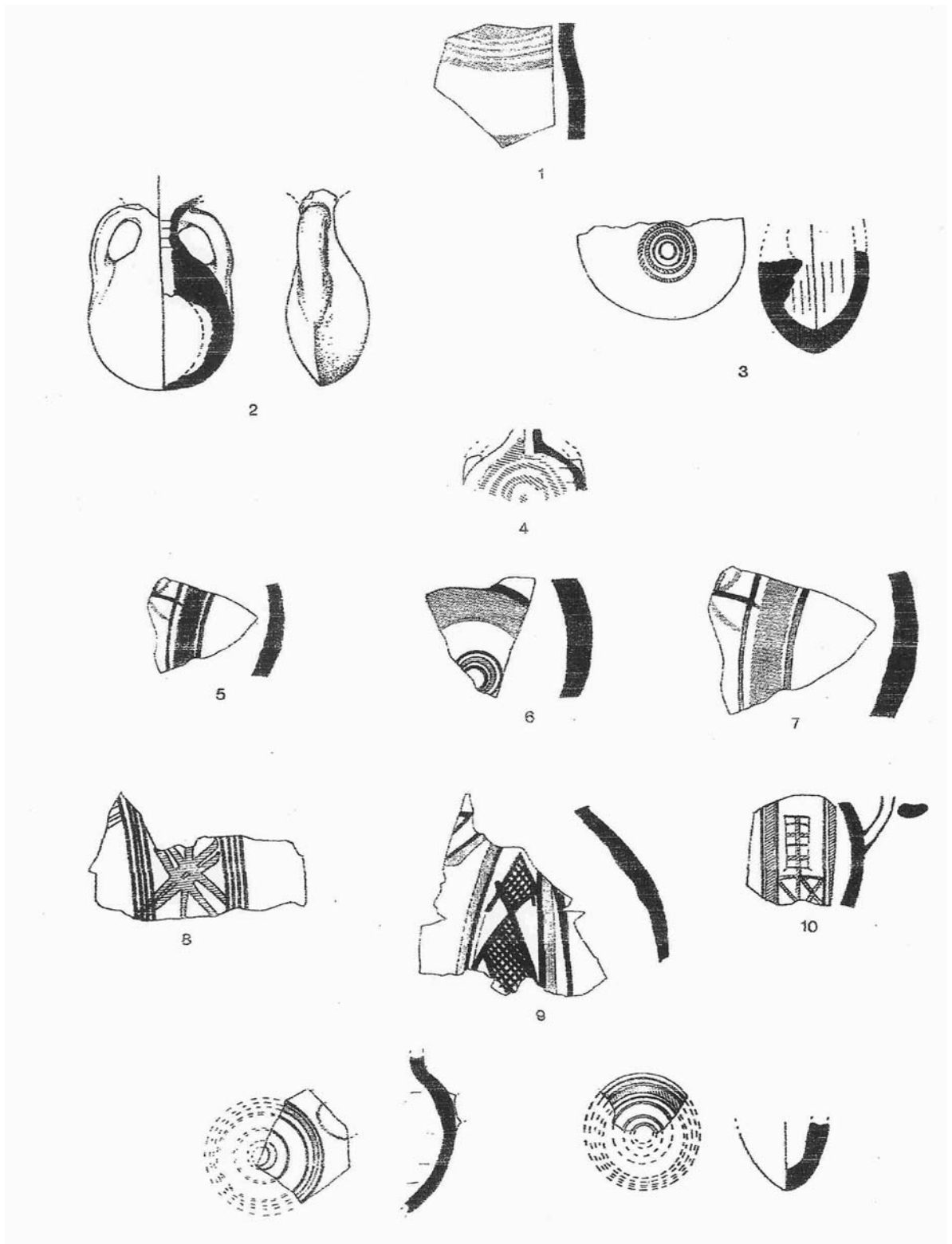
(Gilboa 1998:417)

Figure 41: Early post-destruction containers from Dor.
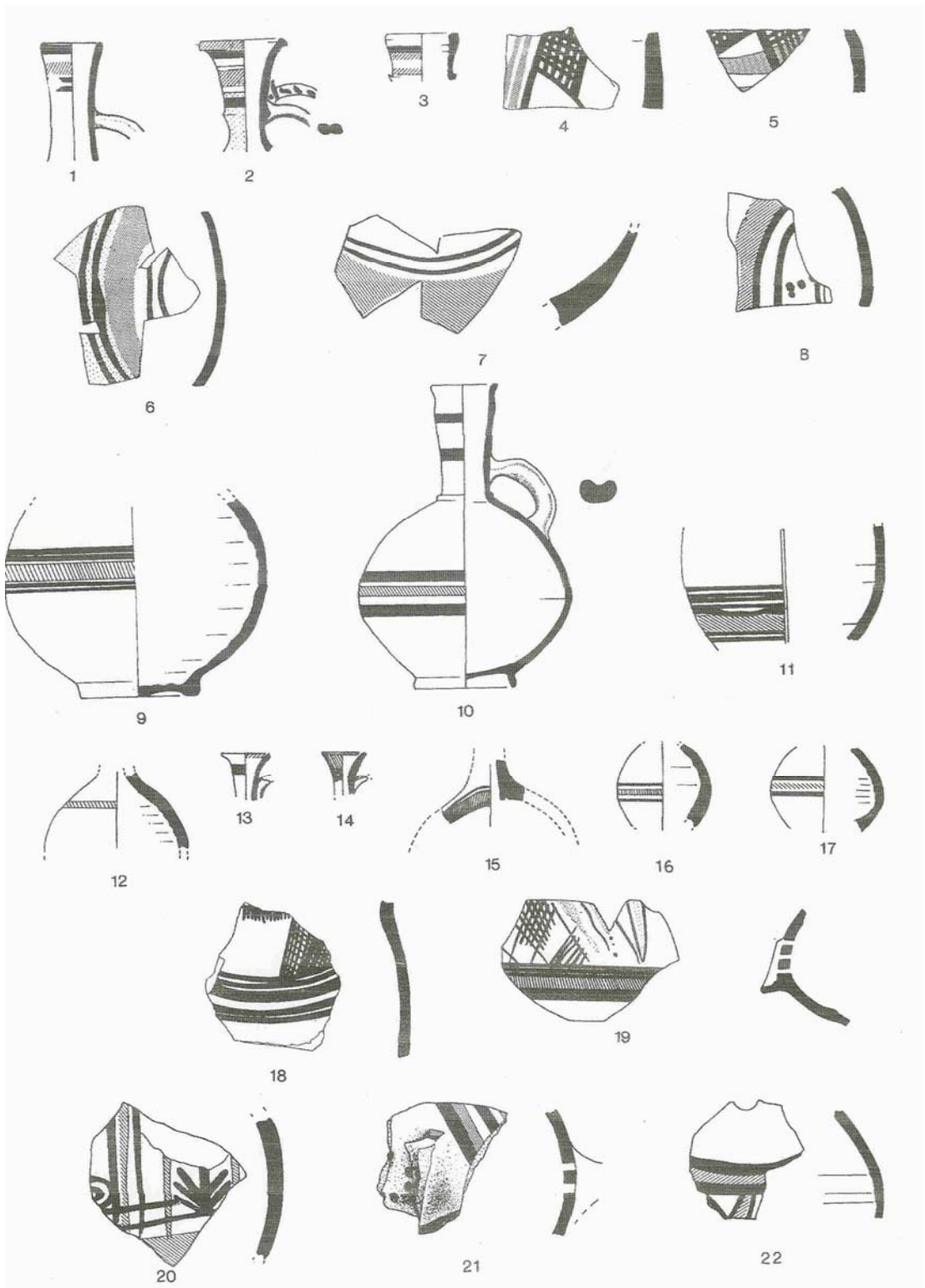
(Gilboa 1998:419)

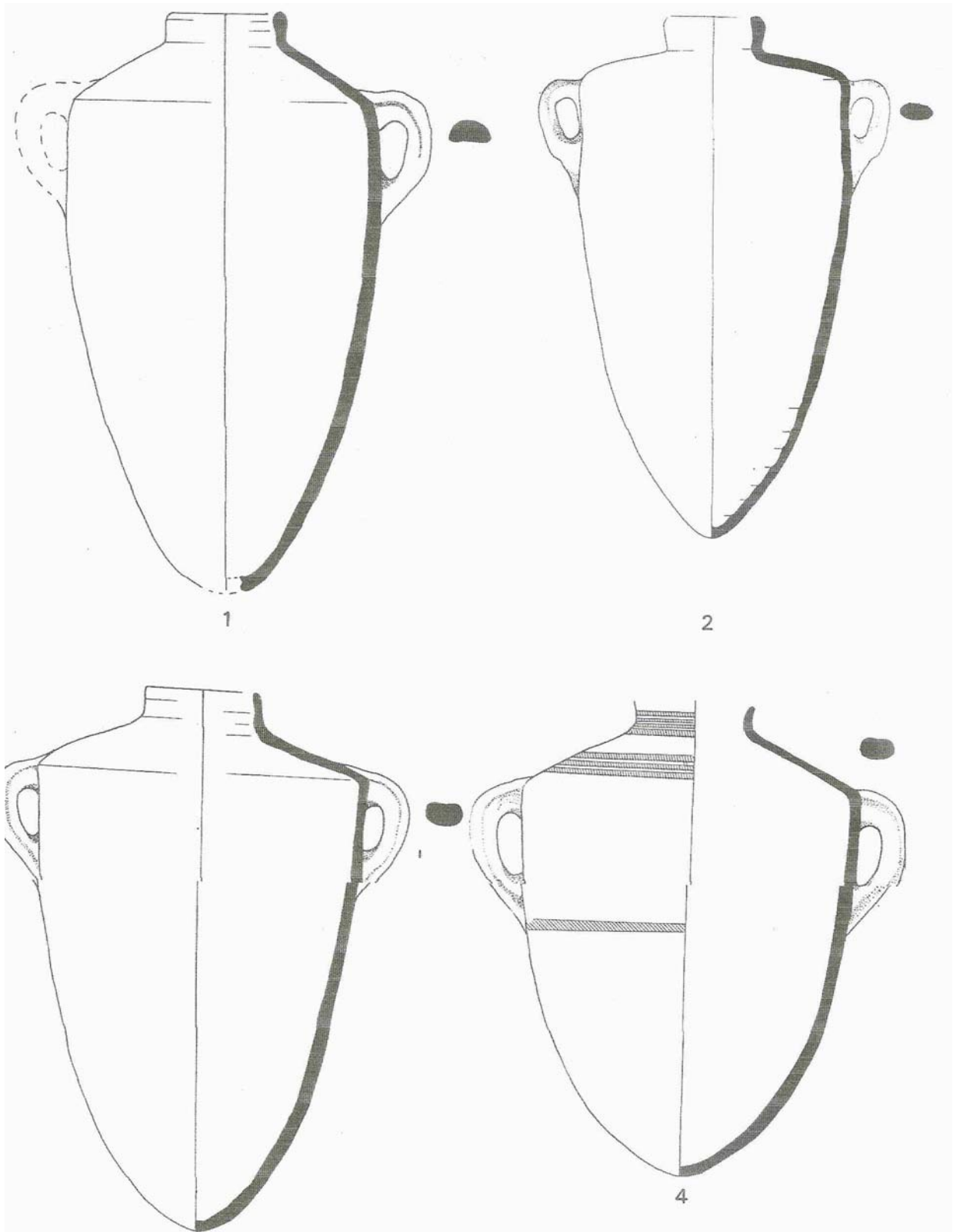Figure 42: Post-destruction containers from Dor.

(Gilboa 1998:420)

Figure 43: Destruction straight-shouldered jars from Dor.

(Gilboa 1998:421)

10.4.3 FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS: GILBOA'S 2005-ARTICLE

In her 2005-article Gilboa (2005:55-60) develops a theory regarding the ceramic assem-
blages at Dor. At the outset the term 'ceramic assemblages' should be emphasised.
According to the summary of the article 'This paper attempts to interpret group iden-
tities along the Canaanite coast in the Early Iron Age, beginning with an analysis of
functional and symbolic properties of ceramics. The starting point is the material culture
of Dor, the SKL town according to Egyptian testimony' (Gilboa 2005:47).

'If one considers quantities and the typological variety, it is immediately evident that
nothing like the "local Myc IIIC/Philistine Monochrome" phenomenon of Philistia ever
existed north of the Yarkon River, in any of the Phoenician sites. At both Tell Abu
Hawam and Dor, not a single potsherd that can be dubbed Myc IIIC, has ever been
uncovered. A similar divergence between Philistia and the regions north of it is evident
regarding the slightly later Philistine Bichrome (PhB) ware. In Philistia this ware is
geographically more widespread than the local "Myc IIIC," though relative quantities at
the various sites vary and often are difficult to estimate. At Dor, PhB fragments were
taken to represent Sikil material culture (e.g. Dothan 1982:69; Stern 2000b:200, Figure
10.3 and see Figure 29 above). However, it is now evident that (a) their quantity there is
miniscule, (b) they comprise mostly containers, and (c) as demonstrated by petrography,
these containers indeed originate in Philistia. PhB ware was definitely intrusive in Dor's
ceramic environment, and the few fragments uncovered probably embody commercial
ties with some Philistine site(s), in this particular case, a rather southern one' (Gilboa
2005:56).

'On the other hand, one ceramic phenomenon in the north stands out in its "western"
association. At Tell Keisan, and less so at Dor, significant numbers of deep bell shaped
bowls, or skyphoi, are attested, a new form, certainly of some "western" derivation'
(Gilboa 2005:56).

According to Gilboa (2005:56), 'Mazar was the first to point out that in the Early Iron Age, clumsy and poorly decorated bell-shaped bowls are known mainly from "Northern Palestine" i.e., he recognised them as a spatial phenomenon, rather than a temporal one.' Gilboa, however, is adamant that 'on no account can these skyphoi be confused with the "Myc IIIC/ PhB" pottery phenomena in Philistia. First, they are indeed the only significant group whose morphology may be linked to the "west," unlike the significantly more variegated "western" repertoires of Philistia. They also differ greatly in the quality of their manufacture. Most of them are rather crude, the treatment of their surface was not really attended to and they are very simply decorated or r undecorated. The designs are very simple lines, either a few horizontal bands or simple spirals. More intricate geometric designs, or figurative ones like those produced by the proficient painters of Philistia, are not attested. Also, there is a large variability in the fabrics and surface treatments of the 'Northern Skyphoi.' At Dor (Figure 44) hardly any two fragments are really similar, though, as demonstrated by petrography, most of them were produced locally (on the Carmel coast or in Dor itself). In this they differ from the specialised, often quite canonic production of Philistia's decorated wares, indicating a different mode of production' (Gilboa 2005:57).

Gilboa (2005:57) avers that ' at Tell Keisan (Figure 45) some skyphoi in the assemblage, mostly the decorated ones, were discussed under the "Philistine pottery" epithet and others were dubbed "Myc IIIC", but, as at Dor, they are generally of poor quality, produced of a large array of fabrics, most of them coarse, and only a few are more delicate. It is suggested that they were modelled on Mycenaean skyphoi. These bell-shaped painted bowls at Tell Keisan, however, are not an isolated ceramic phenomenon there. Numerous undecorated (and some once-decorated but now plain) skyphoi are present there, labelled with the culturally neutral designation *Bol (*B.IV) and discussed separately from the "Philistine" and "Myc III" specimens. B.IV bowls were relatively

frequent (17 percent) in Stratum 13, after which the frequency dropped in Stratum 12 (2.5 percent of all bowls) and increased again (9.33 percent in Stratum 11; 10.72 percent in 10). These bowls are attested at Tell Keisan in unknown, but apparently restricted numbers until Stratum 9 and even in 8c (of the Ir1a|b, Ir1b, and Ir1|2 horizons), and then they disappear. Gilboa (2005:57) argues that the separation of "Philistine" skyphoi on one hand and B.IV bowls on the other, obscures the cultural phenomenon they epitomise.'

Gilboa(2005:57) also points out that at Dor this is borne out by the small number of these skyphoi. 'The Iron 1a sequence at Dor ends with a seemingly site-wide, though certainly not complete, destruction. Stern perceives a cultural dichotomy between the early Iron Age layers pre- and post-dating the destruction, i.e., between his "Sikilian" and "Phoenician" sequences (Stern 2000b: 201), between the horizons designated here LB|Ir and Ir1a (early and late) on the one hand, and Ir1a|b, Ir1b, and Ir1|2 on the other. The Phoenician takeover of the "Sikilian" town was deduced primarily by the appearance, after the destruction, of significant quantities of Phoenician Bichrome pottery. It seems, however, that continuity, rather than divergence, is in evidence' (Gilboa 2005:57).

'North of the Yarkon River there is a significant lack of local Myc IIIC'/PhB ceramics especially with respect to the alleged Sikil and Sherden domains. Should one search for evidence of a 'Sea People' presence at Dor other than the ceramic scenario, the following items were found, which are similar to finds in Philistia: incised cow scapulae, two bone handles of bimetallic knives, a lioness-shaped cup, and an anthropomorphic juglet resembling one found at Tell Qasile (Stern 2000b:198–203). These were taken by Stern and others to exemplify the Sea People nature of the Sikil inhabitants of Dor' (Gilboa 2005:57). (For more specific comments on all these items at Dor, see Sharon and Gilboa forthcoming and the discussion of that article below). 'Some of

them originate at Dor in contexts that are stratigraphically later than the big destruction, and thus are associated with Stern's "Phoenician" sequence and not the "Sikilian" one. It is a fact that Philistia's material culture in the Early Iron Age, including that associated with ritual, was composed chiefly of objects of local, Canaanite derivation. Thus, the fact that an item may be found in Philistia is definitely not synonymous with a conclusion that it embodies some alien introduction or practice. Some objects may equally be explained by prevailing local traditions, whereas others (such as the bimetallic knives) probably attest to trade, most probably with Cyprus' (Gilboa 2005:63). I do not agree with Gilboa's generalisation of Philistine material culture being derived from Canaanite. It has been well established (see Chapter 6.2.3 above) that, except for those associated with ritual, most of the original material culture resemble Aegean or Cypriot roots.

Gilboa (2005:63) poses the question how this difference should be interpreted. 'Does this mean that the arrival of new populations can be traced only (roughly) south of the Yarkon River, excluding the alleged Sikil and Sherden areas of settlement? As attested by ample examples, both in the archaeological and anthropological literature, more often than not, migrating peoples or individuals do not transfer all components of their material culture to their new homelands and sometimes they bring none at all.' Gilboa (2005:63) illustrates this by using the examples of the Ngoni and Sotho migrations into south-central Africa in the early 19th century CE. 'Though the two groups had quite a similar history of migration/settlement, the pattern of change in their new homelands was different. In the area settled by the Ngoni, a significant change was observed in settlement organisation, but their traditional pottery was not introduced to the region. The Sotho, on the other hand, brought about a conspicuous change in ceramics. The selection, inter alia, depends on the symbolism that various aspects of material culture convey to its bearers (or the lack thereof), (Gilboa 2005:63) (See also Hall 1997:111-

142 in this regard). In my opinion, therefore, it would not only be unscientific, but extremely dangerous, to endeavour establishing immigration and settlement patterns by merely analysing the pottery repertoire as is done in this particular article.

'In Philistia (or at least in certain parts of it), the very fact that a new population influx in the Early Iron Age is recognisable, is due not only to the 'local Myc IIIC' pottery phenomenon (which plays an important role in the identification process) accompanying their settlement, but also by a variety of other material media (fortifications, hearths, bathrooms etc.). This demonstrates that although pottery, comprising mostly tableware, played an important role in maintaining and advertising the newcomers group identity, and in this case, ethnicity as well, conveying very specific and meaningful messages to its producers and to its users and their surroundings, they should not be relied upon as the sole measure for establishing identity and origin. The prodution of this pottery and its costly decoration must also have required a complex mechanism (ethnographical observations indicate that the decoration of hand-painted pots amounts to 20 to 30 percent of the total time invested in their production)' (Gilboa 2005:63).

'The same symbolic intent and function should be read into the subsequent PhB pottery as well, though at this stage the identity negotiated by the pottery may have been quite different from that of the 'local Myc IIIC'. These wares were not part of the symbolic expressions along the Levantine coastal stretch north of the Yarkon River.

At this stage it is important to consider the 'northern skyphoi'. As a phenomenon these crude, mostly locally produced drinking vessels, surely of 'western' stylistic derivation, cannot be explained away purely as trade items or as a replacement of a no-longer-available imported commodity. It is also hard to perceive them as some sudden emulation of overseas custom, without a gradual introduction.

They embody the introduction of new, maybe feasting, habits and their associated equipment, which were not there before. It seems very likely that the (few) 'imported Myc IIIC' and PhB skyphoi found in early Iron Age Phoenicia, like those of 'Akko, were meant to satisfy the same habit' (.Gilboa 2005:64) Gilboa (2005:64) argues that 'these skyphoi provide a clear hint that some foreign population should also be sought north of the Philistine coast.' Gilboa, at this stage at least, in contrast to the tenure of her 1998-article (see Chapter 10.4.2 above), admits a foreign influence in the region of the Palestine coast north of the Yarkon river. According to her, this interpretation 'is strengthened by the local 'Wavy-Band pithoi' production and by the other manifesttations of Cypriot concepts in the local pottery production' (Gilboa 2005 63-64).

Gilboa (2005:64) then asks the question how this difference, 'a variegated and abundant "western" ceramic repertoire south of the Yarkon, *versus* skyphoi and a few other Cypriot-derived pots (revealing totally different modes of production) to its north should be understood? It seems that it can only be ascribed to newcomers to the region.' As regards the place of physical origin of these newcomers to the northern coast, Gilboa (2005:65) speculates that 'it should not be sought farther away than Cyprus, where, during late LC IIIA and LC IIIB, the well-documented disarticulation of the Bronze Age social and demographic fabric probably also resulted in emigrations to the nearby thriving coast. In this context, it seems reasonable to trace the "skyphoi phenomenon" to Cyprus.' At this stage it should be pointed out that this scenario presented by Gilboa does not exclude the Sikil as being the 'newcomers' to the northern Palestine coast. We have seen that as part of the attacks on the Hittite Empire, the Sea Peoples (probably the Sikil) invaded Cyprus and probably settled there (at least temporarily) and used it as base for further attacks on the Hittites and other peoples and cities such as Ugarit. Adapting to the local material culture and subsequent movement from Cyprus to the northern Palestine coast seem to be feasible possibilities that cannot be ignored.
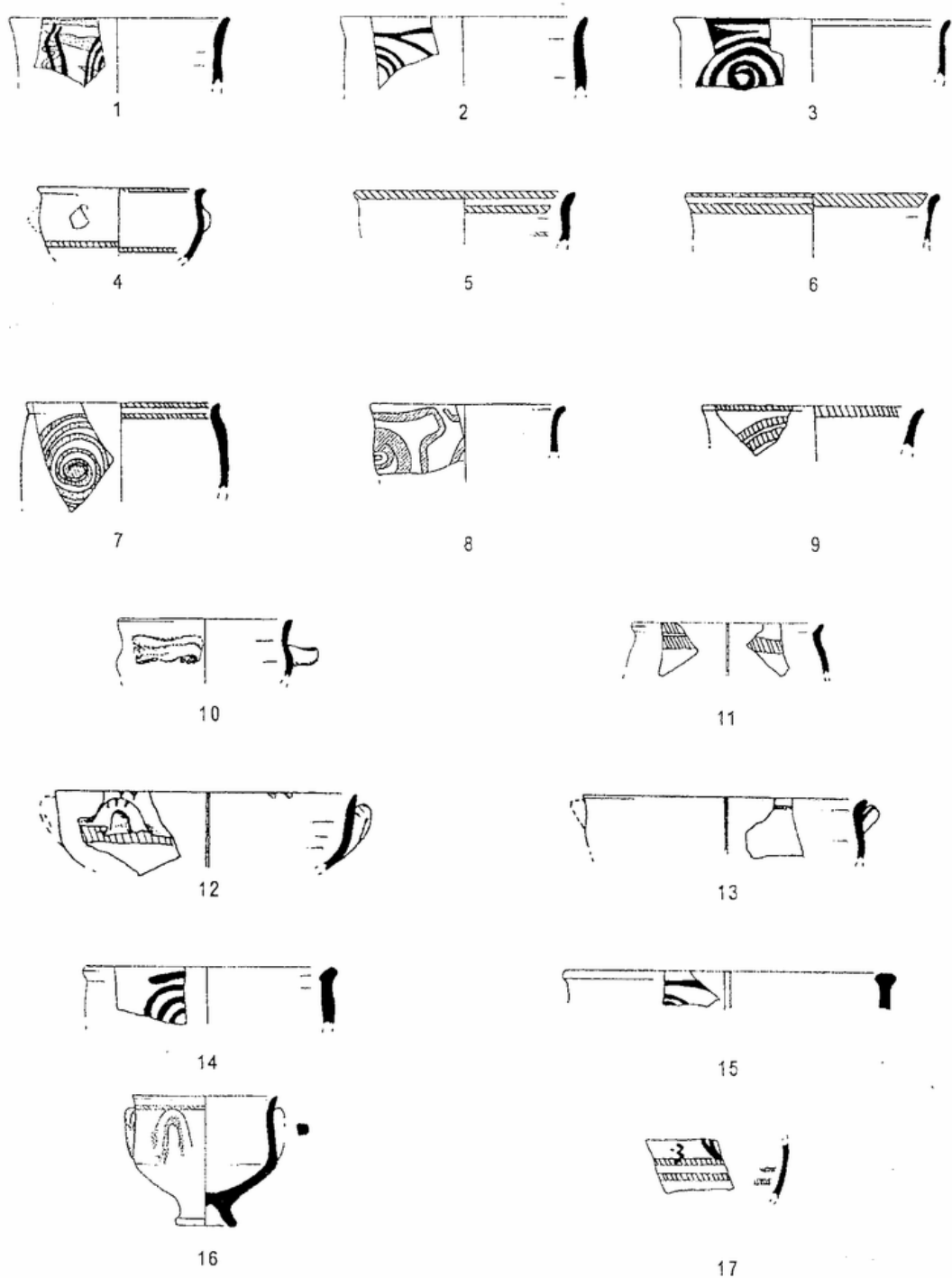
Figure 44: Selection of 'Northern skyphoi'"/deep bowls from Dor. Ir1a *early* horizon:
nos. 1–6, 13; Ir1a *late* horizon: nos. 7, 8, 17; Ir1a, sub phase unclear: 10–12;
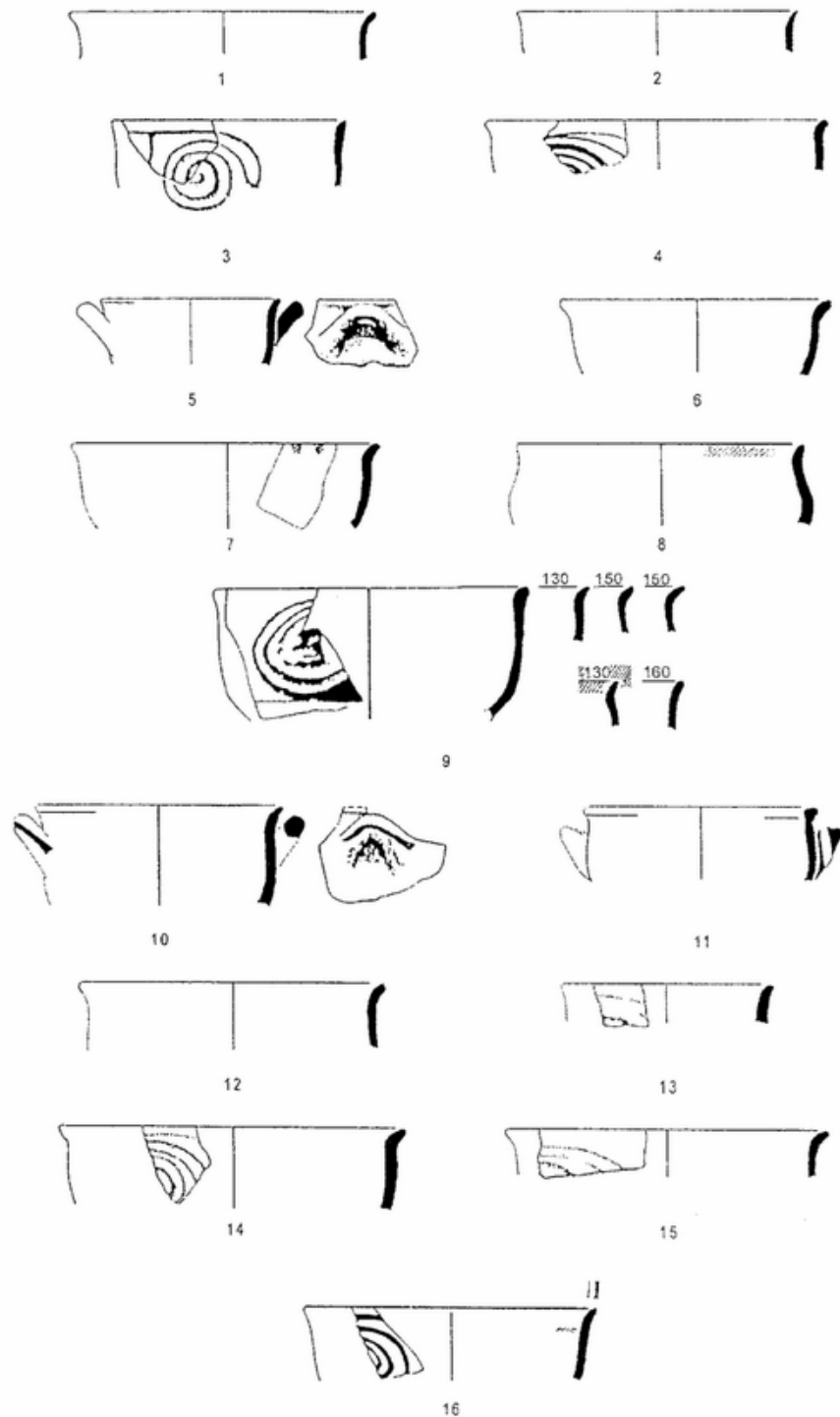Ir1a|b and Ir1b horizons: nos. 9, 16; unclear context: nos. 14, 15. Scale 1:5.
(Gilboa 2005:57)

Figure 45: Selection of 'Northern skyphoi'/deep bowls from Tell Keisan,
1–5,10–14 (Stratum 11); 6–8, 10–12 (Stratum 10); 9–13 (Stratum 10a);
14–16 (Stratum 9?). Scale 1:3.
(Gilboa 2005:59)

10.4.4 THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

Sharon and Gilboa (forthcoming) analysed the ceramic repertoire at Dor during Early Iron 1 along the same line as Gilboa (2005), discussed above, and come to the same conclusions. In this article, however, they also look at other relevant aspects and do not confine themselves to ceramics and other forms of material culture.

The first aspect of importance is the chronology of Dor. As stated above (page 96 note 1) it is not possible to discuss their proposals regarding the chronology of the Southern Levant within the confines of this present study. Suffice to state for purposes hereof that they, in their current article, referring to Stern (2000b:201) state that 'a date *circa.* 1050 BCE for the end of Ir1a (the massive destruction) has been offered. Should one accept that the Sikil city visited by Wenamun is represented (only) by the Ir1a levels (e.g., Stern 2000b: table on p. 201[and on page 84 above]) and accepts the conventional date for this document (*circa* 1075 BCE), this would mean that the Ir1a at Dor must have ended after *circa* 1075 BCE. Radiocarbon dates from Dor for the destruction that terminated the (late) Ir1a destruction were significantly lower than expected and place it, and the Ir1a|b transition in the first quarter of the 10th century BCE.'

According to Sharon and Gilboa (forthcoming) 'a long-time argument against the "Philistine pottery" phenomenon in its entirety as an indication for transhumance of any sort has been that "Philistine culture" consists of nothing but decorated tableware. Proponents of the "Aegeans on the move" hypothesis, though, enumerate other phenomena, including other types of artefacts, which are, according to this view, typically Aegean and which may be argued to characterise '"Sea Peoples" settlements. Some of these do appear at Dor (see Chapter 9.1.3 above), and have indeed been used to supplement the meagre amount of Aegeanizing ceramics found at the site. They are listed below, alongside other artefacts at

Dor which have been brought forward as embodying the association of the material culture of Dor and that of Philistia.'

The authors state that 'the bi-metallic knives (Figures 36 and 37, page 90 above) found for example at Tell Qasile and Ekron in Philistia and attributed to a "Sea Peoples" correlate with handle of this type found at Dor, which was excavated in Phase G/8, just above the Phase G/9 destruction layer.' According to Sharon and Gilboa (forthcoming), 'the majority of these knives, however, are not from the Aegean but from Cyprus. The knife handle from Dor indicates nothing but a Cypriot connection – and these are amply found at Dor in other objects as well.' They also point out that the knife handle was found above the destruction that, according to Stern, terminated the Sikil town.

As regards the notched cow scapulas (Figure 32, page 88 above), found at Dor, and similar finds at Ekron and in Cyprus, the two authors aver that they are ubiquitous. According to the authors, 'in Palestine they are attested since the Upper Paleolithic up to Persian/Roman contexts and are not uniquely Aegean and seem to be of Levantine origin.'

Sharon and Gilboa (forthcoming) state that 'clay lion- and lioness-shaped cups and *rhyta* in the early Iron Age Levant have been found in Ekron, Tell es-Safi/Gat, Ashdod, Tell Qasile, Tel Zeror and Megiddo, while a fragment of one was found in a mixed context in Area E at Dor' (Figures 33-35, pp 88-89 above). They are of the opinion, however, that 'although lion-shaped cups and rhyta manufactured in precious metals were part of the Aegean world and it is apparent that such vessels were an important part of the Late Bronze Age "gift exchange", this was not their sole region of manufacture. Instead of delving into the "who is bringing what and from where" debate, regarding their representations in Egyptian tombs, it would be more instrumental to trace their parallels in clay, which are certainly more closely related to them functionally and symbolically. The best (and indeed very close) stylistic counterparts for the early Iron Age cups in the Southern Levant are those from Ugarit. Not only can the very tradition be traced locally to the third millennium BCE, but the style of these vessels

link them to the east and not to the west. The significance of these vessels, once they, during the early Iron Age, became part of the cultic ensemble of sites in Philistia and other neighbouring regions, remains problematic but they definitely did not originate in the Aegean' (Sharon & Gilboa forthcoming).

'The small decorated chalice (see Figure 30, p 87 above) found with other, apparently votive, vessels in Area G has been compared to stands from Tell Qasile X, and, more loosely Ashdod (Stern 2000b:201), and it was attributed to the Sea People on the basis of its similarity to similar "Philistine" cultic vessels. Acccording to Sharon and Gilboa (forthcoming), 'there is disagreement whether the cultic assemblage, of which it forms part, belongs stratigraphically to either a pre- or post major destruction context. It seems that both stratigraphy and typology of accompanying pottery (especially the bowls) fit a post-destruction date for it (Phase G/8). The stand itself is unique. The Tell Qasile stand is indeed comparable, both in technique and artistic concept, but it should be borne in mind that there is nothing specifically "Philistine" about this stand (which is true for most of the Tell Qasile cult paraphernalia); on the contrary, this type of stand is rather a coastal and Jezreel Valley phenomenon. Very similar fragmentary chalices were found at Tell Abu-Hawam. Also, the shaping of the rim of the bowl finds its parallels at sites in the 'Akko plain and the Jezreel Valley, both on bowls and on chalices.'

Sharon and Gilboa (forthcoming) also address matters such as archaeo-zoological studies (including eating habits) and architecture at Dor during the 'Sikil'-period at Dor. 'The most significant findings of the archaeo-zoological studies were a marked continuity between the Ir1a and Ir1b, as well as the Ir1|2 horizons (the Ir2a sample was not large enough for statistically-significant results to be drawn). On the other hand, consumption patterns at Dor seem to be different than those of Philistine sites. One aspect by which Dor is singled out is an extremely high proportion of remains of fish (both fresh and salt water varieties) and other seafood. In this respect all the inhabitants of Dor, at whatever period, were 'sea

people', and at no time was Dor populated by inhabitants who did not make full use of the fruits of the sea. *Inter alia,* a relatively large proportion of Nile Perch (especially in Area D2) attests to extensive contacts with Egypt. Evidence regarding fish remains in Philistine sites has not been forthcoming yet. Another significant difference between Philistia and Dor is the absence of domesticated pigs at Dor and the extreme scarcity of wild boars. Yet another anomaly of Dor is a preference for goats over sheep, somewhat strange in Mediterranean climate conditions', (but see the next paragraph).[1]

A second factor, according to Sharon and Gilboa (forthcoming) 'underscored by the archaeo-zoological analysis is that the environment around Dor in the early Iron Age seems swampy (see the discussion in paragraph 10.3 [page 99] above). A large number of the wild species are pond brackish-water, or dense brush species, including fresh water fish, fresh water turtles, water fowl, hippopotami and wild pigs[2]. The preference for goats may be a result of brackish drinking water for the flocks.'

The two authors, therefore, conclude 'that the archaeo-zoological findings do not support the introduction of a new food technology or habits at any of the periods under discussion, and may suggest a difference in food consumption patterns between Philistines and the inhabitants of Dor.[3] …, there appear, however, to be a change in feasting habits.'

As regards the architecture and town development at Dor, the said authors again point out 'that to date the town of the Late Bronze Age has not been located. As no Late Bronze Age occupation was found either in Area B1 or D2 (in both, virgin sand or bedrock were reached, albeit in small probes) they conclude that the Late Bronze Age town was signifi-

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[1] I verbally discussed the matter with archaeo-zoologist Dr Ina Plug (of the Transvaal Museum in Pretoria) and she is positive that the difference between Mediterranean sheep and goats is so big that their remnants are not readily confused.

[2] I find this a bit confusing. In the previous paragraph the two authors aver that there were an 'extreme scarcity of wild boars' and here they state that there was a 'large number of wild species… including 'wild pigs'. It seems to be a *contradictio in terminis.* I also discussed this problem with Dr Plug and she assured me that if one speaks of 'wild species', then there is no difference between 'wild boars' and 'wild pigs'.

[3] According to Trude Dothan (1997:100), the Philistines introduced dietary changes to the places they settled in Palestine, by introducing pork and beef in place of goat meat and mutton, which was, until their arrival, the main Canaanite fare.

cantly smaller than those of the Iron Age (as already pointed out by Gilboa in the 2005 article; see page 102 above). The current assumption is that the Late Bronze Age town (and possibly that of the Middle Bronze Age too) must have comprised at least the south-western part of the tell.' The authors recommend that Raban's attribution of the earliest quays along the tell's southern slope to late 13th century BCE, as discussed above, should be investigated anew.

As indicated above (Chapter 8.1.2), 'Garstang's layer of ashes, overlying the Late Bronze Age deposits, contained, according to him, early Iron Age pottery.' Thus, according to Sharon and Gilboa, 'to date there is no support for the assumption that the Late Bronze Age settlement has violently been destroyed (e.g., Stager 1998:338).' They do not, however, completely reject a foreign occupation at Dor and state that they cannot support or refute the possibility of a (short) occupational gap after the Late Bronze Age.[1]

'The significant spread of the town eastward, to the sand spit, is entirely of Iron Age I date. This would mean that the area of the Bronze Age settlement was tripled in the Iron Age I. The crucial question of course is, when exactly did this outstanding phenomenon occur and whether it was sudden or gradual. The evidence is as follows: in Area G, the earliest (and substantive) architecture (Phase 10) is of the early Ir1a horizon. The earliest in Area D2 (Phase 13) is probably of the late Ir1a, but a slightly later date cannot be refuted. In Area B1 (Phase 13) architecture (alongside the city wall) is also definitely attested as of late Ir1a, possibly slightly earlier. Thus the town's first extension eastward can be assigned to the early–late Ir1a horizons. This is the early "Philistine Bichrome" period in Philistia, roughly paralleling Tell Qasile XII and XI (Philistine Bichrome ware is present on the very earliest floors of Phase 10 in Area G at Tel Dor and even below them). This means that, on present evidence, this extension seems to have occurred later than at 'Myc IIIC' Ekron (and possibly also Ashkelon). Once the town reached its maximum extent, in the Ir1|2 or Ir2a, it was not

[1] See also my comments in this regard on page 94 above.

enlarged further till the Roman period'. Another significant fact, according to Sharon and Gilboa (forthcoming), is that 'Iron Age I occupation of Dor, wherever it was found, was urban. In the very earliest horizons (early and late Ir1a) a massive fortification wall was built in Area B1/13, to be replaced in Phase B1/10 (Ir1a|b) with a new solid wall, further to the east; this latter wall served till the end of the early Iron Age (but apparently did not serve in Ir2a). Monumental structures of clearly public nature were built in Area D2 in Ir1b (Phases 10–9; there is no telling whether an earlier, "Rubble Structure" in Area D2/13-12 is of public nature, though its wide southern wall may indeed indicate that). Wherever excavation reached the appropriate depth, architecture was encountered. The urban nature of the early Iron Age at Dor is all the more remarkable in an era otherwise characterised by urban decline and by the establishment of societies lacking in urban institutions. While some Canaanite centers (Megiddo for example) still maintained the urban organisation and reused structures established in the Late Bronze Age, it is only "Sea Peoples" cities (Ekron, Ashdod, Ashkelon) where the Iron Age I is considered a peak of urban development and where there is evidence for enlargement of the town and large scale construction of fortifications and public buildings. In this respect, Dor certainly conforms to the "Sea People" phenomenon, though, on present evidence, it seems to be somewhat later.' Of course, according to the two authors, 'the case for a similar development in Phoenicia can be hypothesised, but till very recently could not be substantiated or refuted for lack of large-scale excavations in the major Phoenician centers. Recent excavations at Beirut, however, demonstrated that the (fortified) Late Bronze Age town there expanded and were heavily refortified at an as yet unknown date between the Late Bronze Age and the early 10th century BCE.'

The two authors conclude their remarks in respect of Dor's architecture with a reference to architectural plans and other architectural details. 'The building constructed in the Early Ir1a horizon in Area G is a typical courtyard building of "Canaanite" type (at least from Phase

G/9 and on), which remained in use, through the destruction of Phase G/9 and with various modification, till Ir2a (Phase G/6a). Another early Iron building of the same type is currently being excavated in Area D1. The Ir1a (Ir1a|b?) and Ir1b monumental structures in Area D2 (the Rubble Structure of Phases D2/13-12 and the complex of Monumental Building/Mud-Brick Structure/Sea wall/drainage channel of Phases D2/10–9) are unparalleled. Nowhere in this sequence are there any "western" furnishing, such as hearths or bathtubs', but the authors admit that this could be accidental.

Sharon and Gilboa (forthcoming) also look at and discuss matters pertaining to the continuation of the material culture in respect of ceramics at Dor, but this discussion is in the same vein as that in Gilboa's articles of 1998 and 2005.

Another aspect pursued by Sharon and Gilboa (forthcoming) is the relationship and dialogue between the Phoenicians and Cyprus: 'The dialog (sic) between Phoenicia and Cyprus, as it is manifested at Dor, is mild, but multifaceted, durative, and bi-directional. The "Cypro-Phoenician" phenomenon is not overwhelming: at no point is the similarity between these cultures such that one might mistake an assemblage from the Phoenician littoral with a Cypriot one or vice-versa. The duration of this dialog is from the very beginning of the Iron Age, and it continues with few disruptions (if at all) and grows in volume to the Iron Age II. Its complexity is displayed in the various forms it takes: direct importation of Cypriot vessels to Phoenicia and vice-versa, local production of Cypriot-like wares (some of which may actually be by Cypriot crafts[wo]men working on the mainland …and the mutual use of a common "symbolic vocabulary" on clearly differentiable local wares in each of the two littorals. We have purposefully used the word "dialog" for this type of "symbolic conversation" to underline that stylistic developments on the island are echoed shortly thereafter on the mainland shore and vice versa. As in the case of non-random transmissions from outer space-we may never know the contents of the messages, but we are able to record that a conversation has taken place.'

The two authors then again stress the differences between this phenomenon (this type of symbiotic relationship between Phoenicia and Cyprus) and what happened in southern Palestine. They state that 'in Philistia, at the beginning of the Iron Age, foreign influence (whether directly from the Aegean or via Cypriot) is tremendous, but that it amounts to one-way traffic (west to east). After the initial foreign influences, the Philistines developed their own local and unique style.' They contend that on the other hand 'at Dor there was not the same development with foreign influences at the beginning of the Iron Age, but rather a gradual l transition from Late Bronze Age 'Canaanite' to Iron Age 'Phoenician', but this is later coloured by obvious Cypriot influences.'

They (Sharon and Gilboa) then pose the question that in view of the fact that they 'do recognise some foreign (mainly Cypriot) influences on the local material culture, and that they claim that these "conversations" were essential to the very definition of that material culture - couldn't that be what the Egyptian author of the "Story of Wenamun" meant when he designated Dor as a town of the Sikil? Why then, this refusal to bring in the "Sikil settle-mint" and the inhabitants of Dor under the "Sea Peoples" umbrella?' (Sharon and Gilboa forthcoming) I also ask the same question. Why indeed should everything be either black or white, with no grey areas in between? Why do they not want to consider the possibility of a Sikil 'invasion' from Cyprus or elsewhere, maybe an invasion without major destructions? They aver that 'for thirty years or more, scientists have lived under the tyranny of "Myc IIIC:1b early" and so forth. It has been known, since the 1970's, that wares bearing this name were independently being manufactured in Mycenae, the Aegean islands, Cyprus, Anatolia and the southern Levantine shores and at other regions too. And yet the very use of the same term was asserting unity for these phenomena as well as pinpointing a very precise geographical and temporal origin for them. To pretend that the terminology which seems to have achieved the status of con-senses in this workshop, "Aegeanizing pottery", is any less loaded or more theoretically liberating would be naïve' (Sharon and Gilboa forthcoming).

In the final analysis the two authors (as already indicated above) then come to the same conclusion as Gilboa in her 2005-article. In seeking foreign influences at Dor, there is no reason to go any further than the neighboring island, Cyprus. 'The implication of a home-land further west, much less some "Sicilian connection" or the like which is imputed by this particular transliteration of the Egyptian consonants, is simply not warranted by the finds in the ground' (Sharon and Gilboa forthcoming). Again I have to ask the question: why not a Sikil settlement at Dor originating in Cyprus with a resultant dialogue and exchange of material culture between the two regions?

They do not think that a large-scale migration or settlement are the correct explanation for the dialogue between Dor and Cyprus which they think can deduced from the material culture at Dor. They again emphasise the differences that they perceive between what happened at Dor and in Phoenicia and what happened in Philistia. 'In as much as a word like "migration" (in the sense of a transference *in toto* of people and culture from one place to a distant one) is applicable to any phenomena in the eastern Mediterranean at the beginning of the Iron Age, that term should be reserved to the process evident in Philistia, and under no circumstances can that and the "Cypro-Phoenician dialog" be subsumed under the same term.' (Sharon and Gilboa, forthcoming). I respectfully disagree with the two authors in this regard. Once it is admitted (as is done by the two authors themselves) that there were newcomers at Dor, probably from Cyprus, during Early Iron Age 1 (albeit for only a short while), it is moot to argue that foreign influences at Dor were only the result of dialogue between Cyprus and Dor.

In another article (Gilboa, Cohen-Weinberger & Goren forthcoming), the authors also look at the artefacts on which Stern relies for his Sikil-conviction (bi-metal knife, cow scapulae, rhyton, ceramics etcetera). In particular they concentrate on the PhB-like pottery disco-veered at Dor. They state that 'the dearth of PhB ceramics at Dor, previously noted by Gilboa (1998: 414), looms even larger after another half a decade of excavating the early

Iron Age levels at the site.' The pottery fragments in Figures 44 and 45 'represent the majority of "PhB-like" fragments excavated at Tel Dor. These include some that may be only be preliminarily described as such by visual examination. These include specimens, which petrographic tests prove to have originated in Philistia and its surroundings' (Gilboa, Cohen-Weinberger & Goren forthcoming).
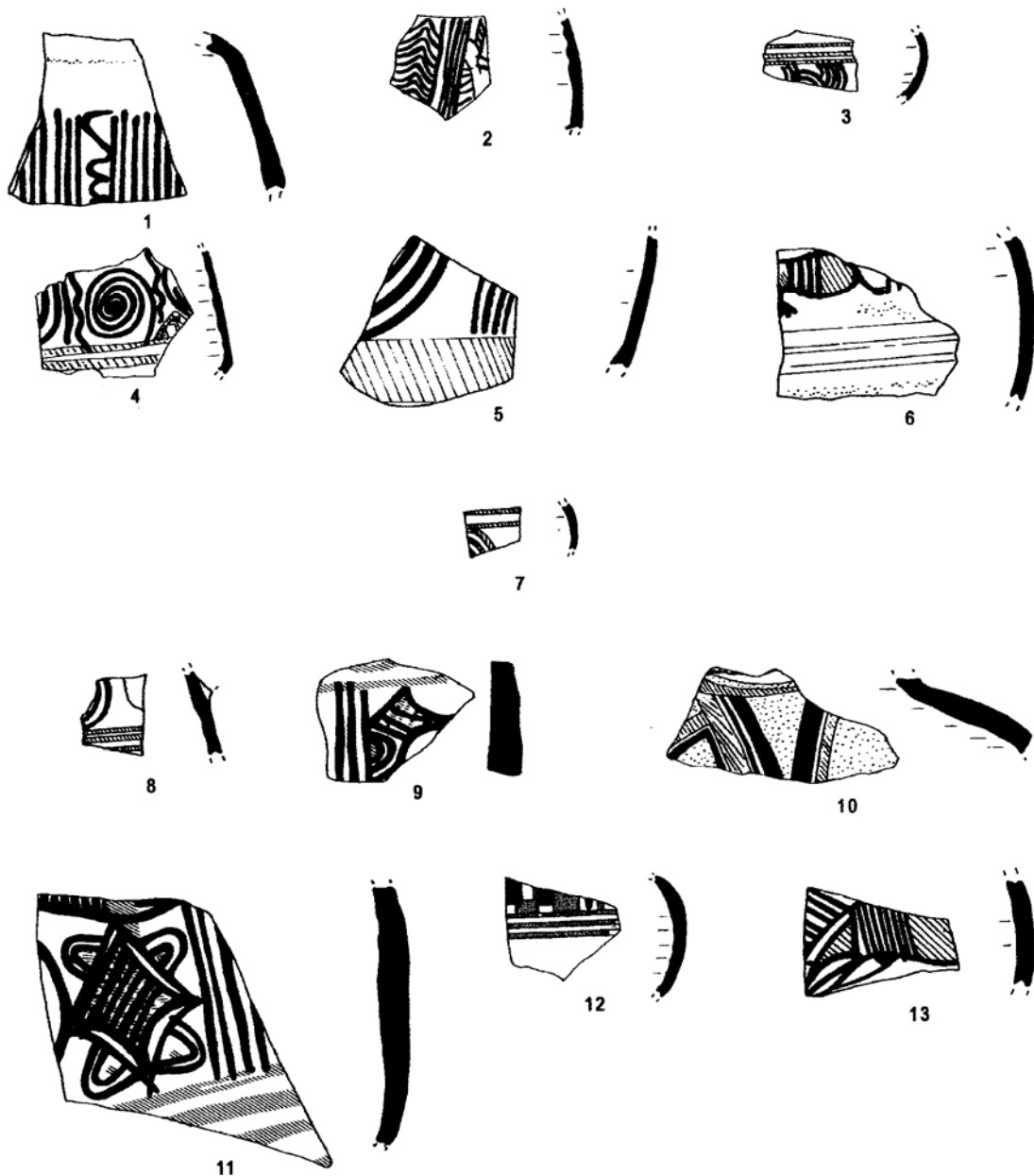
Figure 46: Philistine Bichrome pottery from Dor.

(Gilboa, Cohen-Weinberger & Goren forthcoming)
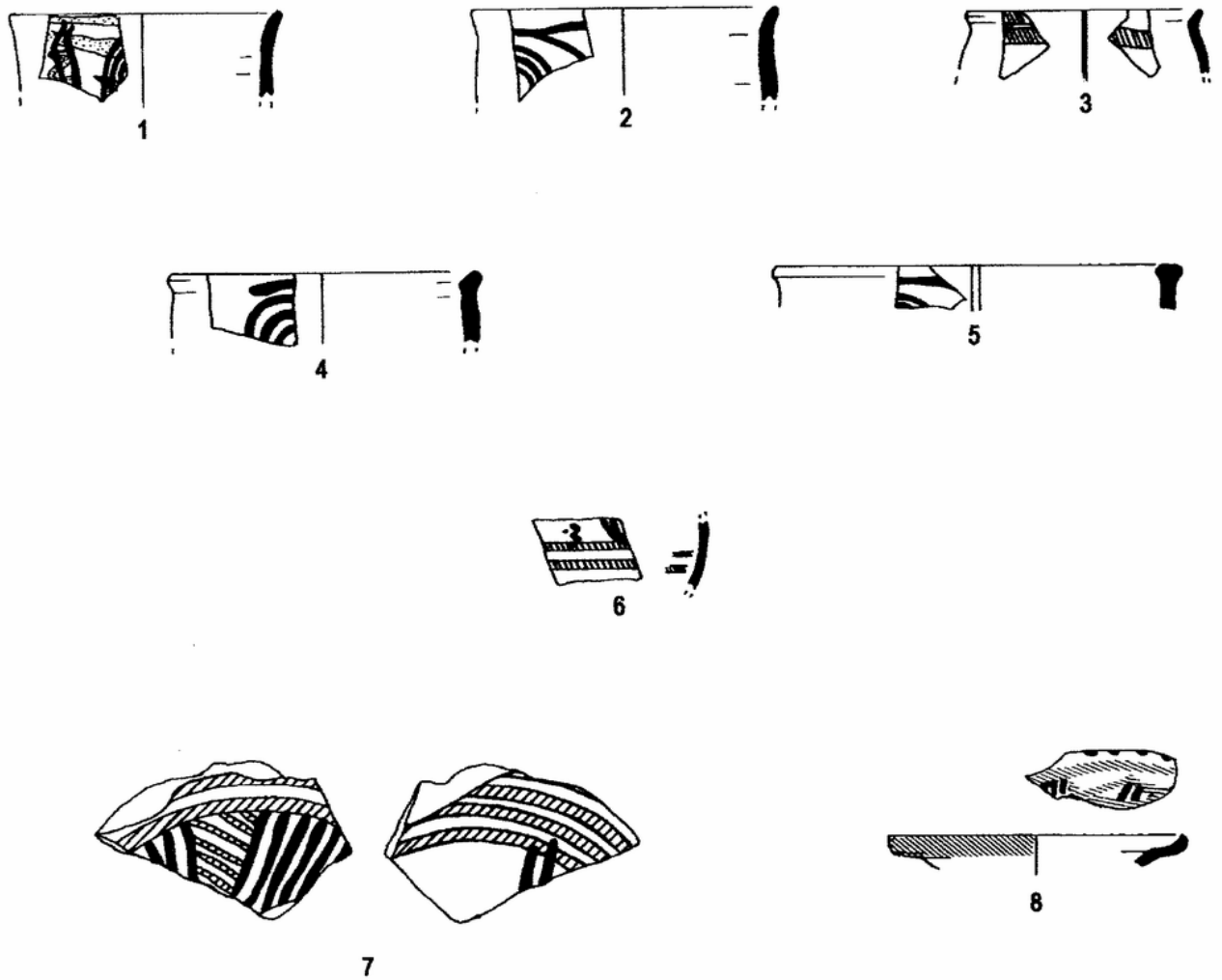
Figure 47: Philistine Bichrome pottery from Dor (2).

(Gilboa, Cohen-Weinberger & Goren forthcoming)

In relation to the large number of pottery excavated at Dor, covering the whole early Iron Age, the proportion of PhB vessels is very small. The authors admit that 'a comparison with relative quantities of such ceramics in Philistia is still not really possible: most of the excavation reports on Philistine sites do not include quantitative data, and decorated pieces are much better represented in them than plain wares.' They state that 'only at Tell Qasile (Area C) are quantitative data are provided (the only site in Philistia) and there the average frequencies of decorated Philistine pottery per stratum out of the total ceramic assemblage were 24% in Stratum XII, 14.3% in XI, and 14.6% in X. Most of the ceramics from Area C

at Tell Qasile comes from the temples and possibly surrounding buildings functionally related to them. The authors aver that this could create a bias toward a higher proportion of decorated vessels' (Gilboa, Cohen-Weinberger & Goren forthcoming).

'In a similar vein the detailed quantitative analysis at present being done in respect of the ceramics from Tel Miqne (Ekron), indicates that the proportions of both Mycenaean IIIC and PhB decorated wares range from 16 to 30% in most contexts, and in the industrial area sometimes more than 50%. For Ashdod the calculations show that ceramics, ascribed to the Philistines, amount to approximately 27% of the total ceramic assemblage. Other Philistine sites, with the possible exception of Tel Sera' produced lower percentages, which are relatively slightly higher at sites on the Coastal Plain (varying from approximately 5% to 12%). It is clear that these are still much higher than those at Dor.'

The authors aver that 'the two fragments of strainer-spouted jugs found in Garstang's excavations at Dor, ascribed to Philistine origin by Trude Dothan (1982: 69 nn. 221–22), are actually local Phoenician Monochrome ware.' A further five sherds (all of closed vessels) from Stern's excavations, which were difficult to characterise, could, according to the authors, possibly be added to this list (Gilboa, Cohen-Weinberger & Goren forthcoming).

A further 17 fragments from Dor, according to the authors, 'on the face of it appeared to be 'genuine' PhB pieces; they were similar in fabric, surface treatment, and pigment to PhB from sites in Philistia; the majority (10–11 fragments originated from closed vessels, mostly jugs of undefinable types (Figure 46:1, 3–6, 8–9, 11–13 and possibly 7; for a colour photograph of No. 4, see Figure 48, left [upside down]). Seven fragments (Figure 47:1–2, 4–8; for a colour photograph of No. 1, see Figure 48, right) are of open shapes, but it is not possible to establish by mere visual examination if these were indeed similar in fabric to open forms discovered at Philistine sites' (Gilboa, Cohen-Weinberger & Goren forthcoming).

Figure 48: Decorated 'Sikil' sherds from Dor.

(Stern 2000a: Plate IX:3)

Sixteen PhB vessels from Dor were examined petrographically and some patterns became apparent according to the authors(Gilboa, Cohen-Weinberger & Goren forthcoming) :

1. In view of the small number of PHB-fragments discovered at Dor, after more than a decade of excavating a complete sequence of early Iron Age levels, it is clear that PHB-like vessels were, compared to Philistia, not produced on a large scale at Dor. 'PhB-like' vessels are intrusive in the local ceramic culture and not evidence of a Sikil material culture.

2. The majority of these fragments are from small closed vessels (containers) and most of these were imported from the southern part of Philistia They appear to have been imported for their contents and, therefore, have no other cultural significance.

3. Three skyphoi excavated at Dor were also imported from the southern part of Philistia. These are clearly not commercial containers and were thus imported for another purpose.

4. Just two fragments from the early Iron Age at Dor that have 'PhB-like' designs, have been produced on the Carmel coast, both from closed vessels (Figure 46:2, 11). Only one bowl (Figure 47:8) was definitely produced in the vicinity of Dor (in the 'Iron Valley), and one closed vessel (Figure 46:13) could have been produced there.

5.   Two closed vessels (Figure 46:1, 3) and one open shape (Figure 47:6) appear to have been produced on the Lebanese coast (Gilboa, Cohen-Weinberger & Goren forthcoming).

I have endeavoured to convey as much as possible of the modern opinions of Sharon, Gilboa and others and their reasons (and in their own words) for arriving at those opinions, in which they differ from the traditional approach of people like Stern regarding the presence of the Sikil at Dor. In order to avoid an unnecessary voluminous study, it is, however, not possible to deal with every detail of their reasons. Stern bases his theory on the Egyptian texts (in particular the Report of Wenamun and the Onomasticon of Amenemope) and the Hittite and Ugaritic texts together with certain finds at Dor and other sites in Palestine. Sharon and Gilboa, on the other hand, argue that the material culture-sequence at Dor, though affected by foreign influences, show a continuity from Canaanite to Phoenician. The foreign influences can be explained by a dialogue between Phoenicia (including Dor) and the neighbouring island of Cyprus. As it stands I agree with Sharon and Gilboa that the concept of the Sikil at Dor as perceived by Stern is not evidenced by the material culture.

CHAPTER 11

APPLYING THE SIKIL MODEL TO THE CURRENT KNOWLEDGE

REGARDING TEL DOR

In this study it has been an objective to deal with as much as possible of the evidence presented by the proponents for and against a Sikil presence at Dor during Early Iron 1. The question may be asked if the evidence is sufficient, on a balance of probabilities, to prove any one of the 'opponents' right and the other wrong or is there a possibility that both sides may be right? In my opinion the only solution is to apply the developed model pertaining to the Sikil to the relevant evidence.

1. As yet no evidence has been found proving that the Late Bronze Age city of Dor was violently destroyed. It should, however, be emphasised that the Late Bronze Age city has not yet been uncovered. Both parties agree that the Early Iron Age 1 city was much bigger than its predecessor, so the possibility of such destruction cannot at this stage be totally discarded.

2. During Early Iron Age 1, the harbour at Dor was suddenly transformed to cater for a major seafaring people. It was not a gradual development as is averred regarding the ceramic repertoire. This appear to coincide with the ceramic development ascribed to newcomers. A balance of probabilities favour a foreign influence on a rather large scale.

3. The 'anti-Sikil' group agree that there were newcomers to the northern Palestine coast, although it might have been only for a short while. They argue that regarding the place of origin of these newcomers or foreign population, one should not look farther than Cyprus. I agree with this contention, but I do not agree with their further contention that this excludes the Aegean as a place of origin. In Chapters 4.1 and 5.2

above, I discussed the probability that there was a gradual settlement from the Aegean in Cyprus, which apparently commenced even before the invasion of the island by the Sea Peoples (probably the Sikil). It is my contention that if a foreign people from Cyprus indeed settled at Dor during the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age 1, they could just as well have been Aegeans who had previously emigrated to Cyprus.

4. As regards the nature of the harbour during the relevant period, Raban is positive that there is a remarkable resemblance between this harbour and harbours at Cyprus and the Aegean (See Chapters 4.1 and 8.1.4 above). This fits a model which provides for peoples moving from the Aegean to Cyprus and the northern Palestine coast whether the movement to Cyprus and northern Palestine occurred simultaneously or first to Cyprus and later from there to northern Palestine. Sharon and Gilboa suggested 'that Raban's attribution of the earliest quays along the tell's southern slope to late 13th century BCE, as discussed above, should be investigated anew'[1]. The innuendo contained in this suggestion is that Raban may be proved to be wrong, but I submit that a further investigation may just as well confirm his findings.

5. As discussed above[2], there seems to be a close correlation between the material cultures of the Aegean and Cyprus during the final phases of the Late Bronze Age. It seems that the Mycenaeans/Aegeans took their material culture with them to Cyprus. On the other hand it is highly likely that certain aspects of the local material culture of their new environment were incorporated in their own material culture. This new material culture would, therefore, also be that of the Sikil operating from Cyprus. To

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[1] See page 124 above.

[2] Chapters 4 and 5.

my mind this newly developed material culture should be compared to the material culture at Dor during the Early Iron Age 1. This is also the material culture that newcomers to Dor (the Sikil?) from Cyprus would import.

6. There is a continuity of material culture, particularly in ceramics, at Dor that does not fit the model of a total replacement of the old one by a new one. There are, however, new influences and I propose two possible solutions to this problem:

   (a)   The newcomers were indeed pirates or roamers who, after driving out the previous inhabitants, adapted to the local material culture with a few innovations of their own;

   (b)   The newcomers controlled the city but did not completely replace the existing inhabitants, who continued their material culture alongside that of their overlords. The newcomers may have adapted gradually to the local material culture or a combination of the two material cultures may have developed further.

In terms of this model, one cannot, therefore, exclude the Sikil, who could have originated initially in the Aegean, but moved to Dor after a temporary interlude at Cyprus. I have to admit that this model is based to a large extent on the assumption that the Sikil were indeed a major maritime people and probably pirates, marauders or roamers of the sea. The two possible solutions suggested above would, however, explain the lack of Mycenaean IIIC-pottery, especially Mycenaean IIIC:1b-pottery at Dor.

CHAPTER 12

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study has been stated as an analysis of the two schools of thought regarding the presence of the Sikil at Dor. The first group maintaining that the Sikil indeed occupied Dor during the Early Iron Age and the second group arguing that no archaeological proof of such presence has been found after more than two decades of excavations. The latter group propose alternatives for the settlement at Dor during Early Iron Age 1, in particular a continuation of the Canaanites (who allegedly became the Phoenician), with a short interlude of a foreign influence, possibly from Cyprus.

At the outset of this study, attention has been drawn to the fact that much have been written about the mysterious Sea Peoples and the role they allegedly played during the transition period from the Late Bronze Age to the Early Iron Age 1. The Sea Peoples *per se* is not the subject matter, but the various groups of them are intricately linked in the most important textual evidence. Not to take heed of all the textual evidence pertaining to the Sea Peoples, when a study is made of one of the groups, would be like an arch without a keystone.

Textually and archaeologically it became clear that the Sea Peoples had their roots amongst the Mycenaean-Aegean people and they were followed to Cyprus, southern Anatolia, Syria, Egypt and finally the coastal areas of the southern Levant. Textually the Sikil are connected with Cyprus, the attacks on the Hittite Empire, Ugarit and Egypt and finally residing on the Palestinian coast and in particular at Dor. In the Hittite sources they are referred to as coming from the west (probably the Aegean or western Anatolia). They are described as a maritime people, more specifically as pirates 'living on ships'. I propose that this is a strong indicator that they originated from an island, probably

Crete. There are remarkable resemblances between harbours of the relevant period in Crete, Cyprus and at Dor.

Mycenaean IIIC-pottery is a major archaeological link in establishing the origins (Mycenaean Greece) and routes of migration of the Sea Peoples. Monochrome Mycenaean IIIC:1b-pottery, locally made, establish a close link between Cyprus and Philistia. A further step in ceramic development on the eastern Palestinian coast is the Philistine Bichrome pottery. Other factors of material culture linking the Aegean, Cyprus and Philistia are items such as hearths, bathtubs, ceramics jewellery and stamp seals (Dothan 1982:41).

As regards Dor, Stern, despite the absence of Mycenaean IIIC:1b pottery at Tel Dor, is convinced that the Sikil indeed occupied the site during the Early Iron Age. He bases his conviction on the Report of Wenamun's journey, the Onomasticon of Amenemope, the Hittite and Ugaritic texts and certain finds at Tel Dor (harbour, massive constructions and artefacts) (Stern 1998a:346). On the other hand, scholars such as Sharon and Gilboa argue that there is a continuity of ceramics at Dor from the Canaanites to the Phoenicians. The fact that there are no finds of Mycenaean IIIC:1b-pottery and only a few sherds of Philistine Bichrome pottery strengthens their contentions. They admit that there seems to be a foreign influence, ascribed to newcomers, at Dor for a short while during Early Iron Age 1. They deny the possibility that these newcomers were from the Aegean and point to the neighbouring island, Cyprus, as the origin of these foreigners.

There is no proof that the Bronze Age city of Dor was violently destroyed. On the other hand, this Bronze Age city has proved to be just as elusive as the Sikil. Both schools of thought, however, agree that the Early Iron Age city of Dor was much larger than the Bronze Age city. After more than twenty years of excavations, the latter city has yet to be found, so proof of such a destruction may yet be forthcoming. It also does not

necessarily follow, although it would be *contra naturam suam* not to do so, that the Sikil, when they took over the city of Dor, destroyed the city.

A lot has been written about the presence or absence of the Sikil at Dor, but it is impossible to write the final chapter in this saga yet. It has been said that all roads lead to Rome. As regards the Sea Peoples and the Sikil in particular, it seems as if all roads lead to Cyprus. In this study, I have proposed that as a result of the close archaeological links between Cyprus and Dor, one may conclude that the Sikil, originating in the Aegean, but later operating from Cyprus, were indeed the foreigners who settled in Dor during the Early Iron Age, albeit, according to Sharon and Gilboa for a short while. 'Short time', especially in archaeological terms, is a relative concept. Unfortunately Sharon and Gilboa refrain from being more specific in this regard. I propose that a period of 150 years (Stern's estimate of the Sikil-period at Dor) is, in archaeological terms, a short time.

This mystery of the Sikil's presence or absence at Dor cannot, however, be conclusively resolved at this stage. The Bronze Age city has to be uncovered and the layers directly above this city have to be studied and analysed before final conclusions are to be drawn. Only then will it be possible to establish which one of the two schools of thought is right.

It is submitted that both parties may in the end prove to be right if one assumes that the Sikil came from the Aegean (near the end of the 13th century BCE) and settled temporarily at Cyprus. From there they attacked the Hittites (*ca* 1200 BCE), destroyed Ugarit (*ca* 1195 BCE), settled at Dor and partook in the attack on Egypt during the time of Rameses III (*ca* 1186 BCE). At Dor, they either drove out the local inhabitants or retained at least a portion of them, but controlled the city themselves. In view of the archaeological record, the latter scenario seems the most likely. When Wenamun fled

from the Sikil and ended up in Cyprus (*ca* 1100 BCE), it seems that the Sikil had already relinquished the island. At Dor they were defeated by the Phoenicians and had to move yet again and ended up somewhere else, probably Sicily, which island then probably derived its name from the new immigrants (Figure 49). According to Sandars, Greek colonists came across a group of people known as the 'Sikels' on the island of Sicily during the 8th century BCE (Sandars 1985:112), although she speculates that they originally immigrated from the mainland of Italy, but it is still merely speculation. Immigration from northern Palestine as a theory, is also mere speculation, but not to be discarded in view of the little we currently know of the Sikil.

Figure 49: Possible routes of Sikil-migrations from Crete to Cyprus, Dor, Egypt, Dor and finally to Sicily (including attacks on southern Anatolia and Ugarit).

This, then, is the story of the Sikil, as we deduce and construct it with our current knowledge and perceived from contrasting viewpoints, but I am convinced that there is still a lot to be discovered about this mysterious people who invaded Cyprus, assisted in the destruction of the Hittite Empire, probably destroyed Ugarit and partook in the attack on Egypt during the reign of Ramses III and according to the texts settled at Dor.

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