MEDITERRANEAN PEOPLES IN TRANSITION
Thirteenth to Early Tenth Centuries BCE

Editors
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In Honor of Professor TRUDE DOTHAN

ISRAEL EXPLORATION SOCIETY
JERUSALEM, 1998
"SEA PEOPLES" AND THE ECONOMIC STRUCTURE OF THE LATE SECOND MILLENNIUM IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

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This paper starts from the premise that there is less point in worrying about who the so-called "Sea Peoples" were and where they came from, than in examining the questions of the kinds of activities associated with them and the relationship of these activities to traditional, long established politico-economic structures in the 2nd millennium eastern Mediterranean. Looked at in this way, they can be seen as a structural phenomenon whose growth was an inevitable product of the expansion of international trade, which carried with it the seeds of the subversion of the palace-based command economies of the 3rd and early 2nd millennia which initiated it in the first place. This process can perhaps be illustrated particularly well on Cyprus where, during the 13th and 12th centuries, we can see the symptoms and results of some of this subversion both within a Cypriot context and in the wider eastern Mediterranean. It is argued that, by the beginning of the 12th century, the coastal urban centers of Cyprus were acting as a kind of institutionalized "powerhouse" of the "Sea People" phenomenon, playing a central role in the creation and maintenance of an eastern Mediterranean coastal-based economic and cultural community whose ostensibly "ethnic" features are of structural rather than primarily genetic or linguistic significance.

Introduction

The archaeology of the late 13th to early 12th centuries BCE in the Levant, Cyprus and the Aegean alike has traditionally been interpreted in terms of large scale "historical events." It is the era of the "Sea Peoples," the "foreign countries... in their islands" of the Ramses III inscription at Medinet Habu or the peoples "of the sea" of the Harris Papyrus; and for well over a century archaeologists have chiefly been concerned with producing a form of narrative history based on a scatter of texts such as these, in much the same spirit as Schliemann and Blegen used the results of their excavations at Troy, Mycenae and Pylos not only to confirm the historicity of Homer's Trojan War but to amplify their particular interpretations of it. The result is a kind of quasi-politico-military history, elaborated beyond recognition from the surviving texts and reliefs, by the mute testimony of walls, tombs and potsherds in which archaeology principally deals, in which short term events rather than long term processes are seen as the most significant and decisive factor. Thus, mass invasions of migrants sweeping in by sea from outside the region (particularly the Aegean) in a very short period of time are held to account like a deus ex machina for a whole package of changes (including destructions of sites, the appearance of new types of pottery, new

1. Though she may perhaps find much in it to disagree with, this paper is dedicated, with deep respect and affection, to Professor Trude Dothan. It has been inspired by her exciting accounts of her excavations, and fed by her generous provision of offprints. It owes much, too, to discussions with Michał Arzy, Andrew Sherratt and Andrea Swinton, and to the generosity and tolerance of the Cypriot archaeological community.
architectural configurations, new patterns of industrial and religious activity) which go to make up what may be regarded as the "Sea People phenomenon" in the east Mediterranean and which, in the Levant at least, are conventionally taken as marking an abrupt transition from Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age. ²

It is no part of my purpose here systematically to set about deconstructing this kind of quasi-historical picture with its exclusive emphasis on decisive "events." ³ Silberman (this volume) has persuasively tracked the 19th and early 20th century contexts in which notions of large scale invasions and mass movements of peoples gained predominance in archaeological and popular consciousness alike, while others have questioned the type of limited descriptive culture-history which the tyranny of "historical context" has frequently imposed on archaeology in the east Mediterranean (see e.g. Bunimovitz 1995:328). What bothers me more than whether events such as invasions and migrations of the kind often envisaged actually took place, is the fact that these are usually regarded as providing a complete and sufficient explanation in themselves both for their own existence and for the archaeological phenomena for which they are held to account. In other words, they prevent us from exploring questions of another sort: why these phenomena should appear when and where they do, or--to translate it into "historical" language--why a mass of people from outside the east Mediterranean should have taken it into their heads to mount a large scale invasion and colonization of selected areas specifically of this region, and why they should suddenly have done so particularly at the turn of the 13th and 12th centuries BCE.

There are serious problems, too, in locating a "homeland" for these "Sea People" invaders and colonizers, a subject on which the contemporary or near-contemporary texts are at worst silent and at best obfuscatory. The prevalent tendency to see them all as Mycenaean Aegeans (e.g. Mazar 1991; Stager 1995) seems, to one more familiar with the archaeology of the Aegean than that of the Levant, frankly mystifying in terms at least of the highly selective (and often contentious) archaeological comparisons on which it is based. Far closer and more consistent comparisons can be drawn between the archaeological record of, for instance, the Philistine area and that of Cyprus than between either of these and the contemporary Aegean; and it is only by dint of regarding Cyprus as synonymous with the Aegean that a Mycenaean "homeland" based on archaeological material can be sustained. In Cyprus itself the work of the last few decades has done much to highlight the cul-

² See e.g. most recently--and perhaps most extremely--Stager 1995.

³ One of the most acute problems raised by politico-military "history" constructed or elaborated on the basis of archaeology is that of chronology. Archaeological synchronicity, based on such things as pottery styles and artefact typologies, is not the same as historical synchronicity, so that archaeologically synchronous events such as destructions may actually be separated from each other by anything up to several decades (Maier 1986:317). Particularly acute problems arise, for instance, with Stager's (1995) account of a mass migration of peoples from the Aegean to new homelands in Cyprus and the Levant which took place within the ten short years between the death of Tewosret and year 8 of Ramses III (c. 1185-1175 B.C.E. on Stager's low chronology). According to Stager, within the space of this brief period the invaders destroyed existing cities at a time when Myc. IIIB pottery was still in vogue and immediately set about constructing new and larger urban centers characterized by their Myc. IIIC pottery which they are said to have brought with them from their homeland. But if they had already left their homeland and arrived in the east Mediterranean before the end of the LH IIIB period, where did they get this pottery? Did they invent it even as they destroyed the old centers and built new ones? Or are we to suppose that sometime between 1185 and 1175 a decree went out--to be heeded by all with Mycenaean blood in their veins--that henceforth Myc. IIIB pottery was to be replaced by Myc. IIIC (that would indeed be a novel way of viewing the chronological progression of successive pottery styles)? The truth is that we have absolutely no idea how much time may have elapsed between the destruction or abandonment of cities such as Dor, Enkomi, Ashkelon and Tel Miqne and the rebuilding of new ones. At Tel Miqne, at least, which appears to have been a small insignificant settlement after a destruction in the 15th-14th centuries, it now looks as though there may have been a considerable interval between the last imports of Cypriot Base Ring and White Slip II and the construction of the Stratum VII city wall (Killebrew, this volume; cf. T. Dothan 1989a:2; and see further below). In general, pottery is a very poor vehicle for the conveyance of historical constructions based on "events."
cultural continuities in pottery styles and manufacture, architecture and urban layout, religious practices, tomb use and metalworking technology which are increasingly appreciated to have characterized the Late Cypriot II-III transition, traditionally associated with the arrival of Greek-speaking, “Myc. IIC.1”-using, ashlar-building invaders and colonists (e.g. Kling 1992; Sherratt 1992a; Hult 1983; South 1984; Courtois, Lagarce and Lagarce 1986; Hadjisavvas 1992a; Matthäus 1982); and 13th century Cyprus can no longer be seen as an underdeveloped backwater awaiting the arrival of settlers from the Aegean in order to revolutionize its technological capabilities and transform it into an urbanized island (Negbi 1986; Cadogan this volume). More generally, the whole question of seeking 2nd millennium ethnicities in material remains such as pottery raises much broader and more complex issues of the relationships between various aspects of material culture, language, and conscious group identity which, outside the concept of the modern nation state (and often even within it), rarely prove straightforward (Sherratt 1992b).

However, rather than continuing to worry about who (in any genetic or linguistic sense) the “Sea Peoples” were, or where (in the sense of some kind of 19th century concept of “homeland”) they may have come from, I should like instead to turn attention to the kinds of activities they were engaged in, and the relationship of these activities to the economic structure of the eastern half of the Mediterranean in the later 2nd millennium. By doing this, I believe that it is possible to argue that the “Sea Peoples” can more usefully be seen as a structural phenomenon, a product of the natural evolution and expansion of international trade in the 3rd and early 2nd millennium, which carried within it the seeds of the subversion of the palace-based command economies which had initiated such trade in the first place. This is not to say that human mobility, in the form of individual or group migrants, or events such as the hostile destruction of cities, can have played no part in the “Sea Peoples” phenomenon as a whole, but merely that these are epiphenomenal symp-

toms—rather than prime causes—of a deeper structural subversion whose roots can be traced back well beyond the phenomenon itself.

I especially want to focus on Cyprus, not only because it is very closely implicated in the whole “Sea People” phenomenon in the east Mediterranean, but also because it is in Cyprus, particularly during the 13th and 12th centuries, that we can see the archaeological symptoms and results of such subversion, both within a Cypriot context and in relation to the region as a whole. By the beginning of the 12th century the coastal urban centers of Cyprus were acting as a kind of institutionalized “powerhouse” of the “Sea People” phenomenon, playing a central role in the creation and maintenance of an eastern Mediterranean coastally based economic and cultural community. The ostensibly “ethnic” similarities between what are called areas of “Sea People” settlement (and, indeed, some areas conventionally excluded from this, such as the Phoenician cities) are just as likely to arise directly from this as from any deep-seated racial or linguistic relationships. In short, pots—and indeed other aspects of material culture—may be telling us less about peoples in any genetic or linguistic sense, and more about changing economic strategies and the effects these may have on cultural institutions and political structures.

Added value and the role of pottery
In order to trace this development, we have to go back and look very briefly at the logic behind the growth of international trade in the 3rd and early 2nd millennia, which was motivated in the first instance by élite control of the acquisition and circulation of materials which confer power, and on which the political structure typified by the early palaces is based: above all, prime-value materials such as precious metals, copper and tin. The growth in volume of this kind of activity has several effects. In the first place, the culturally constructed power of such materials enhances their desirability at other social levels and in areas on the margin of an established exchange system, and, as a result, it is in the interests of élites to continue to exercise tight control over their exchange and circulation in order to
prevent uncontrolled seepage downwards (through their own social hierarchies) or laterally (to élites elsewhere). A second effect is increasing diversification and specialization as more areas are incorporated into a single linked system. On a regional basis, such diversification and specialization will allow local élites to retain as much as possible of the prime value of their raw materials and still participate in international exchange. This leads to the growth of value-added production (for example, finished metalwork instead of raw metals), leading on to products with a greater element of added value (such as textiles, perfumed oils, etc.), and eventually to the development of goods for exchange whose sole value lies in the added value of manufacture rather than in the raw materials (for example, pottery, glass and faience). By the time this stage is reached, the internal social and economic structures of producing centers have reached a level of organization where the continuation and expansion of international exchange (often on something approaching a "coals to Newcastle" basis) becomes essential to prevent internal collapse. A further effect of growth both in volume and diversification is a tendency towards decentralization in the interstices of the system, as it were: such things as private enterprise on the part of official palace-based merchants and agents, or the growth of professional, and effectively independent, carriers and middlemen (cf. e.g. Artzy 1994:138). This is perhaps particularly true in the case of seaborne trade, where the problems of physical regulation are especially great in view of the need for circular routes and frequent landfalls.

The part played by purely added-value products in such international exchange systems is particularly interesting. Because they have no element of prime or intrinsic value, their value in exchange systems rests primarily on their ability to fit into an existing system of cultural values in which they can act as acceptable (often suitably exotic) placebos for sub-élites, or as substitutes for élite goods (for example, for deposition in tombs or sanctuary dedications in circumstances where it is neither necessary nor desirable to use these forms of deposition to make extravagant social or political "statements"); and in this respect they tend to require more active marketing than prime value goods. Because they are not in themselves "powerful" (and therefore "dangerous") goods, their circulation need not be controlled at a high level; though the growth of entire spheres of economic activity devoted to the circulation of such goods in large numbers may come to be recognized as posing a threat to élite economic and political control, particularly when the circulation of more powerful materials becomes mixed up with them. The other thing about purely value-added products which require nothing special in the way of restricted raw materials is their susceptibility to import substitution, particularly once a certain threshold of scale of movement and social diversity of circulation is reached.

Pottery as a traded good in itself, rather than as containers for other goods, is a supreme example of a value-added commodity; and, from the early 2nd millennium, two main actors seem to have been engaged particularly in producing pottery for overseas exchange in the east Mediterranean: the Aegean, followed by Cyprus. The basis on which this operated seems to have been the provision of substitutes for precious metal types, particularly those linked with the formal equipment associated with élite or divine drinking rituals. This can be seen particularly

4. Cf. for example, the well known figure of Sinarunu of Ugarit, who successfully combined institutional activity on behalf of the palace with private exchange and capital financing of his own: see, e.g., Liverani 1987:69-70; cf. Knapp and Cherry 1994:136-137.

5. An example of this might be, for instance, glass paste for gems. Cf. e.g. the White Painted amphorae or tankards with inlaid faience beads from Middle Cypriot tombs at Ayia Paraskevi (Hadjicostis 1992:113-117, figs. 4-7, pl. XVIII), which may be compared quite closely in shape and decoration with an inlaid gold vessel from the temple deposit in early 2nd millennium Byblos (Culican 1966:fig. 19).

6. A good example of this is the way in which, since the beginning of the 1990s, nuclear materials of Soviet military origin have begun circulating in the informal markets of eastern and central Europe alongside surplus military uniforms and stolen cars.
clearly in the small concentrations of Cretan Kamāres ware which reached the east Mediterranean in the early 2nd millennium, and in the drinking sets of Mycenaean kraters, jugs and cups or stemmed cups which followed in the 14th and early 13th centuries. It seems likely, too, that the numbers of White Slip and Base Ring bowls and jugs which reached the Levant in the 14th and 13th centuries were also related to metal forms and intended for use primarily as drinking equipment. That such pottery was not an object of exchange at a high level is quite clear from its total absence in the documentary, literary and iconographical record, and, indeed, is strongly suggested by the sheer quantities in which it was moving by the second half of the 2nd millennium, while the contexts in which it is found may be described as sub-élite rather than super-élite. There is thus every reason to suggest that it moved at a different level, and in a more decentralized manner than those materials (gold, silver, copper, tin, ivory, precious stones, cedarwood, fine textiles etc.) whose high level exchange is documented in tribute lists and letters. Its susceptibility to import substitution can be seen by instance after instance in the east Mediterranean: in the occasional Egyptian versions of Kamāres ware in the early 2nd millennium; in the Bichrome pottery and Base Ring shapes produced in the southern Levant (at Megiddo and in the area of Tell el-ʿAjjul) later on in the millennium (Artzy, Perlman and Asaro 1978); in the gradually expanding growth of Cypriot manufacture of a range of pottery of Aegean type which took place in the course of the 13th century; and finally in the production of a yet narrower range of specifically Cypriot versions of Aegean-type pottery which began at various places in the Levant at the end of the 13th and especially during the 12th century.

Cyprus: pots, metal and the coastal urban centers

Cyprus is especially interesting precisely because, from some time around the beginning of the Late Bronze Age, so much of its trading activity seems to have been devoted to spreading pottery around the east Mediterranean, particularly to the Levant. Not only did it export its own Base Ring and White Slip bowls and jugs in fairly impressive quantities over a wide area of the Levantine mainland and at apparently diverse social levels, but there is good reason to believe that Cypriots were probably also the main carriers and marketers of much of the imported Aegean pottery which reached the east Mediterranean in the 14th and 13th centuries, which is invariably found in the Levant in association with Cypriot wares and not infrequently marked, after firing, with Cypriot signs (Hankey 1981a:44–45; Yannai 1983; Hirschfeld 1992). The fact that Cyprus, in particular, was so heavily involved with trade not only in its own pottery but also in that of others is probably telling us something fairly fundamental about the nature of Cypriot trade in the later 2nd millennium, and the way in which at least much of it operated. The reason why Cyprus seems to have developed this rather special role may lie partly in the nature of political development on the

7. For Kamāres ware as a reflection particularly, perhaps, of silver vessels, see e.g. Vickers and Gill 1994:109 with a.20 and further refs., fig. 5.3, and cf. also the Tod treasure (Warren and Hankey 1989:131–134, pls. 5–11). Most of the Kamāres pottery found in Egypt and the Levant consists of non-container vessels such as wide-mouthed bridge-spouted jugs, cups and bowls. For metal equivalents of several of the ceramic types exported from the Aegean to the east Mediterranean in the 14th–13th centuries, see e.g. Matthäus 1980.


9. For the sub-élite nature of the domestic contexts in which even the relatively small quantities of Kamāres ware occur in Egypt, particularly at Kahun, see Kemp and Merrill 1980:85, 284–285.

10. Although these signs, as Hirschfeld points out, are found predominantly on containers such as piriform jars and stirrup-jars, some are also found on cups, kraters, bowls and jugs (see, e.g., Stubbings 1951:46–50 nos. A.1,2,4–6,10,14,18–19,24,26,29,31,33, B4, E.2–3, F.1).
island—in particular the lack of any centralized palatial system which itself may result from a combination of Cyprus's status as a longstanding and important source of copper for the Near East with its immunity from direct political interference by the largely landbased superpowers of Egypt and the Hittite empire.

The presence or absence of a fully fledged palatial system on Cyprus is still debated, but it has to be said that there is so far no very overwhelming evidence for it (Merrillees 1992:320-321). Though we cannot read any of the later 2nd millennium Cypriot texts, they give little appearance of being administrative documents of a bureaucratic nature such as are associated with palace archives in the Near East and Aegean (cf. Keswani 1993:75). This is not to say, however, that there is an absence of hierarchical structures within the island. This seems particularly clear in the settlement differentiation which appears to be visible especially in some of the southern river valleys, such as the Vasilikos, Maroni (Ayios Minas) and Kouris valleys, in the 14th-13th centuries, where a series of specialized sites (copper extraction sites, pottery production sites, administrative centers such as Aghios Dhimitrios and Maroni-Younes, and coastal outlets such as Tsaroukkas at the foot of the Maroni valley) run in a line from north to south, from the southern edges of the Troodos to the coast. What this suggests is that the exploitation of Cypriot copper for overseas exchange was traditionally organized by a whole series of relatively small contact units focused in linear fashion on the routes which led from the copper sources to the coast, each of which probably constituted a separate political unit with its main center growing up in a strategic position somewhere along the middle of these linear units (cf. Stech 1982:113; Hadjisavvas 1994). Although the possibility of some sort of wider regional or even island-wide control, particularly in the earlier part of the Cypriot Late Bronze Age, has been canvassed,11 there is as yet no decisive evidence for it. The search for it may indeed be something of a wild goose chase, prompted by the need to find a single kingdom which we can identify as Alasiya, itself possibly no more than a product of the need of Near Eastern powers to make Cypriot political structures conform, at least on paper, to their own norms of diplomatic perception and convention. Somewhere into this structure of independent units, however, we have to fit the rising power of the coastal urban centers—particularly those of the south and east coasts, such as Palaeapaphos, Hala Sultan Tekke, Kition and Enkomia—which begin to develop particularly strongly from the beginning of the Late Cypriot II period, and by the end of that period seem to have eclipsed (if not actively obliterated) the balanced linear structure of these hierarchical units, which either disappear completely or fade into relative insignificance some time towards the end of the 13th or in the early 12th century.

Another area in which Cyprus appears as somewhat anomalous is in the organization of its pottery manufacture. It is particularly unusual in its retention of a handmade mode of production during the 16th to 14th centuries for a majority of wares, including the Base Ring and White Slip wares which were regularly exported to the Levant. This is likely to be a reflection of the way in which its actual manufacture was organized. While much of this still remains a mystery, the recent discovery, by Ian Todd and Alison South, of a specialized White Slip production site of 14th century date at Sanidha in the southern foothills of the Troodos, far removed from any sign of permanent settlement (Todd et al. 1992; Todd 1993), suggests the possibility of seasonal (or at least periodic) manufacture rather than full-time perennial production based in urban or administrative centers. While such periodic bouts of specialized production may have been organized from administrative centers (such as Aghios Dhimitrios or Maroni) lying further down the linear valley routes, there can be little doubt that those responsible for conveying such pottery to the Levant, and possibly elsewhere on Cyprus itself, were the coastal dwellers, the ship operators and middlemen, concentrated increasingly in the growing

11. For example by Muhly (Muhly 1989).
urban centers of the south and east. They were primarily responsible both for the import and export of pottery, and for carrying and marketing not only Cypriot but also Aegean pottery overseas. The basis of their economy and livelihood was thus the creation and maintenance of essentially sub-élite markets for added-value products, and their modus vivendi, and the growing power and wealth of the coastal centers in which they were increasingly concentrated, thus depended on a continuation and expansion of the relatively low level, decentralized forms of seaborne trade which the mass movement of pottery in the later 2nd millennium represents. While such pottery may originally, as Artzy (1985) has suggested, have travelled as opportunistic “sailor’s trade,” alongside (and on the same ships as) high level, officially regulated exchange in copper ingots and other prime value materials or élite luxuries, by the late 14th and 13th centuries this had grown into something much larger in scale and more economically significant.

What I suggest is that the gradual but steady growth of wheelmade mass production of pottery which we can see taking place in Cyprus during the course of the 13th century—not only in the gradual growth and expansion of production of an Aegean type of ware (White Painted Wheelmade III), but also in such things as Plain White Wheelmade (Keswani 1992)—represents a successful bid by these urban traders to take the production of pottery more directly into their control. What we are seeing is a process of switch towards full-time perennial mass production of pottery in the coastal urban centers; and it is perhaps no coincidence that an Aegean type of painted ware, which not only formed a significant part of these centers’ trade both at home and overseas, but which was itself ideally suited to industrial mass production, should have figured quite prominently in this strategy as a form of import substitution. It is equally no coincidence that the first steps in this process should have been the production—possibly right at the beginning of the 13th century, if not before—of “Pastoral Style” mixing kraters, based on imported Aegean shapes and general themes of decoration, but fitted in stylistic treatment into a visual ambit more familiar from specifically east Mediterranean art forms: 18th and 19th Dynasty polychrome pottery, for instance (Sherratt 1992a:192), or ivorywork (Karageorghis 1965:234), embossed or incised metalwork or possibly even figured textiles. This was followed—still well within the 13th century—by a variety of drinking bowls modelled on an assortment of imported Aegean, Cypriot and metallic types, and by the gradual but steady addition of other mainly drinking related types—jugs, kylikes, chalices, mugs and skyphoi—as well as some other shapes such as stamnos jars, all of them represented within the repertoire of imported Aegean pottery. I cannot emphasize strongly enough that we are talking about the same ware (White Painted Wheelmade III), and many of the same shapes, as the pottery which is called “Myc. IIIIC:1” and which is conventionally associated with Late Cypriot IIIA levels at Cypriot sites. The latter category is separated from its Late Cypriot II predecessors (and indeed the supposedly “non-Mycenaean” part of its contemporary range) not on grounds of a difference in ware, but solely on the basis of a conventional reconstruction of “historical” events at the end of the 13th century, and on an assumption of its supposedly different cultural origins (Kling 1992; cf. Sherratt 1992a). While the range of shapes and motifs of generally Aegean type continues to expand steadily into and during the 12th century, it appears to be a gradual rather than a sudden process, and the geographical influences in terms of different regions of the Aegean are demonstrably diverse. Insofar as it is inspired by continuing and probably intensified direct contacts with Aegean regions, it gives the impression of selective eclecticism mixed with a healthy dose of local improvisation, rather than the transferred ceramic packages of any discrete groups of people; while the fact that the most Aegean-looking shapes of the White Painted Wheelmade III repertoire are only rarely put in Late Cypriot IIIA tombs detracts somewhat from the idea of these as conscious indicators of group identity. There is also a good argument for some elements of 12th cen-

At the same time as we see this steady increase and expansion in the mass production of wheelmade pottery of more or less Aegean type on Cyprus, we also see, as Arzty (1985) has pointed out, attempts to reduce the unit costs of handmade Base Ring and White Slip production. Reductions in thickness and quality of slip, simplification of decoration and abandonment of bichrome suggest a stepping up of mass production of these wares. This leads eventually to such things as wheelmade versions of Base Ring bowls covered hastily with a matt red wash, White Painted Wheelmade III equivalents of milkbowl shapes with traditional White Slip decoration, and ultimately—during the course of the 12th century—to the demise of these traditional wares altogether.

At the same time as all this was going on, we see other signs of intensifying diversification in Cypriot centers. One of the most interesting and potentially significant of these is the increasing production of finished metalwork (particularly bronzework) in the 13th century, visible at Enkomi and elsewhere (Courtois 1982; Matthäus 1982; P. Åström 1982; Stech 1982). The beginnings, before the end of the 13th century, of a series of Cypriot scrap metal hoards at places such as Enkomi, Kition, Hala Sultan Tekke and Pyla-Kokkinokremos (cf. Knapp, Muhly and Muhly 1988) further suggests that some at least of this finished metal production depended on the circulation of already alloyed scrap, some of which may have been gathered at various places in the east Mediterranean outside Cyprus. Whether this reflects some difficulty on the part of urban metalworking centers in obtaining sufficient direct control over the main resources of copper or participating in official exchange of raw tin and precious metals, or whether it merely reflects the sheer volume of metalworking activity in these centers, it has some interesting implications in that its effect is to undermine and subvert the controlled, high level movement of standardized units of unalloyed copper, tin and precious metals that we see in earlier documentary evidence, and which is probably also represented by the contents of the 14th century Ulu Burun shipwreck. The fact that, between Ulu Burun and the late 13th and 12th centuries, we seem to see a fairly steady increase in the circulation of alloyed bronze and precious metal scrap around the eastern half of the Mediterranean has, I think, some serious implications for control over such prime value materials as metals by established powers, who were dependent on tight control of these, not least for the weaponry and tools which allowed them to function and maintain their status. That the Cypriot cities may have

12. Yet another possible way of looking at it is from the point of view of retention of added value by monopolizing production: in other words, with a much greater emphasis now on manufacturing rather than on primary copper production for export, the international value of Cypriot raw copper becomes comparatively less important to the Cypriot economy as a whole, and one source of metal for manufacturing purposes becomes as good as any other.


14. The importance of such control is perhaps indicated by the ceremonial or ritual stone ingot mould found in the 13th century North Palace (Ahat-Milku’s palace) at Ras ibn Hani (Boulni 1991:109). Despite its rhetoric of diplomatic gift exchange, it seems probable that the Ugaritic palace establishment was already operating in an increasingly commercial manner, however, at least as far as trade within the east Mediterranean was concerned; the difference being that at Ugarit this rose directly out of established political power rather than in competition with it, and was contained within a macro-regional hierarchical structure brought about by direct political interference by imperial Hittite and Egyptian powers in the Levant (Liverani’s “great kings” and “small kings”: Liverani 1987:66–67). At any rate, the close relationship between the Ugaritic establishment (including its merchants) and particularly Enkomi on Cyprus during the 14th-13th centuries is not in doubt (cf. Hellbing 1979:55).

The port city of Ras ibn Hani was founded by the Ugaritic royal family in the 13th century on a headland some 5 km. south of Minet-el-Beida, perhaps in response to changes in sea level. It may have been intended as an additional port to Minet-el-Beida, or possibly perhaps as an alternative. The probability of quarrels within the royal family (Boulni 1991:107) enhances the likelihood of the latter, with the possibility that we might even be seeing the setting up of rival trading establishments. Certainly, after the
been particularly closely implicated in the maritime circulation of metals for recycling at a wider range of social levels is suggested, for instance, by Artzy's extremely interesting Late Bronze IIB site at Tel Nami on the Carmel coast, where bronze scrapishes, including pieces of Cypriot ajouré stands, were being broken up and melted down, possibly for the production of bronze ingots or perhaps for the manufacture of objects such as incense stands, several complete examples of which have been found at the site (Artzy 1994:126-129). With a satisfying symmetry, pieces of just such incense stands turn up among bronze scrapishes at both Enkomi and Pyla-Kokkinokremos, where one may perhaps imagine that they in turn were eventually transformed into the stands and tripods of familiar Cypriot type (Matthäus 1982:fig. 7; Karageorghis and Demas 1984:pls. XXV, XXVI:68, XLIV:68). The development of utilitarian iron in Cyprus, from early in the 12th century, also seems to me to be a symptom of the same processes of subversion of the established order. Initially produced as a by-product of copper smelting, from what might almost literally be regarded as waste in a local context, it seems to have been deliberately marketed as a primarily value-added sub-élite or substitute élite product within an east Mediterranean social and cultural context which still regarded iron as a rare élite material of immense preciosity (Sherratt 1994). Our present evidence suggests that the cities of Enkomi and Palaepaphos, where the highest concentrations of 12th century iron weapons and tools are found, may have been particularly closely associated with this development.

It thus seems likely that the development of many of the features that we think of as characteristic of 1st millennium economies, and which we tend to associate with the activities of people like the Phoenicians, was particularly well advanced in Cyprus by the end of the 13th century. Although the growth of decentralized, and essentially commercial, forms of trading in the latter part of the Late Bronze Age may not have been further advanced than in, say, somewhere like Ugarit, in Cyprus (unlike Ugarit and other Levantine cities which were at least nominally under Hittite or Egyptian suzerainty) such activities were a direct source, rather than a by-product, of actual political power in the coastal cities by the end of the 13th century. What Negbi (1986) has called the 13th century climax of urban development seems to me to represent a successful bid by mercantile (manufacturing and trading) élites to consolidate this power in a more overtly political manner. This rise to dominance of selected centers was associated with urban enhancement, which undoubtedly starts during the 13th century; the grid layout (for example at Enkomi) of monumental public and private buildings and the enhancement or establishment of large urban sanctuaries with which the production of finished metalwork is closely associated and which seems curiously suggestive of something resembling the merchant guild organizations of the Phoenician cities, or of the Hanseatic cities at a later date. That it was also associated with a high degree of inter-urban political and economic competition may be suggested by the increase in fortifications surrounding such cities, and by the rapid growth of bypass and outflanking centers along the coasts. 15 By the latter part of the 12th cen-

15. Pyla-Kokkinokremos, a barely excavated but evidently large and prosperous fortified harbor city of the 13th century, situated on the south-east coast about 10 km. east of Kition, may represent just such a center, possibly an independent offshoot of breakaway elements from one of the older established urban centers to the east, or perhaps even a rival coastal trading set-up designed to bypass these. It does not seem to correspond to any clear inland route, and instead seems to have a primarily coastal focus, as the pieces of bronze incense stand scrap, as well as the wide diversity of other overseas goods, suggest. There is certainly nothing to indicate that it is a settlement of a culturally distinct group of foreigners looking for a safe agriculturally based toehold on a hostile island. Neither the substantial and impressive layout, nor the architecture—which is wholly Cypriot in character—suggest this, nor does the diversity of overseas goods, including Egyptian, Levantine, Aegean (including Cretan and probably Dodecanesian) and western Anatolian artefacts, as well as
tury only the most successful of these cities remained, having displaced, knocked out or swallowed up their less successful neighbors. At the same time, the commercial, decentralized trade in which these urban centers were engaged, aimed largely at sub-élite markets, posed some obvious threats to the relatively closed economic systems of Egyptians and Hittites and political systems based or dependent on these, particularly when it involved the relatively uncontrolled circulation of highly convertible, powerful materials such as metals. That this type of low level uncontrolled trade was indeed seen as a systemic threat is suggested by the way in which Cypriot pots, other than a few containers, were effectively excluded from Egypt in the reactionary post-Amarna period, though not from the Levant where Egyptian economic and political control was looser and more scattered, and where genuine commercial activity was, by contrast, more deeply embedded in the economic structure of coastal polities.

An east Mediterranean coastal economic community

These people—the 13th-12th century urban coastal moguls of Cyprus—are, in effect, the institutional "Sea Peoples," operating a type of aggressively open economy which was highly subversive to the centrally controlled, formal, élite exchange systems which constituted an important part of the political basis of established powers. Their success is measured by the history of Cypriot maritime activity before the end of the 13th and in the 12th century: its direct westerward involvement in areas like Sardinia, port through the coastal centers or, perhaps in some cases, in competition with them. The export of (unperfumed) oil from Alasiya is mentioned on Papyrus Anastasi IV of the time of Seti II (Hellbing 1979:81). Enkomi, in particular, may well owe both its comparative longevity and its success in the 13th-12th centuries to the fact that it started life as the center of an extended linear unit based on the Pedhiios/Yiali river complex running up to the copper sources around Mathiati and was able, because of its coastal position, successfully to combine both roles.

The original position of sites like Athienou and Sindia, which also show signs of growth in the 13th and early 12th centuries, is not entirely clear. However, the sanctuary at Athienou may—whatever its original status—have ended up in some relatively close relationship to Hala Sultan Tekke or Kiton, just as, much later in the 5th century, the important sanctuary site of Dhali was annexed by Kition (Beer 1992:74). The suggestion (Stech 1982:112) that Athienou was involved only in primary smelting of copper in the 13th-12th centuries might support an interdependent relationship of this sort. Sindia, too, which lies between Enkomi and the western edge of the Mesoria, may have had some direct relationship with that city in the 13th and 12th centuries. Both may mark the course of routes which were important to the industrial and trading activities of Hala Sultan Tekke and Enkomi respectively, either for the acquisition of copper (cf. Stech 1982) or for the distribution of manufactured or imported goods.

16. Geomorphological changes and alterations in sea level during the latter part of the 12th century may also have had a hand in this, for instance in the cutting off from the sea of the lagoon at Hala Sultan Tekke and the silting up of the harbor at Enkomi (McCaslin 1978:99, 142 n.9; Karageorghis 1982:112).
almost certainly in the search for raw materials like silver and tin; its penetration of Greek coastal waters (seen in the 13th century Iria wreck, at Tiryns, Lefkandi, and in the 12th century at Perati and possibly on Thasos, also perhaps in the quest for Aegean silver); and in the acme of Cypriot urban and industrial development which continued well into the 12th century. Not only was such activity probably instrumental in the gradual erosion and final collapse of certain aspects of longer established Bronze Age politico-economic systems, but it itself actively benefited from this collapse.

When it comes to the “Sea People” cities of Early Iron I in the Levant, it is quite clear that they provide evidence of very close economic and cultural ties with the urban coastal centers of Cyprus, and that there is no need to look any further. There is nothing that I have yet glimpsed in the range of features of material culture which are ascribed in a general, and sometimes rather elusive, way to the Aegean that is not already present in Cyprus in some form during the 13th century; and there are some features which are present in Cyprus but have nothing whatsoever to do with the Aegean.17 The urban centers of the Philistine strip, of the area around the Bay of Acco, and of the coast at least as far up as Ras ibn Hani show some very similar signs of industrial and economic activity as those characteristic of the Cypriot cities in their 13th–12th century urban heyday. Industrial production of a Cypriot version of pottery of Aegean type, for example at Ashdod, Acco, Tel Miqne, and possibly at Ras ibn Hani, Sarepta and elsewhere—far from being taken as some kind of conscious ethnic denominator with genetic race or language embodied in the fabric—can equally be seen as a continuation of the process of import substitution which saw the beginnings of such production on Cyprus in the 13th century. Such Cypriot-produced pottery was certainly exported to the Levant, as can be seen by finds of “Pastoral Style” kraters at such places as Ugarit, Minet-el-Beida, Byblos and Gezer; while it seems likely that a significant proportion of the pottery of Aegean type found at Ugarit before its destruction was actually produced in Cyprus (cf. Sherratt 1994:67 n.8).18 Before the end of Late Bronze II, if not earlier, we begin to glimpse a more complex picture still, with the distinct possibility that Aegean-type pottery found, for instance, at Tel Nami may include locally made as well as Cypriot produced pieces (Artzy 1994:130).19 From this it is but a comparatively small step to the kind of industrial substitution of Cypriot pottery of Aegean type which we find at the very end of the 13th and in the 12th century at Levantine sites such as Ashdod, Acco, Tel Miqne and possibly Ras ibn Hani, Sarepta and elsewhere. Some of the earliest examples of such pottery are probably

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17. A good example of the latter are the notched ox scapulae found at Tel Miqne and Dor (T. Dothan 1989a:9; T. Dothan 1995:fig. 3.11; Stern 1993:330). Another are arguably the seated “Ashdoda” figures for which excellent prototypes can be found in the female “chair” figurines of Late Cypriot II in which chair and body are also completely merged (L. Åström 1967:42, 57, fig. 70.5; L. and P. Åström 1972:514 type II.4). These, which also often bear traces of painted decoration in the form of red and black bands around the neck and body, and on top of the head, seem to me to provide more immediately convincing comparanda for the “Ashdoda” than the Mycenaean seated figurines with which it is sometimes compared. For other features shared between Cyprus and Palestine in the Iron Age I period, many of them without obvious Aegean antecedents, see Mazar 1991:97-102.

18. A body sherd from Tel Miqne, characterized as “Myc. IIB” (but without further description or illustration) is probably of Cypriot manufacture (Gunneware et al. 1986:14). It seems to have a similar composition to a IIB piriform jar from Deir el-Balah (Perlman, Asaro and Dothan 1973:151). A vertical flake of LH IIB type from a tomb at Tell el-Ajjul is also likely to be of Cypriot manufacture (Ashmolean 1932:956: from the same tomb group as the pottery illustrated in Stubbings 1951:68, pl. XIV:3–7).

19. Comparatively little analysis has yet been carried out on so-called “local imitations” of Aegean pottery found in the Levant in LB IIB contexts. These mainly consist of stirrup-jars (like those from Deir Alla in the Jordan valley; Hankey 1981b:113–114), lentoid flasks and straight-sided alabastra (cf. also Baramki 1973). Petrographic analysis of a “locally imitated” stirrup-jar from Tell Chair near Aleppo, however, suggests a source either on Cyprus or perhaps in the region around Antioch (Jones 1986:563). Results of X-ray spectroscopy on pottery from LB II Megiddo have proved inconclusive, but may also suggest a complex picture (Lambert et al. 1978; cf. Jones 1986:565–566, 570). Even earlier, the possibility has been raised, on grounds of visual appearance, of “imitations” in some 14th century tombs at Acco (Hankey 1977).
those associated with the potters’ shop in Ashdod Stratum XIIIb, which find especially close parallels in White Painted Wheelmade III pottery from Late Cypriot IIC or IIC/IIIA transitional contexts, including Kition Tomb 9. These include types which belong, not to the “Myc. IIC:1” category of Cypriot White Painted Wheelmade III ware, but to its “Late Mycenaean IIIB” or “Decorated Late Cypriot III” categories, generally regarded as of less evidently pure “Mycenaean” origin. Even earlier still may be a kylix, also from Ashdod Stratum XIIIb, which finds particularly good parallels in Kition Tombs 4 and 5 and the lower burial of Kition Tomb 9, which are undoubtedly of Late Cypriot IIC date. The pottery associated with the kiln area at Tel Miqne, by contrast, may reflect a stage (or stages) somewhat beyond the earliest production of White Painted Wheelmade III on Cyprus: early to mid-Late Cypriot IIIA, rather than Late Cypriot IIC or even the IIC/IIIA transition. Its initial production at that site may thus be a generation or so later than at Ashdod.

This Early Iron Age pottery, along with some which probably still continued to be imported from Cyprus itself, is found at sites and in localities where both imported Aegean and Cypriot pottery was marketed in the 14th and 13th centuries. It is also worth noting that—at least in the Philistine area—it seems to represent, on the whole, only a restricted section of the range of recognizably Mycenaean shapes found in Cyprus, itself only a restricted section of that found in the contemporary Aegean (cf. Catling in Jones 1986:607). Predominant among types produced at places like Ashdod and Tel Miqne appear to be items associated with drinking: bowls and kraters already known and used in local and imported repertoires in the Levant, with the addition of strainer jugs, a clay amalgam of two of the elements of the familiar Levantine metal drinking set, the separate jug and strainer. To these can be added the already familiar stirrup jars, and some other shapes such as large undecorated kalathoi and cooking pots of a type found in Cyprus. The latter two forms may have some industrial function, and/or may represent the spread of some Cypriot practices and equipment as a result of close economic and cultural interaction with that island, just as close economic links between Ugaritic merchants and Enkomi brought built tombs of Syrian type to that city in the 14th and 13th centuries. Stylisti-

20. For pottery from the potters’ shop, see Dothan and Porath 1993:12, 55-58, figs. 14-15, pl. 35-6. This includes a number of “Late Mycenaean IIIB” handleless conical bowls (cf. e.g. Karageorghis 1974:86-87, pls. CLV, CLVI:158, 175, 225, 260, 342, 349 from the upper burial of Kition Tomb 9), and some unusually small skyphoi (Dothan and Porath 1993:fig. 14-9:15,17,18,20) which, like the linear decorated skyphoi, also find their best parallels in Late Cypriot IIC or transitional IIC/IIIA pottery (cf. Sherratt 1990:fig. 1 from Palaeopaphos-Eliomylia Tomb 119, with discussion and references). The “Mycenaean” pedigrees of the conical bowls, as well as of “Decorated Late Cypriot III” feeding bottles also found in the potters’ shop at Ashdod (Dothan and Porath 1993:fig. 15:4,10), are far from self-evident. The former shape occurs already in the Plain White Handmade and Plain White Wheelmade I wares of Late Cypriot I-II (Keswani 1992:101-102, fig. 11.1:E-F); for the feeding bottles, see Furumark 1944:236-238, fig. 10:1; cf. Kling 1989:160-161). For a discussion of the “Late Mycenaean IIIB” and “Decorated Late Cypriot III” categories of White Painted Wheelmade III see Kling 1992; cf. Catling in Jones 1986:595; Sherratt 1992a:180-187.

21. For the kylix from Ashdod Stratum XIIIb, see Dothan and Porath 1993:58, fig. 17:7, and compare Karageorghis 1974:39, 59, pls. XXVI:193, CXLI:61, CXLI:6:9,70,88 (Kition Tombs 4 and 5, and the lower burial of Kition Tomb 9). A kylix identical to one of those from the lower burial of Kition Tomb 9 was also found at Ugarit (Schaeffer et al. 1978:fig. 39:5; cf. Karageorghis 1974:49, pl. LIII:61; Sherratt 1994:67 n.8).

21. Cf. Cohen, paper presented in this volume; also Hanky 1993:104. The place of manufacture of pottery of Cypriot “Myc. IIC:1” type found at Sarepta, Tyre and Tell Sukas is not known, though local production has been suggested for Ras ibn Hani (Bouni 1991:110), and kilns are known from Sarepta. The status of such pottery at coastal Cilician sites, such as Tarsus, Mersin and Kazanli (which has a wider and slightly different stylistic range, indicative of contact which continued over a period not only with Cyprus, but also to a lesser extent directly with the East Aegean) is unclear. Some, at least, of it was probably locally made, but possible compositional similarities have also been noted with pottery from Kition (Catling in Jones 1986:607; cf. Sherratt and Crouwel 1987). Although Cilicia is not discussed in this paper, it is clear that, with the loosening of tight Hittite control around the later part of the 13th century, coastal Cilicia also became an active participant in the maritime economic and cultural community which was rapidly created in the east Mediterranean.
cally, there seem to be few, if any, features of this pottery which do not appear in White Painted Wheelmade III ware in Cyprus, while there are several elements which are far better matched there than anywhere in the Aegean. Moreover, the stylistic range encompassed by the pottery from Stratum XIIIb at Ashdod and that from Tel Miqne, which in Cypriot terms suggests a chronological range from Late Cypriot IIC to Late Cypriot IIIA, implies a relatively extensive period of exposure to purely Cypriot pottery of Aegean type. Some stylistic variation is also reported at Tel Miqne itself, where the kind of elaborate decoration which gradually develops during the early part of Late Cypriot IIIA at such sites as Enkomi and Sinda, culminating in Enkomi Level IIIb and Sinda III, is said to appear only in the later levels of Stratum VII or in Stratum VI (T. Dothan 1989a:5).

What this implies is that close and regular contact with Cyprus continued from the latter part of the 13th throughout at least the greater part of the 12th century. Although it is conventional to regard such contacts as coming to an end shortly before 1200 (Mazar 1991; 1994:51), to be replaced by a wave of migrations and settlements from somewhere vaguely to the west, this, I believe, is an illusion, based primarily on the disappearance of imports of easily recognized Cypriot handmaiden wares. These, as we have seen, were, from some time in the latter part of the 13th century, on their way out both as domestic and export pottery, gradually displaced by the growth of wheelmade plain and decorated pottery produced not in the traditional locations of such handmade production but in the urban coastal centers.

As it is, there are other reasons for supposing extremely active economic and resulting cultural links with Cyprus during the 12th century. Industrial installations of a similar nature and on a similar scale are found both in the southern and southeastern Cypriot cities and in the Early Iron Age I urban centers of the southern Levant, while in both areas finished bronzeworking (apparently, as at Tel Nami in Late Bronze IIB, relying largely on scrap circulating on a hitherto unprecedented scale) is associated with temples rather than palaces. It also seems likely that most of the iron utilitarian objects found in the Levant in the 12th century—including the knives from Tell Qasile, Tel Miqne and Sarpepta (cf. T. Dothan 1989b)—were of Cypriot manufacture. Evidence for the large scale production of textiles can be seen not only in the indications of purple dyeing (an activity already well documented on the Levantine coast in the 14th and 13th centuries), but in the large numbers of mass produced loomweights found at sites in the Levant and on Cyprus in the late 13th-12th centuries (Barber 1991:302) as well as in the evidence for fairly intensive stock rearing, some of which may have some relevance to a textile industry (Hesse 1986:21-26). Other features—the “spinning

22. This development of stylistic elaboration on Cyprus may itself be a contributor to the development of elaborate styles in the Aegean in a middle stage of Late Helladic IIIC (cf. Kling 1989:173).

23. It may be significant that already in the lower burial of Kition Tomb 9, for instance, no more than a dozen pieces of Base Ring II and White Slip II were found, in comparison with 86 imported Aegean pots and 23 examples of White Painted Wheelmade III ware (“Late Mycenaean IIIIB” and “Rude Style”): Karageorghis 1974:57-58.

24. For metal recycling (and dye manufacturing) at Acco in Area AB, not far from a small altar, see M. Dothan 1981:111; 1989:60-63. It is particularly interesting that these activities are said to continue from Late Bronze IIB into the Early Iron Age strata, “associated in their lowest level with local late LB pottery and with Cypriot White Slip II and Base Ring II, and in the higher levels with pottery akin to the Mycenaeans IIIC:1” (M. Dothan 1981:111). This would appear to suggest a clear element of continuity, not only in location and types of industrial activities but also in Cypriot connections. (The “Mycenaean IIIC:1” pottery so far illustrated from Acco seems thoroughly Cypriot in style: M. Dothan 1989:figs. 3.1, 3.2. The differences remarked by Dothan between this pottery and that from the potters' shop at Ashdod are probably ones of date rather than geographical connections.) Acco, in many ways, looks rather like a replica of Tel Nami which, unlike Nami, seems to have survived on into the Early Iron Age.

25. In particular, a rise in the proportion of sheep to goats within the context of a relative decline in the overall proportions of sheep/goats consumed, might suggest that more sheep were being reared within a supply area, though fewer of them were being marketed for consumption. At the same time a small, but possibly significant, increase in the proportion of pigs consumed at sites such as Tel Miqne and Ashkelon may indicate the rearing of these useful urban scavengers by an increased urban population (Hesse 1990; cf. Grigson 1995:225, fig. 6(a)).
bowls” and the large undecorated kalathoi ("basket"-shaped pots, which may have been used to hold unspun wool)\textsuperscript{26}—may plausibly be connected with this industry. Given Schachermeyr’s suggestion (1976:299) that certain styles of Cypriot 12th-century pot decoration may have been influenced by Levantine textile designs, and the highly suggestive textile-derived appearance, particularly of the bichrome Philistine ware, it seems quite likely that an exchange of textiles between this area and Cyprus formed part of this regular contact.\textsuperscript{27}

On the Cypriot side, the evidence is even more compelling. Fabric analysis, for instance, of the large numbers of Canaanite jars found in Late Cypriot IIIA contexts at sites such as Hala Sultan Tekke and Maa-Palaekokastro has suggested that these are variably of central and southern Levantine as well as of Cypriot origin (P. Åström 1992); and it would not be at all surprising if it were found that some of the many similar jars found at Levantine sites originated in Cyprus. In addition, P. Åström (1986) has listed various orientalia of Levantine origin from Hala Sultan Tekke, as well as a fair number of Egyptian or Egyptianizing artifacts which are likely to have reached Cyprus via the Levantine coast. The Late Cypriot IIIA shaft grave burial at Hala Sultan Tekke contains a number of oriental objects, including lapis lazuli, gold pendants, a scarab, a Syrian ring and a bronze drinking set of typical Levantine type (Niklasson 1983:173). Finally, there is the question of the Late Cypriot IIIA ivory found in Cyprus: elephants (or hippopotamuses) were not native to Cyprus or the Aegean.

What we have, in short, is a picture of an extremely active, close, economic and resulting cultural community, with its epicenter somewhere in the sea between Cyprus and the Levantine mainland. While it is set within a wider sphere of activity in which Cyprus, and Cypriot ships and traders, link the coasts of the east Mediterranean with the far west via the Aegean, its core is firmly placed in the east Mediterranean. Its activities include the industrial production of textiles, pottery and olive oil (the latter particularly clear in the case of Cyprus), skilled metalworking based on high velocity recycling and including a trade in iron objects, the acquisition of silver (as the continuing basis of an east Mediterranean standard of exchange)—in short the whole paraphernalia of an intensive, irrational “coals to Newcastle” maritime trade between themselves which typifies decentralized trading activities based primarily on value-added products. At the same time, the high degree of competitiveness built into these kinds of activities, and the political aspirations designed to ensure their furtherance, resulted in an environment in which armed aggression, possibly accompanied by privateering and coastal raiding, was probably endemic. In this sense, the periodic destructions generally thought of as accompanying the arrival of the “Sea Peoples” may be no more than symptoms of pro-

\textsuperscript{26} Cf., for instance, the similar shape and size of the baskets used to hold roves of unspun wool on a Greek black-figure pot of the 6th century (Crowfoot 1954:fig. 281). Containers of similar shape are regularly used for the same purpose at a much earlier date in representations of Egyptian spinning (Crowfoot 1954:fig. 276, pl. 13a; Barber 1991:figs. 2.5, 2.6, 2.40, 3.8). It seems that a relatively large, deep container which widened towards the top may have been particularly useful in this context. In general, the large undecorated kalathoi from Tel Miqne seem to provide rather poor counterparts for the (usually painted) Aegean versions with which they are sometimes compared, being much taller and deeper and with straight rather than convex-concave sides (e.g. T. Dothan 1995:fig. 3.7:15; cf. e.g. Mountjoy 1986: figs. 144-145, 195, 232, 255).

\textsuperscript{27} Not surprisingly, virtually nothing remains of actual textiles from the Levant in this period. For the few extant impressions and/or traces, see Barber 1991:166 with references. These include indications of multi-colored cloth from a wall surface in the Stratum XI temple at Tel Qasile (though in this case apparently painted linen rather than dyed wool); Shefer 1976:85 n.7; Mazar 1980:24. Some idea of the kind of designs found on Early Iron Age textiles can probably be gleaned from the bichrome decoration on the “Ashdoda” figure which is closely related to that of contemporary Philistine pottery. The triangle motifs on the Ashdoda’s “robe” are also a frequent feature of the somewhat earlier “Levantine style” of Late Cypriot IIIA (cf. Schachermeyr 1976:fig. 72:161; Kling 1989:115, 124-125, 171). The decorated borders on clothing shown on such examples of representational art as the 13th century ivory plaque from Megiddo also seem in general to represent similar sorts of “busy,” abstract (and often geometrical) designs as are found on the Late Cypriot IIIA “Levantine style.”
cesses triggered off in the first place by the growth of their activities and rising economic and political importance.

In the late 13th and 12th centuries Cyprus was one of the main centers for the rapid growth of such activities, and in that sense Cyprus may be regarded as a heartland of what I would call the institutionalized “Sea Peoples.” This character resulted initially from the probable lack on the island of centralized or tight “palatial” forms of economic and political control, which both permitted the growth of this type of phenomenon and at the same time preserved it from the effects of the spectacular collapses which affected more centralized systems (for example in the imperial Hittite heartland, the Mycenaean mainland palaces, and probably even Ugarit itself). Nevertheless, the coastal Levant had an even longer and, arguably, more deeply embedded history of genuinely decentralized trade during the later 2nd millennium. There are aspects of organization at Ugarit (above, note 14) which suggest that such decentralized trading activities, evident even in the official Ugaritic archives, may have increased in scale and importance during the century following the “international” Amarna period (Liverani 1987:69–70). We have already seen signs of activity very similar to some of those taking place on the Cypriot coasts at Tel Nami, which Artzy (1994:131) suggests may have grown up in the later 13th century as a competitive “bypass” designed to outflank Tell Abu Hawam, with access through the Carmel ridge to the upper Jezerel valley. If we knew more about cities like Tyre and Sidon in this period, we would undoubtedly find signs of the expansion of similar forms of activity there (Bikai 1994:32). As Egyptian political control gradually weakened over the century following Kadesh, decentralized trading—though always regarded with the deepest suspicion by the central Egyptian and Hittite authorities—inserted itself on the edges and in the interstices of the network of Egyptian garrisons, as at Ashdod where an artisans’ quarter and potters’ shops established themselves on the site of the old Egyptian residency, right under the noses of the contracted garrison at Tel Mor from which, however, the type of pottery produced at Ashdod seems to have been excluded. 30

As Artzy has argued in a recent paper (Artzy, forthcoming), such activities—insofar as they are fundamental to the economy and political organization of whole cities or of large groups within them—generate their own culture and cultural institutions: a particular interest in the representation of ships and their symbolism (as at Kition, Tel Nami and Acco); the emergence of a single Astarte/Aphrodite/(Asthoda) figure who com-

28. Perhaps— as Artzy (1994) suggests—the burden of taxes and take-offs demanded by officials in the established port cities had grown too onerous. Such competitive leapfrogging of routes is well documented in the establishment of colonial trading-posts by Phoenicians and Greeks in the central and west Mediterranean: Sherratt and Sherratt 1993:369, 374).

29. Hence, the practice of embargoes, like the one the king of Amurrı is ordered by Tudhaliyas IV to implement against the ships of Ahhiyawa, in order to prevent the overland transport to Assyria of goods brought by them (though for a variant reading of this text, see Steiner 1989). A further indication of Hittite fears about the uncontrolled growth of decentralized trading within their imperial boundaries may be seen in the tight regulation imposed in the early 13th century on merchants operating out of the Cilician port of Ura at Ugarit, which would also have served the interests of the Ugaritic establishment in keeping at bay the permanent presence of too many merchants not directly under its own control (RS 17.130; cf. Cline 1991:6). The restrictions on usury imposed on the Ura merchants seem particularly revealing of one area of activity in which some at least of the economic and political dangers of uncontrolled private trading were seen to lie.

30. For other Egyptian garrisons or control posts which probably represent an attempt by Ramses III to reimpose direct rule over a strategic north-south corridor on the inland edge of the southern coastal plain up as far as Megiddo in the early 12th century, see Dever 1992:101–102 (cf. Weinstein 1992; Bikai 1992b). These include Megiddo, Beth Shan, Gezer, Lachish and Tel Sera—all sites at which, with the partial exception of Beth Shan where a few pieces of “Myc. III C:1” pottery (mainly containers, and possibly imported from Cyprus) have been found, early Philistine pottery and its “Myc. III C:1” predecessor are absent. This absence seems to me much less likely to be a factor either of relative chronology (Finkelstein, this volume) or of well-defined “ethnic” boundaries (Stager 1995:342), than a form of politically motivated economic “quarantine” imposed by the Egyptian authorities as they saw their dwindling political control in Palestine increasingly threatened by the kinds of aggressively open, decentralized economic systems of which the marketing of such pottery was merely a minor symptom.
bines supervision of fertility and technology with an association with the sea and possibly the rather more physical companionship of travelling sailors and merchants; divine protection for a metalworking industry which relies on opportunistic sources for its materials; communal feasting and sacrifice to bind merchants’ guilds or ships’ crews together; and sacred hearths as institutionalized symbols of the beacons which guide ships safely to port. We need not always look wishfully for a specific Urheimat in which to locate cultural elements of this sort, nor do I believe that we would necessarily find one.

As it is, I am not sure that it really matters where the people that we conventionally call the “Sea Peoples” came from. They were probably a pretty cosmopolitan bunch, as many of the coastal city dwellers of the east Mediterranean were throughout much, at least, of the second half of the 2nd millennium (Bikai 1994:35). Many of them may have been living more or less where they were all the time, or have come from nowhere very far away at all; others may have arrived as individuals or small groups from all sorts of places within a wider Mediterranean ambit, attracted by a lifestyle which promised much to the opportunistic. While the grouping of people under ethnic denominators was an important component of Egyptian and Hittite diplomatic and military rhetoric, we should not be misled by this into mistaking these for what, in the context of the modern concept of the nation state, we would call “nationalities.” The individual “ethnicities” of “the foreign countries...in their islands” or “from the midst of the sea” (hardly clearly distinguishable in either the Egyptian iconographical record or in the pottery which has subsequently been attributed to them, and impossible to pinpoint in both respects: Sandars 1978:chs. 5, 7) may refer to little more than the inhabitants of a few individual cities whose names we cannot now identify—or indeed such “ethnicities” may not have existed consciously outside Egyptian diplomatic-speak. The true implications of the “Sea Peoples” phenomenon lie in what they represent: the culmination of a replacement of old centralized politico-economic orders by a decentralized economic system which steadily encroached from within or from the margins of the former, which operated in a quite different way, and with types of cultural and social organization which reflect some of this difference; and which found its political expression above all in the industrial and mercantile city-state. Indeed, it is not impossible that what we see represented in conventional rhetoric by the Egyptian state at Medinet Habu as a purely military menace cloaks a perception of a far deeper and more long-term danger: an insidious economic and political threat to the very basis of that theocratic state itself. As such, it is a structural phenomenon, the seeds of whose growth were included in the long-term evolution of the structures with whose collapse it is associated, and one which points the way clearly to the expansion of those whom the Greeks in the early 1st millennium came to call Phoenicians, but who saw themselves—insofar as they did collectively—first and foremost as eba’ani.

31. The eastern origins of Aphrodite, who was a relative latecomer to the Greek pantheon (she is not mentioned in the Linear B texts), are well known. Not only does an early (Hesiodic) tradition give her birthplace as Cyprus, but she encompasses many of the aspects recognizably associated with Ishtar/Astarte/Tanit syncretisms. These include an association with the sea, a fertility role, and sponsorship of temple prostitution (Herodotus i. 199; cf. Tripp 1988:57-61). She was also married to Hephaistos, the god of smithing (Odyssey viii. 287-8). Herodotus’ information that the oldest of all temples of Aphrodite Urania (reflecting her association, like Ishtar/Astarte, with stars and possibly navigation) was at Ashkelon suggests that the Ashdodite figure of the Philistines was also a manifestation of this multi-roles east Mediterranean goddess complex (Herodotus i. 131; cf. Bikai 1992a:245).

32. Like the Greeks after them, Egyptians were perfectly capable of giving collective ethnonyms to groups of people who themselves were unaware that they constituted a single or distinct social or political group, and who called themselves something quite other. Sanders’ warning against making too simple an identification between the pist of the Egyptian texts of Rameses III and the Philistines of later biblical narrative, let alone between either and a particular pottery style, is a salutary one (Sandars 1978:164-170). Indeed, it is remarkable that the so-called “Sea Peoples” pottery conventionally associated variously with the Peleset, Tjeker and other supposedly distinct groups of “Sea Peoples” should be so similar, given the conventional assumption that it is in itself an unconscious indicator of distinct ethnic groups—and even more remarkable that it should relate so closely and directly to pottery produced in Cyprus.
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